

Railtalk

Issue 53x
February 2011

ISSN 1756 - 5030

Magazine

Xtra



CD Cargo - helping out in deep snow

Welcome

Welcome to the Railtalk Magazine Xtra, which compliments the main Railtalk Magazine and means that we can put even more pages together every month. As always in Xtra, we focus on life outside the UK, and once again we have some excellent shots from some of Europe's finest photographers. Our "From the UK" section has a look at the Wrexham and Shropshire Railway. This month I went on my travels again, this time to the Czech Republic to try and get some last haulage behind the Grumpies or Bardotka as they are known in Czech, and a very enjoyable few days it was. All week we only had one delay and that was a service coming from Poland that was 40 mins late, however upon my return to the UK what a different situation. There were no trains from Stansted to Cambridge because of a power failure and National Express East Anglia advised me to travel via a different route and change at Tottenham Hale. I thought that it was very nice to have arranged an alternative but upon arrival at Tottenham Hale I was treated very badly by London Underground ticket barrier staff who told me that I wasn't valid and would have to return to Stansted. The Barrier person was shouting at quite a high voice that I didn't have a valid ticket. Now at this point I must say that this is the second time that I have been accused by London Underground staff who clearly know nothing about either ticketing or politeness. My problem was resolved by the station supervisor who said that I was valid (I knew that already) and I should be let through. Did I get an apology - No! So be aware if travelling on London Underground because some of their staff have very little knowledge and very bad manners. Finally this month we have extended our popular country flags to our news pages, we hope that you like it.

David

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed this month, it really makes our task of putting this magazine together a joy when we see so many great photos. This issue wouldn't be possible without: Colin Gildersleve, Steve Madden, Brian Battersby, Paul Godding, Phil Martin, CJ Sutcliffe, Pavel Kopec, Tomáš Kubovec, Richard Hargreaves, Martin Grill, Martin Válek, Mark Pichowicz, Richard Weber Filip Štajner, Pavel Šturm, Bea Želtvayová, Petr Holub, Pavel Martoch, Honza Štofaňák, BVT, Ivo Rušák and Libor Hyžák

Contents

Pg 2 - Welcome
Pg 4 - Pictures
Pg 72 - News
Pg 84 - From the UK
Pg 104 - From the Archives

Contact Us

Editor: David
david@railtalkmagazine.co.uk
Co Editor: Andy Patten
editor@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Submissions

Pictures, articles and news can be entered through the forum, or by email to us at:

entries@railtalk.net

Please include a detailed description and credits.



Cover: Czech Cargo Class 743.007 assists 843.010 and 943.010 through the deep snow near Korenov. [Pavel Šturm](#)

This Page: CD Cargo liveried Class 123.001 complete with Cokoliv-Kamkoliv branding is seen at Val-Meziříčiči on December 4th. [Ivo Rušák](#)



A rather faded PKP Class ST43, ST43.257 is seen working an empty coal train from Guben (Germany) to Czerwiensk (Poland) on October 4th, as it passes of Nietkow. Poland.

Steve Madden





DB Cargo liveried Class 155.163 works a steel train through Ahrensdorf on October 6th.
Steve Madden





Class 29 119 hauls Class 25 103 through the old station at Kuala Lumpur on December 1st.

Steve Madden





DB Regio unit No. 612.127 stands at Tanvald in Ceske Drahy territory on January 22nd. This is just one of many cross border services that run in the Czech Republic opening up many opportunities to discover all over Europe. [Paul Godding](#)





Historic diesel locomotive No. 5404 was used for a run between Leuven – Hasselt – Tienen and back to Leuven on November 27th. During this trip, TV - shots were made inside the train for a publicity film, and just before this trip a steam loco hauled the coaches with passengers from Brussels to Mechelen. [BVT](#)





The TransWA 2-car Perth to Kalgoorlie "Prospector Unit" is seen running empty from East Perth to its depot at Kewdale for servicing on July 24th.

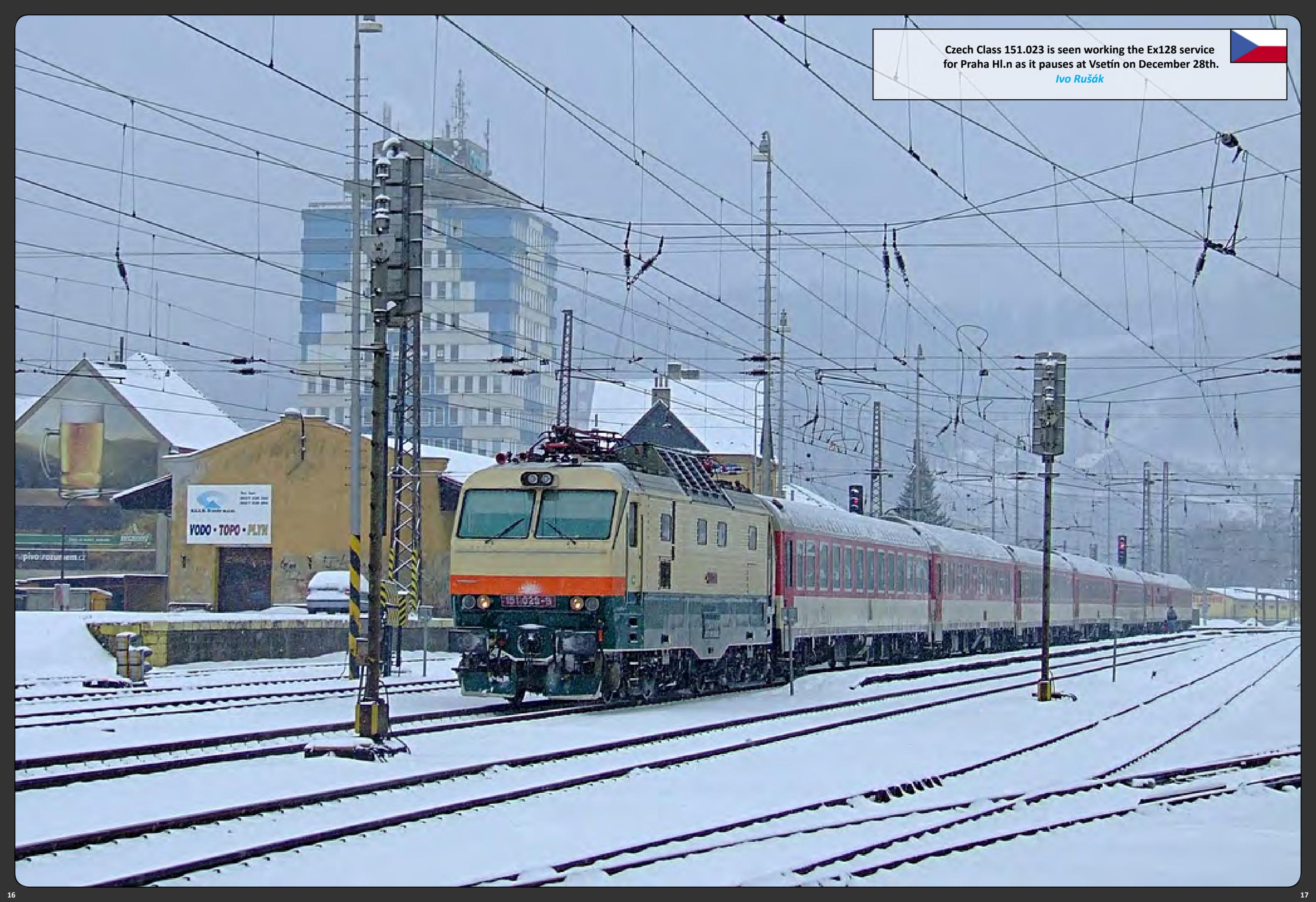
Colin Gildersleve



Czech Class 151.023 is seen working the Ex128 service for Praha Hl.n as it pauses at Vsetín on December 28th.



Ivo Rušák



On October 4th, Polish PKP ET22-715 approaches Czerwiensk Yard with a loaded coal train.

Steve Madden





A pair of heavy duty snowploughs at Letohrad.
Paul Godding



ARGs S3306 creeps up to the Wellard loop home signal. It will wait in this loop for 2 north bound freights to pass before heading on its way south for another load of coal for the Kwinana power station, on October 9th. [Colin Gildersleve](#)





Traxx No.2810 is seen at Liege Gullemins on December 9th. It is exceptional to see a NMBS Traxx locomotive at Liege-Guillemins, this train is a special one, it hauls a 154 ton heavy cylinder for a rolling mill destined for Marienborn (Germany). Here this train makes a change in direction coming from Marcinelle and will then run via Aachen to Germany. [BVT](#)



Rather faded DB liveried Class 151.094 and 151.103
pass Ahrensdorf on October 6th with a
rather long coal train. [Steve Madden](#)





Since the December timetable change and the opening of the new tunnel, IR services to Engelberg have been in the hands of HGe 101 class locos. On December 30th, No. 101964 is seen at Engelberg after arriving with the 17:06 from Luzern. [Mark Pichowicz](#)



4

zb

101 964-5

Die Zentralbahn

On October 4th, Polish PKP ET22-2000
in new red livery crosses over onto the single line
at Niedoradz with a long coal train. *Steve Madden*



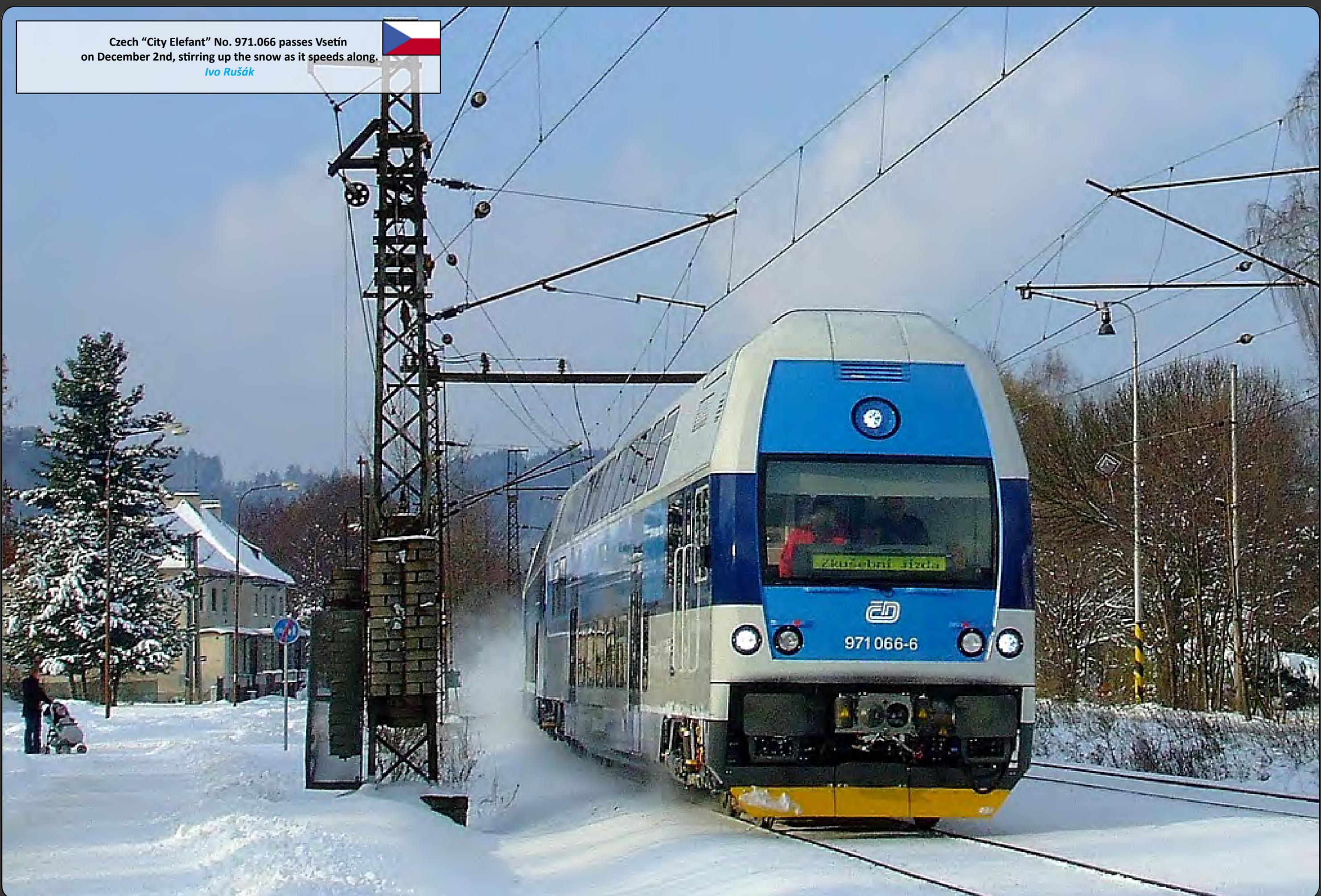
ZSCS - Železničná Spoločnosť Cargo Slovakia,
Class 183.008 is seen passing Vsetín-Štěpánská
on November 26th with a long freight train. *Ivo Rušák*



Czech "City Elefant" No. 971.066 passes Vsetín
on December 2nd, stirring up the snow as it speeds along.



Ivo Rušák





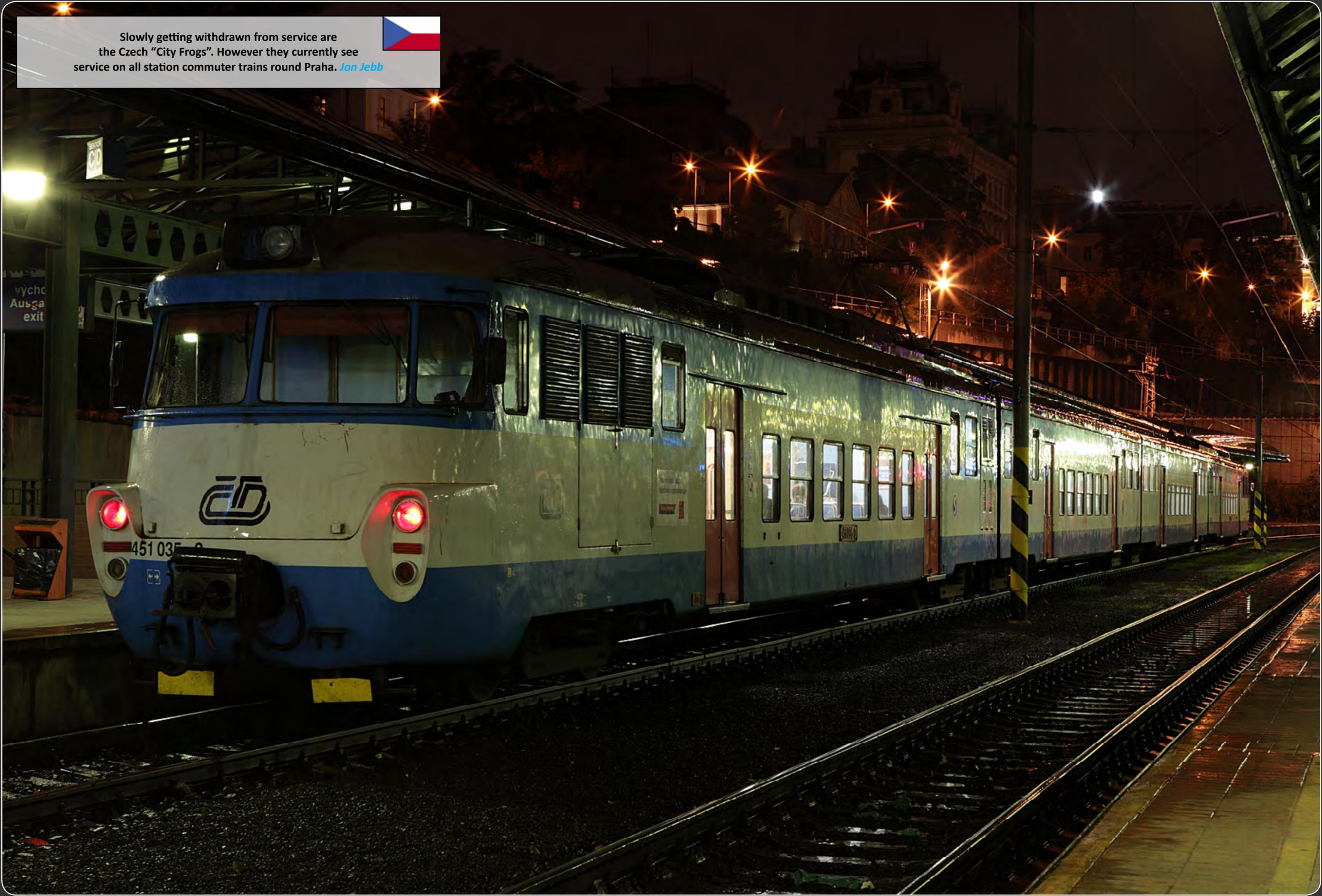
Above: Withdrawn Class 141.037 is seen at Ceska Trebova on January 24th. The class dates back to the late 1950's with just a handful remaining in service, this one not being one of them. [Paul Godding](#)
 Below: Class 150.202 is seen at Praha Hln. on January 21st. [Paul Godding](#)



Above: Withdrawn Czech "Laminate" Class 230.062 is seen at Ceska Trebova, there are rumours that paint doesn't stick very well to fibre glass bodies, but I think that is the least of this locos problems. [Paul Godding](#)
 Below: Of the three Narrow Gauge public lines in use in the Czech Republic, two of them start at Jindrichov Hradec, and the other is some distance away on the Polish border. Here is 705.915 parked outside JHMD's depot. [Paul Godding](#)



Slowly getting withdrawn from service are the Czech "City Frogs". However they currently see service on all station commuter trains round Praha. [Jon Jebb](#)





Class 749 121 prepares to depart Tanvald on January 22nd heading for Praha with the regular Saturday working.



Pavel Šturm



Above: Thanks to the heavy rain, one could make some great shots next to the river Demer which caused a lot of water problems in the central-eastern part of Belgium. Freight traffic wasn't affected as Traxx loco No. 2824 has a bunch of chemical wagons on its load with one of the many freight trains between shunting yard Gremberg and Antwerp. Testelt, on January 8th. [BVT](#)

Below: The bright livery of French company Captrain is always great to see. Loco No. 6607 runs empty between Aachen and Antwerp to pick up his new load. Hasselt, January 12th. [BVT](#)



Above: Crossrail Benelux runs a lot of container trains between Antwerp Harbour and Germany. Here we see loco PB20 with a train from Antwerp-Berendrecht and Regensburg. Testelt, on January 8th. [BVT](#)

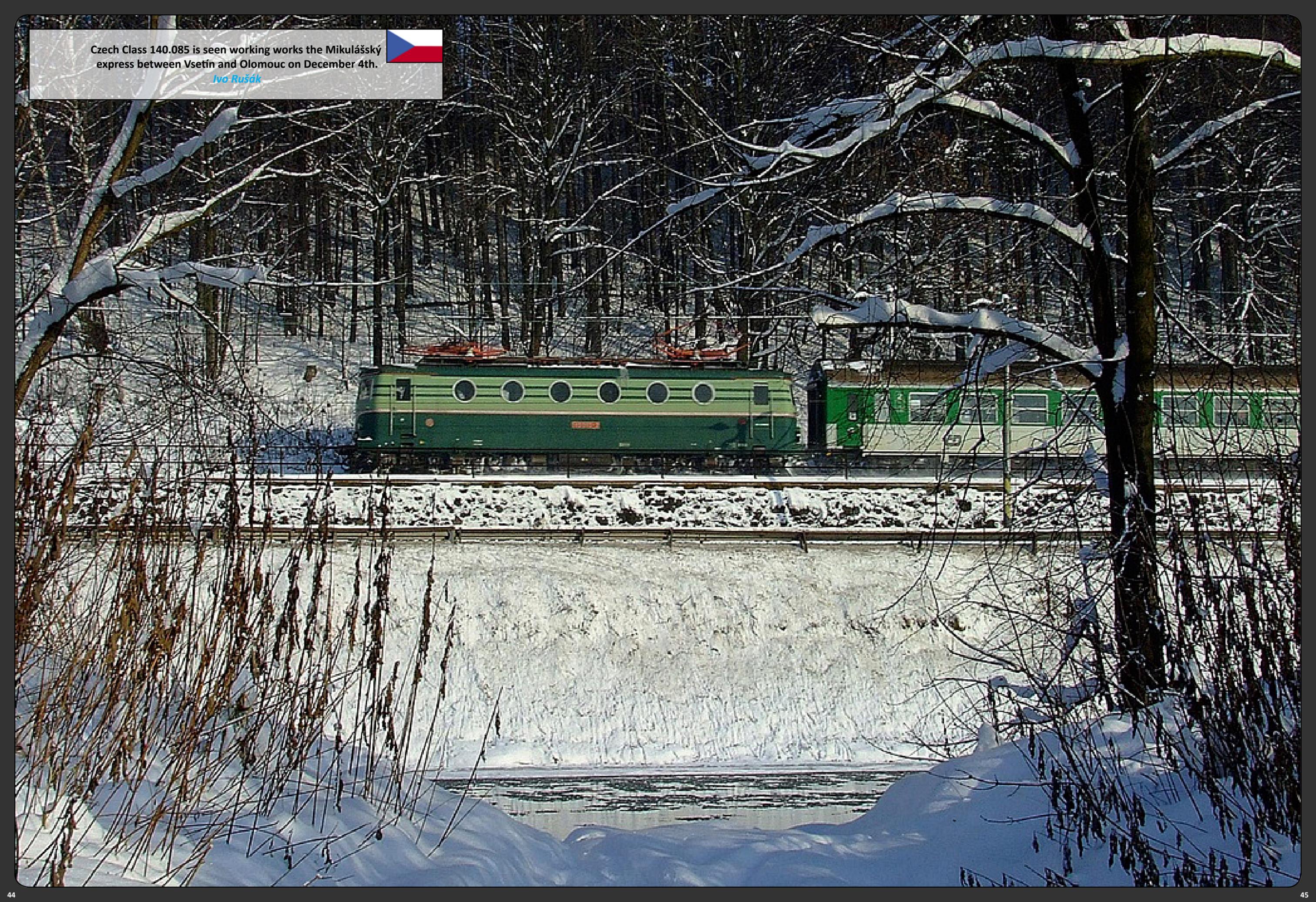
Below: EMU No. 426 runs next to a flooded River Demer with a local train between Hasselt and Landen, Testelt on January 8th. [BVT](#)



Czech Class 140.085 is seen working works the Mikulášský
express between Vsetín and Olomouc on December 4th.



Ivo Rušák



On November 20th an Antwerp-bound freight train passes the flooded lake at Schulen with Traxx locomotive No. 2818 at the helm. Due to heavy rain, it was nice to make some great reflection photos but the flooding did cause a lot of damage. Fortunately there were no serious injuries. [BVT](#)



On December 4th Czech Class 150.222
is seen working the Eurocity service EC127 Fatra
from Praha to Zilina. *Ivo Rušák*



A pair of Traxx locos Nos 2818 and 2819 pass
Langdorp on November 30th. Snow came early this year in
Belgium as can be seen with this shot of a freight train heading for Antwerp.
BVT



Stunning Swiss scenery as Rhätische Bahn Ge 4/4i
No. 602 "Bernina" is seen shortly after leaving Klosters
with the 13:32 Davos Platz to Klosters Dorf Sportzug on January 23rd.



Mark Pichowicz



On the first day of its centenary year, January 1st 2011,
1911 built CFHe 2/3 No. 6 stands at Rigi Kulm
1750 metres above sea level. *Mark Pichowicz*



Czech Class 749.006 prepares to depart Praha Hl.n on January 21st with the evening service to Breznice. [Class47](#)





Rigibahn's only electric loco, He 2/2 No. 18
shunts at Rigi Staffel after arriving with a
Sportpendel-Züge service from Kaltbad on New Years Day 2011.

Mark Pichowicz





Replacement locos for the popular Grumpies are now being delivered to Ceske Drah. These Class 750s are completely rebuilt with new Caterpillar engines and all new electronics. Looking great, but with a touch of sadness because of what they are replacing, Class 750.702 stands at Praha Hl.n on January 21st. [Class47](#)



Rebuilt CD Cargo "Goggles" Class 753.762 and 753.763
pause at Turnov with an oil train on January 22nd.



Class47





In glorious sunshine, 1937 built BHe 2/4 No. 1 climbs towards the summit of Mount Rigi on New Years Day 2011 with a service from Vitznau. [Mark Pichowicz](#)



A pair of freight sector CD Cargo "Grumpies" Class 751.154 and 751.223 are seen stabled at Kralupy nad Vltavou on January 22nd. [Paul Godding](#)



TransPerth EMU No.325 is seen arriving at Midland Station
with a local service from Perth on December 15th.



Steve Madden





DMU No. 2005 is seen on the approach to Adelaide with a service from Gawler Central, December 3rd. [Steve Madden](#)



Bombardier to Deliver TWINDEXX Double-deck Coaches and TRAXX Locomotives for Long-distance Routes to Deutsche Bahn AG



New coaches and locomotives to enter service in December 2013

Bombardier Transportation has received an order from Deutsche Bahn AG (DB) for the delivery of 137 latest-generation BOMBARDIER TWINDEXX 2010 double-deck coaches and 27 BOMBARDIER TRAXX P160 AC locomotives. The order was announced by Bombardier on January 4, 2011 and is valued at approximately 362 million euro (485 million US dollars). The double-deck coaches and locomotives are scheduled to enter service at the end of 2013. The contract involves TWINDEXX double-deck cab cars and intermediate coaches with high/low-floor entrance. It is part of a framework agreement signed in December 2008. The locomotives order is also part of a framework agreement signed in 2000.

This latest order marks the first time that DB has requested TWINDEXX double-deck coaches for long-distance routes. Bombardier double-deck coaches have been operating successfully on the DB regional network since 1993. Grego Peters, President Business Unit Germany and Scandinavia, Bombardier Transportation, said: "Together with Deutsche Bahn AG, we are launching a new chapter for double-deck coaches. We are delighted that DB has now decided to introduce our successful double-deck units on its long-distance routes as well. About 2,000 of our double-deck coaches are already operating with DB Regio. The new-generation TWINDEXX 2010 will set new standards, particularly in terms of comfort." Ake Wennberg, President Locomotives and Equipment, Bombardier Transportation, said: "DB has once again turned to our high-performance, reliable and maintenance-friendly TRAXX platform. We are proud that our locomotives will now become an important part of DB's new long-distance route concept. They form an ideal combination with our TWINDEXX 2010 double-deck coaches."

The TRAXX P160 AC locomotives and TWINDEXX 2010 double-deck units are expected to enter service from the end of 2013 onwards. The order includes both 1st class and 2nd class variants of the double-deck units. They both feature carpeted floors, very comfortable seats with footrests as well as sun-blinds and spacious luggage racks. Numerous power outlets enable the comfortable use of electrical devices such as laptops. The double-deck coaches will also be equipped with an air conditioning system, electronic seat reservation, exterior loudspeakers and amplifiers for optimised mobile reception as well as electronic displays for entertainment and multi-language information. The coaches will feature an innovative LED-lighting system which is energy saving and deploys indirect lighting to enhance passenger comfort.

The new trains will provide designated spaces for bicycles on Intercity routes for the first time. In addition to the conventional passenger areas, the coaches are also fitted with multi-purpose or family areas. All intermediate coaches have two toilets. The new coaches are designed for a top speed of 160 km/h and will be built at the Bombardier site in Görlitz. The bogies are manufactured at the Bombardier site in Siegen.

The 27 ordered TRAXX P160 AC locomotives, with a power output of 5.6 MW and a maximum speed of 160 km/h, complement DB's existing TRAXX fleet. It has more than 600 TRAXX locomotives in use already – for both passenger as well as cargo transport.

The final assembly of the locomotives will take place at the Bombardier site in Kassel. The carbodies will be produced at the Bombardier site in Wrocław, Poland, and the bogies will be produced at the site in Siegen, Germany. The Mannheim and Hennigsdorf sites will provide the propulsion and controls technology as well as the propulsion equipment.

The TRAXX product family is designed for the transportation of goods and passengers on national and international routes on all networks. It is available in three electrical variants (for multi-system, AC and DC locomotives), as well as in a diesel-electric variant. All TRAXX locomotives set themselves apart thanks to their modular construction and their highly efficient BOMBARDIER MITRAC propulsion and controls systems, which have already been put into service in over 3,800 locomotives.

Photo: © Bombardier



Another eight Stadler NExT trains for Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn



Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn RBS is buying another eight NExT low-floored multiple-unit express trains. The first six of these modern vehicles from Stadler have been operating successfully between Solothurn and Berne since 2009. Now RBS has exercised its option to buy a further eight NExT trains from Stadler Rail, with an order value of around CHF 64 million.

Thanks to the six NExT trains – in operation since 2009 – RBS has been able to add further capacity to the timetable between Solothurn and Berne at peak times in the mornings and evenings. RBS needs more multiple-unit trains to continue to meet the constantly growing demand in the Berne–Solothurn corridor in the years ahead. With the eight additional NExT trains, in future only modern trains travelling at 120 km/h will be in operation between the canton capitals.

RBS will completely modernise the vehicles currently operating alongside the NExT trains between Solothurn and Berne (which are nearly 20 years old) and use them on the S8 line from 2014. There they will replace RBS's oldest commuter trains from the 1970s. This shuffling of resources will enable longer trains with around 20% higher capacity to operate on the S8 line in future, and the timetable can be extended.

Hans Amacker, Director of RBS, is most satisfied with the NExT and is delighted about the order of additional vehicles: "Our first six NExT trains are very popular and have proved themselves in daily operation. These modern, very carefully designed trains have a seductively elegant, functional design, offering the passenger the greatest possible space. I am delighted that we will be able to offer our passengers even more comfort with the new NExT."



Tailor-made for RBS

The NExT trains are air-conditioned and equipped with video monitoring, emergency telephones, a fire alarm and fire extinguishing equipment. Furthermore, it is possible to walk from one end of the train to the other, improving safety and helping the passengers distribute themselves more quickly throughout the train. The vehicles feature comfortable seating with generous legroom, good visibility and very large windows. There are seats for 154 passengers, 18 of which are in first class, and standing room for 289 people. The eight new NExT trains will be delivered in 2013, costing a total of around CHF 64 million.

Peter Spuhler, owner and CEO of Stadler Rail Group, is very proud of this new order: "The exercising of this option for a further eight NExT trains is proof that RBS is very happy with the vehicles, which have been in daily operation for the last two years. The NExT is a vehicle tailored to the specific requirements of RBS."

Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn RBS

Regionalverkehr Bern-Solothurn RBS is part of Berne's commuter railway system. It operates the four railway lines S7, S8, S9 and RE, and 10 bus routes within the integrated transport system. RBS has a total of around 23 million passengers per year and is one of the most used private railways in Switzerland. The large number of passengers and a very tight timetable demand a great deal of commitment from all 400 employees.

Stadler expands in Berlin-Brandenburg

The order book for the German Division is very healthy, enabling Stadler Pankow to expand its existing capacity. As part of this expansion of capacity for the production of rail vehicles, a new Stadler Pankow GmbH assembly location will be set up in Hohenschönhausen.

"Our current order book and plans for the future have made this step necessary," says Michael Daum, Director of Stadler Pankow GmbH. "At the same time, we are making a clear commitment to the region."

Stadler Pankow GmbH, which also owns the Velten site in Brandenburg, will invest in existing infrastructure in Hohenschönhausen. A final assembly location for rail vehicles will be created, increasing current capacity by approximately 50%. Start of production at the new site is planned for July.

Building a new bodyshell plant

Stadler will also grow qualitatively, and the founding of a new company in Berlin-Reinickendorf – Stadler Reinickendorf GmbH – is a further commitment to Berlin as an industrial location. Stadler Reinickendorf's goal is to set up a bodyshell plant.

"In Reinickendorf we will be manufacturing our bodyshells for the KISS double-decker multiple-unit trains which are needed to fulfil the order for the Berlin-Brandenburg light rail network. The bodyshells for the Luxembourg Railways order will also be manufactured in Reinickendorf," adds Michael Daum.

The total investment will be around EUR 10 million.

Development, design and administration will continue to be located at the Stadler Pankow GmbH head office, in Berlin-Pankow.

With this expansion, Stadler Pankow GmbH will have a total of four locations – three in Berlin and one in the district of Oberhavel/Brandenburg, which will produce assembly modules for rail vehicles and commission Stadler vehicles.

Further expansion of workforce planned

Around 300 more jobs will be created by 2013. Michael Daum is delighted, "Our plan is to be employing considerably more than 1,000 people in the region by then – all four locations in Berlin and Brandenburg will profit from this growth."

ÖBB: Ready for the Winter snow



The next frost and snow is here - and the ÖBB is prepared for it. In December OBB achieved 95.6 per cent punctuality in the Vienna Transport region which in January rose to 99 per cent.

At the end of last year the market across Europe was paralyzed - in the air, by road and partly by rail - but ÖBB achieved in mass transit relatively good results of 93.7 percent in transport reliability (with an annual average value of 95.2 per cent), in Vienna even 95.6 percent. Nearly 93.7 percent of punctuality of public transport means in December that about 4,200 trains and 500,000 passengers every day arrived on time to their destination - despite the snow, frost and wind.

Top ratings in January so far with 99 per cent punctuality is the Vienna S-Bahn.

WINTERFIT program: Warning system, point heaters on the main routes, Task Force Winter

The ÖBB has put together a package of measures to be ready for the winter.

- Major investments in personnel and equipment for the Winter to be prepared. The Austrian Federal Railways have for several years had a very accurate early warning weather (snow depth, wind, temperature). Accordingly, the willingness to organize and mobilize the personnel, if necessary.

- Not only in the urban areas, such as the Vienna S-Bahn, but also on the main tracks of the main axes that ÖBB operated there is almost 100 percent coverage of very high quality turnout heaters very. This means that in Austria there are over 10,000 points equipped with Point heaters.

- Since last winter, a task force entitled "plant availability - Winter" has analyzed the winter weaknesses, and considered improvements before this winter arrived. (eg, where is it useful / necessary to install additional point heaters, which require additional inspections of establishments, etc. ")

- Wind, cold and snow can paralyze particularly important crossovers and threaten traffic, therefore the controller can use a special key - a kind of "blowing snow key" - for a short time to give a high energy boost to the point heater which causes the snow to melt faster. This technique was learnt after the Berlin S-Bahn was paralyzed, this technique was used by the German's and the media called it "turbo button".

- The OBB are working on the permanent development of the winter performance of all relevant railway premises

- There are well-defined escalation levels and the resulting course and distance to the prioritization of operation. Basically, it is impossible to have a 100% trouble-free winter when you have a combination of snow, ice and frost, but the ÖBB have the best emergency preparations. In case of trouble, all available staff are on duty to resolve this as quickly as possible - and to operate points by hand if necessary.



Groupe Eurotunnel Drives Cross Channel Freight Development



GB Railfreight opens first Daventry to Italy (Novarro) service

Container shipper, DFDS, is one of the first to sign a contract with GB Railfreight and Europorte Channel to haul a mixed goods multi-modal train from Daventry through the Channel Tunnel to France and then on to Novarro in Northern Italy. The train will initially run three days a week.

Since Group Eurotunnel acquired GB Railfreight (GBRf) for its Europorte subsidiary in May 2010, restructuring and contract negotiations have been running side by side. John Smith, GB Railfreight Managing Director has now also been given responsibility for the management of Europorte Channel and has put in place a team, headed by Kevin Walker, Operations Director of Europorte Channel, supported by Neil Crossland, Commercial Director, who have taken on responsibility for developing rail freight services through the Channel Tunnel. The combination of GBRf and Europorte Channel means that the Group can now provide a one-stop shop for hauliers wishing to send goods by rail from the UK through the Channel Tunnel to France and beyond.

GBRf hauled the first train from Daventry to Dollands Moor with Class 66 731, the first of the fleet to be branded with the new GBRf/Europorte logos. At Dollands Moor the loco was changed for Class 92 028, now owned by Europorte Channel, and hauled through the Channel Tunnel to Frethun, France, at 120kph, overnight between Monday 10 January and Tuesday 11 January 2011. Jacques Gounon, Chairman and Chief Executive of Groupe Eurotunnel SA, stated, "Bringing GB Railfreight into the Eurotunnel Group was intended to give us a foothold in the UK rail freight market and help us boost the growth of rail freight through the Channel Tunnel. John Smith is the right person to drive this market for us and this first contract for GB Railfreight and Europorte Channel is just the start of what we can achieve."

John Smith continued, "The combination of GB Railfreight and Europorte Channel gives us a fabulous opportunity to develop rail freight services between Great Britain and continental Europe. It is a huge market with great potential. The rail freight product offers so much to hauliers in terms of volumes, value for money and environmental benefits. GBRf's well-known qualities of reliability, customer service and innovation are perfectly suited to this challenge".

České Dráhy has ordered 8 Skoda Vagonka double-decker trains for the Central and Moravian-Silesian Region



Czech Railways have ordered eight modern CityElefant type double-decker trains. These modern units offer over 300 seats, low entrance spaces, and have selected extra doors equipped for wheelchair boarding. Sets offer a modern air-conditioned interior with space to accommodate prams/pushchairs and bicycle storage. Toilets will be equipped with a closed system, and adjacent to spaces for wheelchair users will be wheelchair access toilets.

Onboard passenger information systems will be fitted. The first four units will be delivered to the Středočeského Region for the route Praha – Benešov u Prahy , followed by four for the Moravskoslezského Region Ostrava – Mosty u Jablunkova (Mosty koło Jabłonkowa).

All kits will be delivered within 27 months of signing the contract, which runs until spring 2013. Closed contract value is 1.75 billion CZK and 40% co-financed by the European Union from the Regional Operational Programmes

Accidents at level crossings caused by drivers



One of the priorities of Railway Infrastructure Administration, state organization (SŽDC) is to ensure and to enhance the safety at level crossings. It should be noted, however, that ensuring the safety at level crossings should concern not only SŽDC as the owner and manager of the railway infrastructure, but also the owner/manager of the roads.

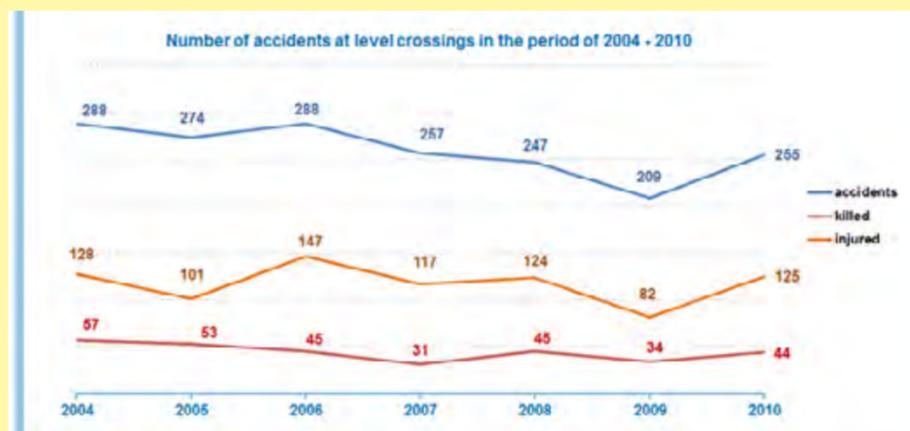
Level crossings have been created since the very start of the first railway in the 19th century. It can be assumed that the owner of the railway infrastructure only permitted level crossings of such parameters that made them safe. Requirements for technical solutions of the crossings and requirements for the operation safety were completely different from the present ones. They were based on technical parameters of road and railway vehicles (the length, width and height of the vehicle, the speed and also on the number of road vehicles and the frequency of train operation. At present, however, the volume of the road transport has significantly increased in comparison to rail transport. Needless to mention anything about the technical modifications the road vehicles had to undergo. We inherited a large number of level crossings from our forerunners but these crossings logically do not allow the current road transport without its partial restrictions, without essential construction work near the level crossing or without introducing costly level crossing safety installations. An ideal solution would be a grade-separated crossing, i.e. an underpass or an overpass. This would call for investments of hundreds of millions which are feasible only on the main railway corridors.

Since being established (as of 1.1.2003), SŽDC could affect ensuring and enhancing the safety at level crossings only indirectly, through the rail operator – Czech Railways, joint-stock company. As of 1.7.2008, SŽDC took over this function (as well as the administration of 8 296 level crossings) and began its direct involvement in level crossings. Lots have changed in the field of level crossings since. SŽDC has created a system of uniform identification (numbering) of the level crossings of all owners in the Czech Republic which is interlinked with the joint rescue service of the Czech Republic. According to the statistical data, the utilization of this system has prevented hundreds of crashes between a railway vehicle and a road vehicle stuck at the level crossing. Subsequently SŽDC introduced the so-called. „joint inspections“, attended by the owners of roads and the rail owner, which aim to find a way to modify the level crossing and its surrounding area and to enhance the operation safety.

SŽDC closely cooperates with the Ministry of Transport CR and the Rail Authority CR when defining clear rules for cancelling poorly utilized level crossings or obviously unused level crossings under the currently valid legislation. From 2008 till the end of 2010, 211 level crossings were cancelled, 115 level crossings only in 2010. As of 31.12.2010, SŽDC managed 8 161 level crossings, out of which 4 453 had a basic securing level, i.e. equipped with a warning cross and 3 708 were equipped with level crossing safety installations of different kind and technical level. In 2010 the securing level was enhanced with 54 level crossings.

However, there is still the problem of poor visibility with some level crossings. We try to deal with this fact by disposing of vegetation and obstacles obstructing the drivers' view of the railway line. In many cases, this is not possible and therefore in relation to the allocated financial means we build level crossing safety installations or we restrict the operation of long road vehicles at specific level crossings. As a last resort we apply permanent restrictions on the line speed; compared to 2009 we increased their number by 56 to 979. However, we are aware of the fact that this boundary solution may partially decrease the track capacity and thus the competitiveness of the railway.

Despite all attempts, the number of accidents, of the killed and injured persons in 2010 approached the number which was registered in 2007 and 2008. The reasons for this situation may vary - from unfavourable snow conditions early 2010 to the increasing lack of discipline and aggressiveness of drivers of road vehicles. We believe that the focus of our efforts supported by larger application of the camera surveillance system and by amending the currently valid legislation will positively result in different numbers of accidents at level crossings in 2011.



Alstom wins contract for T7 and T8 tramway lines and joins RATP and Ile de France region in celebrating 1,500th Citadis ordered



Alstom will be providing the tramways set to run on the T7 and T8 lines in the Paris metropolitan area. The first tranche, totalling nearly €50 million, includes 19 Citadis trainsets destined for the T7 line, which runs from Villejuif to Athis-Mons. A second tranche, to be exercised at a later date, will include 20 additional trainsets for the T8 line, which will connect Saint-Denis with Epinay and Villetaneuse. The contract is being financed jointly by the STIF and RATP and could eventually total 70 trainsets.

With this contract, Alstom joins the RATP and the Ile de France regional government in celebrating the sale of the 1,500th Citadis tram. The RATP will ultimately have the largest inventory of Citadis trainsets in the world with 145, including 60 for the T2 line (Porte de Versailles - Pont de Bezon), 46 for the T3 line (Pont de Garigliano - Porte de la Chapelle) and 19 and 20 for the T7 and T8 lines respectively.

In the face of fierce competition from foreign manufacturers on the French market, this new Alstom contract serves as confirmation of the competitiveness of both French industry and the Citadis product line. Alstom Transport, the leading manufacturing company in the French rail sector, contributes to the dynamism of local economies through operations at nine industrial sites located throughout the country. Alstom Transport's 8,800 employees in France deploy their know-how in the service of customers in France and abroad, and one job at Alstom creates about three jobs for its suppliers. The T7 and T8 trainsets will be produced in France, with design and assembly at the Alstom plant in La Rochelle, engine manufacture at Ornans, bogie manufacture at Creusot, power-train equipment manufacture at Tarbes and onboard electronics assembly at Villeurbanne.

Thanks to the modular Citadis design, Alstom was able to provide the RATP with a custom product both inside and out. Each of the T7 and T8 Citadis tramsets will be 32 metres in length and 2.40 metres wide, and will accommodate over 200 passengers – the equivalent of more than three buses. Designed to offer optimal quality-of-life onboard, Citadis trams feature platform-height floors, air conditioning, and video-surveillance and passenger-counting systems, as well as onboard audio and visual information. Wider seats and more accessible door-opening buttons are just two of the improvements designed to facilitate travel for those with mobility issues. In addition, Citadis is up to 98% recyclable, which helps to preserve the environment. A Citadis consumes four times less energy than a bus and 10 times less than a car (In kWh per seated passenger). The Citadis also enhances the quality of city life: four times quieter than motor traffic, it generates about five decibels less noise.

The RATP will be receiving trams of proven value that today set the worldwide performance standard. To date, 1,514 Citadis trams have been ordered by 36 cities.

Railway in the Czech Republic achieves another success in the field of investments co-funded by the European Union



Within a very short period, the European Commission approved the sixth investment project (over EURO 50 million) for the Czech railway. The Railway Infrastructure Administration, state organization (SŽDC) will receive a contribution of nearly CZK 1 billion from the Cohesion Fund under the Operational Programme Transport. In this case, the objective of this big investment project was the electrification of the railway section Šatov – Znojmo.

The electrification and the overall line reconstruction (superstructure and substructure, bridges and culverts, safety and communication installations) resulted in the speed enhancement up to 90 km/h. The section also provides a larger clear space (in line with the loading gauge UIC GC) and a higher load capacity (in line with the class D4). The whole project is most significant as the section is a follow-up to the previously reconstructed section from the state border with Austria to Šatov. Between Znojmo and Vienna, there is a direct connection via an electrified line and the cross-border railway infrastructure in the Znojmo region got linked to the European network.

Alstom delivers first renovated trainset for line 1 of the Cairo metro



On 1st January 2011, during a ceremony hosted by Egyptian Transport Minister Alaa Fahmy, Alstom delivered the first renovated trainset for line 1 of the Cairo metro.

This delivery was part of a renovation contract signed by Alstom and Cairo Metro Organization in 2007. The contract, worth €19 million, involves upgrading the braking, traction and electrical systems on 52 metro trainsets, as well as repainting the interior and exterior surfaces. The renovation work, which began in 2008 in the Cairo Metro Organization's workshops in Tura, should continue until 2014.

With 9 cars each (3 trailers and 6 power cars), the line 1 metro trainsets were supplied by Alstom in 1982. Line 1, Cairo's oldest metro line, was put into service in 1981 and now has 35 stations. The renovation will eventually enable the trains to increase their frequency due to their improved availability and to carry up to 60,000 passengers per hour in each direction.

Alstom has been operating in Egypt for over 30 years and employs nearly 300 people. A long-time partner of the Cairo Metro as a member of the Interinfra consortium, Alstom supplied line 1's signaling, control and telecommunications system and rolling stock in the 1980s. Alstom is also involved in two French consortia for developing the signaling, control and telecommunications systems - as well as the electromechanical components - for lines 2 and 3. Alstom also delivered 30 shunting locomotives to Egyptian National Railways (ENR) in 2006



Alstom to supply an additional 22 Coradia Polyvalent trains to the Auvergne and Poitou-Charentes regions for €125 million



The Poitou-Charentes and Auvergne regions have just placed an order with Alstom to supply 10 and 12 regional trains, respectively, from the Coradia Polyvalent range (Régiolis) for some €125 million. The Auvergne region is already operating 37 regional Alstom trains and the Poitou-Charentes region, 18 trains.

The order, which was booked in the third quarter of fiscal year 2010/11, is part of the contract financed by the French regions and signed on 27 October 2009 with SNCF. The initial contract consisted of a first tranche totalling €800 million for the supply of 100 Coradia Polyvalent trains. The two order options exercised in January (19 trainsets) and March (23 rames) 2010, brought the total number of trainsets ordered to 142 units. To date, 164 trainsets have been ordered and will be distributed among the regions of Alsace, Aquitaine, Auvergne, Basse-Normandie, Haute-Normandie, Lorraine, Midi-Pyrénées, Pays de la Loire, Picardie, Poitou-Charentes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. The total volume of trains could eventually reach 1,000 Coradia Polyvalent trains, for total orders of over €7 billion.

The production delivery of the contract dated October 2009 is currently ongoing. The first carriage frame is being finished at Alstom's plant in Reichshoffen, Alsace, and the first train will roll off the assembly line in June 2011. The deliveries are scheduled to begin in 2013 and end in mid-2015.

Coradia Polyvalent will be entirely designed, manufactured and assembled in Alstom Transport facilities in France and Belgium: train engineering and assembly in Reichshoffen (Alsace); bogies in Le Creusot (Bourgogne); motors in Ornans (Franche-Comté); traction drives in Tarbes (Midi-Pyrénées); onboard computing systems in Villeurbanne (Rhône-Alpes); and electrical equipment in Charleroi (Belgium).

Régiolis, a product of Alstom's range of regional Coradia trains

The highly-modular Coradia Polyvalent range is a single-level regional train offering different technical configurations and modular fittings for passengers. It can travel at up to 160 km/h in both its electric and hybrid versions and operates at two different voltages (25 kV and 1,500 V). It is also available in a cross-border version for operation on the German and Swiss rail networks at a voltage of 15 kV. Its platform-height floor provides travellers with optimal accessibility and full all-point visibility for improved security. Motor bogies are positioned at the ends of the carriages to limit vibrations and noise levels.

The Coradia Polyvalent consumes about 15% less energy than its competitors – and hence less CO₂ – and its design incorporates eco-friendly and sustainable materials. It is equipped with permanent magnet motors that are more compact and efficient than conventional electric motors. The technical choices incorporated into its design serve the two-fold purpose of facilitating maintenance and optimizing life-cycle cost.

Thanks to over 30 years' experience in regional transportation, Alstom's Coradia range of regional and suburban trains provides adapted solutions to the sharp rise in road traffic, both within cities and on motorways, and to continued suburban sprawl. Alstom has built over 3,000 regional trains in its French, German and Italian plants, which have already covered more than 4 billion kilometres.

Siemens lands first contract for its new metro platform – Warsaw orders 35 trains worth EUR272 million. The biggest order for Siemens in Poland

Warsaw's metro operator, Metro Warszawskie Sp. z o.o., has placed a EUR272 million order for 35 six-car metro trains with a consortium consisting of Siemens and Newag, the Polish rolling stock manufacturer. This is the biggest order ever for Siemens in Poland. It is also the first order for complete units of the new "Inspiro" metro generation recently unveiled at InnoTrans, the world's biggest trade fair for transport technology. These trains are intended for operation on the Warsaw Metro system; delivery is due to start in autumn 2012. "Once again, our ambitions in the rapidly growing market for metro systems have been crowned with success. Inspiro is the result of our efforts in the past years to come up with an innovative and eco-friendly solution to city's increasing mass transit," said Hans-Jörg Grundmann, CEO of the Mobility Division of Siemens.

Warsaw already has one underground line, which is approximately 23 kilometers long and serves 21 stations. The central section of the new Line 2 is currently under construction. The 35 trains just ordered are to be used on both these lines and are Warsaw Metro's answer to the ever-increasing number of passengers. Between 1998 and 2008 alone, ridership tripled annually to a figure well over 126 million passengers. 15 trains will be used on the first metro line and 20 trains are ordered for the new constructed line. An option for the further extension of Line 2 allows for the call-off of 17 more trains of the same type within the next three years. The present order calls for the delivery, commissioning, testing and certification of the trains. The first ten units will be completely built at the Siemens Mobility plant in Vienna, Austria. Partly assembling of the remaining metro trains will be carried out by the partner company Newag in Nowy Sącz, Poland.

With its 1.7 million inhabitants Warsaw is representative for many fast growing cities in Eastern Europe. Analysts forecast an above-average trend for the market there because existing metro fleets are due for modernization. UNIFE, the Association of the European Rail Industry, foresees an annual growth rate of 4 percent for the worldwide metro market by the year 2016, with a current volume of about EUR5 billion for rolling stock and another good EUR 2 billion for rail infrastructure. This growth will be fueled, above all, by the rising populations in the major urban centers in Eastern Europe.

The metro train made by Siemens and marketed under the name "Inspiro" makes consistent use of lightweight construction methods and modern propulsion technology to achieve a marked decrease in the consumption of energy. When it came to selecting materials – for the car body and for the interior – Siemens placed great importance on reusability. The recycling rate exceeds 95 percent. This new metro generation is part of Siemens' green portfolio that generated about EUR28 billion in sales for the company in fiscal 2010, making Siemens the world's biggest supplier of eco-friendly rail technology. These kinds of products and solutions enabled our customers to save 270 million metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) during that same period, which is equal to the aggregate CO₂ output of Hong Kong, London, New York, Tokyo, Delhi and Singapore.

This new rolling stock generation is setting standards not only in environmental protection, but also in terms of operating costs. Maintenance intervals have been extended considerably, thereby lowering the cost of routine servicing while increasing the availability of the trains. Consequently, the metro operator is able to achieve a higher system capacity with the same number of cars. The flexible seating arrangements, the optional use of driver assistance systems, and the possibility of driverless operation ensure that the operator gets the utmost capacity out of his system. The trains can run at a top speed of 90 km/h. The modular, self-contained train concept allows the formation of two to eight-car configurations with varying degrees of motorization. Passenger interchange times have been greatly reduced thanks to the use of maximum door widths and load detection systems. And, for example, since it has been possible to eliminate technical equipment cabinets inside the cars, the interior design can focus on offering full comfort and convenience to the passenger.

These metro trains will also give Warsaw a completely new look. The exterior design created in cooperation with DesignworksUSA, a subsidiary of the BMW Group, is sure to set the modern tone. The combination of futuristic design of the front end and graphics styling of the sidewalls of the "Inspiro" symbolizes the forward-looking attitude of present-day Warsaw. A bright, open-plan interior highlights the modern chic and appeal of the city's metro. Together with the end-to-end accessibility of the train, the interior design contributes extensively to enhancing the passenger's sense of security.

Farewell to Wrexham and Shropshire

A sad occasion on January 28th with the closure of the Wrexham and Shropshire Railway. In the next few pages we bring together some of the photos from the final days of service and what went wrong.



From the UK

wrexham &
shropshire
direct trains to London

IMPORTANT INFORMATION Wrexham & Shropshire closure

It is with great regret that we announce that Wrexham & Shropshire will stop operating trains on Friday 28th January.

This very difficult decision has been taken following a full review of all possible alternatives, in which it was concluded that the business, which operates with no public subsidy, would not provide a return on investment.

Until Friday 28th January trains will operate normally. The last train will be the 1830 from London Marylebone.

From Saturday 29th January, all Wrexham & Shropshire tickets already purchased will be valid on alternative routes into London Euston operated by Arriva Trains Wales, London Midland and Virgin Trains, and London Marylebone by Chiltern Railways.

If you have already purchased a Wrexham & Shropshire ticket for travel after 28th January, please talk to staff at stations, visit our website or contact our customer service centre which will remain open.

Website: wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk

Customer services: 0845 260 5200 or email info@wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our customers, for your loyal support.

wrexhamandshropshire.co.uk

Class 67 012 and DVT 82301 are seen at Wrexham on January 28th at the end of service, goodbye WSMR. *Brian Battersby*

82301

67012



Above: Class 67 001 stands at a foggy Shrewsbury with the 16.30 London - Wrexham on January 20th. [Phil Martin](#)
 Below: Class 67 012 arrives into Telford on January 28th. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Above: The crowd applaud the driver as he departs Wrexham on January 28th for the last time. [Brian Battersby](#)
 Below: Class 67 012 & 029 are seen at Shrewsbury with the 18.30 from London on the January 18th. [Phil Martin](#)



WSMR Class 67 013 heads through Wellington on January 28th, the final day of services.
Richard Hargreaves



In Hindsight - A WSMR Review

by CJ Sutcliffe

On 28th April 2008, following almost directly in the shadow of the success of the open access operator Grand Central, Renaissance Trains launched a new open access service from London Marylebone to Wrexham General, named Wrexham and Shropshire Railways, or as often initialised WSMR. Wrexham and Shropshire restored direct services between London and Wrexham after an eight year absence of such a working, with the previous service run by Virgin Trains being withdrawn in 2000. The company used Mk3 rolling stock hired from DB Regio UK and five Class 67 locomotives hired from EWS/DB Schenker. Originally five trains a day operated in both directions between London and Wrexham, however due to the economic downturn this later became four trains per direction per day, and then later due to insufficient customer demand two services were combined into one service, and the timetable dropped to just three trains per direction per day. Then just a few days ago, after an apparent review into the companies financial situation, the board of directors took the decision to close the company completely from 28th of January, only notifying staff and customers on 26th January. The last service was the 18:30 London Marylebone - Wrexham and return.

I must say that I for one actually am not very surprised at this. As with the rest of the UKs enthusiast scene, I am shocked, but not as much as some, and there are some fundamental reasons behind this, and some speculative rumours also, both of which I shall go into now, starting with:

The Facts

The operation of W&S did from the outset open a can of worms. The route the service took from Marylebone into Wales took the trains right through Birmingham and out to Wolverhampton before serving Telford and Shrewsbury before arrival at Wrexham. Birmingham International, Birmingham New Street and Wolverhampton stations all lie on the route the service took from London, and all three stations are also served by Virgin Trains, who immediately kicked up a fuss at the proposal for such a service. Bringing up their "Moderation Of Competition" agreement, which basically locks every other company apart from new franchises that took over pre-existing franchises out of the WCML and the stations that Virgin serves, they then tried to block W&S from serving Wolverhampton at all, claiming it would provide an alternative route to London other than Virgin West Coast services, and would thus hurt the companies business south of Birmingham.

There was an agreement made which allowed W&S to pick up only heading northbound, and to set down only heading southbound, effectively giving both companies a bad situation. W&S therefore only gained half an interchange point they would have otherwise had, and Virgin blocked them completely from serving Coventry, however allowed for access to Birmingham International, but W&S never took up this offer.

This for me highlights just how unfair the agreement was. It made Virgin very happy that they could still run services and still have just as many people riding them as before, however it did effectively still shut W&S out at the hilt, and therefore made the stop at Wolverhampton pointless. Had there been full access, Virgin may have gained from extra passenger traffic to the north from W&S services from Marylebone, and vice versa for trains heading south. But Virgin wanted to maintain their aggressive business nature, and defended Wolverhampton just like they defend the Settle & Carlisle line today, holding onto unused paths they gained during the upgrading of the line north of Crewe for diversions, claiming them to still be necessary should the need for diversions ever arise again.

This was highlighted when Northern wished to increase the frequency of trains between Carlisle and Leeds utilising the S&C using unused Virgin held paths, but to this day Virgin refuse point blank to give them up to anyone, thus resulting in few charters and few freight services to use the line, and a low number of local services across the route. For me, the whole "Moderation Of Competition" ledger is more like a "Lockout Of Every Other Company" policy. They even went as far as to operate a rival service from Wrexham to London Euston at one point as an extension of the Chester - Euston service southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening, not serving stations in the West Midlands or Shropshire and thus being quicker from A to B, taking business off of W&S.

The Rumours

Rumours are rife following the closure of the service that it was in fact not a financial decision, but more a tactical one. DB Schenker owned the locomotives for W&S and DB Regio UK owned the carriages and DVTs (cab car if you're German), and thus with DB Regio UK also being the parent company to Chiltern Railways, the other main and now only serving company at London Marylebone, it was rumoured that DB asked for the withdrawal of the W&S service to free up the rolling stock to upgrade the current service from London Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street/Snow Hill, which is run by Class 168 "Clubman" units. which were of late Network Southeast origin and would therefore be considered inadequate by todays intercity service standards of rolling stock. And the loco hauled sets of W&S would be far more adequate given their additional comfort and speed, together with better onboard facilities.

Arriva also did not see eye to eye with W&S, after the company started running the daily express from Cardiff to Holyhead via Crewe. W&S originally bid for this, but were outbid by Arriva, who also wanted to run services between Aberystwyth and London Marylebone at one point, the proposal of which was rejected by the ORR, and prompted a statement from DB Regio that if the plan had been approved, they would cease funding of the W&S operation immediately, causing the service to cease. This was during March 2010, at which point ATW was owned by DBR, which they are now not, but this could have been a deciding factor that DB Regio wanted to run their own services to Aberystwyth and therefore needed the stock for that.

The Verdict

With all said and done, I have to side with the facts. Virgin have proved before that they can aggressively defend their territory, and can use all of their muscle as an entity to bully other new companies to stay away from their patch, which happens to be all of the WCML. The agreement is due to end with the current franchise on 31st March 2012, although my betting is if Virgin get the franchise renewed they will also seek an extension to the frankly illegal moderation ledger.

One station can prove to be a pinnacle point in the success or failure of a route, and sadly for W&S it was the latter, and Virgin will once again capitalise. What the fall of W&S will bring for the five locomotives and the associated control cars and passenger carriages remains to be seen, though I would like to see DBR upgrade the Chiltern Railways London - Birmingham services, which is entirely doable as DB as a whole own everything that was associated with W&S.

Photo: Early WSMR stock carried Inter-City Blue/Grey livery as seen here at London Marylebone. [CJ Sutcliffe](#)



Stylish and comfortable Wrexham and Shropshire levels of comfort on board their stock certainly got high praise from their passengers. This is a shot from the "Glory Days" of WSMR at London Marylebone on August 11th 2009. [CJ Sutcliffe](#)





Class 67 001 is seen at Shifnal with the 13.28 ex Wrexham heading for London on January 19th. [Phil Martin](#)



DVT 82301 stands at Wrexham on January 28th, the final day of WSMR services.
Brian Battersby



Class 67 012 & 013 pause at Telford Central on January 26th.

Phil Martin





In 2006 Czech Class 754.021 passes Kuncice pod Ondřejníkem. This loco is now situated in Olomouc depot and now hauls passenger trains to/from Jeseník instead of Class 749s. Also the manually controlled railway crossing isn't located there anymore. [Martin Grill](#)





Above: Bombardier / GEC Alstom built AM96 class EMU No. 528 is seen departing
Gent St Pieters on June 29th 2001. [Paul Godding](#)



Below: Belgian Railways Series 62 Type 212 diesel locos were built in the early 1960s by GM and Cockerill.
This is No. 6226 passing through Gent on June 27th 2001. [Paul Godding](#)



Now all withdrawn, although there are some preserved, the Belgian Railways Class 51 diesel
loco dates from the early 1960s. This is No. 5174 passing through Antwerp Berchem
on June 28th 2001. [Paul Godding](#)





Above: Czech Class 721.198 is seen on the depot at Havlíčkův Brod during a visit on June 30th 2006.



Below: Czech Class 742.170 heads through Mlada Boleslav on June 28th 2006 having just arrived with a local trip working from Vsetaty. *Both: Paul Godding*

