



STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

Welcome to our new *'eMotion Stakeholder Update'*, designed to help keep you – our valued stakeholders – regularly updated on the railway's strategic directions, projects and priorities moving forward.

Firstly, I say 'hello' as the new interim CEO. I was appointed in October by the Emerald Tourist Railway Board (ETRB) and the outgoing Minister for Tourism, the Hon. John Eren MP. My role over the next six months is to provide stability and continuity of our great railway operations. A recruitment process is currently underway by the Board to find a permanent CEO.

(For more information on our Board and governance, please visit our website:

<https://puffingbilly.com.au/about/governance/>)

In this edition of eMotion we have updates on:

- The Lakeside Discovery Centre project including artists impressions,
- The completion of new bus bays at Menzies Creek Station, and
- An update on safety matters.

Plus an invitation to:

- Book in for our 'Behind The Steam' Volunteer Recruitment Day on 17 Feb 2019

As we enter the last few days of what has been a challenging year, I'd like to thank you for your support and look forward to working together in 2019 as we continue to preserve and enhance Puffing Billy Railway for future generations.

Have a safe and enjoyable festive season.

Best regards,

Steve O'Brien
Interim CEO
Puffing Billy Railway



Need To Know

Record passenger numbers – six years running!

For the sixth consecutive year, Puffing Billy has achieved record volumes, carrying 510,128 (+4.7%) passengers in 2017-18, made possible by the generosity of volunteers and our small team of professional staff. The Railway continues to be one of Victoria's fastest growing tourist attractions.

Lakeside Discovery Centre

By Christmas 2020, Puffing Billy Railway will have a new, state-of-the-art \$15.7M Lakeside Discovery Centre at Emerald Lake Park in Emerald. The new Discovery Centre will enhance the Puffing Billy experience by featuring a café, function spaces, significantly upgraded toilet facilities, retail, food and beverage options and interpretation spaces for school groups and families.

The new site will become the hub of the railway and shall be instrumental in opening up the Lakeside to Gembrook section of the train line for use all year round.

Funding Sources

- \$8.2M from the Victorian State Government
- \$5.5M from the Federal Government
- \$2M from Puffing Billy Railway

About the Lakeside Discovery Centre (LDC) Project

Governance Group (PGG)

Under the oversight of the Lakeside Discovery Centre (LDC) Project Governance Group (PGG), this project has now progressed from Design Development into the Construction Documentation phase. The PGG was formed with the introduction of the new Board and comprises of Board members, representatives of government and ETRB management.

This Group plays a critical role in reviewing key deliverables, timelines, costs, statutory requirements and ensuring that the result will deliver to the intent of the Master Plan and strategic goals of the railway. As is appropriate, any key actions and decisions arising from the PGG are then forwarded to the Board for formal ratification.



First internal renders released

Whilst minor design details are still being finalised, we are pleased to release our first artist impressions based on the architect's current plans.

View additional renders at: <https://puffingbilly.com.au/news/discovery-centre/>

Upon viewing the artist's impressions, you will see that externally the Lakeside Discovery Centre is black and shiny like the locomotives that are the signature of the railway, which ultimately recedes into the shadows of the bush. The new Lakeside Discovery Centre is a silhouette backdrop - grounded in place - to the hero that is the Puffing Billy Railway.

This project has been through extensive formal public and internal consultation and the varying views have been taken into account. The contemporary design, whilst notably in contrast to the usual heritage style of the railway, was selected by a broad panel comprising of internal stakeholders and external, independent experts and was determined to be the best design to meet the needs and expectations of the diverse range of stakeholders that enjoy Puffing Billy today. The design and functionality has also been subjected to two separate reviews by the Victorian Design Review Panel of the Victorian Government Architect Office. Their advice was consistent with other architecture, government, design and heritage development specialists in strongly recommending against the creation of a "false heritage" design.

Feedback regarding the Lakeside Discovery Centre is always welcome and can be submitted to LDCfeedback@pbr.org.au

Approvals and next steps

We are also pleased to advise that the formal **Planning Scheme Amendment** process has been completed and approved by the Minister of Planning with the accompanying technical reports now under assessment by Cardinia Shire Council. **Car parking design** has also commenced in co-operation with Council.

As such we remain on track to go to tender in 2019 and to commence construction in the first half of 2019. The goal is to have the Lakeside Discovery Centre open and operational by the end of 2020.

Progress Report



Project Completed: New Bus Bays on School Road, Menzies Creek

New bus bays and a new footpath have been constructed along School Road at Menzies Creek Station. The bays will hold approx. 8 full sized coaches or 10 - 12 minibuses and will enable clear and safe access for locals and visitors to the railway.

We thank the Menzies Creek community and the tour bus operators for their patience during the construction period.



Safety Matters

We continue to ensure high safety standards are applied throughout the entire railway as the safety of all visitors, volunteers, staff and our neighbours is paramount.

With the Summer season now upon us, additional safety measures are taken including:

- Commencing lineside ground fuel reduction from November onwards.
- Operating rail mounted Fire Patrol vehicles behind all trains be they steam or diesel hauled for the duration of the declared fire danger period.
- Fitting all steam locomotives with stainless steel spark arresting grids in the smoke box, and the ash pans located under the locomotive fire boxes are fitted with ash arresting screens which are required to be closed prior to the locomotives commencing operations during the declared Fire Danger period.
- Maintaining close contact with local CFA brigades and other emergency service providers.
- Ensuring trains are diesel hauled and a limited timetable applied on days of Total Fire Ban
- Closing the railway with no staff or volunteers located on the railway's premises when the fire rating is Extreme or Code Red.

I know many of our stakeholders are seeking an update on the possibility of returning the practice of sitting on the side of carriages. We certainly haven't forgotten about it, however until the Railway has finalised our risk and safety assessments to determine if it is practical to implement measures to bring it back, the suspension will remain in place.

Upcoming Events



Behind The Steam 2019: Volunteer Recruitment Event

Sunday 17th February 2019

We're seeking new people to join our volunteer family at Puffing Billy Railway on our FREE open day.

The day will feature ...

- An exclusive 'sneak peek' of the Menzies Creek Museum - which is not open to the public yet. Prospective volunteers will hear all about the exhibits on display and volunteer opportunities at the Museum.
- A locomotive on site (with its' crew) will show how we make some steam and what volunteer opportunities are available around the locomotives.
- Track work and sleeper work on display, including a tamper demonstration as part of our explanation of the volunteer opportunities available in our Way and Works branch.
- A free sausage sizzle and cold drinks will be provided, as well as a chance to win some prizes.

Book now: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/a-day-behind-the-steam-at-puffing-billy-railway-registration-52804301086>

Huffing Hashtags

Celebrating the best images shared by our passengers on Instagram using #puffingbilly

