

Combino Tram Report

As you are aware meetings have been taking place regarding the **59 Tram Order** in Potsdam Germany for **Swanston Trams / National Express**.

Each depot has its representative

Martin Strebbs Essendon / Union
Sam Grano Brunswick
Ian Quintrell Glenhuntly
Ron Scholten Malvern
Russell Brookes (NEGA) Project Manager

The first meetings were taken up in viewing the blue prints of this latest tram called **Combino**. The Worlds newest tram. After the introduction of the new tram, the four depot participants job was to design the drivers cabin to their Melbourne conditions. The group then had to take the information to their members at each depot

Malvern & Glenhuntly were first to pick up a glaring error with the tram design

No door for the driver to exit or enter for (eg) Point Changing

They were to enter or exit from the first passenger door for this purpose.

Members at each depot said they wanted this door for the drivers, but the group were told "**Not Available**" on this tram. Tense meetings were held as the group had to proceed with the design of the cabin for "signing off" dates.

Then came the point of no return "**No door - No more meetings**"

By not having this door meant the driver had to squeeze their way through a crowded tram to the first passenger door, walk back to the front of the tram, change points, walk back to the first passenger door and squeeze back through the passengers to get into the cabin, to drive on.

By having this door for the driver, the control panel had to be rechanged and the controller handle had to be put on the right hand side.

Meetings were cancelled by the Union until the major fault was corrected.

After a month, a decision from Potsdam came our way in that a door would be fitted. This meant urgent work by all parties now to get the control panels corrected - this meant the left hand panel became the right hand panel & the right hand panel the left. The centre panel remained the same. The controller had to be placed in the right hand position. The sign off dates were so close now so as the tram could be designed and parts ordered for its Melbourne conditions.

Not an easy task for the depot group as we are still looking at photos and blue prints of the Potsdam trams.

The Controller handle is now on the right hand side. The depots prefer a forward movement for forward - back for braking, but this is out of our hands at this point as a

Safety Study by a Government Authority is to be done which will decide which method will be adopted for all transport in Australia using this method.

(This will include Bayside Trains - Hillside Trains & Yarra Trams in Victoria)

The Authority will advise us the only way this controller can be used.

The last meeting was held in Transport House on the 20/7/'00 where we had people from Potsdam and Siemens and a signing off of the control panels was held. After this only minor changers can be made (eg) a change of colours for the push buttons to the panels.

Participants were:-

Russell Brookes (NEGA)

N.Dickinson;

G.Jewson;

T.Schiller;

R.Martin;

P.Kanther; Siemens

Marin Strebbs;

Sam Grano;

Ian Quintrell;

Ron Scholten; Depots

For;

NEGA / Siemens.

20/7/'00