

INTERCITY RAILWAY SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE INTERCITY RAILWAY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR YEAR 2006 HELD AT THE CREWE ARMS HOTEL ON SATURDAY 17th MARCH 2007

Present: Jeff Hall, Gary Mutton, Simon Mutton, Maurice Brown, Martin Hall, Carl Watson, Mark Richards, Peter Brittliffe, Trevor Roots, Fred A Lyon, Lawrence McCormick, Paul Bright, Peter.J.Foster

1) WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from: David Sharpe, Chris James, James Holloway, Robert Brown, George Palin & M.Holland

2) CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS – Simon Mutton

This year can probably best be described as one of quiet consolidation. In last years address I spoke of the rapid increase in membership over the last couple of years and the likelihood that the sustainability of this was unlikely.

This has proven to be true with a levelling off of membership at just below the 700 mark- still a magnificent achievement in terms of where we were a few years ago. Membership is not the only measure of our success however- our main activity- providing information which allows members and fellow enthusiasts to pursue and enjoy their interest- continues to flourish, as does the mutually beneficial partnership with HB publications, an arrangement which has eliminated the risks the society might otherwise have faced with regard to publishing and printing 'in-house'. The quality and reputation of these publications continues to grow, and the ongoing association with Railways Illustrated, for whom we continue to provide Rolling Stock and Wagon information, serves only to further enhance that reputation.

On the subject of risk, this was something else I mentioned last year as something the Society needed to address. Our structure, particularly in respect of the voluntary nature of the organisation and its people and reliance on key individuals, brings obvious risks with regard to 'business continuity'.

A classic example of this happened during the year under review when Ken Pitt had to relinquish the post of editor due to ill-health. We were grateful (and lucky) that David Sharpe was able to step in and 'hold the fort', and to Trevor Roots and Peter Britcliffe, who have taken over the editorship of the magazine following an appeal to members to come forward. I offer my thanks to them on behalf of the society, because if they hadn't come forward, we would quite likely not have been able to prepare and publish one or more editions of the magazine, with all that would have entailed in terms of loss of reputation, goodwill and members.

I would at this point particularly like to offer, on behalf of the Society, our thanks to Ken for all his hard work as editor over the years, together with compiling the Stock Changes. Whilst he will still perform the latter function, he had to inform us that his illness meant that he could no longer continue with the editorship. Following

diagnosis and treatment of his condition, I am happy to report that Ken is managing well, and all our best wishes go to him for the future.

As a result of these concerns, Officials have now looked at the issue of risk management and business continuity. This has resulted in a number of actions and proposals, some of which will be discussed during this AGM as they will need your approval, which I am confident will leave the Society in a much stronger and more sustainable position.

One disappointment last year was that a potential opportunity to have an HST power car named after the Society came to nothing. It followed an approach from the IC125 group, who had what I would describe as some ambitious ideas for a joint naming (i.e. with another power car named after their group) together with a rail tour and HST 30th anniversary publication which would be produced by us. Once again a cautious, sensible and business like approach to the venture meant that the Society wasn't disadvantaged financially or reputationally when it became clear that the initiative (which was led by the IC125 group) was not likely to actually happen. It would be nice to think that we might have (or in fact actively promote) an opportunity in the future to get our name on the side of some motive power.

As is tradition with the Chairman's address (and rightly so), I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the success of the society in all of its activities- Membership, Magazine, Publications, Website, Administration, Compiling and Editing, Contributing material or simply paying your subs for another year.

I make no apologies for reminding you all that this is an organisation which, without the dedication shown by fellow members on a voluntary basis to deliver all of the activities above, would not be the continuing success it is. Keep it in mind when you receive your magazine, buy your publication or visit the website. And if you think you could help in any way...you have our contact numbers.

Thank You.

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2003/4 AGM NOT COVERED BY THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

Adoption of the minutes from last years AGM were proposed by Martin Hall and seconded by Paul Bright and carried by the meeting.

4) ELECTION OF OFFICIALS FOR YEAR 2007

There were no additional nominations therefore all officials were re-elected en-bloc.

Officials were elected as follows:

*Simon Mutten
Gary Mutten
Maurice Brown*

*Chairman
Secretary and Treasurer
Membership Manager/Publications Manager*

<i>Trevor Roots/Peter Britcliffe</i>	<i>Editorial Managers</i>
<i>Martin Hall</i>	<i>Editorial & Publications assistant</i>
<i>James Holloway</i>	<i>Editorial assistant - sightings</i>
<i>Robert Brown</i>	<i>European Official</i>
<i>Peter Gregory</i>	<i>Visits Official</i>
<i>Bryan King</i>	<i>Publications – European compiler</i>
<i>David Sharpe</i>	<i>Publications assistant – Wagons</i>
<i>Chris James</i>	<i>Publications assistant – European</i>
<i>Carl Watson</i>	<i>Publications assistant</i>
<i>Mark Richards</i>	<i>Website Manager</i>
<i>Ken Short</i>	<i>Publications & website assistant</i>

Proposed by Paul Bright and seconded by Fred Lyon

Pete Waterman as President, Jeff Hall and Peter King as Vice Presidents are honorary positions and are retained automatically.

5) PRESENTATION OF OFFICIALS REPORTS

a) Financial

i) Gary presented the accounts for the year and copies were distributed to the meeting.

The accounts were still in a healthy position with Assets of £9.2k and liabilities of £3.6k with a closing asset value of £5.6k.

The Society made a loss on the year of £800.

This is mainly due to increased costs now that Ords pack and post the magazine in addition to printing it and increased general costs relating to meetings, particularly because of the increased titles the publications team are now involved in and strategic/risk assessment meetings (to be covered later in the meeting.)

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Trevor Roots and seconded by Peter Foster and carried by the meeting.

ii) Subscription rate for 2007 – Gary suggested this item forms part of the financial report as last year rather than a separate item.

Gary reported that membership made a slight profit to financial year end but as the magazine was funded from membership and in light of the increased costs detailed above it was currently making a loss.

The current mandate is that membership should break even so Gary recommended a £1 increase on the annual renewal with the 5 year rate remaining the same until next March.

Proposed by Paul Bright and seconded by Fred Lyon and carried by the meeting.

b) Editorial

Trevor reported on behalf of Peter and himself.

He started by thanking both Ken Pitt who edited the magazine for many years and David Sharpe who stepped in when Ken was unable to continue due to illness.

*Trevor and Peter responded to the magazine advert and 5 magazines in steady changes and improvements are being made.
There was plenty of material and improvements will continue in the coming months.*

Simon expressed his thanks to Trevor and Peter for taking on the role as well as reiterating the Society's thanks to Ken & David.

c) Publication Sales/Production:

i) Simon opened this item prior to Maurice's report to explain to the AGM the relationship and advantages between ICRS and HB publications.

Since 2005 the production of ICRS publications has been carried out by HB publications.

This was done as explained at the time to remove the risk from the Society with its expanding list of titles of being unable to fulfil its plans and obligations as both compiling and producing was very time consuming for volunteers.

The Society receives royalties from HB publications for each publication sold regardless of any discount HB gives at point of sale and we only have to concentrate on compiling and royalties can be open to re-negotiation should it be deemed necessary.

Other advantages which are unique to the partnership is that HB will print copies of any publication as required, there is no minimum print run and no un-saleable stock, i.e. HB print to order large or small print runs including single copies.

Despatch of any number of publications is within days, usually next day which has proved reliable and has enhanced the reputation of both parties.

ICRS looked at credit/debit card sales some years back but it was decided that this was too expensive to administer.

HB publications offer sales AND ICRS membership renewals from card transactions free of charge to the Society.

Simon added that as far as the Society was concerned there was no conflict of interest with Jeff being MD of HB as Jeff's position as Vice President is a non voting position and is in recognition of his services to the Society over the years, indeed as described above we have significant advantages in using HB and the service has been second to none.

ii) Maurice then presented the annual sales/publications report as follows:

Another record year for our publications, when you look back to a few years ago and look at what we produced then compared with now – we have certainly come a long way with quality technical information in the books.

We have an excellent publications team, who are very enthusiastic and feel proud in what they produce.

Publications published by ICRS:

UK Range:

UK Combined Volume
Locomotive D/File
EMU
DMU
Ireland
Active Industrial

Wagon Combined
Engineers
Private Owner
RIV
Air Braked

Preserved:

Steam Locomotives
Wagons
Coaching Stock
Industrial Diesels

Tram & Light Rail

East European
West European
Metro Systems
Preserved Trams & Funicular

Steam History:

LNER
LMSR
GWR
SR
BR
Steam Locomotive Names

Miscellaneous:

Blank Locolog
Name Directory

Non European:

Australian & New Zealand
USA 1

Continental Range:

Germany
France
Switzerland
Iberia
Scandinavia
Hungary
Ireland
Bulgaria

German Private
Benelux
Austria
Italy
Czech
Poland
Balkans
Russia

Ultimate Sighting Files:

Shunters
Diesel
Electric

Carl Watson Updates and compiles the UK Combined Volume, Loco, EMU, DMU and Irish Data Files.

Carl will shortly be taking on the updating of the Ultimate Sighting File series.

David Sharpe Updates the Combined Wagon book and spends many hours going through data that he receives from various sources.

The 2006 Wagon Combined will be the last one he produces. The research and updating will be taken over by Martin Hall.

***Martin Hall** Martin researches and updates all the Continental Range, Non – European, Tram & Light Rail and Preserved Sighting Files and soon to take on the Combined Wagon plus what ever else he can produce from all the data he has kept over the many years of railway interest.*

*We then have the deadly duo from Norwich **Bryan King & Chris James** who compile all the Foreign, Preserved and Tram & Light Rail into Publisher, so they can be published into book form.*

We have a publications team meeting around July to arrange schedules and discuss new books for the following year - with a representative of HB Publications

When you look at it - all these books are done by dedicated officials living all over the country working from their homes – and it all comes together by sending emails with attachments to the various team members and finally ending up with at HB Publications, for printing.

And my role is just to make sure everyone adheres to the schedules so we get them out on time to our customers and shops.

As I said earlier, we have come along way with Inter City Railway Society publications from the early years; we have gone from just entering basic number under the various categories to supplying more technical information into the books – making them a better and more interesting buy.

I feel we are fast becoming the market leader with our publications, we update them every year – when you look around how many publishers who produce foreign books update them on annual basis – in fact some go years.

We have an excellent working relationship with our printers HB Publications Ltd – who I know are dedicated to the ICRS publications cause, which is shown in the high quality of the product produced. This is reflected in our year on year increased sales. HB not only prints the publications but also handles all postal sales and shop distribution

So my thanks go to all members of the publications team for a first class job.

d) Membership:

Maurice presented his annual membership report:

Membership at the end of 2006 stood at 717 - this was slightly down on the previous year's figure of 735. The membership at the moment has dipped to just below the 700 figure.

We have had less membership enquiries this year– which resulted in fewer enthusiasts joining the ICRS.

We have withdrawn our monthly membership advert from the Railway Illustrated as we felt the cost incurred wasn't worth it – as we only gained one member from the advert. Most of the new members came from the web site, Data Files and the hotline.

We obtained our new members from the following sources:-

<i>Web Site</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Data Files</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Ian Allan shops</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Railway Illustrated</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>* HB Publication</i>	
<i>Hot Line</i>	<i>10</i>

Total new members 104

**The HB Publications Hotline is our latest recruitment initiative - when customers telephone to order books; they are informed that if you belonged to ICRS you would have a 20% discount - so some may join purely on the discount alone.*

For information - any ICRS member can now renew their membership by credit or debit card, just telephone me or if you are ordering books via Jeff at HB Publications.

Some of the membership are still slow at renewing, as some of you are aware - if you do not renew after receiving your renewal form, you receive an email or a friendly telephone call from me saying your membership has expired and do you want to stay with us and if you say I can't find my form – NO problem you can renew by card – resolved.

Although some members who said they would be renewing, but didn't – will suddenly wake up perhaps and think I haven't received an ICRS magazine – ah! I didn't renew, must make a quick telephone call to Inter City Membership Department.

So doing follow ups for 2006 we managed to retain 59 members. I would appreciate that if members are not going to renew, they inform me as this saves a lot of time chasing you up.

One of the annoying things I find is members say yes I will be renewing and they don't – I would rather them say NO!

Perhaps the reason members don't renew is the railway scene it self. There seems more class 66s being used on freight - and a lot of enthusiasts are not impressed with them - plus loco hauled passenger trains are being operated by Units. So where do they go? The European scene or Wagons – which is very much an expanding area for the enthusiast – as can be seen by the growing sales of our wagon books.

There is no one specific reason I can say why members do not renew – It can be no visits/ in other societies, no time to read magazine or just cutting costs.

I feel I must mention that we are not a society for running trips – the reason I say this, is sometimes on returned surveys from new members they say I am looking forward to going on some of trips!! I will then telephone them and say we are an information society not a visits one.

The main reasons enthusiasts join ICRS for 2006:-

1 - Publications (Which I believe now are becoming the market leaders)

2 - Modern Traction Cover

3 - 20% Discount

4 - Web Site

5 - Magazine

6 - Find out more about the Society

The Inter City Railway Society, I feel, is still excellent value with the benefits on offer to members – and all this for only £14.00 per year

Every year I say this – you the members are the ones that can help by recruiting new members by talking to fellow enthusiasts and telling them of the benefits of ICRS, membership plus even by having your UK or Wagon combined publications on display, can strike up a conversation by an interested party.

So thanks to all members who have renewed with us.

Gary added that it was always expected that the steep rise in membership over the last few years would plateau out and this is what is happening. Any Society gaining new members at a rate of 100 a year could be pleased, the trick is retention.

Simon said that it was Maurice's hard work in chasing renewals that helped retention and his efforts are much appreciated.

e) Website: www.icrs.org.uk

Mark presented the website report.

This is my first full year as Web Site Manager for the ICRS and the web site has seen some significant changes over the last twelve months. Throughout 2006 changes were made to rationalise the site, to make it more user friendly and improve the 'look and feel' including a complete redesign of the homepage with a new standard colour scheme and font used throughout. In addition, out of date information was removed, downloads were made more widely available to both members and non-members and a new navigation structure was adopted.

The changes ensure that there is more consistency with the magazine and the web site now shares the same logo and font. There is less repetition of content between the web site and magazine with the intention that both should complement each other.

Feedback on the changes has been muted although generally positive comments have been received. Although 2005-2006 has seen significant changes, it is an ongoing process keeping the site as fresh and easy to use as possible.

The number of contributions received for the web site during 2005/2006 has been poor and members are encouraged to submit photos, articles or sightings to keep the web site up to date and of interest to all members.

The ICRS web site remains very popular with average visitor numbers of more than 6,000 per month. February 2006 was a record month for the web site, attracting over 12,000 unique visitors, also seeing the highest weekly and daily number of visitors.

Visitors to the site are mainly from the UK, accounting for approximately 65% of hits, slightly higher than 2004-2005. 73% of all visitors to the site are from within Europe.

I always welcome members' input and feedback on the way they would like to see the web site develop going forward. Your praise and criticisms are important and help improve the site so that it is relevant and interesting to all our members.

f) Advertising:

Gary reported that as mentioned by Maurice the advert in Railways illustrated was not cost effective and has ceased.

Advertising is currently done by website and publications however it was likely that in the future we would target various periodicals with a half or full page advert in conjunction with HB publications.

6) MEMBERS HANDBOOK & RISK ASSESSMENTS

These items were discussed together as the issues are linked.

Simon explained that Officials had discussed risk assessments and the new handbook and as a result some items of the rules and constitution needed amendment/updating and adding to, to reflect the current operation of the Society and this could only be sanctioned at the AGM and as they would form part of the new handbook needed approval to proceed.

Simon went through each proposal line by line and each was unanimously approved by the meeting.

Amendments /additions to the rules:

The revised wording of existing and new passages is as follows, the wording reflects the agreed revision/addition:

151. *Membership is open to all railway enthusiasts from age 12 upwards.*

152. *New members will maintain the date of joining as the annual renewal date. Annual and five yearly plans are available.*

153. In accordance with the data protection act 1998 members are advised that their addresses and membership numbers will be placed on computer file, which will also be programmed to give precise geographical locations. Any member has the right to request deletion of his her information which is kept on the computer file, but any deletion would seriously hamper the efficient working of the Society.

154. The Society will hold a comprehensive insurance for authorised activities that the Society carries out.

155. The Society will not be held liable for any loss or damage to any property of a member and any damage caused by a member will be that member's responsibility.

156. The Society reserves the right to refuse any application for, renewal of membership and retains the right to terminate membership.

157. Any member in breach of Society rules or bringing the Society into disrepute will forfeit their membership.

158. This passage relating to Society trips - deposits and timings is deleted.

159. The Society's name shall not be used for any individual's private gain or purpose whatsoever.

160. This passage relating to the AGM will be moved to the Constitution.

161. This passage relating to passports for European visits is deleted

162. This passage relating to no smoking policy on vehicles used on Society tours is deleted.

Amendments/additions to the constitution:

Passage transferred from Rules to constitution –

An Annual General Meeting will be held to appoint Officers for the next year and to present accounts for the year just ended.

Two months notice will be given in the Society magazine and all members are able to exercise their voting rights and suggest any improvements or changes in the Society.

101. The Society will be known as 'The InterCity Railway Society.

102. The objectives of the Society are to promote the interests of modern Railway enthusiasts by producing a monthly magazine for members, making discounted Society publications available to it's members and maintaining a society website.

103. Membership is open to anyone aged 12 or above. Annual and 5 yearly plans are available. The Society reserves the right to refuse membership application or terminate membership.

104. An Annual General Meeting will be held in the first quarter of each year. Every member may attend the AGM to exercise their right to vote and to examine the accounts.

Existing family membership gives one vote per family. Members attending the AGM must sign their name and membership number on the register and produce identification if requested to do so.

Any three Society Officials or twenty members may call an Extraordinary General meeting by giving the Secretary at least eight weeks notice in writing and setting out the reason(s) for calling the meeting.

The quorum for this Extraordinary General Meeting will be fifty.

105. All Officials will be elected to serve for one year at the AGM and must be over 18 years of age.

The Chairman may appoint replacement Officials mid-term with the approval of the following Officials meeting.

New nominations for Officials positions must be submitted in writing to the Secretary by December the 1st and be proposed by another member.

The positions of Society Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and editor must be appointed from existing Officials to ensure that the holders of these posts are experienced and competent in the administration of Society affairs. Any Official may be removed from office by a vote of 'no confidence' at a Society Officials meeting or Extraordinary General meeting.

106. The Treasurer bears overall responsibility for the upkeep of Society accounts. Other Officials will prepare full accounts of each activity and send these, with appropriate money and or receipts to the Treasurer soon after completion of the activity.

Any member may request a statement of the Societies current financial position and full accounts will be presented for approval at the AGM.

107. If the difference between assets and liabilities becomes less than £1000, the Treasurer must inform the Chairman.

108. A Society Official can only hold one post. If this is unavoidable then adequate risk reduction measures must be put in place until a suitable replacement (for the extra post) is found.

109. In the event of the dissolution of the Society all tangible assets will be sold and any excess funds retained after the discharge of all outstanding liabilities will be donated to the National Railway Museum.

If the subscriptions owed to the membership, is greater than the assets of the Society, then the subscriptions will be refunded pro rata such that the Society breaks even.

110. The Society will risk assess its operations and review the risk assessment at least annually.

111. Changes to the Society's constitution can only be made with the approval of a two-thirds majority of members present at the AGM.

?? Officials will be entitled to claim reasonable expenses in carrying out their duties i.e. travel/consumables etc.

Risk Assessments

Simon explained the background to the risk assessments.

Officials looked at three key areas, Positional i.e. Officials, Financial and Publications.

A scoring calculation was carried out – impact x likelihood.

50 points and over is classed as red and action was needed to minimize.

25-30 points are classed as amber and are to be kept under review.

Below 25 points is classed as green and no action is required.

The options were discussed and an action plan prepared.

A chart showing the assessments was distributed to the meeting.

8) INTERCITY TRANSPORT GROUP PROPOSAL -FEASIBILITY

There had not been much progress on this item during the year and the meeting ratified last year's agreement to explore the possibilities.

This was not authorisation to amalgamate, only to look at the issues.

Any decisions would have to be taken by the membership.

9) SUBSCRIPTION RATE FOR 2006

See item 5a above

10) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR YEAR 2006

Date and venue to be confirmed

11) INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Peter Foster questioned the advantage of whether an active President would be better than an inactive one as Pete waterman had not attended an AGM for some years and had not appeared on the rail scene recently either.

Gary said that Pete's name was well known in railway circles and whilst true he had had a low profile, he had not resigned and there was certainly no disadvantage in having him as President.

It is unclear whether the contact details we have are correct and Simon will try to find out if PW is still receiving the magazine and any correspondence to the address we have but it may not be easy to get a direct line to him.

12) CLOSE OF MEETING

Simon thanked everyone for making the effort to attend and wished all a safe journey home.