



Railtalk Magazine *Xtra*

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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 above.

All images should be provided at a resolution of at least 2400px x 1700px at 240dpi.

Welcome to Issue 174Xtra

The nights are getting lighter and temperatures are rising, Spring is certainly on its way and so is the end of our confinement, or so we all hope. Until then we have once again a smaller edition, but nevertheless some really cracking photos from around the world.

As usual we start the month with a look at brief news from around the world:

Private Swiss train operator BLS says it is putting in place immediate measures after the Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board (STSB) discovered unusual braking behaviour in the MUTZ trains. After receiving this information, BLS implemented several measures to ensure the trains can operate safely. It is working with the vehicle manufacturer, Stadler, and the STSB to determine the cause of the problem. On December 31st 2020, a MUTZ EMU collided with a second MUTZ (Stadler KISS) at a speed of 23km/h. The two trains were to be coupled together. Both vehicles sustained damage costing around 365,000 euros each. As is required, BLS reported the incident to the Federal Office of Transport and the Swiss Transportation Safety Investigation Board. It has also established a task force to examine the event. During the investigation, the STSB discovered an unusual braking behaviour during poor rail conditions. This occurred during test trips with a MUTZ vehicle in early February 2021. A comparison was also made with a few similar events between 2013 and 2020, which did not cause any damage and which were also reported by BLS to the FOT and / or STSB. Based on these investigations, the STSB have published an interim report with safety recommendations.

BLS started introducing preventive measures in January: train drivers have been instructed to reduce their speed sooner and to a greater extent when approaching signals and other stopping points. The routine brake checks in the maintenance depots have also been intensified. The MUTZ will be replaced by a different vehicle for the S6 service between Bern and Schwarzenburg from March 2021. The reason for that is that these immediate measures cannot be implemented in full on this route.

In other news, Spanish rolling stock manufacturer Talgo has started the dynamic testing of its very high-speed train, the Talgo Avril. The first Talgo Avril has started its test phase on the rail network on a segment of the Madrid-Galicia line. Once this technical homologation is complete, the trains can be put into passenger service by Spanish train operator Renfe. Each Talgo Avril will have a capacity of 581 seated passengers, making it the lightest high-capacity train on the market. The very high-speed train will have a top commercial speed of 330km/h. The dynamic tests are there to determine the behaviour of the train's elements while in motion, such as the running gear systems. The operating conditions will become increasingly complex over the course of the test phase, reaching the speed required for technical homologation of more than 360km/h. The tests will continue for several weeks. For the moment the plan is for them to take place fully on the Madrid - Galicia high-speed line but they could be extended to other parts of the Spanish rail network as well.

And in Florence, Italy, Hitachi Rail has tested its first battery-powered tram. Most trams run under overhead wires, which come with a greater initial capital outlay and are visually unattractive. Battery trams can reduce the visual impact in urban areas, which is especially interesting in historic city centres such as Florence. For the trial, Hitachi Rail installed battery packs on an existing Hitachi Sirio tram so that it could run on battery power for part of the route. The system also includes regenerative braking, meaning that power generated by braking is returned to the battery packs. The battery tram ran between Alamanni and Fortezza in revenue service on lines T1 and T2.

Until next month

David

This Page

DB No. 6422 has placed an empty car train at C.RO in Rotterdam and crosses the Theemsweg on its way back to Botlek Yard on January 8th. *Erik de Zeeuw*

Front Cover

On January 25th, Watco Australia's No. G511 crosses the Swan River with train No. 2142, containerised grain from Forrestfield to Fremantle Port. *Colin Gildersleve*





Siemens Vectron No. 193.759 is the second Vectron as well as 193.766 that will be the main traction of the new service from Amsterdam to Vienna. At this moment this service is not started due to the Covid pandemic but the plan is to commence running on March 25th. At this moment the two Vectrons' are used on the Inter-city Berlin service from Amsterdam as far as Bad Bentheim, where there is a engine change and is being used to train the drivers on the new locomotives. Both Vectrons are expected to get new NS livery/branding, but when is not known at this moment. *Andre Pronk*

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Pacific National's Nos. NR24 and NR52 take train No. 1MP2 a Melbourne to Perth (Kewdale) mixed freight past the Midland hospital. The first three vehicles are staff coaches with two of them for transfer to Perth. These are normally run as one per train for the relief crew to travel in, due to the distances travelled. *Colin Gildersleve*



Aurizon's Nos. Q4016 and Q4002 with train No. 4430 Kalgoorlie to Kwinana empty Sulphur containers, is seen at Kenwick in the suburbs of Perth on February 10th.
Colin Gildersleve



ÖBB and Siemens Mobility present exterior design of the new Nightjet

ÖBB and Siemens Mobility recently presented the first painted car body and exterior design for the new generation of the Nightjet in Vienna. The new, ultra-modern trains will enter service near the end of 2022 and will first be used on connections from Austria and Germany to Italy. The first 13 trainsets have already been called up by ÖBB from a framework agreement with Siemens Mobility, and a further 20 trains are expected to be called up this year.

Leonore Gewessler, Austria's Minister for Climate Protection: "In the fight against the climate crisis, Europe needs more climate-friendly mobility. A strong and extensive night train network is an important contribution here. That's why we'll be investing around €500 million in the future of night trains in the coming years and can purchase 20 more Nightjets produced with Austrian added value. This not only means additional

cars for our fleet, but also more destinations and more night train lines. The Nightjet is the best option for traveling between major European cities. Austria is – and will continue to be – the trendsetter for this service in the EU."

Andreas Matthä, CEO of ÖBB: "The decision made in 2016 to enter the European night train business and steadily expand the night train network was absolutely right. We are already the largest provider of night train service in Europe and our investment in new and ultra-modern trains will ensure that we can continue building on our pioneering role. By providing greater comfort and privacy, our new, state-of-the-art Nightjets will clearly and convincingly focus on meeting the needs of passengers."

Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility: "The new

Nightjet impresses with its greater passenger comfort as well as its sustainability and flexibility and will be the global benchmark for years to come. One central feature of the trains are the innovative mini-suites, which offer passengers a private retreat. Newly designed lightweight bogies ensure especially smooth and quiet operation and reduce energy consumption over the train's entire lifecycle. Our Nightjet will play a central role when it comes to providing ecofriendly connections between European cities and will make rail travel even more attractive."

The next-generation, seven-car Nightjet consists of two coaches, three couchette cars, and two sleeping cars. Their design combines ultra-modern elements with an even higher level of passenger comfort. The new couchette car concept also offers additional mini-suites for single travellers that ensure a pleasant trip

and relaxed arrival. Travel in the sleeping car will be even more comfortable since each of the standard and deluxe compartments has its own toilet and shower. The previously offered regular compartments will naturally still be available as well, with a new design.

A new feature of the coming Nightjet generation is its free WLAN service, which was previously available only on long-distance Railjet trains. During their trip, Nightjet passengers can surf on the ÖBB Railnet, stream contents, and access digital newspapers and magazines free of charge.

Barrier-free overnight travel will also be possible on the new Nightjets. Each of the trains will have a multifunctional car with a low-floor entrance, a barrier-free couchette compartment, and a barrier-free toilet.



From ArcelorMittal Poland to Slovakia

As part of their long-standing cooperation with ArcelorMittal Poland, the ÖBB Rail Cargo Group are scaling up their transport services for the world's largest steel corporation and are now transporting steel coils for Bratislava and Senica.

The ÖBB Rail Cargo Group and the international steel corporation ArcelorMittal Poland have enjoyed many years of successful collaboration. Rail Cargo Carrier - Slovakia, Rail Cargo Carrier - Czech Republic and Rail Cargo Hungaria regularly transport coils from its steel works in Cracow to Gönyü Kikötő in Hungary.

This successful collaboration is now being extended further: the ÖBB RCG has succeeded in securing more steel transport services bound for Senica and Bratislava in Slovakia.

Founded on successful collaboration

The agility and flexibility of the Rail Cargo Carrier subsidiaries in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, coupled with international sales activities at Rail Cargo Logistics - Austria, Rail Cargo Logistics - Poland and Rail Cargo Hungaria have made it possible to expand on the range of transport services and also transport freight efficiently to their destinations in Slovakia.

With its sustainable rail transport services, the ÖBB Rail Cargo Group is helping this globally successful company on the way to reducing its carbon footprint even further, not only through its sustainable steel production, but also its deliveries.



Securing supplies despite tighter border controls

Rail Cargo Group are a reliable partner, international rail transport services are still making sure supplies reach the public and industries in spite of current border controls.

Although border controls have been tightened on account of COVID-19, the ÖBB Rail Cargo Group's national and international rail freight transport services are all operating as normal without any restrictions. RCG are continuing to support the public and the economy beyond our national borders. Naturally, they are adhering to all the regulations issued by the authorities and observing the strictest possible safety and hygiene guidelines in order to protect staff and everyone involved in their business operations.

Reliable partner also in times of crisis

With RCG's extensive production network, their own freight trains and staff in 12 different countries, they have been keeping the international flow of goods moving right from the start of the corona pandemic in spring 2020. In the space of just a few days, even cross-border transport services increased significantly and ensured that supplies reached their international destinations.

Additional capacities for rail transport can be arranged at anytime if required. This also applies to the Rolling Road (ROLA). What's more, they also provide customisable end-to-end logistics services, which include arranging first and last mile transportation.



Sweden will become the twentieth country to be followed by the locomotives of the Czech appliance company CZ LOKO. It will be an EffiShunter 1000 in the colours of the Norwegian company Trainpoint Norway. In addition to business activities, it also deals with the rental and maintenance of locomotives. According to the contract concluded in February this year, the locomotive is to be completed in 2021, followed by test tests. The aim of the project is to put the locomotive into trial operation in the first half of 2022 and to complete the approval process by the end of the year. Approval should also follow in Norway.

“CZ LOKO convinced us with a wide range of offered locomotives and the possibility of modular modifications for specific operating conditions. The locomotive will need to be adapted for operation in the northern regions of Scandinavia ,”explains Hans Sørum, CEO of Trainpoint Norway.

CZ LOKO has extensive experience with operations in Arctic conditions from Finland. The local carrier Fenniarail with EffiShunter 1600 locomotives travels beyond the Arctic Circle, where temperatures normally fall below - 40 ° C in winter. In addition, for operation on Swedish lines, the four-axle EffiShunter 1000, powered by a CAT C32 internal combustion engine, will be equipped

with the national ATC interlocking system and the single European ETCS interlocking. This will allow operation not only on the shift but also in a full-fledged line service.

“We see great market potential in Sweden and Norway. We know from negotiations with Trainpoint Norway that there are more than a hundred, often decades-old, locomotives. Their operation will become more and more demanding not only due to age, but also the absence of ETCS. These locomotives will need to be replaced in the coming years, “ says Jan Kutálek, Sales Director of CZ LOKO.

However, it is not just about ETCS. Scandinavia is generally one of the pioneers in the use of green technologies. Sweden will ban the sale of diesel cars within a few years, and it can be assumed that this decision will soon apply to the railways.



“We like the interchangeable packet system. In the future, we expect to replace the internal combustion engine with batteries. We also appreciate that CZ LOKO has started working on a new generation of green locomotives, such as the HybridShunter 400 and DualShunter 2000, ” concludes Hans Sørum from Trainpoint Norway.

Reconstruction of several station buildings in the Vysočina region will end, and more will begin this year

This year, the Railway Administration will complete the reconstruction of several dispatch buildings in the Vysočina Region, while work will begin in other places. The construction industry will thus move from Třebíč, Sklené nad Oslavou and Křižanov to the railway stations in Velké Meziříčí and Světlá nad Sázavou. The total costs of these five investment projects exceed 190 million crowns.

The reconstruction of the station building in Sklené nad Oslavou, which is taking place at the same time as the reconstruction of the railway part of this station, will be completed in March. As part of the work, the entire building was insulated, windows were replaced, the waiting room was rebuilt and the internal wiring was reconstructed. The modifications will mainly increase the comfort for passengers and the efficient use of the building. The estimated costs amount to 14.6 million crowns.

In April, work on the station building in Třebíč should be completed. The total investment costs amount to CZK 27.5 million. The main goal of the construction is the complete renovation of the entire building. Thus, there are construction modifications on the perimeter cladding, during which it gets a facade with insulation, as well as the replacement of windows, doors

and roofing. The works also include layout changes in the interior, the aim of which is to move the check-in hall and sell tickets to the east wing so as to shorten the distance between the platforms, bus stops and passenger areas. The station building will be fully barrier-free, including new toilets.

Simultaneously with the construction work in the Křižanov railway station, the reconstruction and optimization of the local passenger station is also underway, which should end in August. The subject of the project is the demolition of the existing dispatch building and the complete reconstruction of the operating building, to which the waiting room, public toilets and other areas for passengers will be moved. These will be accessible barrier-free.

The operating building will be insulated, the roofing and plumbing elements will be replaced, the apartments will be preserved and partially repaired. A bus stop will be built on the vacated land and in the surrounding area. Access to the underpass on the 2nd platform will be from the pre-station area. The automatic sliding door then ensures better accessibility for passengers. The total construction costs reach 58 million crowns.

This year, it is planned to start the reconstruction of the listed station building in Světlá nad Sázavou with a total value of 47 million crowns. At the station, the spaces for passengers will be modified, especially the installation of toilets, the entrances, the hall and waiting room and the ceilings will be reconstructed. The building will be fully barrier-free, bicycle boxes and free stands for bicycles will be built on the site of the existing toilets.

The Railway Administration will also begin the reconstruction of the building at the Velké Meziříčí station. The subject of the investment is the overall optimization of the station building, ie: its adaptation to the current requirements of the Railway .

The first run of the retro locomotive “Brejlovec”

On February 13th, CD Cargo’s “Brejlovec” Class 750.338 was unveiled in a retro livery. It is seen here hauling train No. Mn 86121 from Děčín to Brniště.

Photo: © Jakub Dvorak



Fanta's building reconstruction will continue with interior renovation

The ongoing repairs to the facade and roof of the historic part of Prague's main railway station will be followed by the transformation of its interior.

Správa železnic has launched a tender for the contractor of the first phase of the reconstruction of the interior of the Fanta's building, which mainly includes the halls on the ground floor of the Art Nouveau monument. The estimated cost of construction work is approximately 250 million crowns, it should start in April.

As part of a separate first phase, large historical halls in the northern part of the Fanta's building and their facilities will be reconstructed. The original historical form will be returned to the representative spaces as far as possible.

Construction work will take place on the ground floor and also on the 1st underground floor and mezzanine. Thanks to them, the Fanta's building will gain a new connection with the level of the underpasses, in the form of escalators located in the left part of the northern underground passage.

Completion of this phase is expected in the first half of next year.

In the subsequent second phase, the remaining premises of the building will be reconstructed by 2023, with the exception of the former Fanta's café in the central part of the building, which has already undergone renovation recently. Lifts will provide barrier-free access to the individual floors. There will also be another connection with the new check-in hall of the main railway station.

Fanta's building, together with the adjacent hall above the platform, forms the largest Art Nouveau monument in the Czech Republic. All modifications are therefore prepared in such a way as to respect the requirements of state monument care. With respect to technical and static possibilities, some non-original structures will be removed.

The reconstruction will bring an overall revival and ensure the maximum usability of the Fanta's building. Upon completion, passengers will find a

café, restaurant, waiting room or children's corner. Now inaccessible spaces on the ground floor will be open to the public. The column hall will serve as a VIP waiting room, the large hall will become a multifunctional space for organising cultural and social events. A new hygienic background for visitors to cultural halls will also be created in the reconstructed premises, which will also be accessible from the level of the first platform.

At present, the Fanta's building is used by Drážní úřad, České dráhy, Správa železnic and the Police of the Czech Republic. These agencies will be located here even after the reconstruction.



Germany

On February 4th, DB Vectron (MS) Class 193.349-8 runs along the Lotharstrasse avoiding line with Klv (combined train) No. 42530 from Terminali Italia - Quadrante Europa Verona (Italy) to Rotterdam Waalhaven-South (NL). *Erik de Zeeuw*



On February 4th, TKSE No.548 passes Duisburg with a calcium train from 'Rheinkalk' in Wülfrath to 'Hüttenwerke Krupp Mannesmann' in Duisburg Hüttenheim. *Erik de Zeeuw*





Rail freight services to Tyrol and the Czech Republic up and running

Border controls in Saxony and Bavaria have no impact on DB Cargo - Corona rapid tests for locomotive drivers before every shift. DB Board Member Dr. Sigrid Nikutta: "Rail logistics creates robust supply chains"

The entry restrictions at Germany's national borders to Tyrol and the Czech Republic have no impact on Deutsche Bahn's rail freight operations. The Group's subsidiary DB Cargo is operating all transports according to plan with its partners. Almost 200 freight trains are expected each week on the important route through Saxony's Elbe Valley alone.

Dr. Sigrid Nikutta, Member of the Management Board for Freight Transport at DB: "Rail logistics is once again proving to be robust. Freight trains ensure stable supply chains despite Corona restrictions." DB Cargo has reacted very quickly to the new requirements. Every locomotive driver of cross-border trains is tested for Corona before starting their shift and carry the proof with them. "A freight train carries the goods of 52 lorries with a single driver. That speeds up handling processes," Nikutta said. In addition, DB Cargo operates



with its European subsidiaries and formerly defined transfer stations.

"The safety of our employees is our top priority. The well-regulated processes in rail freight transport works to our advantage," says the DB Cargo CEO. Even during the first lockdown, or when connections to the UK were closed,

DB Cargo trains were able to continue running. Around 20,000 trains a week are operated by DB Cargo, around 60 percent of which roll across national borders.

Non-stop from Lower Bavaria to the North Sea

Germany's Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer and the Bavarian Minister of State for Housing, Construction and Transport, Kerstin Schreyer, have praised the logistics partnership in the region: bayernhafen Passau and DB Cargo subsidiary TFG Transfracht have expanded Passau's freight train network to and from the North Sea ports. The project originated in an initiative launched by the chamber of commerce and industry's transport committee. The bayernhafen port in Passau is now connected to the German seaports with daily freight train services. This brings great benefits for import and export-oriented companies in Lower Bavaria. The initiative for this new, climate-friendly combined transport (CT) link was launched by entrepreneurs from the region and does not require any subsidies. The trains are being operated by DB Cargo's TFG Transfracht subsidiary. This company has been the market leader in seaport hinterland traffic with containers for over 50 years.

Since February 1st, the AlbatrosExpress has been operating daily from Passau to the North Sea ports. The hub and transshipment point is the bayernhafen Passau terminal. Most of the containers that come to Lower Bavaria from the north carry automotive components and commercial goods. The goods that are transported in the opposite direction, from Lower Bavaria to the north, are generally products from the automotive, regenerative technology and agricultural sectors. The seaports of Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Bremen and Wilhelmshaven are directly connected to Passau by climate-friendly rail. Container handling is carried out by bayernhafen Passau using a reach stacker and the mobile harbour crane that has been in operation since early 2019. Alongside combined transport, the three partners DB Cargo, TFG Transfracht and bayernhafen also offer a single wagonload transport service.

A true can-do mentality

It was the specialist committee for transport, logistics and infrastructure of Lower Bavaria's chamber of industry and commerce who in 2019 came up with the idea to set up Passau as a port hinterland location.

Germany's Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer said, "The arguments in favour of combined transport are unbeatable: having more goods on the water and on the rails means fewer trucks on the roads. The AlbatrosExpress alone allows us to relieve the roads of around 10,000 heavy goods vehicles. This leads to less

traffic, less congestion, fewer accidents, fewer emissions, and ultimately better quality of life for people. This project has been exemplary in terms of its implementation: it took just one and a half years to bring the concept to fruition, demonstrating real dynamism on the part of the decision makers."

"With the inclusion of bayernhafen Passau in Transfracht's combined transport network, CT in Bavaria is being taken to the next level," said Kerstin Schreyer, Bavaria's Minister of State for Housing, Construction and Transport. "Our ports feature not only inland waterway vessels but also trains, which transport goods to further destinations and ensure that the population has the supplies it needs - particularly now during the pandemic. We need to strengthen the integration of rail and waterways into transport chains and combine them in the best way possible. By doing so, we will create freight transport that brings together people, the economy and the environment in harmony."

Dr Sigrig Nikutta, Board Member for Freight Transport at DB AG and Chair of the Management Board of DB Cargo AG, said, "Our partner bayernhafen and our customers have created a network to which we at Deutsche Bahn can contribute our expertise. We can offer competitive logistics solutions facilitated by maximum flexibility and predictability. And every tonne of freight that is sent on its way here emits 80% less CO2 than a truck on the motorway."

A clear signal

"Our aim is to bundle freight flows and shift traffic from road to rail and inland waterways," said bayernhafen's CEO Joachim Zimmermann. "The new intermodal train service connects Lower Bavarian companies with the German North Sea coast. This shows that our investment in the trimodal expansion at our bayernhafen site in Passau-Schalding is bearing fruit. We are able to offer the greatest possible flexibility for the requirements of Lower Bavaria's businesses." Now all five trimodal bayernhafen locations - Aschaffenburg, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Regensburg and Passau - have links with the German seaports on a scheduled basis. "It sends a clear signal for Bavaria as a business location and for climate protection."

"Each mode of transport has its own specific strengths. We need the combination of rail, ship and

truck to be able to organise the logistical processes in the region as suitably as possible. However, the advantages of a trimodal link like Passau offers have so far only been used to a limited extent," said Jürgen Pfeil, forwarder and chairman of the chamber of commerce's expert committee on transport, logistics and infrastructure. This has all changed. "Our companies now have an international container terminal on their doorstep, which opens up completely new possibilities on the railways to and from the seaports," he said. This was made possible by the interaction of several players on the committee of the Lower Bavarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce. "We have been advocating for decades to improve transport access in our region. But we don't just make demands, we deliver too. In this case and in very concrete terms: we are delivering a new service - from business for business," said Pfeil.

Trimodal hub

"We are delighted to be integrating Passau as a new port hinterland location into our wide-reaching AlbatrosExpress network as of February 1st," said Frank Erschkat, Spokesperson of the Board of Managing Directors of TFG Transfracht GmbH. "With this new service for our customers, together with our partner bayernhafen we are linking the Passau economic region to all the major north German seaports with efficient

rail connections. The ten trains that depart and arrive each week and travel between Passau and Regensburg, transferring to our busy Regensburg corridor to and from the German seaports with 46 trains show how we are further strengthening the Bavarian economy. On the way to achieving our sustainability goals, we are very pleased to be able to shift more road transports to rail with our TFGreen product, while expanding rail service in combined transport and single wagonload transport. Together with our customers and partners, we are making a significant contribution to protecting the environment. For the Passau region, this has meant a reduction in road traffic by around 10,000 HGVs and a saving of 4,000 tonnes of carbon emissions a year."

"It is very good news for us Passau residents that bayernhafen Passau is being integrated into the container rail transport network," said Passau's Mayor Jürgen Dupper. "This fills the trimodal bayernhafen hub with even more life and connects companies from the region with the major German North Sea ports. This interlinking with the seaport hinterland transport system means that Lower Bavarian companies can switch to the more environmentally friendly means of rail transport. A great many parties will feel the benefit of this. Thank you to everyone who helped make this service a reality in Passau." Photo: ©bayernhafen





Controlling an interlocking with the click of a mouse

The Schkopau chemical park now has a new computer-based interlocking. This means that points can be changed with just a click of a mouse and that more trains can serve the site.

For almost forty years, the relay interlocking at the Schkopau chemical cluster in Saxony-Anhalt functioned with admirable reliability. But nothing lasts forever, and the time eventually came to replace the system installed back in 1983. The chemicals company Dow Olefinverbund GmbH has invested several million euros on a fully computerised interlocking, giving the Schkopau site a modern and efficient connection to Europe's rail freight network, and permitting direct rail access from the north.

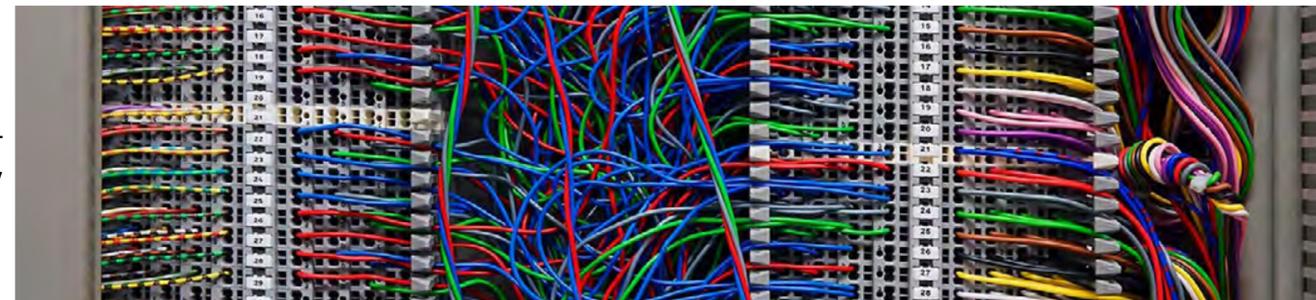
Dow accounts for the bulk of the transport to and from the site, but other chemical companies also use the industrial park's facilities to load their products. In 2019, over 1 million tonnes of chemical products were moved using the park's rail system, and this figure is rising all the time. These volumes

were joined by 3.2 million tonnes of lignite for Schkopau's power plant, which is operated by Uniper.

Increased demand and more transports

Growing freight volumes in recent years have placed greater demands on rail technology. The new interlocking is designed to master them: signallers can now operate a total of 66 signals and 61 points with the click of a mouse. Construction work on the project lasted just twelve months but entailed the installation of 103 km of cable, the modernisation of 10 sets of points and the complete renewal of the electronics system.

"Modernising the interlocking is an important investment in the site's infrastructure and future competitiveness," says Dow's managing director Christoph Maier. It will also help to shift more freight from road to rail in the future, which will protect the environment."



Dr Sigrid Nikutta, CEO of DB Cargo and Member of the Management Board for Freight Transport at Deutsche Bahn AG: "DB Cargo and Dow have been rail transport partners for over 22 years. During this time, our subsidiary MEG ((Mitteldeutsche Eisenbahn GmbH) has transported over 167 million tonnes of freight for Dow. The new electronic interlocking now forms the perfect link between the important chemical cluster at Schkopau and the green rail network."



Coca-Cola on Tracks: DB Cargo creates a freight network in Germany

The transport sector is a major driver of CO₂ emissions in Germany: That is why the beverage manufacturer Coca-Cola is increasingly shifting long-distance transports between its locations to environmentally friendly rail, while DB Cargo is largely responsible for on-time rail logistics. New routes have been connected to the railway since February. A nationwide “rail freight network” for Coca-Cola, in which 13 locations will be integrated, will be established by the middle of the year. The main winner is the climate. With the new, environmentally friendly transport route from DB Cargo, around 1900 tonnes of CO₂ less are consumed each year. And there is now more space on the motorways: around three million truck kilometers are to be saved annually on long-distance connections.

“You drink Coca-Cola cool. And it’s cool for the climate that Coca-Cola beverages in Germany are now also transported by rail over long distances,” says Dr. Sigrid Nikutta. As DB Group Board Member for rail freight transport, she states: “For consumer goods, the mix of long rail transfers and the last mile by truck to the customer is ideal. We have jointly implemented a logistics network for Coca-Cola, which with 13 locations in the consumer goods industry is unique in Germany.” The aim of a strong DB-Cargo is to convince even more customers in Europe of the advantages of rail logistics, says Dr. Sigrid Nikutta.

Coca-Cola and DB Cargo already started a pilot project in 2016 to get long-haul routes within Germany on the rails. Since then, the transports have

been gradually expanded: “We produce largely regionally and mostly have short delivery routes. Where this is not possible, we rely even more on the rails. This year we are therefore building a network with DB Cargo with 19 routes between our locations,” says Tilmann Rothhammer, Managing Director Customer Service and Supply Chain. “This is primarily possible because we can commission rail freight transports with DB Cargo just as quickly as transports by road - in just three days. Since it happens time and again that demand suddenly fluctuates, this flexibility is particularly important for us as a consumer goods company. That helps us to shift more to the railways and to achieve our ambitious goal of a climate-neutral business in 2040.” Coca-Cola has set itself the goal of reducing its absolute greenhouse gas emissions across the entire value chain by 30 percent compared to 2019 by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by 2040.

Overview of facts and figures: Coca-Cola on the rails with DB Cargo

- Since 2016, long-haul rail freight transport between locations in Germany has been expanded
 - o 2020: 1.7 million truck kilometers and 1,000 tons of CO₂ saved
 - o 2019: 1.4 million truck kilometers and 700 tons of CO₂ saved
 - o 2018-2020: Doubling of the locations in the rail network from five to eleven
 - o 2018-2020: Doubling of the routes in the rail network from four to nine

About DB Cargo - Deutsche Bahn

DB Cargo is the freight transport division of Deutsche Bahn.

More than 30,000 employees bring more than 3,600 trains a day through 18 countries in Europe plus China. The annual operating performance replaces up to 22 million truck journeys per year, thereby saving around 7 million tons of CO₂ per year compared to road transport.

About Coca-Cola European Partners Germany

Coca-Cola European Partners Deutschland GmbH (CEP DE) is the largest German beverage company with a sales volume of more than 3.8 billion liters (2019). She is responsible for bottling, selling and distributing Coca-Cola branded products in Germany. CEP DE looks after around 325,000 retail and catering customers and employs around 7,500 people. CEP DE is part of Coca-Cola European Partners (CEP), one of the leading consumer goods manufacturers in Europe. CEP serves over 300 million consumers in 13 countries with a wide range of non-alcoholic beverages.



MORE TRAMS FROM PLZEŇ-BASED ŠKODA WILL BE OPERATING IN BRANDENBURG

The Škoda Transportation group will be the supplier of new low-floor trams for the German federal state of Brandenburg. The trams were ordered jointly by the cities of Frankfurt an der Oder, Brandenburg an der Havel and Cottbus. The traditional Czech brand won the pan-European tender, which was unique in that it was announced jointly by three transport companies. Škoda will supply a total of 24 vehicles with an option for another 21. The total worth of the contract is almost 3 billion crowns (110 million euros).

“We have long believed that the Western European market, led by Germany, is a very important market, and our strategy of focusing on these markets is proving to be a good strategy. We are very pleased with the long-term and regular success of our trams on the German market. With this order we have started the second hundred of ordered modern, comfortable trams from Škoda factories, which will offer ecological transport in nine German cities,” says Petr Brzezina, Chairman of the Board of Directors and President of the Škoda Transportation group, describing their success.

“It has been seven years since we made a strategic decision and began to build a growth strategy in the German market by establishing a subsidiary. This is one of the reasons why we won the unique tender for the supply of trams for three cities, which was the first time in Germany. The customer will get the latest addition from the Škoda ForCity Plus family, which is a partially low-floor, unidirectional tram with three sections, two radial drive bogies and one regular non-radial bogie. The new order underlines the purpose of our long-term investments in developing and improving the level of our trams, making them suitable for modern transport throughout Europe,” says Zdeněk Majer, Member of the Board of Directors and Senior Vice President of Sales of Škoda Transportation.

The new Škoda ForCity Plus vehicles will replace the existing high-floor trams, which are nearing the end of their service life in the mentioned cities. The vehicles will be delivered in two widths, because despite the large number of identical requirements and conditions, there are also a number of individual requirements of each city. Thirteen of the 24 ordered vehicles will travel to Frankfurt, four and perhaps eight more from the option will go to Branibor, and the remaining seven plus thirteen from the option were ordered by Cottbus.

The new trams will increase the attractiveness of public transport in all three cities. The Škoda ForCity Plus trams will be low-floor and are therefore also ideal for people with reduced mobility. The new vehicles will offer all elements of comfort: air conditioning, easy boarding, multifunctional spaces for prams, bicycles, etc. Of course, aspects of the environment and economic efficiency are also important, and the Škoda group's offer meets the expectations of the federal state of Brandenburg with its approach.

This is the first tender in which the contracting authorities requested technically identical vehicles for three significantly different cities. “The winner of the tender won thanks to its modern vehicle concept and the implementation of basic low-floor, space utilization and energy efficiency requirements, as well as its modern, timeless design,” said Christian Utuk, CEO of Frankfurt transport company SVF.

“Without cooperation with Cottbus and Frankfurt and without state support, we would not be able to renew our fleet of trams. Today is therefore a significant milestone for the safety of tram transport in our city and its electrical and reliable future,” says CEO of Brandenburg transport company VBRR, Jörg Vogler.

“Cottbus is at the beginning of very dynamic development in which we face the task of shaping structural change in our region. We are convinced that with a strong tram we will provide quality public transport for everyone for several decades to come,” adds Ralf Thalmann, CEO of CVBB from Cottbus.

For the Škoda Transportation group, this means another success in Brandenburg, where low-floor trams are already operating in Schöneiche-Rüdersdorf. In addition, 14 Škoda ForCity Classic trams are in operation

in (Chemnitz), and a contract for ForCity Smart low-floor trams for Mannheim, Heidelberg, Ludwigshafen and Bonn is currently ongoing.

Škoda ForCity Plus trams

These are modern unidirectional, three-section, 70% low-floor vehicles with two radial and one non-radial bogie. Passengers can look forward to comfortable, air-conditioned, spacious and barrier-free vehicles, in the interior of which there are multifunctional spaces for wheelchairs, prams or bicycles. The new trams will have an easy-to-understand information system with several screens and panels. The tram will also be equipped with a camera system for a better overview of the driver and increased traffic safety. The transport company will appreciate the low operating costs of the product from the Škoda ForCity Plus platform.







Netherlands

On January 8th, RRF No.22 is seen on its way from the Botlek Yard to the Bertschi Terminal in Rotterdam with a part of the Busto shuttle from Italy.

Erik de Zeeuw



Siemens Mobility to develop Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform for the Netherlands

**One environment for planning, booking and settlement of multimodal travel
Travel efficiently, comfortably, and sustainably
Open ecosystem for all mobility providers**

Siemens Mobility will sign a contract in the Netherlands with the joint venture RiVier (NS, HTM and RET) to develop a countrywide, intelligent Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform. The MaaS platform to be delivered in the autumn will allow providers to integrate travel planning. The technological core of the MaaS platform is supplied by Siemens Mobility subsidiaries Hacon and eos.uptrade.

“The pandemic is changing our behavior,” says RET

director Maurice Unck on behalf of RiVier. “We work, learn and travel more flexibly: in time, place and choice of means of transport. That is why we are investing in the best travel options for consumers right now. We lower the threshold to easily plan, book and pay for a trip with multiple modes of transport.”

“Smart applications that can integrate and coordinate different modes of transportation makes the idea of seamless travel from the first mile to the last a reality. Having the ability to choose from the full spectrum of mobility options to plan, schedule and pay for trips, significantly improves the travel experience and enhances overall quality of life. We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide our intelligent solutions and

deliver a MaaS system that will enable mobility in the Netherlands to be more comfortable, sustainable, and efficient,” said Andre Rodenbeck, CEO Rail Infrastructure at Siemens Mobility.

“Creating the perfect passenger experience requires cooperation across the industry. It is inspiring to see how NS, RET and HTM are joining forces to make the mobility landscape in the Netherlands even more attractive. We at Hacon and eos.uptrade are very proud to bring our know-how and solutions to this trail-blazing project”, says Michael Frankenberg, CEO of Hacon and Head of

Intermodal Solutions at Siemens Mobility.

The platform is being developed as an open ecosystem

that can be connected to existing apps from the MaaS providers NS, RET and HTM. The initiators call on other mobility providers to join so that traveling by public transport, bicycle sharing, car, scooter, and taxi, can be better connected and more convenient.

Through the MaaS platform, mobility providers can draw attention to their services and better tailor them to the needs of travelers, while also optimizing their fleet management. In addition to efficiency and passenger comfort, MaaS also provides eco-friendly and sustainability benefits. As public transport or shared solutions become more attractive, travelers will only use their cars where it is of most added value to them.



SBB Cargo International Class 193.529-5 'Neckar' passes Willemsdorp with Busto shuttle No. 40161 from CTT Pernis to the Hupac Terminal in Busto Arsizio/Gallarate (Italy) on January 21st.

Erik de Zeeuw







Near Groenekan, NS SNG 3 (CAF CIVITY) No. 2336
braves the snow on February 9th on its way from
Utrecht CS to Zwolle as Sprinter train No. 5637.

Erik de Zeeuw



Netherlands

On January 27th, RFO Class 189.203-3 is seen with Neuss-shuttle No. 49798 from Rotterdam to Neuss (Germany). *Erik de Zeeuw*









Netherlands

On January 24th, NS No.1752 (without graffiti!) is seen in Deventer working IC service No. 148 from Berlin (Germany) to Amsterdam..

Erik de Zeeuw





On January 22nd, LTE Vectron MS Class 193.232-6 'Flying Dutchman' hauling CD Cargo Zaes tank cars loaded with vegetable oil, is on its way from the Czech Republic via Bad Schandau (Germany) to Pernis as train No. 41324. *Erik de Zeeuw*









Switzerland

SBB to offer more space and reliability to customers with bicycles.

SBB is improving its services for travelling with bicycles for the 2021 cycling season. It is taking this step in response to strong demand and to insufficient capacity last summer. On key leisure travel lines (Bern to Brig, Zurich to Chur) SBB is tripling capacity at times of high demand from March 21st. SBB will offer customers with bicycles more reliable journey planning: thanks to reservations, passengers taking along bikes can be sure that they will find space for them on trains. The price of bicycle reservations is reduced from CHF 5 to CHF 2.

There has been a sharp increase in demand for travelling with bikes and holidays in Switzerland due to the coronavirus crisis. In some cases this has led to capacity shortages and dissatisfied customers who were unable to travel with their bike on the train they had planned to use. Around 80,000 Bike Day Passes were sold in the peak month of July 2020, for example, which is up by around 45% compared to the previous year. SBB also transported up to 15,000 bikes with self-service loading on the main axes of Zurich to Chur and Bern to Brig.

Broad-based dialogue and faster implementation of customer needs.

SBB expects demand for travel with bikes to continue to rise and is responding to this trend. This is why – together with Pro Velo and the Swiss Transport and Environment Association – it engaged in broad-based dialogue with cycling stakeholders as well as consumer and industry organisations on the issue of ‘sustainable travel with bicycles’. The aim is to offer customers

reliable journey planning and reservations, to further improve and simplify services and to make them even more customer-friendly. SBB has a duty of responsibility towards all customers and wishes to provide services that meet and take account of the needs of all passengers as far as possible – including, for example, people with disabilities or families.

Increase in capacity and reliable planning thanks to reservations.

In view of the forthcoming cycling season, which begins on March 21st, SBB has introduced various changes to make travelling with bikes easier:

Increase in capacity.

SBB is increasing capacity for the self-service loading of bicycles at times of high demand on the key leisure travel lines, tripling capacity compared to the current levels where possible. These routes include Bern to Brig and Zurich to Chur. Additional capacity will also be provided on routes to Ticino, Interlaken and the southern foot of the Jura. Passengers will be assisted with the loading of bicycles by SBB staff on these lines where possible. In order to expand capacity medium and long-term, SBB is currently assessing which technical measures can be implemented long-term to create additional bicycle spaces on various types of train. Only minor modifications to rolling stock are possible in the short term.

Reservation for bike spaces.

Customers with bicycles need to be able to plan their journey reliably and

safely. SBB makes this possible on all Swiss InterCity trains with a reservation costing CHF 2. Passengers who made a reservation can be certain that they will find space for their bike on the trains. Trains are labelled with the well-known bicycle symbol in the online timetable. Bikes can only be transported using self-service loading on trains labelled with this symbol if a reservation has been made and a valid bike ticket is presented. Reservations can be made up until shortly before departure in the SBB Mobile app. They can also be purchased at the counter or several days in advance via the SBB Contact Centre. The price for reservations will be reduced from CHF 5 to CHF 2 for a continuous connection – for example for a route with more than one section. International trains within Switzerland can now also be used for bike transport with a reservation, but prices and booking options may differ. Bikes can be transported with a valid bicycle ticket but without a reservation on regional services (R, S, RE trains) as well as on InterRegio trains (IR).

Credit for holders of the annual bike pass.

Holders of the annual bike pass will receive one-off credit for 25 reservations worth CHF 50.

Folding bicycles.

Folding bicycles can be transported on all public transport services without extra packaging and without an additional bike ticket as before.

Italy

Bombardier and GTS Rail strengthen their long-term partnership by increasing GTS's TRAXX locomotive fleet

New order for three additional E.494 locomotives from GTS Rail, increasing its TRAXX fleet size to 20 units

Global mobility solution provider Bombardier Transportation and Italian intermodal freight operator GTS Rail, continue to strengthen their partnership with a new order from GTS Rail for three more BOMBARDIER TRAXX DC3 E.494 locomotives for its fleet. This order will increase GTS Rail's TRAXX locomotive fleet to 20 units, of which eight are the latest generation and the entire fleet is being produced by Bombardier.

“The signing of this contract represents further confirmation of the appreciation and trust between Bombardier and GTS Rail for more than thirteen years. It is a real partnership resulting in a fleet of 20 locomotives for Italy, all from Bombardier's TRAXX product family.” Franco Beretta, CEO of Bombardier Transportation Italy

He added, “In addition, another pride of Bombardier is to offer our customers a complete 360 degree service and these superb TRAXX locomotives operated

by GTS Rail, which boast strong usage and high monthly mileage, are also serviced under a full maintenance contract with Bombardier.”

Bombardier and GTS Rail strengthen their long-term partnership with new TRAXX locomotive order.

“We're pleased to further strengthen our fleet which confirms our strategy of being an asset-based company,” commented Alessio Muciaccia, CEO of GTS Rail. “Bombardier is one of our earliest partners and we will also entrust them with our service business for the next 10 years. The years to come will see exponential growth in rail transport and we are pleased to seize this incredible opportunity. Our goal is to double the fleet size over the next five years.”

The new locomotives will be built at Bombardier's Vado Ligure site in Italy and deliveries will start from September 2021. The TRAXX DC3 E.494 locomotive belongs to the European Bombardier TRAXX product platform and they are the best-selling freight locomotives in Italy.



Rail subsidiary Metrans to expand network through investment in Hungary

The HHLA intermodal company Metrans is building another rail terminal in Hungary in order to expand its transport services along the Adriatic Corridor and towards Southern and South-Eastern Europe. A corresponding agreement has been signed between the subsidiary of Hamburger Hafen und Logistik AG (HHLA) and the Hungarian government. The hub terminal will be built in Zalaegerszeg, which is located on the transport axis to the Adriatic ports of Trieste, Koper and Rijeka.

Angela Titzrath, Chairwoman of HHLA's Executive Board, emphasises the strategic importance of the project to the logistics company: "We are investing in Hungary because we see significant potential there for the rail transportation of the future. The Adriatic Corridor is developing into an extremely important European transport axis. That is why we also recently acquired a port terminal in the Italian city of Trieste. And Hungary, with its location at the heart of Europe, is of key significance to the expansion of the Metrans network towards Southern and South-Eastern Europe as well.

I would like to thank the Hungarian ministries and the relevant authorities in the region for the good cooperation."

Peter Kiss, Chairman of the Executive Board of the Metrans Group, has announced investments of over € 40 million to construct and equip the new terminal. "This major financial investment demonstrates how important Hungary is to the further development of Metrans. We want to grow in Hungary and with the Hungarian people. The planned terminal will help to give the country a further boost towards becoming one of the most efficient logistical hubs in Europe."

The foundations will be laid in autumn of this year after the necessary legal framework has been created. The first section of the facility shall go into operation as early as 2023. The total investment of over € 40 million includes a grant from Hungarian institutions amounting to approx. € 11 million. Metrans expects that approximately 120 new jobs will be created in Zalaegerszeg.

The volume of containers transported by rail in Hungary has grown steadily in recent years. Metrans has benefited from this, especially through the hub terminal in Budapest which opened in 2017. In the first year, approximately 250,000 standard containers (TEU) were handled at the facility, and this increased to 425,000 TEU in 2019. Despite the restrictions in place as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the number of containers handled in 2020 has remained stable overall.

Regular block trains operated by Metrans connect Hungary, via Budapest and the Slovakian city of Dunajska Streda, to the North Sea ports of Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Rotterdam as well as to Duisburg, and the Adriatic ports of Trieste and Koper. The entire European intermodal network of Metrans now comprises 17 of its own and other associated terminals. This network, and specifically the Budapest terminal, are also a key component in the New Silk Road.

Photo: Visualisation of the planned rail terminal in Zalaegerszeg
©Metrans / Grubyi Viacheslav



Bombardier launches major investment plan to modernize and increase production capacity of its factory in Bruges

Global mobility leader Bombardier Transportation has announced the launch of a major investment and hiring plan aimed at increasing the production capacity of its factory in Bruges, Belgium. The modernization of Bombardier's site in Bruges and its increase in production capacity, will be funded by an investment of more than six million euro. As a result, the company will hire at least 180 more employees to support the site's increase in production.

"This plan is for us, as much an industrial necessity as a belief about the future," declared Laurent Bouyer, President of Bombardier Transportation, France and Benelux. He continued, "Despite the context of the coronavirus crisis, Bombardier is committed to moving forward with an ambitious plan for the transformation and sustainability of the Bruges site. This demonstrates the vitality of our industrial site and an unprecedented opportunity to modernize our production facilities, thanks to digital processes, cyber-tools and eco-friendly solutions."

"Our order book is full," said Michel Huyghe, who was appointed Site Director and Head of Operations for the Bruges site on January 1, 2021. "At the end of December, we received a new order for 204 M7 coaches for SNCB, which represents around 18 months of work for our factory in Bruges. Therefore, it is important for us to invest massively in our production capacities and to develop our activities, for the benefit of the entire rail industry and the region," he concluded.

From an industrial point of view, this investment plan will allow Bombardier to increase its production capacities by summer 2021:

- By creating a new production line for 1-level coaches and for SNCB M7 cars

- By acquiring new, more modern and more efficient tools
 - By creating new workstations such as a painting presentation station and a specific workstation for customer acceptance
- The plan will also modernize maintenance workshops, especially those for TRAXX locomotives, for which the Bruges site is a European Centre of Excellence within Bombardier.

Hiring new employees

Regarding skills and knowledge, this plan includes the hiring of at least 180 additional employees to meet the increased production needs in terms of volume and skills. To date, 100 employees have been offered a permanent contract, while 80 others are being hired with a two-year fixed-term contract, with the possibility of converting this into a long-term contract. With its highly specialized employee-base, Bombardier's Bruges site is well positioned with the necessary know-how and expertise to face increasing customer demand.

Supporting suppliers

This modernization plan will also support Bombardier's suppliers. Direct investments in suppliers will enable them to be equipped with the tools required for this increase in production. Bombardier generates an income of around 70 million euro each year for its Belgian suppliers, 80 per cent of which are located in Flanders.

Bombardier's industrial site in Bruges is the only site in Belgium that still has the capacity and equipment to build and test trains from A to Z. The Bruges site covers 173,000 m², offering possibilities for further expansion and development. Bombardier is one of the most important employers in



the city of Bruges and an estimated 1,000 indirect jobs are generated by Bombardier industrial activities in Belgium.

CZ LOKO succeeds in Poland.

It will supply ten locomotives to the state carrier PKP Intercity

The administratively very demanding tender for the supply of locomotives for the Polish state railway carrier PKP Intercity ended in victory for CZ LOKO. Based on an already concluded purchase agreement, it exports ten EffiShunter 300 locomotives to Poland. The first in a year and a half, the complete series within two years.

PKP Intercity, which operates long-distance passenger transport, will use Czech locomotives mainly for light shifts in depots and stations. They should be deployed at important railway junctions in Warsaw, Gdańsk, Wrocław, Katowice and Krakow.

"In the past, CZ LOKO was active in Poland mainly in the field of repairs. But that is now changing and large investments in the country are going to buy new locomotives. Our contract is a clear proof of this and follows on from the delivery of the same type of locomotive to the repair company Metro Warszawskie," says Roman Stríž, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the subsidiary CZ LOKO Polska.

EffiShunter300 is a light two-axle locomotive, designed with the lowest possible production and operating costs. Thanks to its size and interoperability, it can also be operated on special metro lines. This is not common with these types of locomotives and therefore gives it an indisputable competitive advantage. It is equipped with a CAT C13 internal combustion engine with an output of 328 kW, meeting the strictest EU STAGE V emission standards.

Other CZ LOKO locomotives also have a great chance of succeeding on the Polish market, especially the modern four-axle EffiShunter 1000 and DualShunter 2000 with a dual drive combining an internal combustion engine and electric traction.

"Poland is a market with great prospects for us. The local economy is the largest in Central Europe and has grown significantly in recent years. The locomotive park is undergoing a major renovation and will gradually develop dynamically. However, we are also aware of strong local competition and we do not oppose any cooperation with local entities," added Roman Stríž.

ŠKODA TRANSPORTATION GROUP HAS BEEN AWARDED A CONTRACT FOR THE SUPPLY OF MODERN ELECTRICAL UNITS FOR ESTONIA

Škoda Vagonka and Škoda Transportation consortium have signed a contract for the supply of electrical units for Eesti Liinirongid (Elron). The contract is for six modern vehicles with an option for another ten pieces. This contract is worth around 56,2 million euro (1.5 billion crowns). The units for the Estonian national railway carrier are designed for operation on electrified lines with a track gauge of 1520 mm, and they are adapted to the demanding climate in Estonia. The key parameters for success in the tender for Estonian Railways were low electricity consumption, capacity and service costs. The units should be supplied at the end of 2024.

“Škoda best met the conditions for the tender in Estonia and offered the best price for the operation of new modern units. Our units are operating in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania and Ukraine, and now passengers in Latvia and Estonia can also look forward to them,” says Petr Brzezina, President and Chairman of the Board of Škoda Transportation.

“I am glad that we are once again successful in the Baltic region with our ecological units known under the name Panter, modified to a gauge of 1520 mm and a wide body. This contract builds on the recent success in Latvia, where we will also supply our modern electrical units,” says Zdeněk Majer, Member of the Board of Directors and Senior Vice President of Sales of Škoda Transportation, adding: “A business strategy focused on the Baltics has proven to be successful, and we see great potential in the region for our RegioPanters.”

New units with quality equipment

The units are designed as dual-system units for 3 kV DC and 25 kV 50Hz AC power supply systems in a three-car design. The vehicles must be able to withstand climatic conditions in a temperature range of -40 °C to +35 °C. They comply with the latest international TSI standards and with all relevant safety regulations. The maximum speed of the vehicles will be 160 km/h. Great emphasis is placed on the comfort of passengers and personnel. Boarding is low-floor from 550 mm platforms. The train capacity is designed for more than 270 seated passengers, including 48 seats, which are allocated for the first class. After that there are spaces for passengers with wheelchairs, prams and bicycles.

Part of the seats is removable, where ski holders can be installed in their place in winter. There are also allocated spaces for catering. The comfortable seats have 230 V and USB sockets, and the vehicles are fully air-conditioned, equipped with a modern information system, WIFI, passenger counting system and ETCS security device.



“The purchase of new electric trains contributes significantly to the development of environmentally friendly passenger transport in Estonia. Our current trains have been warmly welcomed and widely used by passengers. We are confident that Škoda trains will maintain the high standard of Estonian rail passenger transport,” says Merike Saks, Chairman of the Board of Eesti Liinirongid.

Škoda Vagonka has many years of experience in the production of trains for passenger transport. Its trains operate every day in many European countries. In the last 15 years, Škoda Transportation has supplied its customers with around 150 electric trains for suburban, regional and interregional transport. The Škoda Transportation group develops and manufactures all key train components, including electrical traction equipment, bogies and vehicle control systems. Škoda Transportation uses state-of-the-art technology in its production in order to reduce electricity consumption and save costs.

Finland

Škoda Transtech Oy and Helsinki City Transport (HKL) have agreed on a new order for 23 ForCity Smart Artic X54 light rail vehicles. The order is based on an option of previous procurement. The ordered LRVs will operate on the Yliskylä and Haakoninlahti lines in the future.

“We appreciate the trust HKL has shown towards our operations by placing a new tram order from Škoda Transtech. We are proud of this most advanced light rail vehicle on the market, where the multi-articulated structure is combined with fully pivoting bogies for the first time ever,” says Juha Vierros, CEO of Škoda Transtech.

Experience with light rail vehicles has already been gained in Tampere, where the first LRVs delivered by Škoda Transtech are already in trial operation. When completed, the light rail vehicles on the Crown Bridges will be identical to the LRVs of light rail line 550, which is constructed between Helsinki Itäkeskus and Keilaniemi in Espoo.

“The vehicles in the Artic family of products have been designed for demanding conditions to withstand Nordic weather conditions and a variable network. ForCity Smart Artic X54 is a modern high-speed LRV, which can also be used on the city centre tramway,” Juha Vierros continues.

In Helsinki, there are currently 70 trams of the X34 model, which predates the ForCity Smart Artic X54 light rail vehicle.

OTANMÄKI WORKS MANUFACTURES LRVs FOR CROWN BRIDGES BETWEEN HELSINKI CITY CENTRE AND LAAJASALO



There will be 29 LRVs manufactured for light rail line 550, and now the option order from HKL will increase the total number of Artic trams in the Helsinki metropolitan area to 122. In addition,

19 LRVs are currently being delivered to Tampere, and 3 vehicles have previously been delivered to Schöneiche, Germany.

“The Artic trams, which have been gradually introduced since 2013, have worked well from HKL’s point of view, and the citizens have also been satisfied with them.

The vehicle type coming to the Crown Bridges and the light rail line 550 is the big brother of the Artic vehicle in the city centre, and it also takes into account the challenges of our rail network and climate. It is also beneficial from the perspective of cost-effectiveness of the use of vehicles during their life cycle, that the light rail vehicle series will be large enough with this acquisition of Crown Bridges’ vehicles,” says Ville Lehmoskoski, CEO of HKL.

“I am happy that HKL is putting its trust in the Škoda Artic tram that is developed and produced in Finland. Stability of local orders is of major importance for the stability of our Škoda Transtech factory in Finland,” says Zdeněk Majer, Chairman of the Board of Škoda Transtech and Member of the Board of Directors of the Škoda Transportation group.

Turkey

Alstom completes the interlocking project in Turkey on the Eskisehir-Kutahya-Balikesir railway line

Alstom has completed and put into service the interlocking system covering 328-km of mainline railway on the Eskisehir-Kutahya-Balikesir line for the Turkish State Railways Administration (TCDD).

Delivered in eight sections, the interlocking system for the first five sections, over 182-km and including the Telecommunications and Traffic Control Center (CTC), was completed and commissioned on December 5th, 2020. The remaining three sections, totalling 146-km, started service on February 5th, 2021.

“We are proud to see the fruition of our work on the Eskisehir-Kutahya-Balikesir railway line. We highly value our partnership with the Turkish State Railways Administration and fully support their efforts to elevate the high safety technologies with the introduction of our Automatic Train Supervision solution and implementation of EU standards to this signalling system through our European Railway Traffic Management System (ERTMS). We are a committed long-term partner to Turkey, addressing its mobility needs and supporting the upcoming transport projects”, said Mama Sougoufara, Alstom Middle East and Turkey Managing Director.

Alstom has been present in Turkey for more than 60 years, delivering rail vehicles, turnkey transit systems for metros and trams, and established as a leading provider of signalling and train control technology. The Istanbul office hosts the regional center for Alstom’s Digital & Integrated Systems expertise as well as the Systems & Infrastructure project teams, providing project management, engineering, training and maintenance services.

Egypt



Alstom puts into service the Deirut section of the Beni Suef Assuyt railway line in Egypt

Alstom has successfully installed and commissioned its SIL 4 signalling Electronic Interlocking SYSTEM (IXL solution-SmartLock 400 GP), including a support system and SCADA that supervises and controls different subsystems, based on Alstom ICONIS, TLC system and 11 kv power supply sub-station.

Deirut is one of the longest sectors; it's connected with Abu Qurqas, El Roda and Mallawi stations which are already in service given over 50 km of line which is fully operative with Alstom's system including contraflow function. Adding to the 45 km, the speed can reach up to 160 km/hr with a headway of 220 trains/day. Overall, the length commissioned is 100 km with 7 stations, 32 level crossings and 160-point machines.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Eng. Hussein Rashidy Head of Signaling System at ENR, Eng. Shaban Mahmoud, Upper Egypt Zone Manager at ENR, Eng. Ashraf Khalifa, Head of operation department, Eng. Mostafa Shahin, Head of strategic projects departments, Eng. Mohamed Magdy, BSA Executive Project Manager at ENR, Eng. Mohamed Fawzy, Operations Manager at ENR, Eng. Ahmed Essam, Head of civil works and Mr. Luca Pastorino Alstom Egypt BSA Project Director.

"Deirut is the 7th commissioned sector of the Beni Suef Assuyt Project. We continue to press ahead despite all the challenges, and I am truly

thankful for the dedication that the project team has shown during this period. I am also very thankful for the continued support from our Client ENR. We will pursue our long-term partnership in the country to better address the customers' mobility needs and offer them smart, green and innovative solutions fitting with their expectations" said Mohamed Khalil, Managing Director Alstom Egypt.

Alstom has been a partner to Egypt's railways since 1971 continuously supporting railway infrastructure development in the country. Over these years, Alstom Egypt has established a local talent pool and Center of Excellence (COE) related to signaling, power supply and depot equipment to support projects across its Africa-Middle East-Central Asia region. It is this rich heritage that has enabled Alstom to make a significant contribution to Egypt's rail industry development. Today, Alstom employs approximately 500 people in Egypt and its current projects include the modernization of signaling system on the Beni Sueif - Assuyt line and two monorail lines for Cairo.

Alstom remains fully committed to the principles of operating an ethical business and sets clear guidelines in order to deal with public authorities and customers.

Photo: ©Alstom



Spain



Eusotren orders four new trains to be delivered within two years

The contract for these units has been awarded to CAF and is worth €32 million

Eusotren orders four new trains to be manufactured by CAF and which will be delivered within the coming two years. Thanks to these units, Euskotren will be in a stronger position to extend its regular and special services for sports, cultural and festive events, among others.

Worth nearly €32 million (31,954,528) and with an implementation period of two years, the contract has been awarded to CAF, the company based in Beasáin, to manufacture four new trains, with four carriages and similar characteristics to the 950 Series currently operating on the different lines run by Euskotren. CAF will also supply the necessary rolling stock parts, whose maximum cost will be €8 million, to guarantee the train's proper maintenance.

The new trains will come into service within two years. Subsequently, they will help to meet the increase in demand from the completion of the work to extend the Topo and the opening of a new section, which includes eliminating the current end-of-line at Amara station and opening three new stations in Donostia/San Sebastian. The work will result in better frequencies and more convenient routes. The manufacturing of these four trains is part of the process to modernise the rolling stock that Euskotren embarked on in 2011 with the coming into service of the EMUS 900 Series. It has been completed in recent years with the addition of the EMUS 905 Series, which offer certain improvements particularly regarding accessibility.

The four new trains, whose manufacturing has just been ordered, will be very similar to the 950 Series. In fact, one of the goals is to steadily improve the units' safety and technological features, while offering a feeling of uniformity to the interior and exterior design of the whole fleet.

The main difference will lie in the trains' capacity as the new ones will have four carriages instead of three. They will therefore be able to hold at least 385 passengers, 30% of whom will be seated. The rolling stock will also comply with current legislation regarding universal accessibility with the following basic characteristics: colour contrast, spaces reserved for people with functional diversity, light warning at the entrance with automatic ramp, ramps operated from the driving position, sound alarm systems, anti-slip floors.

Dubai Route 2020 Metro commences revenue service

On February 16th, Alstom congratulated Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) on the opening of the Dubai Route 2020 Metro and the start of the revenue service, delivering a major turnkey driverless metro project, including a fully interoperable extension and the enhancement of the existing transport system's performance.

The new line project, commenced in July 2016 and carried out by the Alstom-led ExpoLink Consortium, also composed of ACCIONA and Gülermak, consists of a 15km-long line, of which 11.8km is above ground and 3.2km underground, and an interchange on the Red Line. The extension of the metro has seven stations including Jabal Ali Station and the flagship metro station at the World Expo exhibition site. The project is worth a total of €2.6billion.

As part of the Consortium, Alstom was responsible for the integration of the entire metro system including 50 Metropolis™ trainsets produced in Alstom's site in Katowice (Poland), power supply, communication, signalling, automatic ticket control, trackworks, platform screen doors and a three-year warranty on the whole system, as well as the enhancement of the existing metro line by upgrading power supply, signalling systems, communication and track works. The trainsets are 85.5 meters long and composed of five cars per trainset and can carry up to 696 passengers each[1].

"I am delighted to see our trains enter the revenue operation. At Alstom, it is our mission to support the transition towards global sustainable transport systems that are inclusive, environmentally friendly, safe and efficient while implementing socially responsible

transport solutions. The opening of the Dubai Route 2020 Metro shows Dubai and the RTA's commitment to provide a sustainable and environmentally-responsible mobility as this project expected to ease the traffic congestions in the areas it serves by approximately 15-20% and expected to reduce carbon emissions by 120,000 tons by 2025", says Mama Sougoufara, Alstom Middle East Managing Director.

The train offers a new level of passenger experience, thanks to wide gangways, large doors and windows, and the three specific areas for Silver, Women and Children and Gold Classes. Eco-friendly, the train is equipped with a full electrical braking system, LED lighting and other innovations to reduce energy consumption, including Alstom's Harmonic Energy Saver Optimizer (HESOP™) which recovers the electrical energy generated by the

trains during braking.

Alstom is a dedicated and long-standing partner of Dubai's transportation and mobility development. Alstom delivered the Dubai tramway, the first fully integrated tramway system in the Middle East and the world's first 100% catenary-free line, which was opened in November 2014. Alstom is also in charge of the maintenance of the Dubai Tram for a period of 13 years.

[1] 4 passengers per sqm²

Photo ©The Roads and Transport Authority of Dubai



From the Archives

No. B602 (GAIA/1969) is seen on empty stock duty at Buenos Aires Retiro San Martin station on November 12th 2004. *John Sloane*

Argentina



From the Archives

Ex Renfe Class 319.237 departs San Miguel with a train towards Pilar on November 6th 2011. *Mark Torkington*

Argentina



From the Archives

Austria

DB Class 110.497 hauls a charter train from Bruxelles-Midi to Zell am See past Hochfilzen station on March 5th 2011. *Thomas Niederl*



From the Archives

Austria

About two kilometres after Hochfilzen station, Class 1116.094, 1116.029 and 1144.236 are seen hauling a mixed freight heading for Salzburg. At the rear end, Class 1144.045 was assisting the train, March 5th 2011. *Thomas Niederl*



From the Archives

Austria

On January 15th 2001, three diesels Nos. 2143-55, 2143-52 and 2043-063 were necessary to haul the heavy freight train No. 66565 from Zeltweg (on the main Vienna - Villach line) via Obdach to Frantschach in the Carinthian Lavanttal. *Thomas Niederl*



From the Archives

OBB Class 1044.111 with a charter train for German ski tourists heading to Zell am See passes Gerling im Pinzgau on February 24th 2001. *Thomas Niederl*

Austria



From the Archives

Austria

On February 5th 2011, OBB Class 1063-045 hauls train No. DRV13811, a charter train for ski tourists and is seen here next to Maishofen heading to Zell am See. The Class 1063 is normally used for local freight and shunting duties and helped out here during the weekend by hauling this special train. *Thomas Niederl*



From the Archives

Bulgaria

BDZ Class 46 (Electroputere/1986 and subsequently modernised by Koncar) No. 46235 stands outside the Koncar works at Poduane, Sofia on May 8th 2011.
John Sloane



From the Archives

No. BJ 3247 stands at Tianjin on March 16th 1987. *John Sloane*



From the Archives

China 

Anshan Steelworks Bo-Bo-Bo electric loco EL1 No. 6 (built by Hennigsdorf in 1960) arrives at the works on March 26th 1987.
John Sloane



From the Archives

No. 52434 is seen after arrival at Guane on May 17th 2011 with a local train from Pinar del Rio. The boxcars in the consist were fitted with benches to provide more seating! *Mark Torkington*

Cuba



From the Archives

On January 26th 2011, OBB Class 1216.226 leads a Praha hl.n. bound service through Usti nad Orlici.
Class47

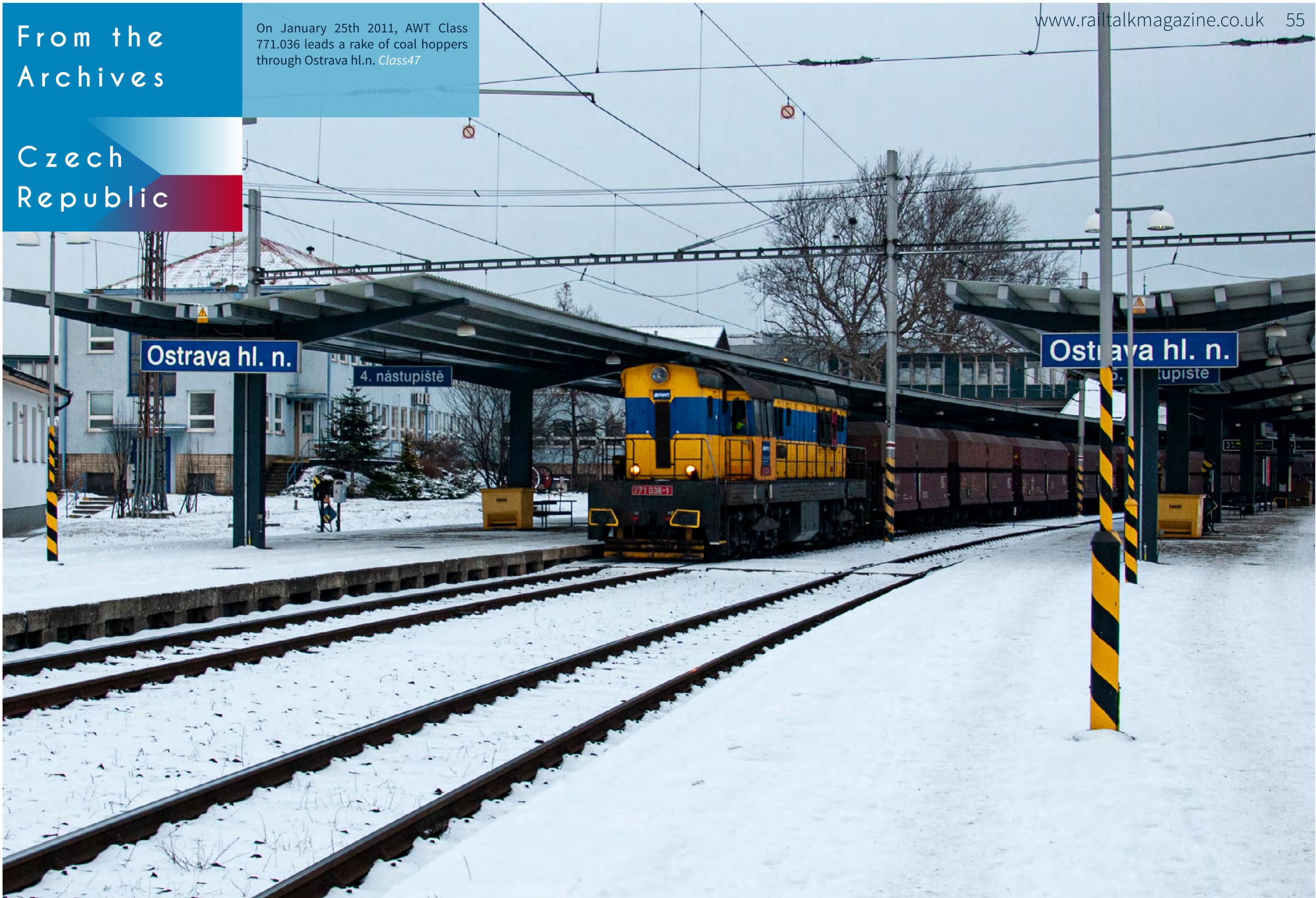
Czech Republic



From the Archives

Czech Republic

On January 25th 2011, AWT Class 771.036 leads a rake of coal hoppers through Ostrava hl.n. *Class47*



From the
Archives

CD Class 451.096 waits departure time
at Praha hl.n. on January 27th 2011
with a service to Benesov u Prahy.
Class47

Czech
Republic



From the Archives

France

Early on a misty October 30th 1991, SNCF BB No. 9283 races past the old station at Boulevard Massena with an Austerlitz to Brive express.
John Sloane



From the Archives

Quadricurrent CC-40104 stands at Paris Nord with 'The Ile de France' TEE service to Brussels on October 28th 1991. *John Sloane*

France



From the Archives

Germany

DRNo. 119.024 arrives at Saalfeld with a lengthy freight from the Arnstadt direction on November 9th 1980.

John Sloane



From the Archives

Hungary

MAV No. V43.2299 is seen ready to depart Budapest Nyugati station on September 13th 2007.
John Sloane



From the Archives

Italy

Rebuilt ex USATC Bo-Bo No. 143.3044 is seen at Rome San Lorenzo shed on May 9th 2008. *John Sloane*



From the Archives

On the island of Java on April 31st 1995, No BB30505, built by CFD in 1984, rests at Jember shed. *John Sloane*

Indonesia



From the Archives

On May 23rd 1983, No. 40212, an A1A-A1A built by GE, stands at Amman after arrival from the Syrian border with the International Express.
John Sloane

Jordan



From the Archives

On October 18th 2005, No. GE1000, bought secondhand from USA and thought to be a C30-7, waits at Chosica Yard on the outskirts of Lima with a freight for Huancayo on the worlds second highest railway line. *Mark Torkington*

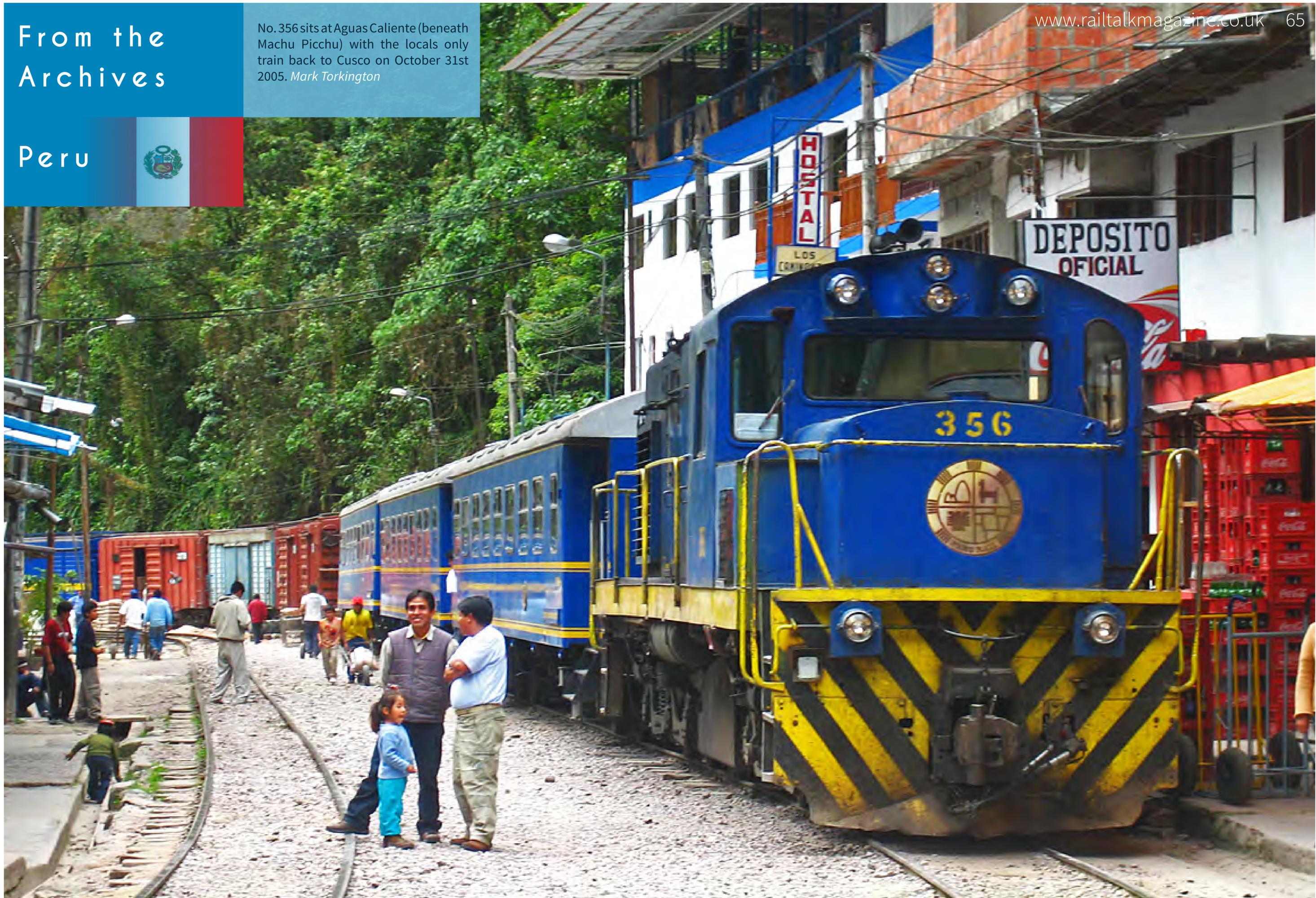
Peru



From the Archives

No. 356 sits at Aguas Caliente (beneath Machu Picchu) with the locals only train back to Cusco on October 31st 2005. *Mark Torkington*

Peru



From the Archives

Poland

Przewozy Regionalne's No. SM42-264 is on station pilot duty at Poznan Główny station on June 6th 2009.
Jeff Nicholls



From the Archives

Romanian built No. ST43-142, sounding just like a BR Class 25, uses the turntable at Leszno depot to line itself up for the correct road of the half-roundhouse on October 1st 2008. *Jeff Nicholls*

Poland



From the Archives

Poland

Deputising for a failed steam loco, No. SU46-022 thrashes out of Wolsztyn bound for Poznan on September 29th 2008. *Jeff Nicholls*



From the Archives

Metre gauge Romanian 1977 built No. AV 400 is seen at Damascus station with a service to Serghaya on May 27th 1983. *John Sloane*

Syria ★ ★

