

A close-up photograph of the front of a green tram. The tram's body is painted a vibrant green. In the upper center, there is a circular headlight with a clear lens and a metal frame. To the left of the headlight, a coiled rope hangs down. Below the headlight, the number '469' is painted in large, bold, yellow characters with a black drop shadow. At the bottom of the frame, a metal bumper or coupling mechanism is visible, showing some signs of wear and rust. The overall lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures and colors of the tram's exterior.

469

Retired
Trams
Strategy

The Retired Trams Strategy will guide how Victoria's fleet of retired trams, including the W-Class, can be protected and repurposed for future use. The strategy has been informed by a comprehensive audit of retired trams currently in storage at the Newport workshops. Overseen by a Stakeholder Reference Group with expertise in transport, heritage, arts, tourism, and local government, the strategy provides recommendations on how these assets can again be enjoyed by the community.

Foreword



Minister for Public Transport
Hon Jacinta Allan

Victoria's retired trams, including the iconic W-Class, are synonymous with Melbourne. Many people have fond memories of riding on these trams, and their distinctive rattle and ding can still be heard on the City Circle, Colonial Tramcar Restaurant and Bendigo's tourist trams.

Over the past 30 years, these older trams have been retired from use and stored away, many of them gathering dust and slowly deteriorating.

VicTrack currently has 237 retired trams stored at the Newport workshops, in varying states of repair. Most are not in a state to be restored for operations as they do not meet modern safety and accessibility requirements.

The trams however are loved by Victorians and have the potential to be re-used and repurposed for other means and again enjoyed by the community. There are some treasures amongst the old trams, including the *Transporting Art* series trams from the 1980s painted by well-known artists including Michael Leunig, the late David Larwill and Lin Onus. Iconic advertising trams provide a vivid trip down memory lane with promotions of products and companies that no longer exist.

The question of what to do with these trams has challenged governments and policy makers over the years.

However there is now a unique opportunity to finally get these iconic trams out of the dust and dark of the workshops and give them a new life where they can be enjoyed by Victorians and visitors alike.

VicTrack has chaired a Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG), comprising people with expertise in transport, heritage, arts, tourism, and local government, which has developed the Retired Trams Strategy to guide future decision making.

The strategy provides recommendations for repurposing these trams, balancing the need to maximise community benefit from the assets, the strong community interest in purchasing a tram, along with the practical challenges of transporting the trams and tram ownership.

Repurposing the trams will help prevent them from falling into further disrepair whilst ensuring that some of the trams will be preserved for a potential future return to service.

In particular, the strategy sets out how 134 of the 237 trams will be offered to the public through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Preference will be given to potential recipients in the non-profit, community, educational, arts and tourism sectors who can demonstrate how community benefit can be maximised through the repurposing of these trams. There will however be trams available for individuals and businesses to purchase.

We will also work with the arts community to re-house the *Transporting Art* trams.

About 25 of the trams in better condition will be set aside for future restoration to be potentially used on Melbourne's City Circle or to be gifted either interstate or overseas.

I am pleased that this strategy now provides an opportunity for these trams to be brought out of the dark and dust of the workshops and given a new life in the community.



Tiriki Onus in front of the tram painted by his father Lin Onus

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Retired tram at the Newport workshop

Introduced in 1923, W-Class trams served Melbourne's public transport needs well, with some still enjoyed by tourists and locals alike via various exhibits and heritage services. A great example is the City Circle tram service, a fleet of W-Class trams servicing tourists on a continuous loop around central Melbourne.

Key points

- 237 trams are currently in storage and a number are retired from active operations each year.
- There is a high level of community interest in the preservation of these trams and a strong appetite to see them brought back to life.
- Enabling the preservation of the City Circle Tram is a priority, as it is a recognised tourism and heritage attraction in Victoria.
- Most trams cannot be used for tourist operations and can be made available for other purposes.

W-Class trams are no longer used on the regular tram network as they are not accessible for people with a disability and do not meet contemporary safety or performance requirements. Other retired trams include the Z-Class trams, which have been superseded with the modernisation of the tram network.

The State Government is committed to maintaining a pipeline of trams for future restoration. Upgrading these retired trams to the standard required for operation on the City Circle network is a costly exercise (approx. \$2 million per tram). The strategy addresses the retention and storage of a number of trams, and spare parts, for that purpose.

Finding a means of preserving the heritage value of the W-Class trams, optimising their tourism potential and providing community benefits through their re-use has been a long-term ambition of the State Government.

Since 2000, there have been a number of reports articulating ideas and exploring options for the future use of the retired trams including: a Tram Heritage Plan Report, a 2003 Transporting Art position report and various disposal strategy papers for the old disused trams in storage. A condition audit was commissioned by Public Transport Victoria in April 2017 and finalised for this re-purposing strategy in October 2017 by VicTrack.

During the past few years, several hundred enquiries from individuals, private businesses, arts, heritage, tourism, philanthropic and community groups have been received regarding potential repurposing of trams.

The retired trams, which range from being in relatively good condition to very poor condition, are currently stored in an unsustainable environment at the Newport workshops, which poses an ongoing risk to their condition. Whilst the community see the trams as an intrinsic part of Victoria's heritage, the trams themselves are not heritage listed.

A comprehensive audit has classified the 237 retired trams according to their type and condition. These include 20 *Transporting Art* trams featuring livery commissioned by well-known artists in the 1980s including Michael Leunig and David Larwill, several advertising trams with historic value and a small number of trams with specific heritage value.

There is a discrete market for trams and tram parts of historic value and the *Transporting Art* trams also have special significance and market interest. There is strong interest in the trams, however there are ongoing maintenance and safety obligations and tram ownership has some risks. The trams contain enclosed asbestos which, as for old housing stock, can become an issue if the trams are damaged or dismantled without due care.



The Retired Trams Stakeholder Reference Group and support staff

The Retired Trams Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) members were appointed by the Minister for Public Transport, Jacinta Allan. The SRG provided critical advice with its key role to inform the development of the strategy.

The membership

- > VicTrack – Campbell A. Rose AM, Chief Executive (Chair)
- > Public Transport Victoria – Giles Dallaway
- > Transport for Victoria – Wendy McMillan
- > Yarra Trams – Nicholas Gindt
- > Visit Victoria – Chris White
- > Creative Victoria – Julie Cotter and Debbie Kiper
- > Heritage Victoria – Martin Zweep
- > Acting Heritage Registrar – Brad Murnane
- > Rail Tram and Bus Union – Phil Altieri and Mark Teesdale
- > Local government representative – Rebecca McKenzie
- > Council of Tramways Museums Australasia – Mal Rowe
- > Community representative – Don Gibson.

Principles

The principles guiding the allocation of retired trams include:

1. To celebrate and recognise the iconic history of the trams
2. To enable the long term preservation and operation of the City Circle service
3. To achieve overall community benefit through any future repurposing
4. To contribute to cultural outcomes
5. To enable those trams capable of preservation to be preserved and maintained for the long term.



Restored tram currently in operation



Artist - Terry Matassoni



Transporting Art tram painted by Terry Matassoni

Approach for re-purposing and allocating trams

There are a total of 237 trams. The condition of each tram, based on the audit, was carefully scrutinised and the trams were categorised accordingly:

- > Operational: 17 for use on the City Circle or for the Colonial Tramcar Restaurant
- > Preservation: 25 in good overall condition, suitable for W8 upgrade or gifting
- > Privately owned: six
- > Historical significance: 11
- > *Transporting Art* Trams: 20 independent of condition
- > Donor and spares: 24 trams of poor and incomplete condition.

The balance of trams (134), whose condition or significance does not lend itself to be preserved in any way, will be offered under an EOI process.

Expression of Interest

An EOI process will be conducted so community organisations, individuals and companies can apply to acquire a retired tram.

The general public and parties who have previously expressed an interest in owning a tram will be invited to participate in the EOI process, which will be supported by a communications strategy and publicised through multiple channels.

An independent panel will be appointed to oversee the EOI process. Each application will be considered on its merits and scored individually by an independent selection panel.

All scoring will be done in an anonymous manner to ensure that each member of the panel has no way of knowing the identity of the applicant for a tram. The criteria and weightings will be published and available to all applicants.

There is a strong preference for community use and/or accessibility to the community. Intended uses for retired trams may include:

- a) Pop up – a relocatable attraction or information booth
- b) Static display – repurposed into a classroom, coffee shop, café, shelter or workshop
- c) Parts feature – tram elements incorporated into a building foyer, wall of a home or retail premises, showcased in a themed coffee shop or café.

For community organisations located in Melbourne and regional Victoria, the cost of transporting the tram and establishing appropriate footings will be covered by VicTrack. When allocated for community use, the tram will be gifted based on the merits of the application.

Commercial and private applicants will have the opportunity to view the tram allocated before taking possession, and have the right of refusal if the tram does not fit the desired purpose. In these cases, the tram will be offered to the next available applicant.

Tourist and international tramway organisations are encouraged to apply for trams under the EOI. However, there is no intention for retired trams to operate on the Melbourne metropolitan network, for safety and access reasons.

Once the EOI process has concluded, and if it is apparent that public interest is insufficient, at the discretion of VicTrack, an additional second round offer may be considered.

Recipients who are planning to have their tram either professionally restored and/or repurposed are encouraged to utilise the services of Bendigo Tramways.

Potential repurposing for commercial purposes





Restored tram currently in operation

Trams for preservation (future use) and upgrading to W8 standard

Trams on the network need to operate at a W8 standard to ensure driver and public safety.

Trams identified by the audit as having the potential for upgrade to a W8 class tram standard and are still of a suitable quality, will be retained.

W7 class trams have been found to be uneconomical to upgrade to W8 class in the past.

These trams, and other trams subsequently used as 'parts donors', will be stripped of the necessary parts to support the continuation of the operational fleet. The remainder will be offered under the EOI process. This ensures a reserve of trams as insurance against the loss of operational trams.

Gifts and future use

Five trams classified as being in good condition, which are neither of historical significance nor art trams, will be retained and stored. This will allow trams to be made operational and gifted diplomatically, as has previously occurred with the United States, New Zealand and Denmark, or used for any other yet to be identified purpose.

An additional nine trams of the same classification will also be stored for any potential future use.

Historical

There is a strong preference for trams with historical significance to be on public display and provide a community benefit. All trams identified as having historical significance will be offered to museums under an EOI process targeting these organisations. Trams will be issued to these organisations based on the merit of the application. This will consider:

- The intended use being restoration to operational status or static display
- Timeframe for restoration
- Ensuring ongoing community access.

For museums located in Melbourne and regional Victoria the cost of transporting the tram will be supported by the State. Any historic tram not requested by an organisation will remain in storage.

Historic trams, particularly W-Class trams, are already well represented in Victoria in six museums. Five of these museums are members of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA) and one museum is a member of the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria (TMSV). There are currently 34 W-Class trams preserved in Melbourne and regional Victoria. These are available to be viewed by the public and have been fully restored to either operable or static condition.

Transporting Art trams

There are a number of *Transporting Art* trams painted between the mid-1980s to early 1990s, some of which are significant art works.

A number of the artists and artists' estates have been contacted to discuss their preferences for the future of the tram and more specifically how the artwork should be preserved. There is a general preference that the artwork is accessible to the community in some way and this will continue to be co-ordinated with Creative Victoria.

There is a strong preference for artwork to be restored for public enjoyment and ideally, the art trams will be stored inside to preserve the artwork. Where an outdoor sculpture park or other external site is preferred, a concrete slab and roof are required for weather protection.

Any funds raised from art tram sales through an auction should be directed back into relevant public transport initiatives.

As part of the Retired Tram Strategy, the possibility of the art work being displayed again on a new tram (via a 'removable wrap' as per current trams for the Melbourne Festival) is being explored by Creative Victoria.

Spare parts

A number of trams were identified in the audit as being only suitable for donor parts. All parts which are salvageable will be warehoused and stored using a catalogue system that supports the maintenance of operational and restored trams that have been distributed for repurposing.

Operational and static

Trams identified as donor parts for operational trams or static display will be stripped and stored. All asbestos will be removed and appropriately disposed of, in accordance with OHS&E requirements. The remainder of the tram will be available via the EOI process if other parts not required have been requested. The final unwanted elements of the tram will be flat packed for disposal.



Fiona Larwill and her sons Henry, 9, and James, 13, with the tram painted by David Larwill in 1986.
Photo: Daniel Pockett, Credit: The Age



Filming inside a repurposed tram at Fitzroy High School



Tram being moved at the Newport workshop



Interview with Principal Linda Mitchell at Fitzroy High School

Expression of Interest

Private individuals, community organisations and companies can apply to acquire a retired tram.

The EOI will be advertised and marketed through mainstream and social media, and other channels.

The public and interested parties who have expressed interest in owning a tram will be invited to participate in the EOI process. The criteria and weightings will be published and available to all applicants.

An independent panel will oversee the EOI process. Each application will be considered on its merits and scored individually by the independent selection panel based on the questions with a final score calculated according to selection criteria and weighting.

Schedule

The EOI process will be open for six weeks. To allow sufficient time and opportunity for all interested parties to apply for a retired tram.

Once the EOI is closed, the panel will score and deliberate for approximately four weeks, with the tram allocation process taking place after that.

EOI panel

The EOI panel will make recommendations of preferred applicants based on selection criteria developed and weighted by the SRG, with oversight by an independent probity advisor.

Chair

An independent chair has been appointed to oversee the evaluation of the EOI process. In identifying a suitable chairperson it was agreed that previous experience in heritage panels, evaluating scored criteria of commercial vs community and sound knowledge of the industry would be required.

David Hunter (previous Board Member for VicTrack) was chosen as the chair given his experience in chairing the Heritage Committee, overseeing the Heritage Panel which established, weighted and rolled out the five-year Heritage Program and chairing the Property and Environment Committee for a number of years.

Panel members

To ensure the best selection outcome from the EOI, the panel will comprise no more than four members with differing skill sets and backgrounds.

Scoring

All scoring will be done in a blind manner to ensure that each member of the panel has no way of knowing the identity of the applicant.

Individual assessment

Scoring will utilise the selection criteria and weightings to assess the responses to the questions by the applicants.

Questions which are of a yes/no nature will receive either 0 or 100% score.

Questions that require a subjective assessment against the criterion will have a sliding scale:

- > 0% - Not satisfied
- > 25% - Somewhat satisfied
- > 50% - Half satisfied
- > 75% - Mostly satisfied
- > 100% - Fully satisfied

Once the individual scores have been completed they are multiplied by the weighting for each criteria. The weighted scores for each criteria are totalled to obtain each individual panel member's score for the application.

Total panel score

Once all the individual panel members complete scoring for all applications, the panel will meet and combine scores to obtain the total score for each application.

Hazardous materials (asbestos)

The W-Class Trams will be gifted or sold in an "as is where is" manner. The W-Class trams have been audited under "Victorian legislation OHS Regulations 2017, Division 5 – Asbestos in the workplace".

Asbestos has been identified in the flooring and electrical control systems. Each tram has an appropriate asbestos register which will be made available to every recipient of a W-Class tram once allocated.

If the recipient of the tram plans to re-purpose the tram, it will be incumbent on them to conduct their own "Division 6 - Demolition and refurbishment where asbestos is present".

Tram allocation

The tram allocation panel will comprise four representatives from VicTrack to assess each successful application.

Successful applicants will be expected to take delivery of the tram by a set date and using the process as agreed. Commercial and private applicants have the opportunity to view the tram allocated before taking possession and have the right of refusal if the tram does not fit the desired purpose. In such cases the tram will be offered to the next available applicant yet to be allocated a tram.

The allocation process will continue until there are either no more applicants or no more trams to allocate.

Probity advisor

The entire EOI process is to be conducted with oversight from an independent probity advisor, who will attend all formal meetings and discussions of the panel and particularly when final scoring and selection is conducted.

The probity advisor should also be present in the discussions involving the allocation of trams to the successful applicants.

How to apply

Anyone interested in applying to receive a tram should visit victrack.com.au/trams





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