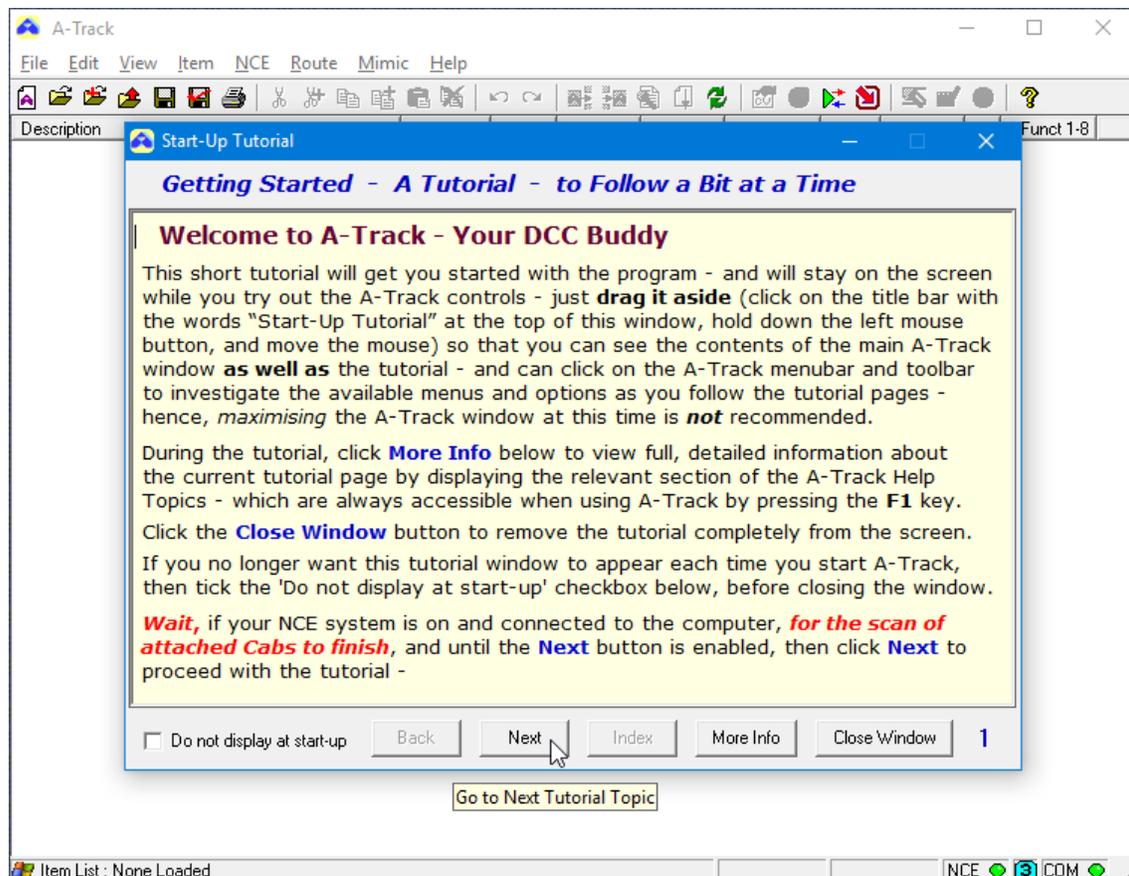# A-TRACK – Your DCC Buddy

Documentation Updates
for Versions 4.4.206 and 4.4.208

A-Track Version 4.3.208 is a minor update to Version 4.4.206 to correct a number of identified bugs in the software. The changes do not affect the Reference Manual, User Guide, and Installation Notes issued for Version 4.4.196. The documentation will be amended to incorporate all details of these minor updates in due course but, for the present, all of the significant changes which have been made are summarised below.

3.6 An Introductory Tutorial (as amended in Version 4.4.206)

Once A-Track has completed its initialisation, the start-up window disappears and will be replaced by a **Tutorial** window which you can use to get a feel for the basic facilities provided by the A-Track program, including how to access the key menus and functions, and which will then guide you through the first steps in using A-Track with your own roster of locomotives.

The opening page of the Tutorial is shown below, with its straightforward controls. Having read the first page, click on the **Next** button to display the next page. Thereafter, you can return to a previous page by clicking the **Back** button, which will then be enabled. For your information, the number of the **current page** is displayed in the bottom righthand corner of the Tutorial window.

If you want further information about the topic described on any Tutorial page then a click on the **More Info** button will open another window showing the appropriate section from the full **A-Track Help Topics** (the contents of the Reference Manual).

You can stop viewing the Tutorial, and remove it from the screen, at any time by clicking on the **Close Window** button.

Although the Tutorial window is always displayed in front of the main A-Track window (and all other open windows), you should drag it to one side, to leave the Tutorial window on the screen where you can see most of the main A-Track window as well the contents of the Tutorial (move the mouse pointer to the window title bar, where the text 'Start-Up Tutorial' is shown, hold down the left mouse button, and move the mouse to drag the window to where you want it to be, then release the mouse button).

As you step through the Tutorial, various A-Track functions and features will be demonstrated, with additional windows being opened as necessary. It is important to note that all of the main A-Track controls, and those in all of the demonstration windows, are fully operational when the Tutorial is running, especially if an NCE Command Station is connected and powered-on (like the Power Cab Version 1.65 system indicated here). Hence, you are free to explore further, at any time, any particular A-Track feature which is of interest to you – which is by far the best way to get to grips with A-Track. You cannot cause any damage to the program or its files by doing so.

However, note that, after branching off on your own from the Tutorial, and changing the state of the loaded A-Track data, it may not be possible for the Tutorial to continue on its intended course when you click the **Next** or **Back** button. A message to this effect will be displayed, inviting you to click **Close Window**, after which you can, if you wish, restart the Tutorial by clicking on **Help** on the A-Track menu bar, followed by **Start-Up Tutorial** (See the menu details in **Section 12.8** of the Reference Manual).

The Start-Up Tutorial window will appear each time you start A-Track unless you click on the '**Do not display at start-up**' checkbox in the bottom-left corner of the window. At any future time after you have done this, the Tutorial window can be displayed once more from the **Help** menu by selecting **Start-Up Tutorial**.

If you want to print out any page shown in the Tutorial window for reference, you can highlight the text by using the normal Windows procedure with the left mouse button, copy the highlighted text (hold down either **Ctrl** (Control) key, then press the **C** key), and paste it into any word processor.

A more comprehensive set of Help pages (the full text of the Reference Manual) can be viewed by clicking on **Help / Help Topics** on the A-Track menu bar, or on the 🕮 icon on the A-Track toolbar, or by pressing the **F1 key** on the keyboard at any time. Using the **F1** key will open the Help Topic most appropriate to the current A-Track activity in progress.
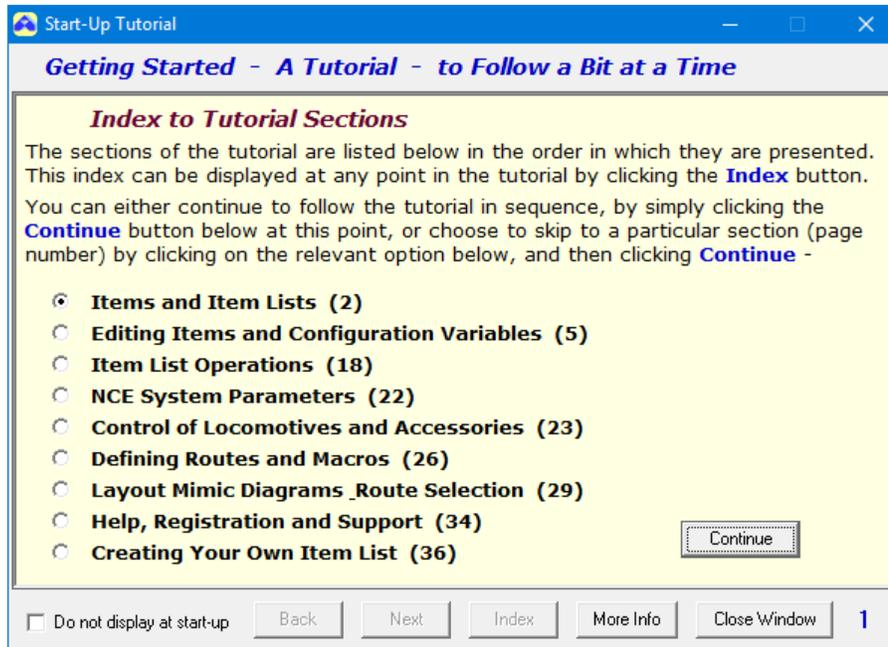
As noted in **Section 3.4** of the Reference Manual, you can also access the Help pages directly (without running the A-Track program) from the Windows Start Menu, by clicking on **Program Files**, selecting **A-Track**, then clicking again on **A-Track Help**.

From the Windows 8 Start Screen, the link to the A-Track Help file is revealed by right-clicking on a blank area of the screen, then on the '**All apps**' option, and then locating the **Help** entry in the **A-Track** group of tiles.

Although the Tutorial has been kept as short as possible, while still covering all of the main A-Track features, you will probably find it difficult to absorb all of the information

presented in a single session. Hence, the Tutorial has been split into nine sections, each covering a single topic. After following one or two sections you can quit the Tutorial, try out the features described for yourself, and then return to the Tutorial at a later time, to pick up at the next section.
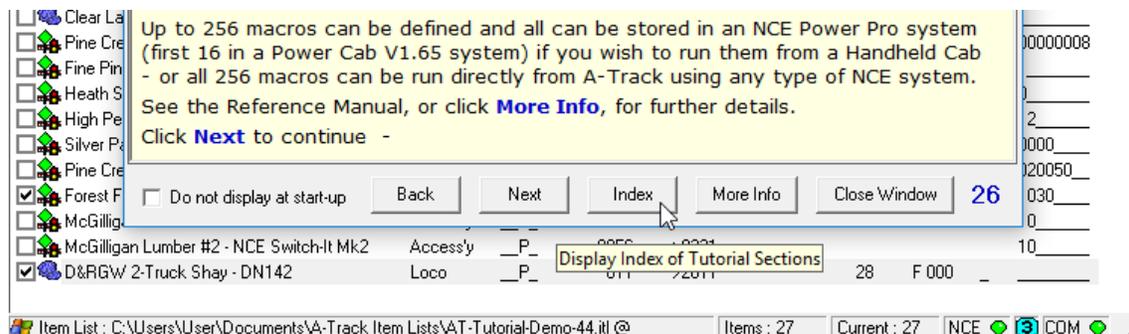
After clicking the **Next** button on the Welcome page, the **Section Index** page will appear, as shown below –

To start viewing the first section of the Tutorial, simply click the **Continue** button or, if you wish to skip forward to a later section, click on the name of that section before clicking **Continue**. The starting page number of each Tutorial section is shown in brackets after the title of the section.

Wait until the necessary part of the Tutorial has been loaded (or reloaded) and then proceed with the Tutorial. You can move forward or back through the complete Tutorial from any selected section by using the **Next** and **Back** buttons.

At any point, a click on the **Index** button will display the Section Index page from which you can skip to any other section –

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Revision History

Reference Manual 12

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Release 4.4.206

Corrected fatal error when attempting to Program On Main Track with PowerPro – due to referencing wrong set of CVs

Identified cause of fatal crash during initial Cab Scan with PowerPro as reported by John Bennett – due to legacy code inadvertently left in program – removed

Added Index to Tutorial to allow quick jumps to any of 9 sections – with minor amendments to text on error pages

Amended Program and Read/Verify functions to disable use of Program Track when Smart Booster connected (following comments from Chris Ruhl) – programming only enabled on Main Track, and Read/Verify completely disabled

Continuous polling of Cab and AIU status suspended during output of commands for Macros, etc. to prevent lockup of communications with the NCE Command Station

Disconnection of PowerCab systems now reported correctly to A-Track, and inconsistencies in recovery procedure removed, so that A-Track operation resumes correctly when connection to the Command Station is restored

Adding a new Accessory Item to the Item List no longer prevents subsequent editing of any Mimic diagrams

Error in placing a new element on a Mimic diagram corrected – which also ensures that the current editing position on a Mimic is preserved when the current edit is complete

Removed final piece of legacy code which, when connecting to a PowerPro system without any Cabs attached, resulted in an immediate A-Track shutdown

Release 4.4.208

The change made in Release 4.4.206 regarding placement of a new element on a Mimic diagram inadvertently disrupted the Mimic Block Editing function described in Section 8.2 of the Reference Manual – and could prevent further editing of the Mimic. This has now been corrected so that placement of Mimic elements and editing of a block of elements can be performed in accordance with the documentation

Selected Program parameters when programming decoders on either the Programming or Main Tracks, or Read/Verify parameters when using the Programming Track, are now restored correctly each time the Program or Read/Verify functions are launched (rather than just when an Edit CVs window is opened)

Continual redrawing of the displayed Route Macro Table page (jumping bottom to top and back) with each Macro executed, when running Macros located near foot of the page, has been eliminated

When using PowerCab for Read/Verify or Program operations, the interruption of power to the track as the Power Cab changes modes causes decoders to reset, and some decoders are not ready to respond to the first programming commands issued. The delay before commands are sent has, therefore, been increased from 1.5 to 3 seconds

The fault reported by Bruce Johnston where, after a Route Macro Table has been loaded, all major menus (File, Edit, View, Item) are left disabled until the Route Macro Table has been closed and then re-displayed, has been corrected

Added improved error handling when checking for A-Track program updates

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