



One of the three SŽ trains as the morning IC from Murska Sobota to Ljubljana shortly before reaching Ptuj (photo: T. Bačić, 26 December 2017).

SŽ Pendolino to Murska Sobota

Slovenian Railways (SŽ) has been running a pair of Pendolino trains between Ljubljana and Murska Sobota in the far north-east of the country since the change of timetable. IC 13 leaves Murska Sobota at 7:10; the train journey (IC 22) departs from Ljubljana at 17:15. The journey time with six stops is more than two-and-a-half hours, half an hour less than trains operated with conventional rolling stock which are stopping at more stations.

The new express service has become feasible thanks to the completion of the electrification of the 110-kilometre-long Pragersko – Ormož – Hodoš (– Hungary) line in 2016, where trains can now operate at 160 km/h, instead of 80 – 100 km/h. A six-kilometre-long section was completely realigned; 78 level crossings were either secured with barriers (27), replaced by bridges (19) or completely removed (32).

Otherwise, the three SŽ Pendolino trains operate between Ljubljana and Maribor; they also travelled as far as Venezia (Venice) until 2008. The mini-fleet was immobilised for months because of maintenance problems during the first half of 2017. The trains also operate relatively frequently with their tilting technology switched off. (bac)

Modernised 441 for Srbija Voz

In early November 2017 Srbija Voz, the passenger subsidiary of Serbian Railways (ŽS), took delivery of the first Class 441 electric

locomotive modernised by ŽOS Vrútky. In total three such locomotives, namely 441 701, 704 and 706, are to be overhauled in Slovakia. They will also receive the new corporate colours, which are based on the livery of the Serbian Flirt trains. Possibly the overhaul programme will be extended, as 441 601 and 603 might also be sent to ŽOS Vrútky. (bac)

Large British ETCS contract for Siemens

The state-owned British infrastructure company Network Rail has signed a framework contract with Siemens for the supply of in-cab signalling (ETCS L2 Baseline 3) for freight locomotives. During a first phase, the most common locomotive types will initially be fitted with the Trainguard 200 system. The conversion of traction vehicles will not begin before 2022 and is expected to last until 2030. The total value of the contract is listed at 150 million GBP (170 million EUR). Taking into consideration the large number of locomotives that actually needs to be converted, this sum seems remarkably low. In total up to 750 locomotives from the six different freight operators could be involved, including DB Cargo UK, Freightliner, Freightliner Heavy Haul, GB Railfreight, Direct Rail Services and Colas Rail. (pd/mr)

Stadler wins in Slovenia

According to an Italian online portal, Stadler has apparently won the bidding procedure for 25 new trains involving three different classes of vehicles. The call for tenders was published by Slovenian Railways (SŽ) in the summer of 2017. If the deal is signed within the planned

framework, the Swiss manufacturer will supply ten multi-system Flirt units, ten DC Kiss EMUs and five diesel-electric trains (see RU 9-10/2017, p. 136). According to the report, Stadler was the only company to submit an offer for the relatively complex acquisition involving rather low numbers of units; however, the price is believed to be much higher than SŽ had expected. This probably means that further negotiations will be necessary regarding the details of the contract. (mr/lüt)

Romanian DB locomotive in Croatia

472 005, which is registered with DB Cargo Romania, arrived in Croatia on 20 November 2017 (see our cover photo); it is a former British Rail Class 92 electric locomotive. After minor adjustments had been made, it was ready for staff training journeys by the middle of December. However, certification was not yet available. Rail Cargo Carrier Croatia (ÖBB) is providing the engine drivers, after efforts to deploy HŽ Cargo personnel had failed because of resistance from a trade union. The freight forwarder Transagent, which also has an ES 64 U2-001 from MRCE in its fleet, is leasing the locomotive. (bac)

Decision to construct Swedish high-speed line

The so-called Ostlänken line will be built from 2018 onwards as the first part of the planned high-speed network from Stockholm to Malmö and Göteborg (Gothenburg). This 150 kilometres long section of the route will be a new double-track line from Järna to Linköping and will be equipped with ETCS. It will provide relief for the Södra Stambanan that has to handle long-distance, regional and goods trains. The new route is expected to open in 2028.

The new line will have 200 bridges measuring ten kilometres in all as well as 30 tunnels with a total length of 20 kilometres. The construction costs (SEK 54 billion or EUR 5.5 billion) are being shared by the state and the local regions. There have been huge delays to the realisation of this major project because of protracted discussions about the route speed (320 or 250 km/h) and the layout of the line in Norrköping. A decision was finally made to design the new route for speeds of no more than 250 km/h in order to save costs.

There is already one new route designed for speeds of 250 km/h in Sweden – the Botniabanen line from Sundsvall to Umeå. However, all the modern long-distance trains – including



On 8 November 2017, 441 701 of Srbija Voz is seen in the new corporate colours at the Makiš marshalling yard in Belgrade (photo: A. Spasić; collection Bačić).