

Jan 2023 Operating Status

The layout and freight/passenger design were appreciated and well enjoyed by all, so well done to all involved. It was a large layout (208 freight cars is a record for the dart room) with a long mainline transitioning from front to back via Prairie Grain Terminal which allowed the module backs to be placed almost up to the dart wall increasing aisle width. People loved the Thursday set up and the extra ops day. It provided a much better balance between the amount of work required and the amount of play time.

Set up & Disassembly:

The layout set up was done on Thursday and ran ops on Friday for an extra day. We had an ideal number of volunteers to setup such a large layout. The layout was up and levelled (but not wired) before 8pm and freight planners were out of St. Anthony's by just after 9pm.

The storeroom was closed at about 5:45 pm on Sunday and the last member left about 6:15pm. I think this was the first time that the storeroom was closed before all members had left.

Operations: We had new modules out, we used turntable as an interchange and there was a wide variety of industries and many trains to run. Jim provided more trains, new mixed freight trains and shorter trains that you could run in under an hour David provided many passenger operations and it seemed that more passenger trains were run. The yard never ran out of trains, so if one wanted to run a train, one could without waiting for the train to return.

The yard got full at lunch time as trains returned causing trains to be parked in the passenger tracks. This was exacerbated by the fact that people had left trains in the fiddle yard. Ops got frustrating when the layout would short out constantly. Turns out it was related to a circuit breaker with loose contacts which Paul fixed once the problem was identified.

Overall statistics:

Brandon has compiled our stats the statistics from the 2023-Jan operating session are:

A total of 142 trains were run. Of these, 118 were freight, 0 were MoW, and 24 were passenger trains. Total running time was 207.26 hours. There were 0 RTC runs totalling 0 hours. 32 engineers ran trains. 6 apprentices ran for 6.44 hours.

Stats breakdown:

Freight

Through	20
Freight Local	98
MoW	0

FL10	was run	9 times
FL11	was run	7 times
FL12	was run	6 times
FL13	was run	6 times

Passenger

PT	20
PR	3
PL	1

No. of trains run by Engineers:

4 engineers	ran 1 train
5 engineers	ran 2 trains
9 engineers	ran 3 trains
2 engineers	ran 4 trains
1 engineer	ran 5 trains
2 engineers	ran 6 trains
2 engineers	ran 7 trains
2 engineers	ran 8 trains
2 engineers	ran 9 trains
0 engineer	ran 10 trains
0 engineer	ran 11 trains
1 engineer	ran 12 trains
0 engineer	ran 13 trains
1 engineer	ran 14 trains

Freight Locals

FL1	was run	6 times
FL2	was run	3 times
FL3	was run	5 times
FL4	was run	11 times
FL5	was run	5 times
FL6	was run	2 times
FL7	was run	8 times
FL7B	was run	7 times
FL8	was run	4 times
FL9	was run	10 times

Module Building Program

Liam's module track plan was transferred to his modules (with a mainline crossover to satisfy module standards).

Issues to be addressed

Despite all the kudos and fun, there were some issues that popped up over the weekend which need addressing now. They included:

- Running trains without an apron/train card. If you don't have an apron, you must get one. The purpose of the train card (pass) is to ensure that all know the train has been released and all appropriate actions have been taken to properly log its release.
- There was excessive profanity overheard. The dart room is not the place for frequent profanity, please reserve it for private areas and avoid it in the dart room.
- If you have back problems and need to stretch out, please do so in an uncrowded part of the dart room or use the lunchroom or any other place that doesn't impede the movement of engineers around the layout.
- Newcomers (those who have not yet achieved engineer status) are NOT allowed to run unsupervised. I observed an instance of this situation. Supervision means you follow the trainee around the layout.
- A train was left on the fiddle yard overnight. The fiddle yard only has 3 tracks, and if people leave their trains there, it prevents others from running their through freights. The Exec will discuss time limits.
- Some trains had coupler problems wherein cars would randomly uncouple. The Exec will work on solutions to enforce the coupler standards.
- Unfortunately, and uncharacteristically, we had fewer volunteers for disassembly than setup.
 - It seemed that several people just disappeared shortly after 3 pm. The rule is that if you play you must volunteer at setup or disassembly.
 - It was noticed that this convention was disregarded by at least one person. If this issue was observed again the Exec would take positive action. So, the Exec will discuss how to ensure this convention isn't violated anymore. Since no one gave any reasons in advance, we can assume that they are shirking their responsibilities.
 - **However, if you have a medical/physical limitation or other approved reason, the Exec will waive this requirement so that you can still participate. We don't want to exclude people who aren't capable of this convention**

Conclusion

Overall, it was an excellent operating weekend which was well enjoyed. I had a few people ask about having more extended operating weekends throughout the year. However, it may not be practical as members are usually back at work and school at other times. It worked this time because of the holiday season and people being available. But the Exec can discuss it further to see if any other opportunities are possible.