

LCL containers

Thank you for purchasing this kit and I hope you get many hours of enjoyment from it. Chris Pearce (Spirit Design)



Basic history notes: The Victorian Railways in 1952 introduced a new steel container service for its customers, which attracted considerable attention. These units were very similar in design to the steel ones SAR and NSWGR had introduced earlier on their Railways. The units were probably based around overseas practice as NYC (New York Central) pioneered the use of these units in 1921 and by 1922 had standardised the box shape with side strapping and door access at one end with the roof matching their steel boxcars of that era. The LCL (Less than Car Load) was made from rust-resistant 16-gauge steel (probably Corten steel). The unit was 7-foot wide x 8 foot long and 7 foot 9 15/16 inches tall.

The main strength of each unit was 1/4 inch and 1/8 inch steel braces surrounded by the 1/16 inch corrugated sidings. Internally they had provisions for hanging with hooks and tie-off points and the floor was fashioned from steel-framed supports upon which Oregon timber was bolted to. Each unit weighed 19cwt and could carry 5 1/2 tons later being raised to 6 tons.

They were introduced to stop the risk of goods being pilfered and could be padlocked for extra safety. Apart from the benefits of less pilfering, there was also less handling of the consignment, which reduced the chances of goods being broken. The service was such a success that demand soon exceeded supply and the Victorian Railways jointly with NSWGR would end up making a fleet of over 350 ordinary, insulated and grain carrying containers.

To cater for this new trade the Railways originally carried the units in HY wagons similar to GY's until a conversion program had built enough KC's (1954-55) and QC (1959) bogie wagons. The KC's were made from cutdown IY 4 wheel wagons whose bodies had reached the end of their lives but whose underframes were still quite serviceable. When first in service they carried the code of K but soon were recoded KC with an odd numbering group. Numbers in the class were 87-106 and 112-121.

They could be seen around the Victorian Railways system carrying all manner of LCL containers be they the 7ft box, cylindrical types to the 14ft box units. They make a very interesting model as these units with the advertising U vans were the most colourful on the VR system.

By the late 1970s, their importance waned with the adoption of the more modern 20ft, 40ft and 48ft containers and heavier road traffic and as a result, they were progressively scrapped or used as storage around depots.

Equipment & Materials: Files, paints etc.

1. Using a razor saw cut through the lugs holding the container towards the 3D base. Then using a small pair of snips – trim the remaining nubs but be careful as the 3D prints are brittle
2. Using a smooth file profile the rooftop if needed or sand the bottom edge of the container
3. If your unit has a hole in the roof glue 1 of the provided hatches and covers into it. The base of the hatch sits level with the inside of the roofline
4. Using a small drill – drill 4 holes near the corner of each LCL roof corner and insert the brass hooks provided so that the hooks face outwards as in the picture

Paint and decals.

Paint with LCL a golden Yellow similar to Steam Era's diesel yellow. Fit decals to each side of the container as per the photos after briefly soaking them in lukewarm water. The left-hand side Melbourne Sydney decals(Decal sheet) are for the front of the unit and the right-hand side ones are for the back of the LCL.