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BRANCH LIAISON SECRETARY

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39.01 TREASURERS' GUIDANCE NOTES, VAT AND BRANCH FINANCIAL RETURNS

Bob Ellison, Assistant Treasurer, Branch Finances, has compiled a guidance note for Branch Treasurers and Committee members about the expenses which can be claimed back from the Society and the procedures for reimbursement. The guidelines appear as **APPENDIX A** to this Newsletter. Eventually this information will be incorporated into the Treasurer's section of the Branch Officers' Handbook when it has been finalised.

At the MC meeting on 2nd April, the Society Treasurer, Reg Wood, stated that with the change in VAT to 20% and the increasing vigilance of HM Revenue & Customs in monitoring VAT returns, it is important for the Society to ensure that its VAT liability is under control and reported in a timely manner. The meeting therefore agreed that in future all branches will be asked to submit VAT returns at the end of each quarter, i.e. at the end of January, April, July and October. Bob Ellison will be in contact with branch treasurers about this change.

Training days for branch treasurers are being planned for late September / early October and two locations are being considered, one in London and another at Crewe. Further details will be announced later.

A reminder to treasurers that the returns covering branch finances and sale of publications for the period November 2010 to April 2011 are due shortly from **ALL** branches and should be submitted to Bob by the end of May at the very latest. A revised set of forms for the April returns will be circulated to treasurers by the end of the month.

Can all Branch Chairmen ensure that their branch treasurer and committee members are aware of these points please.

39.02 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society AGM is being held at the Caledonian Hotel, Osborne Road, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne at 16.00 hrs on Saturday the 16th of April. Hotel bookings for the weekend are now closed however all members are welcome at the AGM.

39.03 OFFICERS CONFERENCE 2011

No branch or regional group has come forward to host the 2011 Members Weekend and Officers Conference therefore a one day Officers Conference would be held at The Hallmark Hotel in Derby on Saturday the 15th of October. Further details will be announced in future Newsletters, the RO and on the Society website.

39.04 FUTURE AGM & MEMBERS WEEKENDS

At the MC meeting on the 12th of February it was decided that future Society AGM's would be a one day event similar to the AGM held at Derby in 2010. The Society would then be able to concentrate all its efforts in organising a Members' Weekend in October as has been held in the past, with of course the exception of 2011. John Day, former Society Secretary has agreed to lead a small team currently consisting of Irene Rabbitts and Jacky Wood who will assist branches in organising the Members' Weekends. John will be discussing the future process with Irene and Jacky before contacting members at Branch level with the proposals and the prospect of inviting them to join the team. It may well be that the group is supplemented by branch members from the area the Members' Weekend will be held and thus assistance will rotate on an annual basis. This small team is not going to do all the work in organising the event, however, it is essential that branches or regional groups still come forward and volunteer to host the event. With the added bonus of a team willing to assist with the task of organising future Members' Weekends then the job should not be so onerous. John Day will be at the AGM in Newcastle and will be happy to discuss matters with any interested branches and members.

39.05 SOCIETY INSURANCE (PUBLIC LIABILITY)

If any Branch is required to give details of the Society's public liability insurance cover, for example by the organisers of an exhibition where there will be a branch sales stand, a copy of the current insurance certificate can be obtained from Alan Cooke, Society Secretary. Alan's contact details are in the Branch Officers' Handbook page 4.01.

39.06 SOCIETY INSURANCE (DIGITAL EQUIPMENT)

All digital projectors and associated laptop computers owned by the branches listed below are now covered by the Society's insurance policy. Paragraph **35.13** in Newsletter 35 clearly states what other equipment is covered by the insurance policy.

Bristol & District
Cheltenham
Merseyside, Chester & N. Wales
Northampton
North East
Surrey
West Midlands
Windsor & Maidenhead

If any branches should purchase a digital projector in the future, please follow the procedure described in paragraph **36.08** in Newsletter 36.

39.07 PURCHASE OF DIGITAL PROJECTORS

The Development Sub Committee has been receiving enquiries from branches wishing to purchase a digital projector reflecting the growing use of digital images at branch meetings in place of conventional slides. Due to the pace of technical development of this technology it has been difficult for the DSC to identify suitable equipment together with the need to also have available a suitable laptop computer.

Until recently projectors have been available in the commercial end of the market which do not require the use of a laptop. However this technology has now been applied further down the market to projectors designed to suit school classrooms, clubs and societies and pubs. This means that a branch now does not have to outlay upwards of £750.00 for a low end projector and a laptop but can use its cash to purchase a better quality projector.

The recommended projector is the **SAMSUNG SP-L335** which can be purchased for approx. £500.00 excluding VAT. This projector can be viewed on the Samsung website or on this website:-

www.projectorpoint.co.uk/projectors/Samsung_SP-L335.html where a more comprehensive review is given including pricing. You will see that this projector is specified as "PC Free" All that is required is that your speaker provides his presentation on a USB Memory stick. The memory stick is inserted in the USB port on the projector and the projector will run the presentation and can be controlled via the provided remote control. The presentation can be in the form of a series of JPG files or a Powerpoint file. It is also possible to project document files. To play discs, a CD/DVD player can be connected or a laptop can be connected if required. Please note that many projectors are equipped with a USB port as one of their input options but you will see from the *ProjectorPoint website* that not many have the "PC Free" facility.

The DSC feels that at the moment this is the "Best Buy" for branches seeking to equip themselves with a digital projector. *ProjectorPoint* offers this projector to RCTS branches at a discount of 10% on their advertised price and 'free' next day delivery. All you need to do is send an e-mail to *ProjectorPoint*, for the attention of Chris Wilson identifying yourself as an RCTS branch wishing to take up this offer and copy the e-mail to **publicity@rcts.org.uk**. *ProjectorPoint* will not respond with this offer unless the e-mail is copied to **publicity@rcts.org.uk**

39.08 STATIONERY ITEMS

The following stationery items are available from Bob Ballard. (Contact details are in the Branch Officers Handbook)

A4 Letter headed Paper
Complement Slips
Membership Recruitment Packs
Carrier Bags both large & small
Folded 4-sided promotional leaflets

39.09 OUT OF PRINT PUBLICATION

If any branch have any copies of 'The Great Northern Railway in the East Midlands Volume **No. 2**', could you please bring them along to the AGM at Newcastle on Saturday 16th April and hand them over to Rodney Allen from the East Midlands branch. Please ensure you endorse your next publications return form that these books have been transferred to the East Midlands branch.

39.10 PUBLICATIONS COMMISSION

Branches that sell Society publications are reminded that the branch commission on publication sales is 15% of the then book price, not the cover price. There is no commission on the sales of binders and ties.

39.11 REGIONAL MEETINGS

The annual programme of regional meetings which are held at five locations throughout the country are published on the next page. An MC representative will be in attendance to answer any questions branch officers may want to raise. An updated version of the 2010 Regional Meetings Action Points document plus a draft agenda will be distributed to all branch officers from the individual Regional Meetings chairmen in due course. If you have a 'burning item' for the agenda contact your regional chairman and get that item on the agenda.

Every branch should make every endeavour to attend these meetings. The Society will reimburse branches with reasonable travelling costs for two branch members to attend and a lunch will be provided at each venue. Claims for travelling should be paid out of branch accounts and claimed back from the central funds in the normal way. If any branch has not received details from their Regional Group meeting two weeks before the meeting it is their responsibility to contact the group Chairman.

EMNESH – Wednesday 4th May -- 10.30a.m.
Central Methodist Church, St. Saviour Gate, York YO1 8NQ

NORTHERN HOME COUNTIES – Saturday 7th May. 11.00a.m.
Digswell Village Church Hall, Warren Way, Digswell (Welwyn North)

LONDON & SOUTH – Saturday 4th June. 11.00a.m.
The Wheatsheaf Ember Inn, Woking

NORTH WEST & MIDLANDS – Wednesday 15th June, 12.30p.m.
The Crewe Arms, Nantwich Road, Crewe. CW2 6DN

GREAT WESTERN – Saturday 18th June, 12.00noon
Manvers Street Baptist Chapel, Bath.

39.12 2010 OFFICERS' CONFERENCE MINUTES

The minutes of the Officers' Conference held at Swindon in October 2010 have now been prepared and published. A copy of the minutes is enclosed with this newsletter. For those of you who receive electronic copies of this newsletter please note that the minutes are on another attachment to the e-mail.

Those of you who receive paper copies may also find additional copies enclosed; these are for other branch members who were in attendance at the Officers' Conference. These copies are marked with the delegate's name, could you please distribute them to the appropriate delegate.

39.13 EXHIBITIONS

Bob Ballard has compiled the annual return for 2010 of the income generated for the society from branches attending exhibitions. Exhibitions generate a good source of income and are an invaluable platform to advertise Society membership and publications. The information (**APPENDIX B**) is published for your information.

39.14 FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & MEMBERS WEEKENDS

		DATE	BRANCH	VENUE	HOTEL
2011	MW	15 th October	One Day Officers' Conference Organised by the MC	Derby	Hallmark Hotel
2012	AGM	tba	One Day AGM Organised by the MC	Derby or other Midlands Town	tba
	MW	tba	????		
2013	AGM	tba	One Day AGM Organised by the MC		
	MW	tba	????		

Further details will be published in the RO, Newsletters and on the website nearer the event. The MC is looking for branches or regional groups to volunteer to host future Members Weekend's. If any branch or group is able to host a Members Weekend please contact myself or any member of the Management Committee. **See also paragraph 39.04**

The information contained in this newsletter is for use of RCTS Officers and Members only and should not be communicated outside the society.

W. Gordon Davies,
Branch Liaison Secretary

6th April 2011

APPENDIX A

The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society

Treasurers' Guidance Notes: Society reimbursements

The Society policy is that branches should be self-sufficient as much as possible from a financial point of view. However, there are circumstances in which claims for reimbursement of branch expenses can be made. The purpose of this note is to provide guidance to branch treasurers and committees about the expenses that can be claimed and the procedures involved for reimbursement. Further information can be provided from The Assistant Treasurer (branch finance), if necessary.

Regional Meetings

The Society will reimburse the fees for the hire of the room and for a lunch, drink and reasonable travelling costs for two delegates from each branch. The room hire and lunch expenses should be paid by the organising branch treasurer and the delegate's travelling expenses by their branch treasurer. VAT receipts for the expenditure should be obtained and submitted with the claims. Branch treasurers should then claim reimbursement for these costs from the Society through the half-year returns. If more than two members attend from any one branch, lunch and travelling costs for these additional members should be funded by the branch.

When claiming for fuel costs, a VAT receipt for the fuel used should be obtained to allow the Society to recover the VAT involved. This can be done by filling the car at the start of the journey and again on the return and getting a VAT receipt. Alternatively, a VAT receipt for fuel purchased on or around the date of the claim indicating the proportion used on RCTS business can be submitted.

Officers' Conference

The Society will reimburse the cost of accommodation for one night and reasonable travelling expenses for one branch officer from each branch. Initially, these expenses should be paid by the branch treasurer and then claimed back from the Society through the half-year branch return. A receipt for fuel costs should be obtained in the same way as for Regional meetings.

The Society AGM

The Society does not reimburse costs for branch officers or members to attend the AGM.

Support for branches

The Society is prepared to consider support for branches where their continuance is threatened by financial constraints. If a branch committee considers that such support may be required, then an application should be submitted to the MC via the Branch Liaison Secretary before making a claim.

VAT

VAT can be recovered on many items of branch expenditure including purchase of envelopes, photocopying, ink-jet cartridges, raffle prizes (e.g. a bottle of wine), equipment and hospitality for speakers etc. If branch meetings are held in a hotel or designated meeting rooms, it is likely that VAT can also be recovered from the room hire charge, but probably not from a church hall. A VAT receipt must be obtained for all claims for reimbursement and submitted with the Branch VAT return.

Claims procedure

It is recommended that claims should be made where possible through the branch financial returns. Please remember that to avoid excessive bank charges, resulting payments to branches of less than £25 will be held over by the Society and included in the next financial return. However, this new procedure does not prevent branches from submitting claims for small amounts in a branch return.

Finally, please ensure that all expense claims are legible and, if possible, prepared using a computer. VAT receipts must be originals and not photocopies. Copies should be retained for your own records.

APPENDIX B



2009 / 2010 EXHIBITION RETURN
BASED ON BRANCH RETURNS

BRANCH	Number of Exhibitions Attended		Total cost of stand £	Days	Total Sales £		Society Publications Sold £	
	2010	2009			2010	2009	2010	2009
Bristol *	1	2	35	1	383	425	NIL	126
Cambridge	NIL	NIL						
Cheltenham *	NIL	NIL			NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Chichester *	NIL	NIL						
Croydon & S. London *	5	7	125	8	1321	2019	578	799
East Midlands*	2	3	Nil	4	362	485	225	359
Furness, L&L	?	Nil						
Hitchin *	3	5	159	4	1131	1778	82	684
Humberside *	4	6	463	9	2151	2828	375	378
Ipswich *	8	10	200	8	1042	1295	40	124
Lancs & N. West	NIL	Nil						
Merseyside, C & N.W. *	1	1	46	1	252	438	58	146
Milton Keynes *	3	3	40	3	433	504	98	39
Northampton *	NIL	NIL				NIL		NIL
North East *	13	12	510	24	4540	4333	765	1307
Peterborough *	NIL	NIL						
Scottish *	1	1	Nil	3	661	1426	312	201
Sheffield	NIL	NIL						
South East *	4	4	181	7	1972	1228	200	104
South Essex *	1	NIL	26	1	338	NIL	72	NIL
South Wales *	NIL	NIL						
Solent*	2	2	40	2	297	1088	31	261
Surrey *	4	4	170	7	1323	1002	228	202
Sussex	NIL	Nil						
Thames Valley *	NIL	NIL			NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Watford *	NIL	1						
West of England *	2	2	83	4	1620	1891	87	104
West Midlands *	1	2	122	2	1828	3480	1747	2766
Windsor & Maidenhead*	2	5	112	3	398	689	33	212
West Riding	NIL	NIL						
ALEXANDRA PALACE ++	1	1	158	2	1020	1086	274	332
PETERBOROUGH ++	1	1	184	2	529	503	42	19
TOTALS	59	72	Average cost per day £		21601	28400	5247	8163

Key :- No Returns Received

++ principally attended by Hitchin

W. R. Ballard Exhibitions Officer
2011