



December 2009

<http://ptmops.org>

Operations Schedule
Museum Calendar
Operating Policies & Procedures
Operating Orders
Operations Department Forms

Updated every Sunday!



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Some Points to Remember

I want to thank Bruce Wells for suggesting these changes to this article which appeared in the October 2009 issue of Two Bells.

Operators should remember that notching up to full series *and* then *quickly shutting* off is the desired way to control speed. *Operators should coast as much as possible in their operation of any car. On and off the first point is OK when operating in yards and inching a car, otherwise multiple points are preferred, particularly around loops and wyes.* Operation of the car for long periods while not in full series or full parallel overheats the resistor grids *and wastes* electric power.

How are we doing? Survey results

1. *What do you like about the way the Operations Department is run?* Like PDF schedules on internet; Very business like; Everyone is kept informed; Chain of command is clear; Information updated; Too many white hats at special events, if they are not in charge have them wear a black hat.

2. *If there one thing you could change about the Operations Department, what would it be?* Too much service for County Fair; Concern over loading opposite bound cars at Richfol; Seems to work OK; Less dependence on radios-run on timetable and use radios for emergencies; Require new operators to receive decent training and work as a conductor before receiving decent training; Operators should spend more time becoming acquainted with history of trolley era; Decent duties made more clear; Update schedule more frequently.

3. *Are you satisfied with the system of scheduling your shifts?* A clear, user-friendly system; Much improved.

4. *What improvements would you make in scheduling?* Too many operators scheduled 1 car=2 operators; Don't need the spare guy; Recently the posted schedule seems to lag more than a week behind; Update more often.

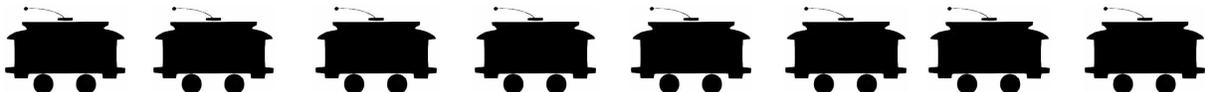
5. *How can we recruit more operators?* Do we need to if we schedule better? More active solicitation by operators when talking to likely candidates; Push Operator for an Hour program; Posters in the Visitor Center; Make Operator for an Hour cheaper; Make operator training shorter and require fewer shifts before promotion to regular operator; Encourage all operators to talk about volunteerism; This is a management issue, wish I had more insight.

6. *What would you change, if anything, in the way we handle our guests during their visit?* Store needs to keep better track of folks before turning them over to operations; I often see visitors look disappointed when told only one car is available for rides; Use one crew and two cars with a docent assigned only to do carbarn tour; Need something for visitors to interact with while waiting for the next tour; Store does not enforce the “late additions” policy; It is fine the way it is.

7. *How can we get more visitors through the TDB?* Offer more times; remove surcharge; Offer a self-guided tour for those who do not want too much information; The only mention of the TDB Tour on the website is buried in admission costs, website needs revision and bolder positioning; Have store and crews tell about TDB to every visitor; Small commercial about TDB on video that plays in the Visitor Center; Have a nice picture of the inside of the TDB, a short description of it and the tour.

8. *How would you add or delete from Operator Requalification?* Looks okay to me; New guys need more time with instructors; Requalify every two years; I have never requalified, so I am not sure; Have student explain emergency stopping on a car; None, there has been much improvement.

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9. *What training would you like to see and when would you like to have it offered?* CPR; Training on consistency of message, especially Loop talks and to fulfill the museum objectives (during requalification); Addition training on emergency procedures (weekends or evenings after 6:30pm); Emergency stopping procedure on all cars (during warm weather).

10. *Comments, questions, reflections?* Continue to fine tune as necessary; Difficult to balance the need for a high level of professionalism on the part of front-line operators with the need of a volunteer organization and the danger of demotivating a scarce resource! I believe the real problem is ensuring that the procedures taught are in fact implemented; County Fair operations have gotten better, but there is still room for improvement. Run on demand during the day, do not let passengers sit in the hot sun so we can be “prototypical” in operation. How about running from the East Site all day long? Run County Fair like an Open House, everyone gets the same thing for the same price, except the TDB Tour which could be offered several times a day by volunteers already working there during the Fair. What better way to showcase our operation than during a week where we actually provide transportation just like the good ole days?; I think we are open way too many days with light loads. Need to examine revenue vs costs and assign a cost value to the volunteer’s time as well. No point in consuming 30 man-hours+overhead+utilities+wear and tear for 10 or 15 visitors.

There were 6 surveys completed by 7 members of the Operations Department, from Instructors (not me) to First Year operators. I have included their thoughts with some minor editing for brevity. In the case of similar answers, I only included it once. We thank you for your input and want you to know you may contact us at anytime with your concerns. Contact us in person or by e-mail.

The Instructors, Educator and Visitor Service Manager will meet to discuss the 2010 Season once this season has concluded.