



press clip

Solar train on track

New website gives low-down on project

BYRON Bay's world-first solar train now has its own website chock-a-block with information about the innovative new project.

Jeremy Holmes from Byron Bay Railroad Company said: "The Byron Bay train will run from solar generated power from the get-go. We are proud to be able to bring what we think is world first technology to Byron Bay.

"The solar conversion will render the train significantly quieter than it would have run as a diesel service. We will work continuously to ensure that the train impacts as little as possible on the residents living alongside the rail corridor."

Given concerns over noise and running schedules, Mr Holmes encourages the public to visit their new website to find out more about the intended running times.

Concerns were raised on a Facebook site, called Byron Bay Train which claims to "provide a platform for communicating the facts and raising critical questions around the Elements Byron Train which is promoted as environmentally friendly and solar powered."

Mr Holmes said some of the information was incorrect, such as the type of train to be used.

"There is a video circulating which is

supposed to be our train but is in fact a different train operating under vastly different conditions to those we will see in Byron Bay. The portrayal of our train is fundamentally incorrect. This video reflects a train running on dual diesel engines whilst our train will run on solar powered electric engines. The video shows an active level crossing with alarm bells which does not exist in Byron Bay. And further the video shows multiple blasts of the country horn, which will on our train would only be used in emergencies. I sincerely encourage local residents to view the website and call or email us with any questions."

The service is set to start operating in the first half of this year, with tickets costing \$3 one-way.

The website also outlines what work has gone into getting the train 'on track' including: restoring an out of action heritage train, fully repairing three kilometres of railway line, reinvigorating and preserving an out of action rail corridor, providing an affordable public transport solution for locals and visitors, map that the train takes at Byron Bay.

The history of the two carriage set lies at the Chullora Railway

Workshop in 1949, after it had been used to build Beaufort aircraft bombers

during the Second World War.

The workshop innovatively used aluminium aircraft technology from their war efforts to produce high performance yet lightweight trains.

The very last two car set constructed was 638/738 in 1968 which was specifically built with a more powerful Cummins diesel engine for hauling a parcels trailer on the steeply graded Casino to Murwillumbah line.

According to the website these railcars have a long history in this area.

■ For information on the Elements train go to: byronbaytrain.com.au



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SUNNY SIDE UP: Artist rendering of the Byron Bay Railroad Company solar train.

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