



## 1036: SFX/VFLX Victorian Railways- V/Line container flat wagon.

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



SFX-25 loaded with pipes. Note the white handbrake identification stripe on the bulkhead. Courtesy Rob O'Regan.

**Basic history notes:** Between 1967-1970 the SFX wagons were built in two distinctive groups, 1-25 and 26-120 of which Newport workshops produced 1-50 and Ballart North engineered the rest, numbers 51-120. When built they had bulkheads and removable side stanchions, as well as the first 25, had lashing rails the length of the wagon and wooden decks, units 26-150 had all-steel decks. Designed as a general all-purpose flat wagon they would be seen all over the system with various loadings such as flat steel pipes and poles. Many different types of machinery loadings were also common because of the many lashing points and pockets they had built into their decks.

With the increase in containerization around the late 1970s, many were fitted with container anchors and had the bulkheads removed. They had a loading capacity of 49 tons. Throughout their lives, they have been made into various niche groups as needed by the railways. SFF plywood traffic, FPX Panelboard traffic for SA, OGF LPG gas traffic

With the conversion to 4-letter coding, the class carried the following: VFLX, VFLY, VFLF, VFMX identities and when skeletonised they received the coding VQLX. See *Spirit Design Kit No. 1035 (3 versions) for this wagon*.

**Equipment & Materials:** Exacto knife (blade no 16 or similar), 800-grit aluminium oxide sandpaper, small flat needle file. Also and 'Hold and Fold' is Ideal for bending the etch or vice with 2 stainless steel rules will help. Fast-drying wood glue like 'Selleys Exterior PVA', 'Selleys Kwik Grip' water-based, a soldering iron or super glue are required for completion (all recommended: usual disclaimers).

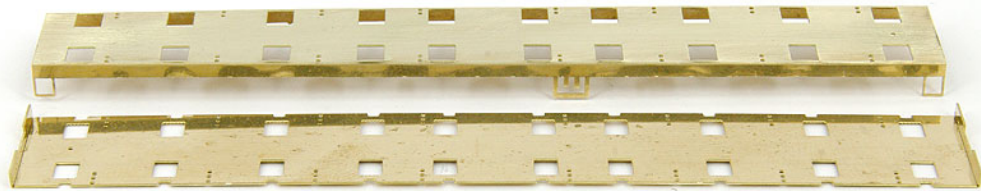
**Soldering notes:** when removing any item from the brass etch with an Exacto knife please take care. Cutting should be done on a self-healing mat using a few score marks rather than the cut once method. Make sure that the brass is clean before soldering by using a brass cleaner like Tarnoff, very fine wet and dry sandpaper or using a fine wire brush in a Dremel to lightly polish the surface front and rear whilst taking care not to damage the etch itself. Depending on your skills, some soldering is required but you could use superglue. It is up to you the modeller to decide your skill level. It is assumed if you use solder, you will also be fluxing the joints with Carr's Red label flux or equivalent.

**Assembly Instructions:** There are a few steps that require close attention and they are highlighted in ***bold and italics!*** Parts referred to in the text are marked (P1), (P2) etc. ***Refer to the photos, which illustrate well the correct positioning of all parts.*** As there are several ways to build this kit, I will leave it up to the builder to decide. The best way is to assemble both the brass component and timber sub-assemblies and paint them before gluing the two units together. The wooden underframe is best glued with a 'PVA' woodworking glue and the assembled frame is glued to the brass decking using 'Selleys Kwik Grip'.

### **The Etch:**

1. Cut the main deck etch free (P1) from the surrounding brass. Place in so that the orientation of the unit matches the parts listing (see diagram below). Bend the end sills up at 90 degrees.
2. Using a 'Hold and Fold' or pliers, gently bend aside up so that the fold line is on the inside of the unit of (P2).
3. Repeat the same for the other side. Make sure that you do not damage the side stirrup steps of the grade control cage and the two valve representations enclosed in the cage. ***All fold lines remain under the wagon when assembled.***

4. **(P2) after bending might have some raised edges around where the chain pocket holes are. Gently sand these flat before step 5.**
5. Using either 'Selleys Kwip Grip' or Superglue, attach **(P2)** to **(P1)** using the dimples marked on the underside of the wagon as a guide. Both dimples should be at the same end as each other. **Take care not to put glue where it will ooze out into the chain pockets (rectangular holes in the deck).**
6. Fold the shunter step footplate at 90 degrees and apply a small dab of solder to the joint. **Note at the top of the shunter steps there are two small tabs (make sure these are still attached when cut free from the etch) that will allow you to poke these through the holes in the decking end sills and either glue or solder into place.**
7. Attach **(P4)** to the end sills matching the cut out notch for the coupler with the decking notch. You may have to relieve a bit of brass out of **(P4)** to make it sit snug against the end sill where the shunter step was just placed.
8. Glue **(P13)** inner bulkhead plate to an end sill in the orientation shown in the parts list.
9. Glue **(P5)** outer bulkhead plate on top of **(P13)**.
10. Glue **(P6)** to **(P5)** using photos as a guide.



Main decking pieces bent up before gluing together.

**The Underframe: Test fit all parts before applying glue.**

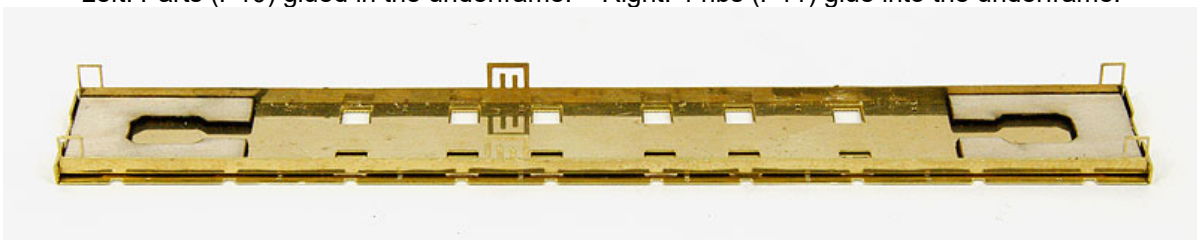
1. Glue both **(P7)** parts back to back, so that the slots for underframe ribs are free of glue.
2. Glue the assembled **(P7)** unit into **(P8)**.
3. Glue **(P10)** into the first and last slots of the underframe sub-assembly.
4. Glue **(P11)** into the remaining 4 slots, there are two extra ribs, one of each type in case you break one.
5. Glue **(P9)** onto the underside of the deck at each end. Use 'Selley's Kwik Grip'
6. Glue the assembled underframe between the 2 **(P9)**'s in the brass etch. Use 'Selley's Kwik Grip'



Left: Parts (P7) - Right: subassembly (P7) and (P8).



Left: Parts (P10) glued in the underframe. – Right: 4 ribs (P11) glue into the underframe.



Parts (P9) are in place awaiting the underframe subassembly.

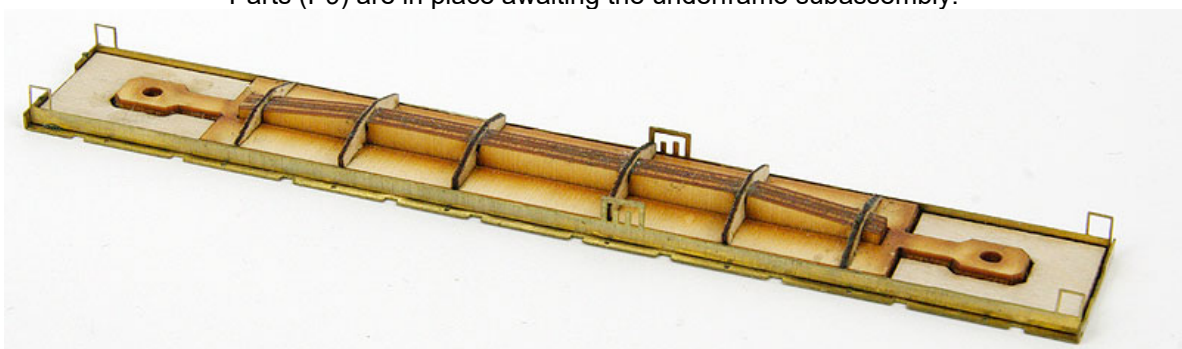


Photo 3. Completed underframe minus bolster spacers and end bulkhead assemblies.

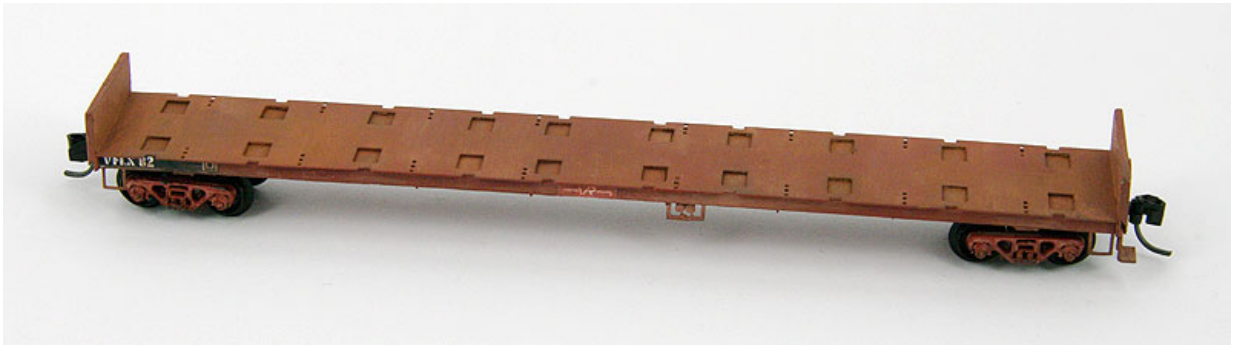


Photo 4. Completed kit with weathering ready for your favourite load.

**Bogies and couplers:** Use any Micro-Trains or other brands of roller bearing bogies, as these are similar to the Victorian Railways bogies - V/line XC/XSC bogies.

Couplers are the best body mounted and the bogies are kept separate. You can trim the couplers from a bogie and adhere them to the deck using 'Selleys Kwik Grip'.

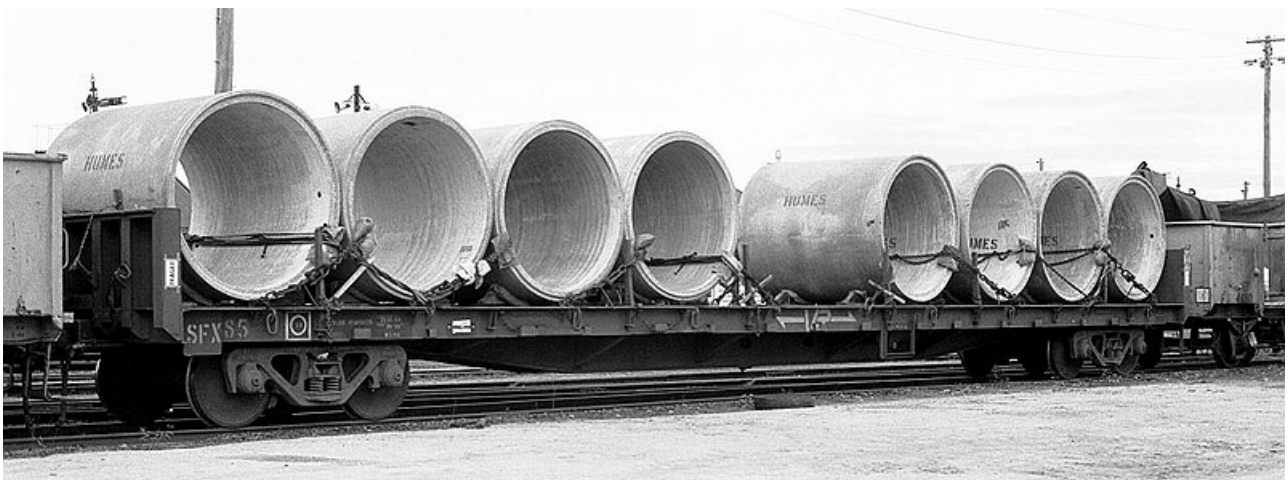
**Painting general:** The completed kit should be *lightly coated* with an etch primer and then given a coat of Steam Era wagon red or equivalent colour from other makers. Paint the side of the bulkhead edge where the handwheel is attached, white, see photo above of SFX 25. Steps, shunter steps, grade control valves and wheel brakes are painted white in the late 1980s.



SFX48 pressed into timber traffic. Photo courtesy Rob O'Regan.

**Decals:** Using the photos as a guide the small white VR goes centrally on the wagon side. The paper SFX or VFLX decals are positioned at the left-hand end of each side, adhere to these with either Microsol Flat or PVA. See photos. Bogie Exchange 'X'ers are placed in the first opening of the bulkhead ends. See Photo above.

**Weathering:** Use pastels or paint to weather the wagon to your taste. Use the photos as a reference.



SFX 85 loaded with Hume pipes. Photo courtesy of Rob O'Regan.

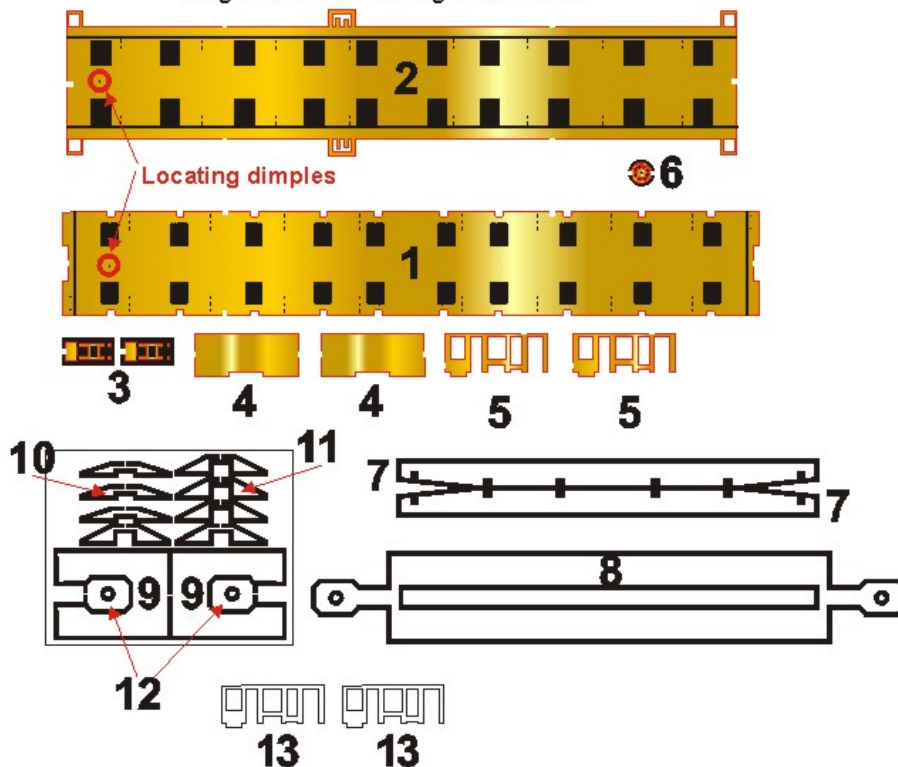


SFX 40 loaded with containers and note the 'T' van in the consist. Photo courtesy of Rob O'Regan



SFX 18 with a load of pipes. Photo courtesy of Rob O'Regan

*Images shown - looking underneath*



For more information and photos see [www.spiritdesign.com.au](http://www.spiritdesign.com.au), Rob O'Regan's website <http://www.robx1.net/> or Mark Bau's <http://www.victorianrailways.net/> or Peter Vincent's <http://www.pjv101.net/index.htm>.

Any alterations, suggestions or queries please contact me.

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