Railtalk Magazine *Xtra*

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Welcome

Welcome to another edition of Railtalk Xtra, the monthly magazine that predominantly features railways outside the UK.

Well I'm just back from my first visit to mainland Europe and what an exciting trip it was. It was especially pleasing to see that we continue into 2018 with plenty of Czech Class 749 action - can they go one forever - well probably not but as far as I can see providing there isn't a major failure, then their future is safe for the time being.

Some news from Poland this month and Orlen KolTrans has leased three of five Griffin locomotives which Newag had originally built for Lotos Kolej under a deal which has been terminated following a dispute about the lack of onboard ETCS equipment. This was a pretty complicated and messy dispute but essentially Newag said it had asked Lotos Kolej to take over the locos without ETCS, and then terminated the deal after this did not happen. It has now bought the locomotives back from ING Lease.

Also in Poland, Infrastructure manager PKP PLK has selected Trakcja PRKil's 99m złoty bid for a design and build contract to reopen Warszawa Główna station. The terminus was originally opened in 1945 on the site of a former freight facility. It is located 1 km west of a previous Warszawa Główna, a through station which had been built in 1938, was destroyed during World War II in 1944 and which is now the site of the Warszawa Śródmieście local station opened

Content

Submissions & Contributions

Railtalk Magazine Xtra, a Magazine written by the Enthusiast for the Enthusiast. So why not join the team. We are always looking for talented Photographers and Writers to join us at Railtalk. Be it though Pictorial Submissions or via a written article featuring an event or Railtour, we greatly appreciate any contributions to the magazine however big or small.

Photographic Contributions
All Photographic contributions should to be sent to us via email, post or via the members section page on our website. Contact addresses are provided to the right or on the next page.

All images ideally should be provided at a resolution of at least 2048px x 1536px at 150dpi.

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Front Cover
BL36PH No. 827 crosses Cypress Creek whilst hauling Tri-Rail train No. P615 07:30 Mangonia Park - Miami Airport.
Laurence Sly

This Page
In Haarlem, Rail Experts locomotive No. 1251 (built in 1952) arrives with the Alps Express from Austria to Leiden on January 21st. The locomotive is a design from Baldwin/Westinghouse. *Erik de Zeeuw*

Next Page
A heritage Class 772 railbus nicknamed 'Ferkeltaxe', No. 772.140 is seen working train No. RB 29881 at Schwarzburg on February 22nd. *Thomas Niederl*

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in 1963. Warszawa Centralna opened as the capital's main station for long distance traffic in 1975, and the following year Warszawa Główna closed to passenger traffic. It later became a railway museum, which is now to be relocated.

This months 'From the UK' is the recent steam gala at the Churnet Valley Railway, featuring two USA Class S160s, and for those who dont know, the United States Army Transportation Corps S160 Class is a class of 2-8-0 Consolidation steam locomotive designed for use in Europe during World War II for heavy freight work. Over 2000 were built and deployed worldwide.

As always thanks for all the excellent photos, please keep sending them in, and remember if you are going on holiday, don't forget to take your camera.

David
Editor

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With Thanks

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed, it really makes our task of putting this magazine together a joy when we see so many great photos.

These issues wouldn't be possible without: Ray Anslow, Brian Battersby, Mark Bearton, Mark Bennett, Tim Blazey, Keith Chapman, Julian Churchill, Nick Clemson, Derek Elston, Mark Enderby, Tim Farmer, Dave Felton, FrontCompVids, Paul Godding, Richard Hargreaves, Keith Hookham, Colin Irwin, John Johnson, Anton Kendall, Jyrki Lastunen, Ken Livermore, Michael Lynam, Peter Marsden, Phil Martin, Denzil Morgan, Thomas Niederl, Peter Norrell, Chris Perkins, Mark Pichowicz, David Pollock, Andy Pratt, Railwaymedia, Alan Rigby, Bryan Roberts, Neil Scarlett, John Sloane, Stephen Simpson, Laurence Sly, Stewart Smith, Steamsounds, Steve Stepney, Mark Torkington, Andrew Wilson and Erik de Zeeuw.

Rail Cargo Group and TransContainer together on track

The Chinese market offers enormous potential for freight transport to and from Europe, so the Rail Cargo Group (RCG) is continuously expanding its long-distance connections. These expansion activities at RCG are now entering the next round. With the signing of a joint memorandum of understanding (MoU), RCG and Russian logistics specialist TransContainer are taking a significant step towards intensifying freight transport operations on the Silk Road route. The aims of this cooperation include implementing regular intermodal transport operations between China and Europe.

RCG and TransContainer combine their expertise

The Rail Cargo Group is already running two round trips per week in cooperation with TransContainer, Russia's largest intermodal container transport and logistics provider. In order to further encourage the development of relationships between China and Europe and increase the frequency of round trips, RCG and TransContainer are not only combining their networks, but also their expertise. Customers benefit from through transport along the entire corridor from the Chinese-Russian border from a single source, shorter shipping times and even better quality. In this process, TransContainer is acting as a partner for rail freight shipments and operator services between Europe and China. The intention is to increase the current two round trips per week to ten weekly round trips by 2020.

Thomas Kargl, Chairman of the Rail Cargo Group, and Peter Baskakov, CEO of TransContainer, signed a memorandum of understanding to this end during the course of the well-attended "Strategic Partnership 1520" International Rail Business Forum in Vienna.
"This step unites two experts in the railway logistics sector, thereby offering our Chinese customers a real and, above all, high-quality alternative to other routes and production methods," says a convinced Thomas Kargl.

"The transit-transport between China and Europe is one of the fastest growing segments in the container market. Regarding the broad gauge, we are convinced that TransContainer´s technologies and competences combined with the know-how and abilities of the Rail Cargo Group in the European rail transport – especially in Central- and South-East Europe – will create an additional impulse. This concerns in particular East-West container transports by rail. Thus, we are able to offer our customers a reliable and competitive service", says Peter Baskakov, CEO of TransContainer.

Doubling of intermodal shipments

At 30 to 40%, annual growth rates on the European corridor are more than impressive. Above all, rail transport operations to and from Asia via the new Silk Road are booming. For this reason, RCG has been constantly expanding its transport activities on the Chinese-European axis since last year, thereby providing end-to-end logistics services between the two continents.
With its growing range of rail logistics services aimed at the Far East and Central Asia, RCG is substantiating its strategy of internationalisation beyond the borders of Europe. The intention in coming years is to expand Euro-Asian relationships, to increase capacities at the borders and thereby double intermodal transport volumes to two million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) by 2025.

PJSC TransContainer

PJSC TransContainer is the leading intermodal container transporter in Russia. The company has a market share of approximately 47% in railbound container traffic and approximately 19% in container terminals in Russia. TransContainer has 42 rail terminals in Russia's largest industrial centres. Furthermore, the company operates the container terminal in Dobra on the Slovakian-Ukrainian border and has a 50% stake in JSC Kedentranservice. In addition, TransContainer is the largest rolling stock provider in Russia, the CIS states and the Baltic countries – with more than 24,000 wagons and 70,000 ISO containers.

Every year there are a few special overnight trains connecting Western Germany and Dutch cities with the Alps in Austria. The 'Alpen Express' connects Leiden Central and Bludenz with carriages going forward to Schladming. This photo shows the Schladming part in Austria running as train No. D13187 at Altenmarkt im Pongau on January 27th. This season the Schladming train is hauled by E10.1309 owned by AKE Eisenbahntouristik. *Thomas Niederl*

RCG increases services on the Balkan route

Block train system links western and central Europe with South-East Europe
Modern dispatcher centre ensures everything runs smoothly

The Rail Cargo Group has been providing a rail logistics link between West European economic centres and countries in Southern and South-East Europe, as well as CIS states, for several years now with its special product, the “Balkan Express”. This handles rail shipments in the form of single wagons, wagon groups or block trains and runs regularly to destinations in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Greece, Turkey and beyond. A dedicated dispatcher centre has now been opened in Budapest in order to further simplify the processing for RCG customers.

Special product targeting South-East Europe

Previously, shipments from the whole of Europe were assembled into trains at numerous hubs, such as Villach, Budapest, Sopron, Štúrovo or Belgrade, for onward transport. Since January 2018, however, shuttle train formation has taken place centrally in Budapest, thereby enabling standardised processing of transport operations from and to the Balkans.
The new Rail Cargo Group dispatcher centre in Budapest guarantees that the shipments run smoothly. Rapid train formation and planning down to the very last detail allow waiting times to be reduced effectively and shipping times to be shortened sustainably by several days. Furthermore, the centre offers professional support with wagon management and add-on services. The range of additional services offered extends from organisation of prior and subsequent carriage through to customs processing in the destination country.

DB Regio Class 928.424 arrives into Salzburg Hbf on a wintry February 16th. *Class47*

SNCB Infrabel Class 62s Nos. 6207 and 6236 are seen stabled at Leuven on February 15th. *Class47*

On February 15th, peak time stock is seen stabled at Schaerbeek .
Class47

Kometa Expres liveried Class 380.017 is seen departing Breclav with a Bratislava bound Eurocity service on February 18th. *Class47*

Class 854.212 stands under the magnificent roof at Praha hl.n. on February 18th having arrived with a service from Ceske Budejovice. *Class47*

ČD Cargo - a specialist in the transport of extraordinary consignments

At the beginning of February, a 20-axle wagon for carrying raw iron was transported from Uničov via Břeclav to the Austrian station at Leoben Donawitz. The wagon was manufactured by the engineering company UNEX as and is intended for the customer Voestalpine Stahl Donawitz GmbH's. This extraordinary consignment was realized in cooperation with Rail Cargo Logistics - Czech Republic sro

The weight of the wagon itself is 146 tons, with the fire insulation weighing more than 200 tons, the diameter of the cylinder is 2,900 millimeters. This type of wagon is nicknamed "torpedo" and is designed to transport liquid iron from a blast furnace to a steelworks for further processing where the torpedo's rotating mechanism turns the container and pours the contents into steel furnaces.

Photo: © CD Cargo

Looking immaculate inside and out following a repaint, Class 749.107 stands at Praha hl.n. on February 18th having arrived with a service from Cercany. *Class47*

Estonia

On February 10th, TEP70.0229 awaits departure from Tallinn with the daily Go Rail train to St Petersburg and Moscow.
Mark Torkington

Finland

Finnish Railways Sr2 VR No. 3238 departs Helsinki on February 11th. *Mark Torkington*

Finnish Railways Sr1 VR No. 3097 pauses with a freight at Rovaniemi on the edge of the Arctic Circle, February 8th. *Mark Torkington*

Finnish Railways Sr1 VR No. 3077 arrives at a rather cold (-12!) Kemi with an IC train to Ouulu on February 9th. *Mark Torkington*

SNCF Transilien BB No. 27322 propels a service into Montparnasse.
John Sloane

SNCF BB No. 22329 awaits departure from Gare du Nord.
John Sloane

ETF No. 1516 (61000 Class) carries out some shunting at Ivry yard.
John Sloane

Alstom to supply 20 additional metros to Île-de-France Mobilités and the RATP

Alstom will supply Île-de-France Mobilités and the RATP with 20 MP14 metros, consisting of 5 cars each, for line 11 of the Paris metro for an amount worth 157 million euros. These options form part of the MP14 contract signed in March 2015 between Alstom and the RATP (mandated by Île-de-France Mobilités) concerning the delivery of up to 217 MP14 metros over 15 years for a total amount of more than 2 billion euros. The first firm part of the contract was for 35 metros. A first option for 20 metros was exercised in December 2016.

The new trains, which will replace the existing metros of Line 11 of the Paris metro, have a brand-new design and unprecedented levels of comfort and security. They will be equipped with new ergonomic seating, screens and dynamic maps for improved passenger information, LED lighting and video protection. The absence of separations between the carriages allows for total circulation inside the metro, thus optimizing passenger flows.

"While the first MP14 metros ordered at the beginning of 2015, in their automatic versions for lines 4 and 14, take shape in our production site at Valenciennes, I am delighted by the renewed confidence of our customers, Île-de-France Mobilités and the RATP," said Jean-Baptiste Eyméoud, President of Alstom in France.

Seven Alstom sites are responsible for designing and producing the MP14 metro: Valenciennes, Le Creusot, Ornans, Villeurbanne, Tarbes, Saint-Ouen and Aix-en-Provence.

The trains will consume 45% less energy than MP59 metros currently running on line 11 of Paris network. Their 100% electric braking system recovers energy and re injects it into the network in the form of electricity, thus limiting the emission of fine particles from the brake pads.

SNCF Transilien EMU No. 20915 approaches Juvisy.
John Sloane

SNCF No. 7247 propels it's TER service past Villeneuve St. Georges towards Paris Bercy. *John Sloane*

SNCF Infra shunter No. 9102, with 9044 at the rear, approaches Juvisy on an infrastructure working. *John Sloane*

Bombardier to Provide Nine Additional Regio 2N Double-Deck Trains to SNCF for Ile-de-France Mobility

Rail technology leader Bombardier Transportation has received an order for nine Regio 2N train sets from the French National Railway Corporation, Société nationale des chemins de fer français Mobilités (SNCF) on behalf of the Greater Paris public transport authority, Ile-de-France Mobilités. This order is valued at approximately 96 million euro ($120 million US), including price escalations based on best faith assessment of assumptions, and is an option contained in a 2010 contract for a maximum of 860 trains signed with SNCF on behalf of the regions.
After launching the Transportation Revolution, Valérie Pécresse, President of the Ile-de-France Region, continues to invest heavily in new, better performing and more comfortable rolling stock, to improve the daily travel conditions for Greater Paris' passengers.

"Bombardier teams based in the North of France are committed to designing reliable, highly automated trains that integrate state-of-the-art technologies to contribute to the smooth operation on the SNCF Transilien network. Our engineers have also developed an in-depth knowledge of the network's special requirements", stated Laurent Bouyer, President of Bombardier Transport France. "Such massive investments from Ile-de-France Mobility towards the purchase of modern, comfortable trains which are praised by passengers, will quickly enhance the quality of daily rail journeys."

The Regio 2N, a spacious double-deck train, was designed to meet the expectations of passengers on lines serving the suburbs a hundred kilometres beyond the center of Paris. It features level accessibility at all stations, uncluttered onboard access platforms enhancing passenger flow to seating areas, air conditioning, a dynamic travel information system and power outlets for mobile devices. Also, it offers a lively interior color scheme to brighten up daily commutes.

With these extra nine train sets, a total of 134 Regio 2N will be rolled out on the SNCF Transilien network on lines R, N and D. The first trains were commissioned in December 2017 on line R.

Ile-de-France Mobilités continues to consolidate its fleet of Francilien trains, a tailor-made train for the region. With a high level of performance, it clearly improves the punctuality of the lines where it operates. So far, Ile-de-France Mobilités has ordered a total of 277 Francilien trains for lines H, J, K, L & P.
To date, ten French regions have ordered a total of 382 BOMBARDIER OMNEO/Regio 2N trains
The OMNEO platform offers trains for suburban, regional and intercity services. Orders per region are as follows: 72 OMNEO Premium intercity trains for Centre-Val de Loire (32) and Normandy (40); and 310 Regio 2N for Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (40), Brittany (26), Centre-Val de Loire (14), Hauts-de-France (25), Ile-de-France (134), Nouvelle Aquitaine (24), Occitanie (18), Pays-de-la-Loire (13), Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (16).

A Chemnitz tram passes Theaterplatz.
Steamsounds

Alstom wins the Europe 1 Mobility Trophy for its hydrogen train

Alstom has been awarded the Mobility Trophy for Coradia iLint, its hydrogen train, in the context of the French leading radio Europe 1 Trophies of the Future.

“Alstom is very proud to be awarded this trophy. We strongly believe in the future of hydrogen trains, a technology that aims to replace the diesel trains in circulation on European networks. Coradia iLint is the outcome of five years of development by our engineers in France and Germany,” said Thierry Best, Chief Operating Officer of Alstom, at the award ceremony.

Coradia iLint is the world’s first low-floor passenger train powered by a hydrogen fuel cell, which produces electrical power for traction. This zero-emission train is silent and only emits steam and condensed water. Coradia iLint is special for its combination of different innovative elements: clean energy conversion, flexible energy storage in batteries, and smart management of traction power and available energy. Coradia iLint is particularly suited for operation on non-electrified networks. It enables sustainable train operation while maintaining high train performance.

The first two trains are currently undergoing tests in Germany and are expected to transport their first passengers in the second half of 2018 in Lower Saxony, the first region to have ordered 14 hydrogen trains.

Coradia iLint was designed by Alstom’s teams in Germany at Salzgitter, a centre of excellence for regional trains, and in France, notably Tarbes, a centre of excellence dedicated to traction systems and Ornans for the engines, with the contribution of the sites of Villeurbanne and Saint-Ouen.

Coradia iLint belongs to Alstom‘s Coradia range of modular trains, which benefit from knowhow spanning more than 30 years and proven technical solutions. More than 2,400 Coradia trains have been sold to date, and 1,900 are presently circulating in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Canada.

The 2018 Europe 1 Trophies of the Future recognise men and women researchers, students, entrepreneurs, writers, citizens and elected representatives who, through their actions, want to make things happen and thus contribute actively to the construction of a sustainable and harmonious society.

Bentheimer Eisenbahn locomotive No. D20 takes a break in Bad Bentheim on January 30th. This loco was former V200.147 (221 147-2), one of 20 that returned from Greece. *Erik de Zeeuw*

Several erixx DMUs are seen at Vienenburg. *Steamsounds*

Train No. IC145 from Amsterdam to Berlin Ostbahnhof has just changed traction at border station Bad Bentheim on January 30th. DB promotes FC Hertha BSC in Berlin and locomotive Class 101.144-4 carries the advertising of the club. *Erik de Zeeuw*

Germany

MRB Class 223.054 stands at Leipzig Hbf with a service from Chemnitz. *Steamsounds*

DB Class 185.179 exits Loreley tunnel with a southbound freight *John Sloane*

DB Class 182.019 stands at Hamburg Hbf working the 16:11 service to Rostock. *John Sloane*

Germany

Locomotion Class 185.666 arrives at Hamburg Hbf with a sleeper train. *John Sloane*

An ICE 4 departs Hamburg Harburg. *John Sloane*

Metronom No. ME146-06 (Class 146.506) approaches Hannover with a service to Uelzen. *John Sloane*

The 'Oberweißbacher Berg and Schwarzatalbahn' is a DB Company which operates the branch line from Rottenbach on the Saalfeld to Neudietendorf line to Katzhütte (Schwarzatalbahn), the funicular rail from Obstfelderschmiede to Lichtenhain (a d Bergbahn) and an electric line from Lichtenhain to Cursdorf. Here diesel railcar Class 641.019 runs as train No. RB29881 near the halt Bechstedt-Trippstein on February 23rd. *Thomas Niederl*

Germany

On the 'Oberweißbacher Berg and Schwarzatalbahn', the second Class 641 DMU is currently unavailable due to overhaul. (Hauptuntersuchung in Deutsch). In this case the regular service trains are currently operated by an heritage Class 772 railbus nicknamed 'Ferkeltaxe'.

Here on February 22nd it is seen working train No. RB29881 near Bechstedt-Trippstein (top) and then at its final destination of Katzhütte (bottom). *Thomas Niederl*

Germany

One of the passenger vehicles being carried on the 'Oberweißbacher Berg and Schwarzatalbahn' funicular railway. There is also a possibility to carry freight cars, but regular freight transport was suspended in 1966. *Thomas Niederl*

From Lichtenhain, there is a three kilometre line to Cursdorf. This is electrified and is operated by a Class 479 unit. Here EMU No. 479.203 works train No. RB29944 from Lichtenhain to Cursdorf on February 22nd. *Thomas Niederl*

The funicular is seen approaching the top station at Lichtenhain. *Thomas Niederl*

Germany

DB Regio Class 143.967 arrives at Dresden Hbf on February 20th, working an S2 service to Pirna. *Class47*

DB Class 151.036 draws a rake of Ferrywagons out of Köln-Gremberg. *John Sloane*

DB Class 245.007 calls at Kaufbeuren with train No. RE57507 from Füssen to München Hbf. *Steamsounds*

DB Regio Class 612.674 and 612.600 call at Erfurt Hbf with an RE service to Würzburg. *Steamsounds*

Germany

ITL Traxx Class 186.138 passes through Obervogelgesang with a northbound tank train. *Steamsounds*

On January 16th, SBB Cargo Traxx loco No. 482.014 is seen on the east side of the Rhine at Koblenz-Ehrebrelstein hauling a southbound freight. *Bryan Roberts*

DB Class 146.014 stands at Dresden Hbf with an RE service from Leipzig Hbf. *Steamsounds*

Germany

A City-Bahn Chemnitz branded railcar well away from home at Sebnitz is seen working trains between there and Pirna. *Steamsounds*

Railtraxx NV, Borgerhout Class 186.206 is seen on January 17th heading north along the side of the Rhine towards Boppard with a long train of new cars. *Bryan Roberts*

On January 17th, Railpool loco Class 187.005 heads south on a freight near Boppard. *Bryan Roberts*

HSB's 99.222 is seen ready for departure at Wernigerode.
Steamsounds

Germany

HSB No. 99.7241 departs Drei Annen Hohne. *Steamsounds*

HSB No. 99.222 is seen at the Westerntor road crossing in Wernigerode. *Steamsounds*

HSB Nos. 99.7241 and 99.236 stand at Schierke. *Steamsounds*

Germany

On January 18th, a push-pull service arrives at Limburg with DB Regio Class 143 064 at the rear.
Bryan Roberts

Preserved AEG diesel shunter No. Ks4071 is seen outside Limburg station on January 18th.
Bryan Roberts

HLB single car unit No. VT203 is seen in the bay platform at Limburg (Lahn) on January 18th.
Bryan Roberts

Germany

DB Regio Class 146.124 is seen near Dedensen-Gümmer with a RE8 service to Hannover Hbf. *John Sloane*

DB Class 155.087 hauling empty car carriers passes 143.019 with a mixed rake of wagons at Dedensen-Gümmer. *John Sloane*

EGP Class 140.824 hauls a container train through Hamburg Harburg, with DB Class 185.395 running light engine in the opposite direction on a Machen to Hamburg docks move. *John Sloane*

DB Regio Class 146 263 is seen approaching Köln Hbf. *Steamsounds*

DB Class 143.228 calls at Limburg(Lahn) with a service for Frankfurt(Main)Hbf. *Steamsounds*

H-Start EMU Class 415.027 stands at Heygeshalom on February 16th having arrived with a service from Gyor. Just visible behind it is a Railjet service heading to Budapest. *Class47*

FS E656.023 is seen stabled at Pistoia. The Class E.656 is an articulated rheostatic-type electric locomotive built between 1975 to 1989 and have earned the nickname of 'Caimano' (Caiman).
John Sloane

Italy

Contractors locos Nos. T448.077-9 and T448.936 (former Class 740 Slovak and Czech industrials respectively) are seen at Livorno. *John Sloane*

A 'Frecciabianca' set is seen at Pisa. *John Sloane*

Trenitalia Class E464.667, in a livery advertising an art exhibition, departs Pisa. *John Sloane*

NS VIRM train No. IC2235 crosses the drawbridge over the River Spaarne working a service from Flushing to Amsterdam on January 21st. *Erik de Zeeuw*

Netherlands

In Leiden, 'The Alps Express' is ready to begin its journey to Austria on January 21st. Rail Experts locomotive No. 9901 is taking care of the first part of the trip to Venlo. *Erik de Zeeuw*

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Netherlands

In Haarlem, Rail Experts locomotive No. 1251 (built in 1952) arrives with 'The Alps Express' from Austria to Leiden on January 21st. Haarlem is the only station in the Netherlands in Jugendstil.
Erik de Zeeuw

Slovakia

Class 749.259 runs around the Grumpy Railtours Western Slovakia tour at Horna Stubna on February 5th. *Mark Torkington*

On February 4th, Class 771.054 stands at Zilina with the Grumpy Railtours train up the line to Rajec. *Mark Torkington*

ZSSK Cargo's Class 751.191 makes a rare passenger outing with the Grumpy Railtour at Oravsky Podzamok on February 4th. *Mark Torkington*

Slovakia

At Bratislava hlavná stanica ZSSK Class 736.103 is seen stabled between duties on February 17th. *Class47*

Class 240.136 stands at Bratislava hlavná stanica with a train for Kuty on February 5th. *Mark Torkington*

Regiojet's Class 163.110 and ZSSK's Class 163.117 await departure from Zilina on the rather cold morning of February 5th. *Mark Torkington*

There is plenty of snow falling in Arosa where Allegra EMU No. 3515 waits to return to Chur with train No. R1456. *Steamsounds*

MGB Deh 4/4 II No. 93 waits in the snow at Göschenen with train No. R632 for Andermatt. *Steamsounds*

Switzerland

RhB ABe 4/4s Nos. 52 and 55 depart Diavolezza with train No. R1625 from St. Moritz to Tirano. *Steamsounds*

RhB Allegra EMU No. 3511 arrives at Bergün/Bravogn with train No. RE1152 from St. Moritz. *Steamsounds*

Basel tram No. 307 heads along Aeschenplatz with a line No. 14 service. *Paul Godding*

TILO FLIRT EMU No. 524.114 arrives at Göschenen with train No. RE4431 to Milano Centrale. *Steamsounds*

USSC EMD GP11 No. 308 crosses the Caloosahatcee Canal at Moore Haven whilst working a train of sugarcane to Clewiston.
Laurence Sly

U.S.A.

Amtrak's P40 No. 157 and P42 No. 822 storm through Folkston whilst working Amtrak train No. 97 'The Silver Meteor' from New York to Miami. *Laurence Sly*

USSC GP40-2 No. 504 crosses the Hillsborough Canal at South Bay whilst working the Clewiston - Fort Pierce local. *Laurence Sly*

Florida East Coast's ES44C4 Nos. 821 and 803 pass Pompano Beach whilst working train No. FEC127-27 from Jacksonville Bowden to Miami Hialeah. *Laurence Sly*

U.S.A.

CSX SD40-2 No. 8137, SD70MAC Nos. 4571 and 4585 pass Folkston with a southbound manifest train. *Laurence Sly*

CSX ET44AH No. 3339, SD70MAC No. 4704 and ES40DC No. 5305 depart Waycross with a southbound manifest train. *Laurence Sly*

Whilst hauling a loaded sugarcane train from Bryant to Clewiston, USSC GP38 No. 506 is seen at Belle Glade adding more loaded cars to its consist. *Laurence Sly*

CSX SD50 No. 8596 leads SD40-2 No. 8136, SD70MAC No. 4760, ES40DC No. 5354, GE AC4400CW No. 576 and AC44CW No. 396 passing Jamestown whilst hauling a southbound double stack container train. *Laurence Sly*

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U.S.A.

Florida East Coast's ES44C4 Nos. 803 and 821 approach St. Augustine whilst working train No. FEC226-26 23:00 Hialeah - Bowden. *Laurence Sly*

USSC GP38 No. 312 backs a train of tanks in the sugar factory at Belle Glade. Despite being rail connected, the Belle Glade factory receives its sugarcane by road. *Laurence Sly*

First Citadis X05 Light rail Vehicle begins Testing & Commissioning in Sydney, Australia

The world's first Citadis X05 Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) has entered the testing and commissioning phase for the Sydney Light Rail project, marking a significant milestone in the delivery of the network. The CBD and South East Light Rail is a new light rail network for Sydney, currently under construction. The 12km route will feature 19 stops, extending from Circular Quay along George Street to Central Station, through the suburbs of Surry Hills to Moore Park, then to Kensington and Kingsford via Anzac Parade and Randwick via Alison Road and High Street.

When the network is fully operational, the LRV's will operate in a 67-metre couple set which will have a capacity of up to 450 people, equivalent to up to nine standard buses. The network will have a capacity to move up to 13,500 passengers per hour, which will ensure less congestion on Sydney's roads and more reliable travel times for commuters. Passengers have been placed at the heart of the development of this new vehicle, with the emphasis on on-board mobility and comfort. The LRVs include double-doors for improved access and passenger flows, large balcony style windows, multi-purpose areas, ambient LED lighting and the highest levels of customer safety including CCTV monitoring, emergency intercoms and the latest wayfinding aids for passenger information and real time travel information.

The impact to the environment will be minimised through increased energy efficiency achieved by the use of electrical braking, permanent magnet motors, LED lights, sensor-based air-conditioning and the use of water based paints and non-hazardous materials for construction. Each vehicle is 99% recyclable at the end of its life-span (30 years).
"We are extremely proud to see the first official movements of the first Citadis X05 trams in Sydney." said Mark Coxon, Managing Director for Alstom in Australia and New Zealand. 'The Citadis X05 and associated technologies will transform Sydney and provide a step change in the city's public transport capability and reliability while preserving the aesthetic appeal of the City," said Mr Coxon.

Initially the LRV's will be tested and commissioned at night on a completed part of the network in Sydney's eastern Suburbs. The vehicles will initially operate as 33 metre sets and will progressively expand their commissioning of the network as further sections are completed. Testing and Commissioning of the entire fleet of 60 LRV's with continue into 2019.
Currently, more than 50 cities worldwide operate Alstom's Citadis light rail vehicles. The Citadis X05 model has been produced first for Sydney but will also soon be rolled out in other cities including Nice and Avignon (France), and Kaohsiung (Taiwan).

Inaugural Eurostar service sets off from London to Amsterdam

Eurostar, the high speed rail service linking the UK and mainland Europe, has marked an historic milestone in the expansion of international high speed rail as it embarked on its inaugural journey from the UK direct to The Netherlands.

The inaugural service departed from London St Pancras International at 08.31 on February 20th and tickets for the new route are now on sale for travel from Wednesday 4th April.

With highly competitive fares from just £35 one-way, a journey time of 3hr01 to Rotterdam and 3hr41 to Amsterdam, Eurostar will transform the connection between these key destinations, providing travellers with a compelling, environmentally friendly alternative to the airlines.

Nicolas Petrovic, Chief Executive, Eurostar, said:"This inaugural service heralds an exciting new chapter in the expansion of high speed rail, strengthening the trading and tourism links between the UK and mainland Europe. With just weeks to go until the start of service we are looking forward to providing customers with a fast, comfortable connection from London to Amsterdam and transforming travel between these important capital cities."

Commercial service starting on Wednesday 4th April
After extensive preparation, including a comprehensive programme of testing on the Dutch high-speed network, and the building of Eurostar terminals in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, Eurostar will start its commercial service from 4th April with two trains a day departing at 08.31 and 17.31.

With its seamless city centre to city centre offering, wifi connectivity and ample space to work or relax, Eurostar's new service will provide passengers with a stylish, convenient route from the UK to the Netherlands and a transformed travel experience.

A record breaking journey time between London and Brussels of 1hr48. In addition to revolutionising the cross Channel connection to The Netherlands, the new London-Amsterdam service also delivers a record new journey time for those passengers travelling on the London-Brussels section of the route.

Going forward, these customers will see their journey time cut by 17 minutes as the time onboard is reduced from 2hr05 to 1hr48.

For more information or to book Eurostar tickets visit www.eurostar.com or call the Eurostar contact centre on 03432 186 186.

Alstom's first tramway for the City of Lusail in Qatar has left La Rochelle, France

Alstom just shipped the first trainset for Lusail tramway from its plant in La Rochelle. The convoy will join in Barcelona harbour in order to be shipped by boat to Doha. In 2014, Alstom, as part of LRTC consortium with QDVC, was awarded a contract by Qatar Railways Company to supply a turnkey tramway system for a 4-line tram network in Lusail. The 4-line network will cross the city of Lusail covering a distance of 22km, including 10km underground and 28 stations. The arrival of this first train is expected in March 2018.

Every step of the production, including final static and dynamic tests, is carried out in La Rochelle, France. After having completed all tests; the first Lusail tram has successfully passed the factory acceptance by the customer.

"Thanks to all Alstom employees involved in the Lusail tramway project, we have managed to achieve this great milestone. We are very proud to work on this project for our customer in Qatar. Alstom is a long-term partner of the Qatari mobility market development", says Didier Pfleger, Senior Vice President, for Middle-East and Africa at Alstom.

Alstom contributes to providing the city of Lusail with a fully integrated tramway system by delivering the design, manufacturing, commissioning and servicing of 28 Citadis tramways, Track works, power supply equipment (substations, catenary and APS), signalling and platform screen doors. Lusail tramway is composed of five cars per single unit, with each 33-meter long car to carry over 207 passengers. Each tramway features two classes: common and family class.

The cars will be fully low floor to enable easier access for all passengers. Lusail tramway will offer passengers a high level of comfort. It will include passenger information and security systems both at station level and on-board. The tramways are eco-friendly, and equipped with a full electrical braking system and LED lighting.

Siemens, Alstom, Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane and George Kent with PORR to partner on the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail project

Siemens, Alstom, Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane and George Kent together with PORR have mutually agreed to join forces in a consortium to bid for the Kuala Lumpur - Singapore High Speed Rail Assets Co tender for the Kuala Lumpur – Singapore High Speed Rail project, announced by the Malaysian and Singaporean governments. The companies will work to prepare a joint offer encompassing engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) and operations & maintenance (O&M) for the purpose of this tender.

This partnership shall result in a powerful team combining European technology and project experience with the best local expertise. The consortium brings together the two manufacturers, Siemens and Alstom, with decades of technology leadership and excellence in delivering complex cross-border high speed railway projects. In the past, both companies have worked on similar complex Private Public Partnership (PPP) projects across the globe. Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane brings valuable expertise in railway operation and a vast global footprint. These European companies are joined by George Kent, a Malaysian company offering significant construction experience in rail transportation projects and a strong local knowledge of the Malaysian market. George Kent is partnering with PORR, a highly experienced track work provider offering a state-of-the-art slab track technology proven in operation on high speed railways.

Commenting on this agreement, Jean-Francois Beaudoin, Senior Vice President of Alstom Asia-Pacific said, "Alstom, with its expertise in complex high speed projects, has been keenly looking at this tender and seeking the best partnerships - locally and internationally to offer the finest solution to Singapore and Malaysia. I believe we have a powerful and competent team to address this tender - with the best of European Rail Companies and George Kent as our local partner."

Michel Obadia, Head of Siemens Mobility Asia Pacific completed: "The Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail is a ground-breaking project that will significantly prosper the economic and social ties of millions of Malaysians and Singaporeans. Siemens is a trusted partner for both countries having contributed to their vital infrastructure development for many years. We have also been committed to technology transfer to both countries, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with this iconic project. With the help of our global network of recognized experts we will be able to provide the most innovative technical solution for a comfortable and safe journey."

Commenting on the partnership, George Kent Chairman Tan Sri Dato' Tan Kay Hock added that "The Kuala Lumpur - Singapore High Speed Rail project is one of the most prominent projects in the Region. George Kent have assembled a strong team and will be working together with experienced partners to deliver and maintain the safest and most reliable high speed rail systems in the world. We aim to facilitate technology transfer and maximize the local content, resources and human capital in line with Malaysia's aspiration of developing a resilient and vibrant rail industry."
Filippo Scotti, Executive Vice President International Markets of FS Group (Italian State Railways) further commented: "The Kuala Lumpur – Singapore High Speed Rail is a strategic project that will bring a leap forward in the economic and social development of Malaysia and Singapore. We are honoured to contribute to it through our consortium, which includes the best players in the industry, and proud, to bring large technological and innovation experience and expertise in the rail and mobility industry".

Alstom to supply 30 electric locomotives to ONCF

Alstom has been awarded a contract with ONCF for the supply of 30 electric Prima locomotives. The contract – which is the result of an international tender launched by ONCF in March 2017 – is worth around €130 million. While the 30 locomotives will be manufactured in Alstom's Belfort plant, the Alstom team in Morocco will ensure the after sales service and maintenance. The 30 Prima M4 locomotives have a nominal power of 5.5 MW, a maximum operating speed of 160 km/h and operate under 3 KV DC voltage. They can be equipped with ETCS level 1. They require minimum maintenance and provide a high reliability level and low lifecycle cost thanks to the modular design.

"We are delighted that ONCF has renewed its confidence in our company and our products. Thanks to a consolidated and historical partnership based on mutual trust and a real teamwork spirit with our customer, 20 Prima locomotives have been successfully in service in Morocco since 2011 and today, with this new contract, our journey continues and we are proud to contribute to the development of the Moroccan railway infrastructure", said Brahim Soua, Managing Director of Alstom in Morocco.
Alstom has been manufacturing locomotives for more than 100 years with the first electric locomotive produced in 1926. Today, Alstom has sold more than 3 000 locomotives from its Prima range over the last 20 years. Alstom offers for the Prima locomotives a complete service to support operation, including parts supply, heavy maintenance or full service offers.
Six French sites will participate in the production of the locomotives: Belfort (manufacturing), Le Creusot (bogies), Ornans (motors), Petit-Quevilly (transformers), Tarbes (traction chain components) and Villeurbanne (on board electronics).

Present in Morocco with 350 employees, Alstom has contributed to several structuring projects, such as the delivery of Citadis trams to the cities of Rabat and Casablanca, and 12 Avelia Euroduplex trains for the High Speed Line which will link Tangier to Casablanca. In its plant in Fez, Alstom produces cable bundles for rail applications and electrical switchboxes that are supplied to its European plants and mounted on trains exported around the world.

PKP CARGO supports competition growth in cargo transportation sector

Competition growth in the sector of railroad cargo transport was a key topic during the conference in Budapest, with participation of the Visegrad group representatives. This Conference was the experience exchange platform for railroad sector, between the infrastructure managers, cargo carriers, with participation of the Member State governments representatives. Poland has presented i.e. proposals for the improved railroad traffic, including infrastructural investments pursued on main transportation corridors.

During the „V4+RAIL CEO SUMMIT" in Budapest, January 31, to February 1 this year, discussion was oriented on strengthening the cooperation for development of railroad sector in the Visegrad countries (V4) and in Central and Eastern Europe. Infrastructure and transport are key areas of cooperation in the V4 countries, located on five most important European transportation corridors, on the south-north axis, with example of Baltic-Adriatic Railroad Cargo Corridor, Amber Railroad Cargo Corridor, or Via Carpatia Road Corridor. Infrastructural investments pursued on main transport corridors support the increased effectiveness of international and cross-border transport, both.

Also a Polish delegation participated in this event, that took place in the period of Hungarian presidency, as the member of V4. Mr. Grzegorz Fingas, Member of the Board for Trade Affairs in the Company, has presented perspectives for development of cargo transportation market, on behalf of PKP CARGO S.A. He paid caution to key factors determining development of freight, i.e. an increasing international trade exchange and containerisation in transport, increase in volume of cargo handled by Polish ports and resulting from strategic localisation of Poland on the crossing of two main transport corridors, as well as increase in transports on New Silk Road.

„PKP CARGO Group, as the leading logistics operator on the European transportation market, pays great attention to the competition increase in railroad cargo transport sector. Modern infrastructure, as well as an efficient and integrated transportation system, become the increasing response to developing demand and more and more efficient transportation services. The extensive modernisation and maintenance programme for railroad network, as well as construction of logistics base, should be in favour of this" underlined Mr. Grzegorz Fingas. During the conference, areas of railroad digitalisation, as a basic instrument influencing on competition increase in the railroad cargo transport sector, as well as on perspectives of development on the European-Asian railroad connections, were discussed.

Siemens delivers signalling for a fully automated metro in Malaysia

Signalling and train control system for Light Rail Transit Line 3 in Greater Kuala Lumpur

New line has a distance of 38 kilometres

Intrusion preventive system and platform screen door systems included

Siemens has received, in consortium with Rasma Corporation Sdn Bhd, an order from Prasarana Malaysia Berhad, the operator of Malaysia's Light Rail Network (LRT), for the supply and installation of signalling and train control system for the planned fully automated Light Rail Transit 3 Line (LRT3) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. MRCB George Kent Sdn Bhd is the appointed Project Delivery Partner (PDP) of LRT3.

The new line, with 38 kilometres and one depot, is expected to be completed in February 2021. The scope for Siemens also includes the installation of an intrusion preventive system (IPS) and a platform screen door system (PSD).

"With public transportation being a decisive factor for the economic growth of the Greater Kuala Lumpur area, this project will support the development of an attractive, reliable and efficient mass transit infrastructure by optimizing headway times and improving punctuality through our cutting-edge Communication Based Train Control (CBTC) technology Trainguard MT, which enables the operator to maximize their network capacity and throughput," said Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility Division.

The planned route for the LRT3 will ultimately link Bandar Utama to Klang, spanning 26 stations – 25 elevated above ground and one underground. Once completed, the line will be incorporated into the existing Klang Valley Integrated Transit System in the city. It will provide connectivity to the western part of the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley area. The project is expected to benefit 74,000 commuters daily and 500,000 residents as it will mobilize 36,720 passengers per hour in a single direction by improving connectivity and reducing traffic congestion.

The LRT3 line will be fully automated with Grade of Automation 4 (GoA4). As of 2016, Siemens has equipped about 300 kilometres of lines worldwide with signalling technology for fully automated operations.

Stadler to deliver eight double-decker trains to AB Transitio

Stadler and AB Transitio sign contract for eight double-decker trains to be used by Uppsala Länstrafik. Especially adapted for cold weather, these trains are well-suited for the demanding conditions of Scandinavia. Along with the purchase of Swedtrac from Knorr-Bremse earlier this year, this deal signifies a further commitment to the Swedish market.

Stadler has received an order from AB Transitio for an additional eight double-decker electric multiple units (EMU). AB Transitio is therefore taking up an option from the contract signed in 2016 about 33 EMUs with an option of 110. The trains are going to be used by Uppsala Länstrafik and are very well suited for commuter and regional traffic around Uppsala.

Stadler vehicles feature excellent resistance to severe winter weather – something Stadler has proven with its trains in Norway, Finland, Estonia, Russia and Belarus, where extreme conditions occur regularly in the winter. These exceptional winter weather capabilities are a result of the closed engine rooms, double-wall intercar gangways, snow scrapers between the bogies and carriage bodies, a heat recovery system, floor heating and high-quality insulation. As part of this current order, Stadler will of course once again involve Swedish suppliers such as Icomera AB, Kockum Sonics AB, ÅF-Infrastructure AB and Hök Instrument AB.

Wider vehicle bodies

The new generation of double-decker trains features an open, fluid architectural design. The passenger flow in the entrance area has been optimised – a change that makes a positive difference particularly in urban regions with a large number of commuters, such as the railway systems in Zurich and Berlin. The new double-decker trains offer plenty of legroom for passengers and also provide an open, spacious feeling. The double-decker vehicle bodies are adapted to fit the Swedish clearance profile, which is higher and wider than the Swiss standard.

Energy savings

The use of aluminium in the design of the car bodies lead to a significant decrease in the energy required as well as lower operating costs. Another forward-thinking engineering solution is the dry transformer that doesn't require oil as a coolant. Already in use on Stadler FLIRT EMUs by Swiss federal railways SBB, this system saves about 8% in average of the total energy consumption of those trains

Excellent credentials with intercity travel

Stadler has excellent credentials in the field of interregional- and intercity travel. Austrian Westbahn use Stadler double-decker EMUs in the intercity-segment between Salzburg and Vienna. SBB use Stadler multiple unit trains on interregional lines all over Switzerland. By December 2018, SBB will also start to operate the Stadler SMILE high-speed intercity trains on the transalpine route from Zurich to Milan. From 2020 Stadler double-decker EMUs will connect San Francisco with San José through the Silicon Valley. Stadler is a dependable partner to several state railway operators

From the UK

Churnet Valley Railway

The Churnet Valley Railway is a preserved standard gauge heritage railway to the east of Stoke-on-Trent in Staffordshire that operates along a part of the former North Staffordshire Railway's Churnet Valley Line.

TKh49 0-6-0 No. 2944 'Hotspur' is seen in the shed at Cheddleton undergoing repairs. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 33 102 and 33 012 are seen outside the shed at Cheddleton on February 3rd. *Richard Hargreaves*

With snow falling, Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 2226 'Katie' awaits restoration in the cold at Cheddleton. *Richard Hargreaves*

GWR 42xx Class No. 4277 built in 1920 at Swindon, stands at Kingsley and Froghall station on February 3rd. *Richard Hargreaves*

Former USATC S160 No. 5197 prepares to depart Kingsley and Froghall on February 3rd with a service to Cheddleton.
Richard Hargreaves

Soviet design double loco No. TE3-6721 at Debalchevo shed on May 2nd 1993. *John Sloane*

SNCF BB No. 4211 fresh from overhaul at Oullins Works, stands ready for it's next duty at Paris Ivry shed on October 27th 1988.
John Sloane