

Notes from a meeting of the
Boiler Test Group
Held at the Bedford Holiday Inn Express
On Wednesday 15th September 2010

Present:

Roger Greatrex	Chairman
Tony Wood	Walker Midgley Insurance Brokers
Brian Reading	7 ¼" G Society
Malcolm Armstrong	Midlands Federation
Wally Pearson	Southern Federation
Frank Stephen	NAME

Note taker Mrs M Stephen

Attended from 12.15 pm, Bob Garnett, RSA

The meeting had been moved to a different location within the Hotel, on the first floor. The meeting room was not the usual venue and conditions were not ideal.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10.10 am and welcomed those present.

Apologies were received from Mr John Norman, MSRVS.

Item 1. Discussion document regarding the future arrangements of the boiler test group.

A paper had been circulated outlining thoughts re the future of the group.

The paper was intended to regulate our affairs, who to relate to and what we call ourselves. The original body British Model Engineering Liaison Group, BMELG, is now defunct but the Boiler Test Group, BTG, had continued with its work. It was felt necessary to redefine the role of the group and have the support of the model engineering organisations.

It was not proposed to change the way matters were dealt with but the consensus was the group should remain small in numbers. However the group recognises that there is possibly a wider remit required so that other issues and matters concerning the hobby could be dealt with. This process would involve other people where necessary to advise on particular issues. The BTG members acknowledged that to accomplish the wider remit we need to go back to our respective bodies for their approval and support.

In discussion it was noted that whilst Walker Midgley, representing 7 ¼" G and NAME interests, had attended the meetings, Footman James had not attended. The Southern Federation were asked to request their attendance at future meetings.

It was proposed that the wording of the paper circulated be amended to that shown in Appendix 1. This revised document should then be presented to the respective organisations for comment and possible agreement and approval. The BTG agreed that the consultation be carried out and the results reported back by 31st December 2010.

It was noted that the MSRVS were in fact a society and were represented by the Southern Federation. Roger Greatrex stated that he would like to continue as a member of the group.

The BTG proposed that the title of the group be 'Model Engineering Liaison Group', MELG.

The terms of reference for the MELG could include any aspect regarding the model engineering hobby. The group can then be flexible and cover any issue arising in the future.

The members of the MELG would be:

7 ¼" Gauge Society

Midlands Federation of Model Engineers

Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies

Northern Association of Model Engineers

The Insurance Brokers of the relevant organisations.

Other bodies could apply to join the MELG.

Item 2A. The Fosse Seminar

(Inserted before Item 2 at the request of the Chairman)

Comments had been made by boiler inspectors following the seminar. It was suggested that the practical boiler test procedure had not been carried out in full. For example the sequence of test events and that there was no cold examination demonstrated.

Suggestions regarding a 'tick box' sheet were made as were comments regarding the witness of the test who should be qualified according to the Blue Book.

These matters were noted and the boiler sub committee of NAME would be informed.

Item 2. Boiler Test Code and HSAW Act

(Mr R Garnett joined the meeting)

There was a consensus that a lot of society activities do fall under the HSAW Act and that it was probable that some societies were 'acting commercially'. These were 'Grey Areas' where some clarity was required. However, case law would be required to answer the question re HSAW Act application.

If the HSAW Act applies then the paperwork issued by the hobby bodies could be deemed 'not compliant'. It followed that the owner of any land on which the activity was taking place might be liable to prosecution. Furthermore, a privately owned locomotive operating on a commercial track could also be in breach of the Act.

It would be preferable to assume that the Act did apply unless proved otherwise.

Walker Midgley pointed out that insurance is not a problem on the policies issued by them.

Boiler paperwork should be PSSR compliant, particularly at Rallies, where miniature steam boilers operate.

Where the public are present then it is probable that the HSAW Act applies. Hence PSSR boiler certification should be in place. The only reason the hobby paperwork was not compliant was the requirement of a written scheme of examination, WSOE, for each boiler.

It was also pointed out that on sites where people are 'employed', even for the sale of buns, then the HSAW Act is probably involved.

The meeting was aware that an 'independent' commercial boiler inspection had 'failed' and the inspector is being prosecuted. The question was how far the HSE/RI might follow up on this issue regarding the hobby.

It was once again reiterated that case law would be required to answer some issues and the hobby should preferably assume that legislation applies unless proved otherwise.

The 'problem' with the current hobby paperwork was that there was no written scheme of examination for each boiler. It was suggested that a number of WSOE's could be written and customised to suit the particular type of boiler, copper, steel, locomotive, vertical marine etc. The intention would be to incorporate the test code into the scheme of inspection and make it fit the variables. Note that in NI and Jersey, for example, there is different legislation.

The present documentation would be combined into one sheet per year. There would be additions to the existing paperwork in line with the minimum outlined in the ACOP, but these are straightforward. There is no requirement to change the existing code and test procedure, the Blue Book. The responsibility for issuing the correct WSOE for individual boilers and pressure systems would rest with the boiler inspector.

It was also noted that the Blue Book would not be changed but it should be updated with those amendments previously listed, together with any subsequent notifications.

Comment was made regarding the methods of feeding water into a boiler and their number. There was, at present, no legislation or requirement to have more than two 'working' methods. Should other methods of water feed be present the main two should be identified to the inspector for the purposes of the boiler test.

Mr Bob Garnett suggested working with a member of the BTG to develop the new paperwork required for compliance with PSSR. Mr Tony Wood agreed to assist with this task. All BTG members would be circulated with the proposals.

An issue was raised regarding an ex-member of a society issuing paperwork to commercial miniature railways. All agreed that this is not acceptable and should cease.

Item 3. Southern Federation member correspondence.

Correspondence had been received by the BTG from a Southern Federation member regarding a specific problem with a non CE marked boiler and subsequently a series of some fourteen (14) questions related to boiler testing. The boiler question was considered at length. Based on the documentation provided at the time and information received from other parties, it was confirmed that the statement issued by RSA that the boiler would have to be CE compliant was correct.

With regard to the (14) questions, the BTG considered it not appropriate to answer although the comments have been recorded and noted.

Item 4 Any other business and questions from the representatives

A question regarding the Boiler Design Code was raised. Had there been any progress? The answer was that the requirement for the Design Code had not been dropped but was currently on hold.

The Chairman ascertained that there were no further questions or items to be raised.

The meeting closed at 15.35 pm.

Appendix 1 Boiler Test Group - Future Arrangements

The existence of the Boiler Test Group, BTG, can be traced back to the liaison group set up some years ago between the HSE and various representatives of the model engineering hobby. For reasons known to all, that background is no longer part of the justification for the continued existence of the Group.

The group has worked well over the years and has fulfilled the brief that it was originally given. The “ownership” of the group should now be fully recognised as belonging to the major responsible bodies within the hobby.

For efficient management, the group should still be kept as small as possible.

It is hoped that a recommendation for approval from each of our parent bodies is possible based on the following proposal:

Membership

One representative from each of the following:-

7 ¼” Gauge Society
Midlands Federation of Model Engineers
Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies
Northern Association of Model Engineers
The Insurance Brokers of the relevant organisations.

Other bodies could apply to join the Group. The Group can co-opt other persons to serve for specific periods.

The Chairman of the Group will be appointed from one of the representatives of the responsible bodies. The Group can make arrangements for the attendance of a minute secretary.

The cost of room hire and any postage incurred to be shared equally between the model engineering organisations represented.

There should be an understanding that whilst the model engineering bodies can liaise/correspond with their particular insurance broker, matters that have implications for all bodies in the testing and management of miniature steam boilers should in the first instance be brought to the attention of the Group so that, if appropriate, the opportunity can be given for consultation within the Group.

As the Group is now tending to deal with issues other than the test procedure perhaps the time has come to change the title of the Group to the

Miniature Engineering Liaison Group

The BTG
September 2010