

17 February 1994

A1 PROJECT SIGNS SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT WITH WILLIAM COOK PLC FOR CASTING OF DRIVING WHEELS

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, the registered charity which is building the new ex-LNER Class A1 Pacific 60163, the first mainline steam locomotive to be built in Britain since 1960, today announced a major sponsorship agreement with Sheffield-based William Cook plc, the world's largest steel foundry group.

Under the agreement, William Cook, whose plants specialise in the design and manufacture of steel castings for all industrial purposes, will make the pattern equipment, cast and machine the new steam locomotive's six 6ft.8in. diameter driving wheels on very advantageous terms. In return, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust will provide the company with appropriate publicity and access as accords a major sponsor of the 50th Class A1 Pacific locomotive. The Trust estimates that the six driving wheels would normally have cost around £60,000.

David Elliott, Technical Director, A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, commented:

"We are delighted to have reached this sponsorship agreement with such a world leading and technologically advanced company as William Cook plc. Thanks to the help that the company is giving us in producing the driving wheels for 60163, we are hopeful that we will have completed the rolling chassis for the next A1 by early next year and that we are on-track for completing the locomotive in 1998"

Andrew Cook, Chairman, William Cook plc added:

"William Cook plc is delighted to be associated with such a splendid project as the one to build a brand new mainline steam locomotive in the 1990s. Our agreement to provide the complete driving wheels on highly advantageous terms is one that is of great benefit to both parties. The finished locomotive will be a tribute both to the dedication and vision of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust and the quality of the products of the William Cook group."

"This is a sponsorship arrangement that will enable us to demonstrate again the variety of uses to which our castings can be put and one that demonstrates that the UK still leads the world in this branch of steel technology. We look forward to working with the Trust on this and other aspects of the locomotive's construction."

David Champion, Chairman and Project Manager, A1 Steam Locomotive Trust, concluded:

"The addition of William Cook plc to our growing list of sponsors, which already includes Macreadys and Doncaster Council, is a major advance for the Trust. With the signing of this agreement to manufacture the driving wheels and the laying of 60163's frames in March, no-one can now doubt that we really mean business. 1994 will see further major announcements as the construction of the locomotive gathers pace. We are now appealing to those who want to be a part of this exciting project to become covenantors, sponsors and volunteers to help us maintain this momentum."