

Modelling Queensland Railways guards vans

Arthur Hayes models a selection of Queensland Railways guards vans. Photos by the author.



Griffith van No. 627 with one 2nd class compartment. Class GV, in later years this was changed to BGV.

As I am Modelling Queensland Railways (QR) in the 1960's, there is no shortage of guard van types for the layout. Some were part of small contracts or batches, others were converted from surplus carriage stock, and then there were vans built to increase train loads without the need for a vehicle just for accommodating the guard. On top of this, there was the odd departmental van. These models were built using A4 QR plans with basic dimensions and aided with various prototype photos.

The plans were purchased from Ipswich Workshop and Railway Shop some years ago. Today AMRA Qld Library at Zillmere have extensive files of QR rollingstock plans.

All models are HO $3\frac{1}{2}$ (12mm gauge track) and have been scratch built using styrene. Most have a press fit roof to facilitate the painting and fitting out of the interior.

External siding for passenger guards vans was constructed using Evergreen styrene No. 2037 Car siding.

On brake vans converted from goods wagons with a larger boards, Evergreen V-Groove No. 2030, No. 2040 and No. 2050 was used, subject to the board size required.

Plain styrene sheet purchased from Mulford Plastic was used for interior, seats, roof, underframe etc.

Evergreen styrene strip was used to form window and door trim. A platform jig with a straight edge was made from



Griffith van No. 725, has two 2nd class compartments. Classed as a GV, in later years this was changed to BGV. There was also a three-compartment version as well. Modelling with the window down and doors open adds another dimension to the model giving that 'in service' appearance. It also opens up the interior, making it visible.




In some vans, passengers are installed on one side only to give the van a dual role when on the layout. You can't view both sides at the same time!

acrylic sheeting to assist in assembling the various parts. Both sides could be laid out and built at the same time.

Bogies, buffers, brake cylinders, and dynamos are from the Caintode Flats product range. Standard HO scale whisker 158 Kadee couplers were used on all models.

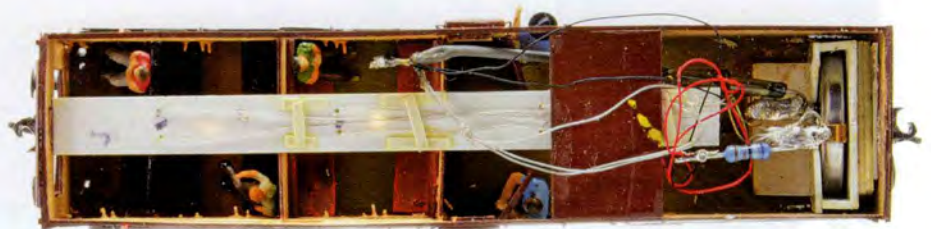
Sheet styrene was used to form the roof. A length of styrene sheet was wrapped around a 57mm (2¼ in.) outside diameter section of steel pipe and held in place using masking tape. The pipe was then placed into a metal cake tin, which is filled with hot water from a jug. After a few minutes, the pipe is then placed into cool water, creating the base for a curved roof. For brake vans with a canvas roof, sections of washed, used tea bags were placed over the styrene base.

For a corrugated iron roof, yoghurt tub foil was run through a homemade rolling mill to replicate the corrugations.

Externally, the vans are painted with the PGC Scale Models range of acrylic lacquer paints. For internal surfaces and for weathering, Vallejo water based acrylic paints were used. 



Composite (1st and 2nd class compartments) CV class, No. 286.



This van is fitted with a passenger compartment and red side lights powered from a button battery. A latching reed switch with a magnet turns the lights on and off when required.



CLV class van (Composite Lavatory Van) No. 1402 for mixed trains with passenger accommodation on branch lines. 20 CLVs were built in 1950/51. In later years, many were modified with the 1st class compartment becoming part of the guard's compartment, making them BLV class vans.



The figures were purchased unpainted from an online auction site, or were found in the scrap box.



CV 18 was built in 1963 using a surplus carriage underframe (coach CL 18 built in 1886).



NB No. 3920 sheep van added extra loading (revenue) to a train and provided accommodation for the drover and guard. The vertical bars were made from Ratio 'N' gauge No. 245 Great Western Railway spear fencing kits.



One of many World War two (WW2) conversions, a box wagon converted into a Guards van, CB class. Some of these vans made it to the end of the wooden wagon era as breakdown vans.



A CB class van. This van is part of the Gladstone breakdown train.



Many small country depots had a stand-alone Breakdown van for quick response to minor, local derailments.



▲ Mostly, I only add brake equipment that is visible when a wagon is standing on the track as the wagon will not be viewed on the layout upside down. However, sometimes I do let my hair down and add a little more detail. Van CLV 1402 has been equipped with battery boxes, dynamo, train and brake pipes to the combined brake cylinder which is coupled to foundation levers and pull rods. Pipes from under the toilets have also been modelled. All vans have a sheet of plumbers' lead tucked in between the underframes to add weight. Coupler boxes have been custom-built to allow the bogies to freely swivel and reduce coupler swing.