

# THE POWERLINE UPDATE

The Official Newsletter for Powerline Direct and all the latest news concerning Powerline Models Pty Ltd  
www.powerline.com.au

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Firstly I apologise for the delay in getting this issue out. It was decided to hold off publishing the Powerline Update if we could get permission to publish the exclusive. Thus here we are and we have the news of a pending new production. This is exciting news as you will find out when you read on. Powerline Models Pty Ltd still has much up its sleeve with some planned projects going back to 1994 being revisited and reviewed.

## **48 Class in 2004. We will get in FIRST.**

Every time a manufacturer produces a new locomotive or a new livery, or even when they re-do a livery, there are always modellers and enthusiasts that like to test accuracy. Often these people are referred to as rivet counters. Well no doubt our latest run of 48 Class locomotives will not be exempt from this treatment so we thought we would get in first on a few issues.

Firstly all the artworks and applications of liveries are brand new as are the paint colours and batches. This is not a re-do of a past livery or pre-existing artwork. All new artwork, colour matching, fonts and lettering were based from photographs, drawings, paint chips, written records and existing physical evidence. Everything was done from scratch with the core aim of improvement as listed in the next paragraph.

The P232A NSW Candy 48 Class is our first cab of the rank. The livery and application of the paint finish was taken from numerous photographs with two core aims; to be accurate as possible whilst also improving on the last time we had applied the livery and to reproduce a different and improved variation of the livery. Obviously we are doing the mark 3 variation but the livery still had to stand out from those of the past.

So we opted for the Candy livery with the silver roof. According to some discussions we had only 4 48 Class locomotives were painted with the silver roof. They were reported to be 48103, 48107, 48121 and 48125. Just in case anyone brings up 48117, it had a grey roof and was reported to be the only 48 Class to have a grey roof. 4833 was painted with a white roof. It is interesting to note that many in the railways felt that painting the roof a different colour, let alone a light colour, was a waste of time due to the roof quickly going black due to exhaust emissions. Another issue that will no doubt arise is the slight difference in the red used on the Candy locomotives compared to the Red Terror locomotives. Essentially both the Candy and the Red Terror are the same red and the Red Terror is a simplified modification of the Candy livery. Well after looking at many photographs and checking paint samples we did note slight to very minor differences, even with locomotives in the very same photograph. Red is a very sensitive colour which can change from batch to batch, paint job to paint job and is prone to aging and sun fade. With the red we used it is the same for both the Candy and the Red Terror, it is the undercoat that is different which gives the effect of making the red stand out on the Candy locomotives. This we believe is most acceptable and gives a vision that we see in many photographs.

In reference to this production run of the all new P232A NSW Candy 48 Class mark 3, we at Powerline Models Pty Ltd made one error that no one has picked up on. This was not picked up by anyone at any of the exhibitions at which we exhibited the samples, from Brisbane in May to Newcastle in August. This slight but noticeable error has been fixed thanks to a delay in production.

The P233A NSW Red Terror 48 Class is also a completely re-done and completely new set of artworks, which in all is an improvement on that done previously. As many know the Red Terror was a simplified Candy livery, or as some tell me the red with out the candy so its not sweet it's a terror. The initial samples of this came up very well and were well received. The only real issue raised was the mild difference between the Red of the Red Terror and the Red of the Candy. Very little else was commented on and many people look forward to purchasing this model. Yet there too was an error in the Red Terror which no one noticed or made comment on. This also has been fixed.

The error with the Candy and the Red Terror was there for all to see and was not a small error in terms of appearance but in terms of being correct it was a HUGE error. The error was that great we were surprised that no one had noticed or commented on it. Fortunately a delay in production allowed us to fix the issue. Note Buffers were not the error.

The P230B NSW Tuscan 48 Class mark 3 is also all new artwork and a move to improve on past efforts. It was surprising how much effort went into the builders plate and the crest to try and get them right. This livery was included as a special run to build the production numbers up and thus production numbers were going to be less than those of the P232A and P233A. A delay in the actual production date has allowed the production run to be increased.

The P234Y Silverton was a last minute inclusion. This is an all new production livery and is based off locomotives photographed at Parkes. Powerline did not expect to produce this locomotive but a move in production slots and delays enabled this new livery to be slotted into the production plans. We believe this production of the Silverton 48 Class has come up quite well and will prove very popular amongst modellers.

Due to the delay in production we have been able to increase production numbers of all the locomotives and thus we are now not sold out. We anticipated some extra demand and have increased numbers to meet this, as such we will be accepting orders again. So if you would like to purchase one of these models you can now order again either through a Powerline Retailer or Powerline Direct.

Delivery of the 48 Class to stores is expected to take place commence on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2004. This is the official release date for these locomotives. All orders up to that date will be supplied in chronological order, first in first served.

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### **RTR N Scale X Class**

The new N-Scale Freight Australia X-Class did not quite make it onto the shelves as quickly as we had expected. The original expectation was before the start of May 2004 in time for Brisbane, then it was moved back to the beginning of June 2004 and the end result was early July 2004. Not quite what we expected or wanted but better late than never they say.

These locomotives feature a one-piece resin body that was planned, designed and manufactured right here in Australia. The mechanism is a top quality Atlas N scale SD9 mechanism with skew wound 5 pole motor and twin flywheels, which drives on all wheels. The couplers used are Micro Trains ® MAGNE-MATIC® quality couplers. The roof and handrails are brass. The model is hand assembled, painted and finished, each one is different and there are a few variations.

The model is expected to retail for between \$245-\$300 ready to run in stores, Powerline Retailers only. The initial production run will be 100 units in Freight Australia only, finished and ready to run. Please note that since these are being hand finished each model will vary. Supply will be in batches of 5-15 at a time, which will be a few weeks apart.

Those interested in acquiring a model will need to place an order immediately with their local Powerline Retailer or via Powerline Direct. Strictly only 100 models maximum will be done to start with and any future production will depend solely on demand and back orders. Models will only be made to meet existing orders, so to get one there must be an order placed.

Order NOW!

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### **Parts and Accessories**

Arriving along with the 48 Class locomotives in November 2004 will be a small production run of parts and accessories. Some are much anticipated new spares whilst other are long awaited re-runs. The listing of what is to arrive is as follows:

P1238K	48 Class Kadee Adaptors Black
P1238R	48 Class Kadee Adaptors Red
P1238B	48 Class Kadee Adaptors Blue
P1207	81 Class steps/brk wheel &M/uc
P1215	G/BL steps and MU/C
P1209C	1.5 volt globes for 81/G/BL
P1402	81 Class Horns
P1403	G/BL Class Horns
P1290-2	SM/2 PCB for 81/G/BL
P1406	G/BL headlights and light guides
P1407	81 Class headlights and light guides
P1218A-9	Kadess Adaptors G FA –Short
P1218A-10	Kadess Adaptors G FA –Long

Although these items will arrive with the 48 Class locomotive their release will be delayed by a few weeks due to a need to sort, package and label the items ready for sale. I would expect a late November to mid December 2004 release.

### **Project T-Class**

Since becoming a Director of Powerline Models Pty Ltd, Brian Comport has had plans to do various projects. The T-Class project has been with Powerline Models Pty Ltd now for well over two years. It was planned for release in 2003/2004 but set backs, delays and other issues made 2004 impossible.

### **The T-Class**

Well it is now official, Powerline Models Pty Ltd has announced its intension to produce the Victorian T-Class diesel-electric locomotive. Yet the announcement is more then a T-Class as Powerline Models Pty Ltd is planning to produce both the series one, high cab, and the series 3, low nose, locomotives. Yes both the series 2 and the series 3 T-Class locomotives are to be produced by Powerline with release planned for 2005/2006. This is no maybe production, this is a going to do production.

The new locomotives will feature a level of detail, accuracy and finish that people have grown to expect from Powerline as well as a can motor, twin flywheels, all wheel drive and all wheel pick up. This is to be a good quality locomotive at a good value price. The retail price is expected to be below the \$200.00 mark and possibly around \$180 but this wil depend on the Australian dollar and the final costings.

Expressions of interest and orders are now being accepted. It has not been decided which liveries will be done in the first production run but I would expect there to be three with at least VR and V/Line leading the pack. Depending on sales and popularity I have no doubt that over time all possible liveries and loco numbers will be done.

More details and official order forms should be available in the December 2004 issue of the Powerline Update.

### **Marketing of the T-Class**

In the light of current marketing practices by our competitors consideration is being given to a pre-production direct sales initiative but only for the first production run. All Powerline product will still be available through Powerline Retailers.

So for the first time since the early 1990s Powerline Models Pty Ltd is going to make a pre-production offer for the public to purchase the T-Class locomotives directly from Powerline Models Pty Ltd. This offer will entail a special once off price and a cut off date. After that cut off date the deal expires and then the T-class locomotives will only be available from Powerline Retailers. To be eligible for this offer you must place an order with Powerline Models Pty Ltd by a set date, pay a deposit and make full payment by a cut off date. The official order form for this special offer will be out in December 2004 with the Powerline Update. Expressions of interest and orders are being accepted now.

### **BL and G Class**

P216 V/Line G-Class Mk 1 G511 and G513  
P218 NR BL-Class BL27 & BL29

For a change this quickly production run arrived right on time if not a little early. At the time of writing this article a few of each number were still available. Unfortunately once sold out another production run can not be done so easily as the artwork and plates for the V/Line and National Rail liveries have been destroyed and Powerline Models Pty Ltd has no plans to re-do the artwork or have new artwork and plates made. As future plans and project do not allow for production space or the allocation of a budget. Once sold out that is all folks for the G Class mark one V/Line and the original National Rail BL Class. This is absolutely your last opportunity to obtain one of these locomotives, stock is still available of P216 and P218 only.

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### **Proposed range change**

It has been proposed to release existing models in variations or with decals and or details to allow modellers to create their own variations. It is nothing drastic but in the near future you will see undecorated Powerline coaches with decals for you to apply so you can chose the number and type of coach you have. Colour schemes and liveries are being reviewed now for release within 2004. This is a move away from the really RTR models that Powerline saw as its core business as it would appear some of our customers would prefer to individualise many of the items we produce.

First release is expected in November 2004.

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### **SOLD OUT**

Powerline Models Pty Ltd the manufacturer, producer, warehouser, wholesaler and distributor of the Powerline, Freightline and LinkLine range of products announces that the following products are no longer in stock at the warehouse:

P235B 48 Class Mk1 Freight Corp 4806  
P235B 48 Class Mk1 Freight Corp 4862

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These are added to the other lines that are now not available from Powerline Models Pty Ltd including P420, P421, P423, P438S, P602, P603, P682, P684 and P601.

Other lines that are about to run out, down to the last box or two, are P455, P456, P681, P683, P620A, P415A and P416A

## **The Tree Kit Returns**

The very successful L601 Bottle Brush Pine Tree Kit from LinkLine has returned and is in stores now. For around \$2.50 a kit you can make up to 40 trees. All you need to add is a spray can of brown paint, a packet of Woodland Scenic Foilage and a bit of time. Tools required are a piece of wood for a work bench, a nail, a hand drill and some wire cutters. With one packet of L601 and the above listed components and tools you can make up to forty trees from one tree kit. Over the years we have sold out of these kits quite quickly selling thousands.

The L601 Bottle Brush Pine Tree Kit is available at your local Powerline Retailer now. So go make yourself a forest and have fun.

## **DCC**

### **Is It Anymore Realistic?**

The simple answer is NO. There are also claims that using DCC makes your operations more realistic. To this I must also answer NO. DCC to put it simply is another operating system for model trains, a different form of train operation and as some like to tell me it is a more modern approach to the operation of model trains. Many individuals, who prefer to be called proactive, believe that DCC is the new tool with which to attract new people to our great hobby and that the new technology will bring model trains into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2004 I would have to agree with this but will add it has taken over 20 years to get to this point. The concept has been around for over 30 years with GE In America, amongst others, Hornby with the ZERO One and H&M, going broke trying, all having a go.

In real life railways and railroads have different operating systems and control systems and in the world of model trains DCC is just another system. The only aspect of DCC that I could honestly call realistic is that the operation of the locomotives is occurring in the locomotives and we are operating it by remote control.

Do not get me wrong I am not saying DCC is wrong, bad or otherwise but what I am saying is that it is not the be all and end all. Sure manufacturers and producers are jumping onto the DCC band wagon but that does not mean it is it. They are jumping onto the technology band wagon as it is perceived DCC will attract more to the hobby, will make it more universal, value adds to the product and is another good marketing and profit making tool.

My greatest fear is that in the short term the current cost of DCC or perceived technical jargon will scare away starters and beginners from the hobby. Bachmann is attempting to address this with their E-Z DCC System but that system is limited to 10 locomotives.

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### **Adding DCC to an existing layout.**

A number of people have written or spoken about going DCC but fear the need to change or re-wire their existing layout. The simple answer to this is simple. There is no need to re-wire an existing layout with block wiring, just add the DCC command controller like any other controller to your block wiring. For example I have a layout that is controlled by blocks with two cabs using double wiring and double pole-double throw-centre off switches. I simply added another switch which had the top two poles wired to the standard controller, the bottom two pole connected to the DCC Command unit and the centre two poles went to the cab selector switch to the cab B two poles. So when I switch to cab B I can then select either the standard unit, switch up, or the DCC unit, switch down. On this system it does not matter if my DCC system is powered by AC or DC current. Those using block control and common wiring, the process is similar except that the DCC unit must be using DC power only. DCC can be as simple or as complicated as you want it to be and no matter what anyone says I do not believe DCC is all good for the hobby and essential, its all a matter of personal preferences.

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### **Track Curves.**

A recent editorial has sparked a rush of emails and questions regarding track laying, track size, track radius and the realistic operation of locomotives on track. Just to answer a few of the questions out there I have compiled the following list.

Firstly I can openly, and confidently, state that 90% of us do not have the time, money or space to build a model railway to scale with correct scale curves. For example a 4 foot radius curve in HO is roughly a 100 metre radius in real life and real railway radius curves can be in kilometres. To represent 1 kilometre in HO scale is 11.494 metres.

Secondly a need for masses of space and large curves will not attract new enthusiasts and modellers to the hobby. A few firms in the USA noted some disappointing sales on product that required 24 inch or greater radius curves.

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Thirdly, many people in society today do not have the space, recreational and free time, and the money to build or fit large layouts into their homes. This has resulted in growth for N-Scale and Narrow Gauge. In today's society people like product compact, functional and user friendly.

Fourthly, the minimum radius we recommend is 18 inches. The bigger the radius the better off you are but if you need to be compact always aim for 18 inches or greater, never less than 18 inch radius.

Fifthly, this maybe move off to left field but the issue of gradients raised its head as well. We recommend no steeper than 1 in 20 or 5%. The shallower and more subtle the rise the better with many preferring a 1% to 3% gradient.

Lastly, the production of locomotives and rolling stock is a fine balancing act. The issues include cost, level of detail and finish, accuracy, user friendliness, mechanism, what track it will run on and its radius requirements. In terms of track there are three issues to consider, NRMA or NEM standard, what code of track will it run on and what radius curves will it require and run on? Thus there are compromises in production, finish, detail and accuracy.

## **The FUTURE of the Hobby and Model Trains.**

In many facets of our great hobby there is an air of concern and uncertainty. There is a general feeling that the hobby is in decline and in the USA a group of interested parties got together to do something pro-active. The result is the Worlds Greatest hobby campaign. Clubs are running clinics, open days, exhibitions and promotional campaigns.

The recreation, modelling and hobby market has expanded, competition has increased, people have less time and often people also have less space. Model trains, model boats, model cars, model trucks, model planes, military models, role playing games, remote controlled models, video games, adventure games, computers and computer games are all competing against each other. The significance, importance and exposure of rail in Australia has been undermined. Real train shops have disappeared with general model and/or hobby shops taking their place whilst toys stores move away from trains to more profitable cheap and nasty disposable products, that have a short popularity and life span, so that they can maximise profits. On top of this backyarders, internet sites, discounters and mail order businesses with less costs, lower over-heads and often no interest in guarantees or warranties, are hijacking customers.

The future and survival of our great hobby rests on getting new people and young people into the hobby. This can only happen through shops, exhibitions, open days, displays, clinics, promotion, advertising and railway activities. Mail order, internet and backyard businesses do not promote the hobby, they exploit it because it gives them minimal outlay, fewer costs, closed exposure, limited responsibility, the need for little knowledge and just a means to maximise profit and undermine shops. This to some may seem extreme but the future of the hobby rests with exposure, promotion, display and accessibility.

The future of our Hobby is in our hands and its survival and growth depends upon exposure, promotion, advertising, exhibitions, How to clinics, encouragement, access, shops and producers. This means we must support those interested, encourage beginners, teach what we know, keep the hobby simple, support exhibitions, and support our local retail shop that specialises in trains. Failure to do so will see the hobby fall backwards.

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## **Exhibitions**

### **Adelaide**

South Australia's premier model railway exhibition was on again over the Queens Birthday long weekend. This is South Australia's largest trains show and its premier model train exhibition. If you are a South Australian Modeller or if you have an interest in the South Australian Railways, Commonwealth Railways or Australian National then this exhibition is a must visit.

### **Glen Waverley**

Strictly speaking this exhibition was no where near Glen Waverley but it was the Glen Waverley Model Railway Club that was running this exhibition. Due to changes at the World Vision Centre this exhibition moved to the Hungarian Community Centre in Boronia Road Wantirna. The new venue in many ways was an improvement.

### **Stawell**

What can one say about Stawell in July, it is cold. Yet the cold did not stifle this exhibition with a full house of good displays bursting at the seams and good crowds. People came from all over Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia to see this exhibition and I doubt any went away disappointed with their efforts. Although the venue is not grand and the location is a bit out of the way for most, the content, number of displays and variety would rival any other exhibition in Victoria. In fact the origins of most of the exhibits was more diverse than the visitors coming to see it. This show is popular with visitors and exhibitors, so much so that organisers have to turn down some exhibits or slot them in for following year.

### **South Oakleigh Club**

After a lay off of some years due to a fire and some administration delays, the SOC exhibition was on again. This is only a very small and tight exhibition aimed at starters, beginners and children. The main aim to create interest, to encourage everyone to have a go and to attract new people to the hobby. All proceeds raised from the exhibition going to the SOK, Sign Of Kindness, run by the SOC to raise money for children. During the exhibition Bruce Ritchie, Murray Johnstone and Donna demonstrated various aspects of the hobby including track laying, ballasting, doing scenery, making trees and buildings, detailing buildings and building a complete layout. The result over the weekend was a finished and fully scened layout complete with locomotive and rolling stock which was raffled off over the weekend. The layout was finished and operational before the drawing of the prize winner. Also on display were Laurie Green and Grant McAdam showing how to scratch build,

Ted Allan with his GWR layout, Corio Model Railway Club, Adrian Hoad with his mini layouts, Tony from Warrnambool and his G gauge shunting layout, Trainz Simulators as well as a four track U-Drive for the kids.

### **Sunshine/Braybrook.**

This years exhibition had 27 exhibits and 11 being operational layouts. There was something on display to interest everyone, and the cartoons in the program were pretty good too. Held at the Braybrook Secondary College this one of very few train exhibitions to display and promote our great hobby to the western suburbs. So this is the premier model railway exhibition of Melbourne's western suburbs.

### **NEWCASTLE**

This exhibition continues to provide one of the biggest shows in Australia. This is more than a train exhibition, this is a hobby exhibition that fills the Newcastle Entertainment Centre spilling outside to include remote control car competitions and races as well as miniature trains rides on Thomas the Tan Engine and friends. There is definitely something here for everyone with model trains being a major force of the show. A good show for the whole family with ample parking and right next to the railway line. I also found it an excellent forum from which to poach and lure modellers of other forms to our great hobby. Once they saw the light and realised model trains is the original and leading hobby with the greatest variety of facets they were hooked. Well worth the visit and must visit for enthusiasts and families next year. You live in NSW got a car or are you near a railway line and time on weekends then you have no excuse.

### **LIVERPOOL.**

The Australian Model Railway Association of NSW model train exhibitions in Liverpool is a much anticipated and popular exhibition amongst train enthusiasts. Promoted as Australia's Premier Railway Exhibition this is one of the largest shows in Australia and considered a must visit by train enthusiast across Australia. It was at Liverpool this year, 2004, that the very first pre-production samples were seen of the impending release of 48 Class locomotives.

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## **Exhibitions in 2005**

### **Warrnambool**

8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

Archie Graham Centre

Timor Street

Warrnambool

### **Geelong/ Corio**

28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> January 2005

(31<sup>st</sup> Jan as well if Govt Gazettes Holiday)

Centenary Hall

Cox Road

Corio

(next to Water Slide).

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## **Future Exhibitions**

Powerline Models Pty Ltd attends many exhibitions each year in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. Should any club or group running an exhibition in any of these states wish to have Powerline Models Pty Ltd attend their exhibition please feel free to contact Ian Comport. The address is:

Ian Comport

Operations Manager

Powerline Models Pty Ltd

P.O. Box 2100

North Brighton                    3186

We are always looking to attend new and different model railway exhibitions and may be able to assist organisers with additional displays, layouts and stalls.

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## **Powerline Update back issues**

Back issues of the Powerline Update are available on the Internet at the Powerline web site [www.powerline.com.au](http://www.powerline.com.au) or from Powerline Direct at P.O. Box 2100 North Brighton 3187. The cost off the Internet site is free for back issues but mailing out of back issues is becoming costly and we request that a stamped self addressed envelope be sent as well as an additional 50 cent stamp cover costs and speed up delivery.

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### **Articles and comments for submission.**

The Powerline Update is accepting original submissions, articles and write-ups from its readers and those with a common interest.

All writings must be on topics concerning either; model trains, Australian model trains, HO scale model trains, Australian Railways, Powerline model trains, model train modifications, model train detailing, model train layouts, DCC, train and/or railway exhibitions, model train clubs, electrical issues within model trains, and issues of interest within the hobby.

Acceptance and publication of any submission will be solely at the discretion of the Powerline Update. All published submissions will have the author's name recognised. All submissions to be considered for publication must come with a name, address, phone number and contact details.

The Powerline Update will, where possible, check the accuracy or validity of any submission and will not publish any submissions that may be sensitive or questionable. The Powerline Update will also accept no responsibility for the accuracy, reliability, statements made or views and opinions expressed in any submission.

Articles should be at least 80 words and can be anything up to a page. Submissions should be in word or as a hard copy, long articles must be provided in word and as a hard copy.

Submissions can be sent as follows:

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<b>P.O. Box 2100</b>	Fax
<b>East Brighton 3186</b>	<b>(03) 9596-3917</b>

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### **News in Victoria**

West Coast Railways operations from Melbourne to Warrnambool via Geelong is no more.

CFCLA purchases West Coast Railways locomotive fleet.

Freight Australia sale to Pacific National goes through.

Melbourne to Bendigo railway line becomes single track operation.

New faster passenger train operations not living up to expectations.

What is to happen to the WCR steam fleet?

Rowville and Peninsula rail lines??

### **Australia lagging behind**

In terms of passenger trains and passenger train operations, Australia sadly is seen as having third world operations as England, Europe, America, China and Japan leap ahead with high speed passenger trains. At present only Queensland with its Tilt Train is seen as the exception. China for example is spending \$17 Billion up grading 2000 Kilometres of track to run at speeds of at least 200 Km/h and some lines up to operating speeds of 275 Km/h. In the USA you have the Acela and Jet Train attaining operating speeds of 241 km/h, the TGV is expanding across France and operating at 320 km/h, in Japan the MAGLEV is recording speeds of 581 km/h and is expecting operational speed of 500 km/h, I guess we do not need to mention the Japanese Bullit and its improvements and others in Europe are looking at passenger trains operating regularly at speeds of 250 Km/h to 350 km/h. Makes the new Vlocity's 160 km/h insignificant.