

The International Committee on the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage



Address of Recipient (see list below)

20th May 2020

To whom it may concern:

Achenseebahn

I write today as the President of *The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage* (TICCIH), the primary international organisation concerned with industrial heritage. Among our many activities, we support UNESCO's advisors, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and its work for the World Heritage Committee, especially in relation to World Heritage nominations of sites with industrial components.

Our expertise, advice and extensive international network has for many years embraced railway heritage, and it is clear that Austria is an extremely important player on the international stage, as was exemplified by the inscription of the Semmering Railway onto UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1998. TICCIH was therefore very surprised and hugely disappointed to hear news of the current threat to Achenseebahn.

As you are aware, the Achenseebahn is the oldest rack railway in Austria, and is the oldest to be still operated by steam locomotives in Europe. Its survival as an authentic, operating railway brings great credit to the people of who have preserved it so well over many decades, and should be a source of pride both to the region and to Austria as a whole. It is an extraordinary asset that is of international significance, and of great economic and social value, as well as being a tremendous focus for continuing technical education and traditional skills.

TICCIH therefore believes that allowing the Achenseebahn and its component parts to be sold, broken up and dispersed would represent a serious cultural loss and would cause significant reputational harm at an international level. It would also be an extraordinary waste of a valuable cultural asset. We therefore hope very much that means can be found to apply appropriate legal protection for the Achenseebahn as a single entity, and that it can be preserved and restored for future generations. If you consider there is a way in which TICCIH might help achieve this goal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Miles Oglethorpe', is written over a horizontal line.

Dr Miles Oglethorpe

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