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Contact Us

Editor: David
david@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

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

Contents

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.

Welcome to our second edition of the new look Railtalk Magazine Xtra. Feedback for the new look has been great so far, and we hope that it will continue with this issue.

Well I can't believe that it's February already and as I commented last month, where is all the snow? Looking at the various webcams that are around Europe's railways it would seem to be virtually nonexistent, which is a great shame, but probably not if you have to travel in it. January has been a very quiet month, with nothing major happening both in the UK and in Europe as far as I can tell. In the Czech Republic whilst the Class 749s officially finished their duties in December they seem to have still been working regularly. Whether this continues into the summer only time will tell. Whilst in both France and Hungary the replacement of diesel loco haulage for DMUs seems to be on the horizon in many areas. Time for a trip over there to get in the haulage whilst I can, me thinks!

In the UK this month we have had plenty of wet weather but there have been a few bright days and one of them was at the Great Central's steam gala featured in our From the UK section this month. Well is was nice and sunny till the thunderstorm hit!. Still it certainly drew the crowds and I have to say that this was one of the busiest galas that I've seen in quite a while.
Anyway till next month and as always keep sending in the photos, and if you are going on holiday please don't forget to take the camera.

David

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed, it really makes our task of putting this magazine together a joy when we see so many great photos. This issue wouldn't be possible without: Ken Abram, BVT, Brian Battersby, Mark Bearton, Steve Dennison, Dave Felton, Paul Godding, Carl Grocott, Richard Hargreaves Dave Harris, Stuart Hillis, Keith Hookham, Richard Jones, Anton Kendall, Steve Madden, Phil Martin, Chris Morrison, Gerald Nicholl, Chris Perkins, Mark Pichowicz, Andy Pratt, Laurence Sly, Railwaymedia, Steamsounds, and Steve Thompson.

Front Cover: A pair of OBB locomotives approach Sankt Jodok whilst working a southbound freight train on November 8th. The lead locomotive is Class 1116.180, the second locomotive is a Class 1144. ***Laurence Sly***
This Page: Sri Lankan Railways Class S11 No. 900 Indian built diesel multiple unit passes through Mahawaskaduwa, north of Kalutara with an early morning packed commuter train from Matara to Colombo Fort. ***Dave Felton***

Pictures

On November 25th, OBB Class 1142-682.2 pauses at Linz Hbf with a coal train. ***Class47***

On November 8th, FrecciaBianca train No. 9716,
09:38 Trieste Centrale - Torino Porta Nuova passes Albignano,
Laurence Sly

SNCB's Bombardier Traxx No. 2830 (E186-222) passes through Antwerp Berchem on December 13th with a rake of tanks.
Brian Battersby

SBB Re 4/4 II No. 11158 passes through the picturesque town of Fluelen with train No. IR2279, 15:04 Basel to Locarno on August 23rd. ***Steve Madden***

Trenitalia's Class E.655 102 passes Albignano whilst working freight train No. 51332 from S. Zeno Folzano to Villadossola, November 8th. ***Laurence Sly***

As a farewell to the SNCB red livery, the rail preservation group TSP recently organised a special outing featuring EMU No. 268 and ex-Sabena EMU No. 599, seen here at Leuven. ***BVT***

H-MAV No. 628-326 working the daily cross border freight from Valea Lui Mihai (Romania) to Debrecen (Hungary) is seen passing Nagycsere Va (Hungary) on October 3rd.
Steve Madden

On January 11th, two Class 100 AVE (Alta Velocidad Española - Spanish High Speed) units and a Class 130 Alvia unit await their next turn in the standard gauge platforms at Alicante Terminal Station.
Steve Dennison

At Nagycsere Va on October 3rd, Class 418-166 is working train No. 6813 from Satu Mare (Romania) to Debrecen (Hungary). The loco would have worked this train from Valea Lui Mihai and picked up the Bzmot's at Nyirabrany. ***Steve Madden***

DB's ICE515 to München Hbf crosses the Hohenzollernbrücke at Köln on September 25th. ***Steamsounds***

Above: On October 19th, ALEX No. 223 067 arrives into Kempten(Allgau) Hbf with train No. ALX84144 to Lindau and Oberstdorf. ***Steamsounds***

Left: DB Class 111.037 pauses at Garmisch Partenkirchen for a driver change with a service for Mittenwald. ***Steamsounds***

Main: A Zillertalbahn DMU working train No. R143 is seen approaching Mayrhofen. ***Steamsounds***

An ex works Class M41 and brilliant blue sky at Mateszalka. This is train No. 6519 04:40 Eger to Fehergyarmat with Class 418-172 in charge on October 5th. ***Steve Madden***

Class 480-022 is seen carrying a unique livery. The man on the side is Weores Sandor, and the livery on the loco celebrates the centenary of his birth. ***Steve Madden***

RENFE Class 334 diesel locomotive No. 334.012.2 and Class 252 electric locomotive No. 252.058.3 await their next duties at a cloudy Alicante Terminal station on January 11th. *Steve Dennison*

Above: Deutsche Reichsbahn No. 99.222, built in 1931, runs round at the misty summit of the Brocken. ***Steamsounds***

Left: Deutsche Reichsbahn No. 99.7241 metre gauge steam loco built in the 1950s is seen departing from Schierke. ***Steamsounds***

Main: Another metre gauge loco, No. 99.7234 is pictured crossing the road at Wernigerode Westerntor. ***Steamsounds***

Above: DB Schenker Poland/EWS Class 66 237 (92 70 0 066 237) hauls a train of road vans through Katowice Sosnowiec on September 26th. ***Anton Kendall***

Left: Former CSD Class 182.143-8, now with CTL Logistics, brings a loaded coal train through Katowice Sosnowiec on September 26th. ***Anton Kendall***

Main: PKP EMU No. EN57-761 is seen at Poznan Glowny on August 24th. ***Brian Battersby***

Sri Lankan Railways Class S11 No. 912 Indian built diesel multiple unit is seen passing through Mahawaskaduwa, north of Kalutara with an early morning packed commuter train from Galle to Colombo Fort from on December 10th. *Dave Felton*

Private operator Regiotrans is seen working train No. RI4060, 14:00 Brasov to Bucharesti Nord service as it departs from Buftea formed of Ex SNCF loco No. 25572 and stock.
Chris Perkins

Above: DB Schenker Poland Class 311-D11 (92 51 3 640 021-3) works through Katowice Sosnowiec on September 26th. Amazingly these are rebuilds of the popular ST44 locomotives. ***Anton Kendall***

Right: PKP twin Class ET41-197 heads a loaded coal train through Radzionkow on September 25th. ***Anton Kendall***

Main: With the looks more of a tram than an EMU, No. EN94-18 passes through Warszawa Ochota. ***Brian Battersby***

On December 28th, Romanian built L45H type diesel-hydraulic loco No. MK45.2004 departs Janos-Hegy on the Budapest Children's Railway. ***Mark Pichowicz***

Class 651.008 (ex DB 232.682) pauses at Zalaszentivan with train No. R8902 08:12 Sopron - Pecs, December 29th.

Mark Pichowicz

Above: Vossloh G2000BB No. 1104 heads through Antwerp Berchem on December 13th. ***Brian Battersby***

Left: Crossrail's Class 66 No. PB14 passes through Lokeren On December 10th with a rake of containers. ***Brian Battersby***

Main: SNCF's Alstom BB Class 36000, No. 36020 heads a freight through Antwerp Berchem on December 13th. ***Brian Battersby***

PKP Cargo's ST44-1215 (92 51 3 630 079-3) double heads with ST43-217 through Kedzierzyn-Kozle on September 27th.
Anton Kendall

Above: The 2 assisting engines of an eastbound coal train bring up the rear of the train passing through Crawford Hill, Nebraska, whilst a coal empties waits it's path west back to the Powder River Basin. The Engineer takes the opportunity to stretch his legs while waiting for the loaded train to pass. ***Andy Pratt***

Right: At Crawford Hill, Nebraska, a BNSF coal loads struggles over the summit at Belmont. These 13,000 ton coal trains have to stop at Crawford to attach banking engines for the 15 mile climb up Crawford Hill. By the summit they are down to walking pace. ***Andy Pratt***

Main: A Union Pacific loaded coal heads east through Wyoming on September 16th. ***Andy Pratt***

On November 26th, OBB Railjet Class 1116-245 is seen departing Landek-Zams heading for Innsbruck.

Class47

STK-operated No.T448P-122 hauls a short engineers train, including a large transformer wagon through Kedzierzyn-Kozle on September 27th. *Anton Kendall*

Sri Lankan Railways Class M5 diesel electric locomotive No. 782, built by Hitachi, is seen arriving into Colombo Fort station on December 13th. Dave Felton

Romanian Class 60 rebuild now with an EMD engine, No. 63-1060 takes line 901 at Chitila with train No. R9103, 14:30 Bucuresti Nord to Titu on September 24th. ***Chris Perkins***

A trio of Railpool locos, with Class 186.287 leading head through Innsbruck on November 26th.

Class47

Above: ÖBB Class 2068.028 is seen stabled at Innsbruck Hbf. ***Steamsounds***

Right: ÖBB Class 1063.049 stands ready to give rear end assistance to a westbound freight over the Arlberg Pass. ***Steamsounds***

Main: At Lienz in Osttirol, ÖBB Class 1144.050 is seen ready to propel train No. REX4654 to San Candido/Innichen. ***Steamsounds***

Romanian-built No. ST43-R014, working for CTL Logistics, works a fuel train through Radzionkow on September 25th.
Anton Kendall

On November 26th SBB Clas 460.014-4 in rather attractive advertising livery pauses at Olten. ***Class47***

Class 477-821 heads train No. IR1621, 10:00 Buchuresti Nord to Timisora, north of Azuga. The River Prahova is in the foreground and the Bucegi Mountains in the background. ***Chris Perkins***

On December 30th, Class 664-105 rests at Maribor after arriving from Hodos with train No. IC246. ***Mark Pichowicz***

PKP's Class EP09-017 stands in Praha hl.n on November 22nd, ready to depart with an overnight sleeper service. ***Andy***

Above: An eastbound BNSF car train arrives at Mojave on September 21st. It has just crossed the Tehachapi mountains seen in the background of the photo. ***Andy Pratt***

Left: The rear of a westbound Union Pacific manifest is seen at Tehachapi on September 21st. This is the summit of the line between Bakersfield and Mojave. In the background can be seen the Tehachapi mountains. ***Andy Pratt***

Main: Caliente lies at the foot of the western climb of the Tehachapi mountains in California and sees the start of the climb to the summit at Tehachapi. Here, a pair of BNSF locos make light work of a relatively short eastbound train of lorry trailers round the horseshoe curve. ***Andy Pratt***

On November 27th, in early morning mist, SNCF BB No. 26144 awaits its departure with a service to Metz.
Class47

A pair of Alstom Prima dual voltage loco's Nos. 427028 and 427016 pass Beziers Airport on August 18th with an eastbound intermodal working which originated in Spain.
Chris Perkins

On November 25th, DB Class 218.474 is seen at Bremen Hbf. having just arrived with a local service.
Andy

Above: On November 26th, DB Class 146.128 is seen stabled at Bremen whilst an early morning Metronom service heads out of the station heading for Hamburg. ***Andy***

Left: Metrans Class 186.181-4 speeds a liner towards the port as it passes through Hamburg Harburg on October 1st. ***Class47***

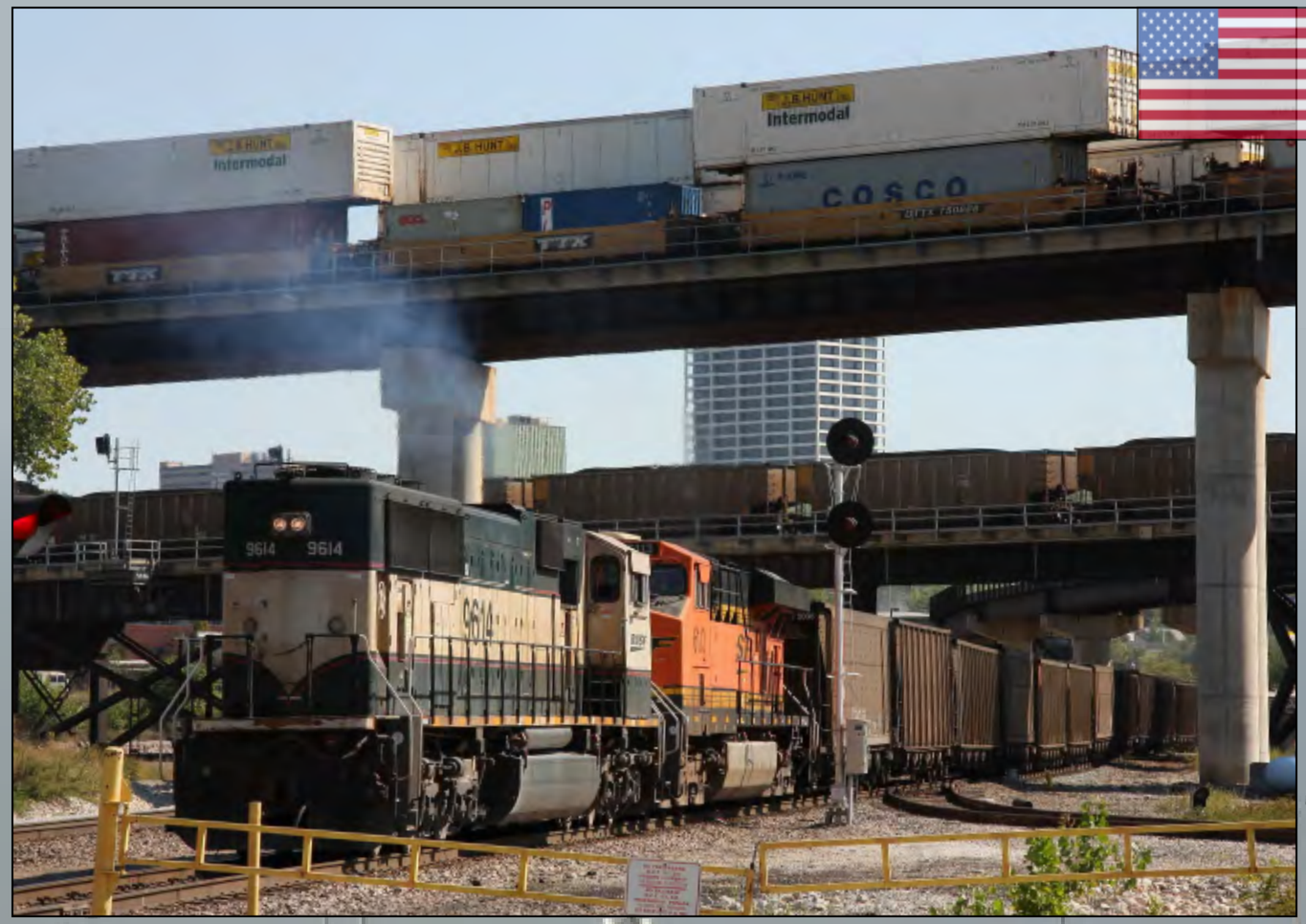
Main: SBB Cargo Re 4/4 II No. 421.395-5 is seen heading through Hamburg Harburg on October 1st, with a well loaded liner heading back over the border into Switzerland. ***Class47***

Sri Lankan Railways Class S3 No. 827 Hyundai built diesel multiple unit passes through Mahawaskaduwa, north of Kalutara with train No. 8040, the 06:30 service from Colombo Maradana to Matara on December 16th. ***Dave Felton***

On November 22nd, Ceske Drahy's Class 371.002-7 is seen in Praha hl.n having just arrived with a terminating service from Zilina. ***Andy***

On October 16th, a RENFE Rodalies de Catalunya Civia EMU No. 245M speeds along the seafront at Barcelonetta with a Molins de Rei Maçanet - Massanes service. ***Class47***

Above: A short BNSF transfer freight is propelled across the diamonds at Kansas City Bottoms whilst a loaded coal working awaits a run over the diamonds. ***Andy Pratt***



Right: Full house at Kansas City Bottoms. Double stacks pass each other on the BNSF flyover, beneath it a Union Pacific coal loads heads over the Union Pacific flyover having just crossed the Kansas River on the upper deck of the Adams Street Bridge. On the ground a BNSF coal working rattles over the diamonds with another 2 BNSF locos on the rear assisting. ***Andy Pratt***

Main: A BNSF loaded coal waits for a path over the diamonds whilst in the background a KCT manifest has run off the lower deck of the Adams Street Bridge, Kansas City Bottoms. ***Andy Pratt***

On August 18th, SNCF Sybic No. 26196 heads past Beziers Airport with a westbound Intermodal service consisting mainly of tanktainers. *Chris Perkins*

PKP Intercity Class EP08-012 speeds through a sunny Warszawa Ochota on August 27th.
Brian Battersby

Above: Montpellier Alstom Citadis tram No. 2073 is seen working a Line 3 service as it passes outside the main railway station. All Line 3 trams carry an underwater theme livery. ***Chris Perkins***

Right: TDM (Tranvia de Murcia) Alstom Citadis tram No. 162 waits at the Nuevo Condomina stop for its return journey to Murcia on November 29th. ***Steve Dennison***

Main: ZSSK No. 905.951 is seen in the lower TEŽ (Tatra Electric Railway) terminus at Štrba. ***Steamsounds***

ÖBB's Wien Central Station Shopping Centre to open in the Autumn

More than a Train: The shopping centre at the Wien Central Station, ÖBB Bahnhof Wien Hauptbahnhof, will cover 20,000 square meters of retail space on two levels, catering for the needs of rail passengers, visitors and residents of the surrounding district. Even now - nine months before the opening of the shopping centre - 96 percent of the retail space is already leased.

As of October 2014, around 90 shops and restaurants in the city's Railway Station will open its doors for customers and to stay, invite, stroll and shop. The Wien Central Station is a modern transportation hub that meets the needs of customers.

The ÖBB Bahnhof Wien Hauptbahnhof is an environmentally friendly alternative to shopping centres outside the urban area and a perfect complement to the existing infrastructure of the environment.

Shops & Restaurants for train travellers, residents and visitors

The shopping centre in Vienna's main train station has been designed specifically for the needs of rail passengers, residents and visitors. For the lease of the land ÖBB-Immobilien Management GmbH has commissioned the German shopping centre experts ECE. ECE will take over as a professional partner and the long-term centre management. Attention has been paid to create a balance of business, the customers should find trendy shops and attractive brands. On the ground floor there will be a food court with nine providers and in the basement of a market for fresh products with seven vendors.

Among other things, opening shops in the food and catering InterSpar, L'Osteria, Felber, Ströck, bakery Heberer, anchor, McDonalds, Burger King, Starbucks and Cafe Oberlaa. Even fashion retailer will be present on site, for example, New Yorker, Deichmann, Calzedonia, Tezenis, Promod and Intimissimi. For sports enthusiasts, the branch of Hervis will be particularly interesting. In the fields of perfumery and book complete Müller drugstore, Marionnaud, dm drugstore, Thalia, Libro and press & books offering for customers. To this end, there will be, among others, a pharmacy, several bank branches and a TUI Travel Centre.

Photo: © ÖBB / City of Wien

Chemin de Fer à Vapeur des 3 Vallées

The Three Valleys Steam Railway is a tourist railway in Belgium of standard gauge and 14 km in length, created in 1973 and operates in the Walloon Region between Mariembourg and Treignes on line 132 (Charleroi to Vireux- Molhain in France). It has some important historical heritage railway rolling stock originating from several countries, and organizes an annual steam festival enjoyed by many enthusiasts.

Above: SNCB Bo-Bo No. 6086 is seen at Mariembourg. ***Brian Battersby***

Right: ELNA No.158, a 130T type 42T loco built by Henschel in Kassel in 1940, is seen with US 'Army Transportation Corps' No. 4389 departing Mariembourg. ***Brian Battersby***

Main: 0-4-0 Industrial standard gauge loco 'Yvonne', built in 1893 and recently restored to working order. ***Brian Battersby***

Chemin de Fer à Vapeur des 3 Vallées continued...

Above: SNCF BB No. 63149 manufactured by Brissonneau and Lotz in 1956. ***Brian Battersby***

Left: SNCF X3998 unified 300 hp "Picasso" is seen at Mariembourg. ***Brian Battersby***

Main: No. AD05, a type 040T built by Ateliers de la Meuse in Liège in 1950 leads SA01, an 030T type loco built by SA Anglo-Franco-Belge des Ateliers of Croyère - Seneffe and Godarville in 1945. ***Brian Battersby***

Bombardier Wins Additional Order from San Francisco BART

•Number of new rail cars on order rises to 775
•"Fleet of the Future" to offer highest levels of quality, performance and reliability

Rail technology leader Bombardier Transportation has announced that the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) confirmed an order for 365 additional rail cars for its "Fleet of the Future". The order, valued at approximately $639 million US ($681 million CDN, 470 million euro), is part of a contract signed in June, 2012. Bombardier now has firm orders for 775 cars with a total value of approximately $1.5 billion US ($1.6 billion CDN, 1.1 billion euro).

"BART is very pleased to be partnered with Bombardier for this important project to bring a new and improved fleet to the Bay Area," said BART General Manager Grace Crunican. "We look forward to the successful delivery of 775 innovative, reliable, safe and comfortable rail cars."

Raymond Bachant, President, Region Americas, Bombardier Transportation, added: "This new order is indicative of BART's satisfaction with our partnership and progress in the design of this new generation of metro cars. The cars will incorporate state-of-the-art, environmentally-friendly technologies and include input from Bay Area citizens who had the opportunity this summer to tour a mock-up of the car and learn about proposed improvements to the interior."

These improvements include a reconfigured interior layout designed to maximize seating, openness, and comfort; more priority seating for seniors and people with disabilities; wheelchair areas at the end of each car; and bicycle racks in every car. Other new features include more comfortable seats; interior and exterior digital displays showing passenger information; a better quality public address system, including automated announcements; more doors to make boarding faster and easier; energy saving lighting; and energy-efficient propulsion and regenerative braking.

Bombardier will assemble the cars at its manufacturing plant in Plattsburgh, New York. The Plattsburgh facility is Bombardier's center for rolling stock production in the United States. In operation since 1995, it has produced more than 3,300 passenger rail cars and locomotives now in service across the United States.

Ten pilot cars are scheduled to be delivered in the spring of 2015, followed by comprehensive testing of the pilot cars on the BART system. The delivery of the 765 remaining production series cars is expected to follow between early 2017 and 2021.

Bombardier is transforming how people get around every day. Worldwide, more than seven billion trips are taken on Bombardier metro cars every year in cities including Boston, New York, Montreal, Toronto and Mexico City as well as London, Paris, Berlin, Delhi and Shanghai. Bombardier's current metro car orders in North America include 714 new cars for Chicago, 468 cars for Montreal, 420 cars for Toronto and 300 cars for New York.

Trams from Škoda Transportation rolled out into operation with passengers in Hungary ahead of schedule

On January 20th, in the Hungarian city of Miskolc the latest in modern trams from the Škoda Transportation factories were launched. The first vehicle rolled out a few weeks earlier than was originally stated in the contract. Škoda Transportation will deliver a total of 31 low-floor trams to the northern Hungarian city.

“The first tram started to operate with passengers, the other one is in Miskolc, ready for operation. That means that we have successfully managed to meet all the European technical requirements and Hungarian rail authority standards for operation approval. Moreover, we accomplished to produce and get an approval of the new tram in 22 months since the contract signing. I am glad to state that we fulfill all the contractual conditions prior the deadlines.” says Zdeněk Majer, Vice President of sales at Škoda Transportation.

The vehicle is based on proven design solutions and modern technologies. The tram-car is a two-way five part with a three fix chassis, the outer two of them are powered and the middle one is standard. It holds more than 300 passengers, who can look forward for air-conditioned cars and a modern information system including LCD screens. Plenty of space is available for strollers and persons with reduced mobility.

The tram-car for Miskolc is the widest car made by Škoda Transportation. It has both a very spacious exterior and interior. Moreover, it offers an interesting modern design with an organic green flowers motif on a white background, which was chosen by the inhabitants of Miskolc. They were very satisfied with the new tram at the ceremony.

“The whole team worked, figuratively, day and night to present the vehicle to our customers in time, and therefore I am also pleased that our tram-car was welcomed with such enthusiasm. We built the two tram prototypes last year, after that we successfully conducted all required tests and in December we received type-permission from the Hungarian railway authority and permission to operate these two tram-cars.” adds project manager Václav Trkovský.

The contract also includes an option for ten years full-service for almost 200 million. Škoda Transportation defeated other European tram-car manufacturers in the tender, namely the Italian manufacturer AnsaldoBreda, Spanish CAF, Romanian Astra Vagoane and Polish Solaris. „Hungary is one of our key markets. Since 2007, Škoda Transportation has been supplying equipment for the Budapest metro, trolleybuses for Debrecen, Szeged and Budapest, and now is starting to deliver the tram-cars for Miskolc. The total value of the contracts in this country reaches almost up to 3.5 billion crowns,“ says Zdeněk Majer.

Trenitalia's Class E.652.127 passes Albignano whilst working freight No. MRV51698 from Bergamo to Genova Sestri P Aer on November 7th. ***Laurence Sly***

Siemens and Russian Machines establish joint venture

Siemens and the Russian industrial company Russian Machines Corporation, which is headquartered in Moscow have agreed to establish a joint venture. The new company, in which both partners will invest a total of 160 million euros, is to be based in the region of Moscow and will employ up to 800 people. Siemens and Russian Machines aim to participate as joint partners in the invitation to tender for Moscow's metro. The Russian capital wants to modernize its metro fleet and is planning to purchase more than 2,000 cars.

"Siemens is the most successful foreign provider of rail technology in the Russian market. We want to further reinforce this role in the country. With Russian Machines, we have won one of the most renowned industrial companies in Russia as a partner," said Jochen Eickholt, CEO of the Rail Systems Division at Siemens. "In cooperation with Siemens AG we plan to provide the city of Moscow with one of the most advanced rolling stock in the world. Moreover, we intend to localize the production of new-generation rail cars and thus create new jobs in the Moscow region", said Siegfried Wolf, chairman of Russian Machines.

The contract is likely to be awarded to a bidder that can prove that value added is generated locally. To this end, Siemens and Russian Machines intend to establish local production operations in the greater Moscow region; these could cater for up to 80 percent of localization as of 2017 supported by the Siemens metro car plant in Vienna, Austria. In September 2013, Siemens and Russian Machines presented their first design study for the trains at the 4th International Rail Salon of Engineering and Technologies "EXPO 1520" in Moscow. The new generation of trains has been specially developed for Moscow's metro and offers a combination of great comfort, higher capacity and maximum safety for passengers. In addition, the new models reduce power consumption and maintenance costs compared with the trains currently in use in Moscow.

The joint venture is to make a major contribution to modernizing Russia's infrastructure and increasing industrial value added – two issues that Joe Kaeser, President and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens AG, and Russia's President Vladimir Putin discussed intensively at a meeting in October 2013.

More Tangos for Stuttgart's citizens

Stuttgarter Strassenbahnen AG orders another 20 Tango/S-DT8.12 light rail vehicles

Stuttgarter Strassenbahnen AG has ordered another 20 S-DT8.12 light rail vehicles from Stadler Pankow GmbH, thus exercising the first option of their contract from spring 2010. The light rail vehicles will be an addition to the existing fleet, which has been operating in the Stuttgart city area since autumn 2013. Delivery will commence in the middle of 2016. A spare parts package has also been agreed. The total order value amounts to around EUR 73 million.

"The vehicles are easy to adapt to the existing city centre infrastructure and are ideally suited to the conditions on the Stuttgart tram network. They can handle tight bends and gradients of up to 9%," reports Michael Daum, Director of Stadler Pankow GmbH. "We are very pleased they are so satisfied – and even more passengers will get to enjoy the comfort of the trams in the future."

The S-DT8.12 is based on the Tango light rail vehicle product series. With a maximum speed of 80 km/h and a modular construction, the Tango is designed for city transport. The dual traction carriage has eight axles, all of which are powered separately. Due to the comfortable carriage width of 2.65 metres, it has a generous, friendly interior with 106 seats and room for 144 standing passengers, as well as air-conditioning in the passenger compartment and driver's cab. There are four entry doors on each side to allow fast passenger embarkation and disembarkation for the bidirectional vehicle. Barrier-free access and stepless access throughout the passenger compartment allow use by persons with restricted mobility.

The light rail vehicles are 39.1 metres long across the coupling and have a track gauge of 1,435 millimetres.

Appenzell dances the Tango

Stadler Rail has won the Appenzeller Bahnen (AB) tender for seven Tango light rail vehicles. The trains will be used on the new cross-town link (Durchmesserlinie) connecting Trogen, St. Gallen and Appenzell.

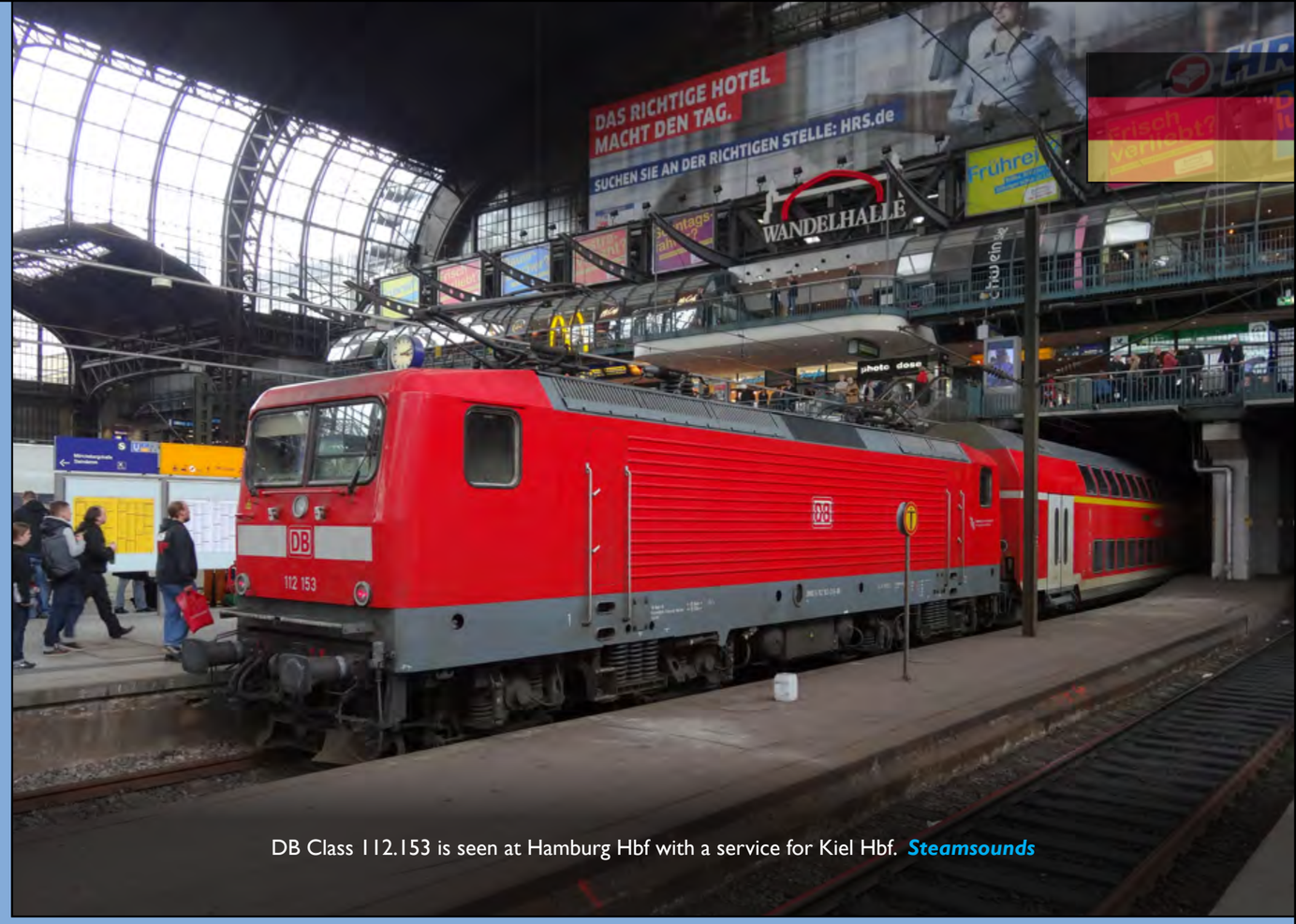
The order, which includes a spare parts package, is worth nearly CHF 60 million. By opting for the Tango, AB is backing a vehicle which has already proved its worth in the Basel and Geneva regions. It has a comfortable interior to suit the longer stretches and high tourist potential of the AB lines. The units will be produced at the Stadler works in Altenrhein SG. The new trains will allow AB to use the same vehicle type on both branches when the new cross-town link opens in autumn 2017. Until this point, the eastern branch from St. Gallen to Trogen is serviced by tram-like trains, with rack-and-pinion trains required for the western branch from St. Gallen to Appenzell. The new line will remove the single rack-and-pinion section. The Tango combines all the benefits of railway vehicles and trams.

High degree of travel comfort

This light rail vehicle has full air suspension on the bogies, making it an extremely comfortable ride. At the same time, it has all the characteristics required for efficient, safe operation of a tram on city-centre routes. The stretch towards Trogen will also feature a first-class section for the first time. This represents clear added value for the line to Trogen. The trains seat 133 in second class and 12 in first class. The Tango has a very high low-flooring level. There are only slightly raised areas at the end of the half-train for the four engine bogies. All four doors on each side are in the low-floor section to allow barrier-free travel for all. This is a real benefit for passengers with heavy luggage, wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.

Established technology

By opting for the Tango, AB is backing established technology from Eastern Switzerland. This vehicle has been successfully in service for five years for Basellandtransport (BLT, 38 trains) and Geneva-based transport operator TPG (32 trains). It is very popular among passengers and operators alike. The situation in Basel is at least partly comparable with AB: the BLT trams are operating on the stretch from Barfüsserplatz to Schifflände, right through the centre of the city, on the highest-traffic routes in Switzerland. The same vehicles also travel across very long cross-country routes through the cantons of Basel-Landschaft and Solothurn, as well as brief stretches in France. The crash concept is a modern solution, which has already proved its worth in a serious scenario at BLT. The design of the front minimises the consequences of an accident and prevents more serious damage. The vehicle has various other modern elements, such as folding steps to bridge the gap on entry, full air conditioning, modern passenger information systems and generous multifunctional compartments.



DB Class 112.153 is seen at Hamburg Hbf with a service for Kiel Hbf. ***Steamsounds***

CZ Loco launches Class 735.604 hire loco at Metranz Danube

Comprehensively modernized locomotive No. 753.604 from the beginning of January will provide transportation of container trains on the routes between Danube - Bratislava and Danube - Zvolen - Košice. Later Metrans Danubia will trial the loco on the Danube - Budapest route.

The company CZ LOKO locomotive has modernised the legendary four-eyes Goggle from the Class 750/753/754/755 series. A major contribution of the modernisation is to reduce the costs of operation and maintenance by installing a CAT C 3512 HD, engine with an extension of maintenance cycles, using MSV electronic control systems with automatic speed control and automatic train operation.

In addition to modern design has also brought an entirely new level of safety, comfort, ergonomics and aerodynamics. The cab of the locomotive has been characterized not by diving glasses, but sunglasses!.

METRANS (Danubia) as, is the largest private rail freight carrier in Slovakia - METRANS is a member of the holding company, the biggest operator of combined transport operators and eight container terminals. METRANS Company, Inc., was founded in 1991 and is based in Prague.

Its major shareholder is the German group Hamburger Hafen und Logistik (HHLA). Metrans provides rail and road transport services just-in-time through its own train and truck transport in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Germany and Austria. It provides rail links Central European container terminals with major European ports, including Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Rotterdam, Duisburg, Koper, Trieste and Rijeka. It operates scheduled shuttle train to Istanbul. Metrans has the largest network of sophisticated container terminal in Central Europe.

Transdev calls for equal competition in regional rail

The Massachusetts transportation authority (MBTA) announced on January 9th, the selection of the bid submitted by SNCF / Keolis to operate Boston's commuter trains. SNCF / Keolis was competing with the incumbent operator, MBCR, which included Transdev's Veolia Transportation subsidiary, Bombardier and Alternate Concepts Inc. MBCR has operated the commuter network for 11 years with very good results (best rail operator for safety according to U.S. authorities, more than 95% ontime performance, high customer satisfaction averaging 88%, promotion of employment diversity).

According to MBTA's General Manager, the choice in favor of SNCF was due to a financial offer approximately $25 million per year lower than that of MBCR, a result of lower margins for the operator and to the sole benefit of Massachusetts taxpayers.

Beyond this setback, which is part of life for an international company present in 20 countries, the conditions under which it occurred leads Transdev to raise some questions.

Transdev does not question the decision to open the contract to competition; since its creation, the company has operated in an environment in which nearly 95% of its revenue is subject to competition. Transdev believes, however, that it is important that international competition, including between French companies, is conducted fairly and on equal terms. What is the legitimacy of a public company with more than 60% of its revenue protected under monopoly positions sacrificing its margins and attacking internationally another French company whose contracts are almost all subject to competition? Transdev raises questions on this point, while noting that the lack of transparency of the monopoly's financial activities, particularly those involving the regional TER trains, is regularly questioned by regional government councils.
For this reason, Transdev believes the people of France's Aquitaine, Lorraine and Rhône-Alpes regions should enjoy the same benefits as the people of Massachusetts, by opening regional rail lines to competition. Through competition regulated and organized by the regional councils under delegations of public service, which have proven effective in urban transportation, the quality of service on TER lines could be improved, with financial benefits for the regions. In Germany, competition has created no disruptions, lowered expenses for the states by approximately 30% and resulted in reforms and acceptance of competition by Deutsche Bahn. Transdev requests that as part of the next step in France's railway reform, that regions are confirmed as organizing authorities with full rights to entrust certain regional lines to other operators.

In addition, Transdev, with the strong support of its shareholders, will continue its development in the United States in all modes of transportation and is actively preparing to offer the regions an alternative for management of their TER lines.

DB Class 218.363 is seen working train No. IC2315 Westerland(Sylt) to Frankfurt(Main) Hbf at Husum. ***Steamsounds***

Alstom to participate in the modernization of the Milan-Desio-Seregno suburban-tram

Alstom has been awarded by Cooperativa Muratori e Cementisti (CMC) of Ravenna – an Italian construction company - a contract to supply sub-systems to modernise the Milan-Desio-Seregno suburban tram. The €40 million contract1 includes the design, supply and installation of the tracks, electrical traction sub-stations, the signalling and telecommunications system. The 14.3 km-long line is due to enter into service by the end of 2016.

During the duration of works, Alstom will limit inconvenience for local residents and passengers thanks to its use of Appitrack. Four times faster than conventional systems, Appitrack reduces on-site working times and consequently, inconvenience for local residents. Alstom will also equip the line with the Hesop technology (harmonic and energy saving optimiser), the latest generation reversible sub-station that enables unused braking energy produced by the trams to be re-injected into the electricity distribution network. Hesop is particularly suited for trams and allows for the recovery of around 99% of braking energy.

Alstom will also supply the signalling system which will be completed by an ATS (automatic train supervision) system to guarantee complete safety and security of passengers and provide better control of traffic circulation for the operator. In addition, this supervision system will help to identify anomalies such as items left in critical areas thanks to intelligent high definition cameras.

The project will be managed by the Alstom Guidonia site. This site is specialised in designing and producing railway infrastructure systems. It collaborates closely with Alstom's centre of excellence for railway signalling in Bologna.

Tram No. 4012 is seen on driver training duties at Severinstraße, Köln. ***Steamsounds***

Vossloh is awarded a contract in Austria

The company based in Albuixech will build 11 trams for the rail operator Stern&Hafferl. The contract is valued at approximately 30 million euros. The Austrian rail operator has selected the bid presented by Vossloh España and Vossloh Kiepe-Austria for the acquisition of 11 Tramlink model trams to provide service in the city of Gmunden. This contract is valued at approximately 30 million euros. Under the terms of the bid the contract also includes maintenance of the vehicles for a period of 16 years.

The vehicles, delivery of which will begin at the end of 2015, will be metric gauge bi-directional trams with a capacity for 183 passengers and which can reach a speed of 70 km/hr.

Vossloh España's commitment to innovation and development and the analysis of cities' rail transport needs have resulted in a high-performance vehicle with a technology that provides better travel dynamics and optimum comfort and safety conditions for passengers.

Thanks to its innovative characteristics this type of tram has already been purchased by countries such as Germany and Brazil and now one can add Austria.

Vossloh España is specialised in the development of railway vehicles. Its technological centre in Albuixech (Valencia) designs and builds locomotives, passenger vehicles, metro trains, trams and train-trams.

Alstom Transport to open a new tramway manufacturing line in Brazil

Alstom Transport will open a new manufacturing line dedicated to trams in Taubaté, Brazil, operational from December 2014. Based at the Alstom group's existing hydro manufacturing site in Taubaté, the new manufacturing line will address the Brazilian and Latin American markets where tram projects are booming. The line, which represents an investment for Alstom of around 15 million euros, will cover an area of 16,000m².

The first trams that might be produced in Taubaté are the ones ordered in September 2013 by the VLT Carioca consortium for the city of Rio de Janeiro. Alstom is supplying a catenary-free tramway system, which includes 32 Citadis trams along with power supply, signalling and telecommunication systems.

The delivery of the trams is scheduled to take place between early 2015 and mid-2016, in time for the summer Olympics. In order to meet the contractual term, Alstom will produce the first Citadis in Europe and the remaining ones in Taubaté.

"The tramway is gaining momentum as one of the solutions for urban mobility issues in Brazilian and Latin America cities. This is why Alstom has decided to invest in a tram line in Taubaté, which will serve Brazilian projects as well as export projects in Latin America," said Michel Boccaccio, Senior Vice President of Alstom Transport in Latin America.

Alstom has sold 1726 Citadis trams to 43 cities throughout the world. 1500 Citadis are already in circulation and have carried more than 6 billion passengers since its entry into service some fifteen years ago.

Photo: Tramway manufacturing line, La Rochelle, France.
©: Alstom Transport/TOMA - C.Sasso

Raaberbahn plans to order five regional trains from Siemens

The Austrian operative part of the privately owned railway Raab-Oedenburg-Ebenfurter Eisenbahn AG (German name: Raaberbahn AG; Hungarian name: GYSEV Zrt.) is placing an order with Siemens – subject to a successful bidding procedure for financing – for five Desiro ML regional multiple unit trains. The Raaberbahn is the only cross-border private railway in Austria and operates mainly in western Hungary and eastern Austria, Burgenland province and metropolitan Vienna. These regional three-car electric multiple units are to be built with two-system capability (15 kV AC / 25 kV AC) and delivered from mid-2016 onwards. The trains will be built at the Siemens plant in Krefeld, Germany, while the bogies will be supplied from the Siemens works in Graz, Austria.

"The new trains represent a milestone for future rail traffic between Deutschkreuz and Vienna, and between Pamhagen and Vienna in cooperation with Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB)", said Dr. Csaba Székely, Managing Board Director Raaberbahn, at the signing ceremony. The Desiro ML trains will be delivered as three-car basic units, each with four doors on each side of entry and 259 comfortable seats. They will benefit from a particularly high level of equipment and excellent passenger comfort and achieve a top speed of 160 kilometers per hour. Convenient low-floor entrances guarantee barrier-free access without ramps, even for wheelchair users and families with strollers or baby carriages. The floor height is 600 mm.

The Desiro ML is a flexible and reliable vehicle which, thanks to its conception as permanently coupled trains, can be individually adapted to passenger volumes. With their improved drive systems, allowing further reductions in energy consumption compared with predecessor models, they are especially kind to the environment. The design of the trains too makes use of ecologically sound materials, for example in the paint finish and internal fittings.

Great Central Railway's Winter Steam Gala

Kicking the 2014 season off at this popular line was the Winter Steam Gala where attendance was high and most trains were very full. The attraction of a very busy timetable with passenger, freight and mail services combined with an abundance of steam locos working certainly offset the poor weather.

BR 9F Class 2-10-0 No. 92214 'Cock of the North' arrives into Leicester North station on a damp January 25th with a service from Loughborough. ***Class47***

Above: Great Northern Railway N2 Class 0-6-2T No. 1744 is seen with the mixed freight running through Woodthorpe. ***Ken Abram***

Right: Great Western Railway's 0-6-2 No. 5643 is seen on Loughborough shed, January 23rd. ***Stuart Hillis***

Main: BR Standard 2MT Class 2-6-0 No. 78019 pilots LMS Ivatt 2MT Class 2-6-0 No. 46521 through Woodthorpe on January 25th. ***Ken Abram***

LMS 3F Class (JINTY) 0-6-0T No. 47406 stops at Loughborough for a top up with water. ***Class47***

LMS Class 2 2-6-0 No. 46521 approaches Quorn and Woodhouse with the lines rake of Mineral wagons. ***Class47***

SR N15 Class No. 777 'Sir Lamiel' arrives at Quorn and Woodhouse with a Leicester North to Loughborough service on January 25th. *Class47*

BR Standard Britannia Class 7 4-6-2 No. 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' is seen in charge of the day's first train out of Loughborough on January 25th. On the smokebox is a wreath in memory of Mick Pickering a GCR driver who passed away recently. ***Ken Abram***

Built in 1956 by Hunslet, Works No. 3844, United Steel Company No. 22, is seen at Loughborough on January 23rd. *Stuart Hillis*

BR Standard Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92214 'Cock of the North' is seen at Loughborough being inspected prior to working the mail train. ***Class47***

LMS Stanier Class 8F 2-8-0 No. 48624 steams through Kinchley Lane with the wind cutter rake of mineral wagons.
Ken Abram

Former Bedford - St Pancras, Derby suburban Rolls Royce DMU Class 127 Nos. 51622 and 51616 is seen departing Loughborough, heading for the depot. ***Class47***

SNCB heritage electrics, as a pair of Class 23s, Nos. 2363 and 2364 enter Namur with a freight train on June 20th 2001. ***Paul Godding***

BLS Re 4/4 locos Nos. 195, 186 and 177
are seen stables at Basel Bad Hbf on August 26th 2008.
Brian Battersby

SNCB Class 21 No. 2144 is seen on the rear of a Brussels service at Antwerpen Berchem on June 20th 2001.
Paul Godding