

Almost 1000 IC coaches scrapped by DB within 15 years

The German Federal Government's reply to a "minor enquiry" (interpellation) by the parliamentary party Bündnis 90 / The Greens made it publically known for the first time just how many IC passenger coaches DB has scrapped during the past 15 years. A total of 862 vehicles are listed in detail according to type and age; more than a hundred were built later than 1980. 433 further IC coaches were sold to other countries during the past decade; 196 of these sales were handled by the Swiss Heros Group, in which DB held minority shares of two per cent until 2014, as the Government's reply also revealed.

It can also be deduced from the reply that DB does not expect to run the new Velaro ICE high-speed EMUs (Class 407) through the Channel Tunnel to London in the fore-

seeable future. In answer to the question as to which new ICE and IC trains are to be internationally deployed in future, the Velaro was only named in connection with France and Belgium. (fsch/rp)

Stadler's metre-gauge business blossoms

After the collective order of several metre-gauge railways in western, French-speaking Switzerland, Stadler Rail can count on numerous orders from the German-speaking part of Switzerland in the coming months. In addition to the existing order for six articulated EMUs for the Albula line and 13 universal driving trailers, RhB (Rätische Bahn) now also wants to purchase 27 four-coach EMUs with automatic couplings, while RBS (Regionalverkehr Bern – Solothurn) has 16 four-coach articulated EMUs for line S7 to Worb on its

"shopping list". AB (Appenzeller Bahnen) will shortly be tendering for four three-coach EMUs for the Gossau – Wassererau service and WSB (Wyental- und Suhrentalbahn) is preparing a procurement by tender to strengthen its fleet. Since there is no serious competition it would come as a great surprise if Stadler did not win all these contracts totalling more than 50 trains. (mr)

Serbian Railways splitting up

According to a governmental decision in early July 2015, Serbian Railways (ŽS) will be split up into four independent companies. There will be two operators, "Srbija Voz" (passenger traffic) and "Srbija Kargo" (freight traffic), plus an infrastructure and a holding company. All railcars and multiple units, the 140 km/h electric locomotives (Classes 441.6 and 441.7), five Class 461 as well as the Class 666 diesel locomotives will be allocated to passenger, all other locomotives to freight traffic. The latter will have to manage without subsidies from 2018. To haul passenger trains on the Niš – Dimitrovgrad route, Srbija Voz will be hiring several Class 661 diesel locomotives from Srbija Kargo. (bac)

First Rc3 loco in Hector Rail colours

The private Swedish operator Hector Rail (HR) painted the first of its Class Rc3 electric locomotives taken over from SJ in HR colours at the end of May 2015. The former Rc3 1060 is now designated as 143 060 "Jernsida". So now HR's Rc3 fleet currently sports three different liveries: besides the freshly lacquered 143 060, no. 143 039 (formerly Rc3 1039) is black, while the other six locomotives are still in their old blue-red-grey SJ colours. (blas)

ICx in Velim

Since mid-May 2015 DB's first new twelve-coach ICx unit 9001 is being tested in the Czech test centre at Velim (see cover photo). On 8 June in Germany an ICx dining car was sighted on its own wheels for the first time: locomotive 127 001 transferred dining car 93 80 8812 004-4 D-DB from Krefeld to Vienna, where it was to undergo tests in the climatic wind tunnel. (mr)

Pesa to build double-deck vehicles

The Polish rail vehicle manufacturer Pesa is evidently building double-deck vehicles for the first time: such a coach body shell could be seen in early May at the main plant in Bydgoszcz. According to February 2015 media reports, Koleje Mazowieckie (KM) – the TOC of the Masovian Voivodeship – has ordered two double-deck coach sets with two electric Class Gama locomotives. KM already operates locomotive-hauled Bombardier-made double-deck trains. (kar)

Further Flirt units for Emilia-Romagna

In the consortium with AnsaldoBreda, Stadler Rail won a contract in November 2009 for 32 electric Flirt units and two diesel GTWs (articulated multiple units) for the Italian operators Sistemi Territoriali (ST) and Ferrovie Emilia Romagna (FER). Deliveries began in 2012. The order included options for a further 20 Flirt units and two GTWs. From the first order FER received twelve five-coach trains. Now its successor Trasporto Passeggeri Emilia-



Above: Locomotive 143 060 freshly painted in Hector Rail colours, with no. 143 046 still in its old SJ livery, on 3 June 2015 at Skövde station (photo: Ph. Blaser).

Centre: ICx dining car with central loading door on the way from Krefeld to Wien (Foto: 5776).

Below: Body shell of a double-deck coach on the vehicle manufacturer Pesa premises at Bydgoszcz (photo: S. Karkowski, 1 May 2015).



Romagna (TPER) is evidently taking options, as seven further five-coach Flirt units have been under construction at the Stadler plant in Bussnang for some time already – likewise the middle coaches, which in the first order were partly produced in Italy.

After a call for tender the railbound regional traffic in Emilia-Romagna was recently awarded to a consortium of Trenitalia and TPER. By 2018 about EUR 750 million is to be invested in the purchase of 96 further multiple units. Together with the modern trains already in the fleet, the entire older rolling stock will then have been replaced. (lüt)

BLS “Nina” EMU with new coupler heating tested in Vienna

In view of the forthcoming operational changes involving its RABe 525 “Nina” EMUs, BLS intends to manage without the manually operated, failure-prone coupler covers by equipping the trains with a more powerful coupler heating. RABe 525 002 as trial vehicle has already been refitted and was transported to Vienna in late May 2015 for thorough testing in the Rail Tec Arsenal climatic wind tunnel. If the tests are positive, it is planned to retrofit all 36 Nina units with coupler heating, so that in future there will be no need to use covers. (mr)

ICE-S in central Switzerland

On the weekend of 11/12 July 2015 the ICE-S measurement train of DB Systemtechnik (ICE prototype built in 1985) was underway in central Switzerland for ETCS network access tests. In tests on the new Gotthard base line with step-by-step speed increases, the four-part measurement train is due to return to Switzerland in November 2015 and reach 275 km/h, ten per cent faster than the future service speed – a precondition for achieving 250 km/h route approval. (mr)

Ae 1042 locos finally in Swiss service

In mid-May 2015 the Swiss operator WRS (Widmer Rail Services) brought the first of the mainline locomotives taken over from Austria in 2013 into commercial service. On 18 May loco Ae 1042 041 took over a 1800-tonne block train with Czech fodder maize from Basel Bad Bf in two parts, one part to Sursee, the other to Herzogenbuchsee. WRS carried out this transport – which is to take place regularly in future – as a partner of the Austrian RTS (Rail Transport Service); the customer is the agricultural cooperative Fenaco. Since early June loco 1042 007 – a second former ÖBB locomotive – has been ready for service; a third engine – no. 1042 032 – is to follow shortly. So now WRS can readily expand its traction services. (mr)

Above: ÖBB locomotive 1116 029 with BLS EMU “Nina” RABe 525 002 en route to Vienna on 28 May 2015 near Flurling, west of Innsbruck (photo: M. Inderst).

Centre: Locomotive Re 4/4 II 11159 with the ICE-S on the return journey bound for Basel at Immensee station (photo: A. Niederberger, 12 July 2015).

Below: Loco Ae 1042 041 with diesel shunter Tm 232 286 – taken along for the shunting manoeuvres – and the Romanian cereal wagons on the journey from Basel to Herzogenbuchsee shortly before Langenthal (photo: W. Ruetsch, 18 May 2015).

