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World-first Byron railway to create 19 jobs

THE government department charged with regulating rail safety in Australia has “never seen anything like” the new Byron Bay train – which is one reason why the groundbreaking solar rail project has been delayed for several months.

It was originally hoped the solar-powered train might have its maiden 3km voyage over Easter, but it now won't open until July at the earliest.

Byron Bay Railroad Company development director Jeremy Holmes said while approval was granted two years ago to run the

heritage train as a diesel service, the decision to transform it into the world's

first solar power train was only made in December.

“Changing from diesel to solar requires a modification to the existing accreditation from the National Rail Safety Regulator and the timing for this is out of our control,” Mr Holmes said.

“We understand that we are the first to run a solar train and it's complex new technology.”

Parts for the solar conversion have been shipped in from Italy, South Korea, the US and China to

the Lithgow State Mine Railway where the heritage train has lived for the past 14 years.

The good news is the project is set to employ 19 people, or 7.5 full-time jobs.



DELAYED: The Byron Bay Railroad Company's magical solar train.