The Railway Herald

7 July 2006 No. 43

The complimentary UK railway journal for the railway enthusiast

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The Railway Herald

Issue 43
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Submissions

We welcome submissions from all readers, especially photographs from those enthusiasts with a digital camera! Pictures should be sent to the editor at editor@railwayherald.co.uk

Good quality scans of colour slides and prints are also acceptable.

Please note that as the *Railway Herald* is free and compiled on a voluntary basis, we are unable to offer any financial return.

Once the 'new-look' *Railway Herald* is launched, a reproduction fee will be paid to photographers.

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FRONT COVER: The warm sunny weather has brought railway photographers out in force! On 4 July, DRS Class 37/6 Nos. 37611 and 37609 power along between Byfleet & New Haw and Weybridge, with a Woking Down Yard to Wimbledon Park Depot Serco working (via Waterloo and Southampton.) CHRIS NEVARD

BELOW: With the future of EWS having been announced, one of the key questions remaining is where does the 'Enterprise' network fit? At no point in the announcement was 'Enterprise' mentioned. Could it be heading for a similar fate to Speedlink? On 30 June, Class 66 No. 66194 approaches Melton Ross with a well loaded Enterprise working bound for Doncaster Belmont Yard, comprising steel wagons, empty MEAs and tanks. RICHARD TUPLIN

EWS announces the future ... four separate companies!

The future plans for Britain's biggest rail freight operator have been announced.

Despite numerous rumours of takeovers, the company is to be restructured into four separate businesses, all wholly owned by EWS and each will have its own dedicated 'key' area.

After trying several different styles of operating, where priorities have been focused on a regional or a commodity basis, the latest change, which is said by EWS to be "one of the most significant customer led innovations in rail freight in years", appears to take the industry back to a similar style of operation to that of the early 1990s!

Four new divisions will be launched in the autumn. EWS says that the aim is to deliver an enhanced level of customer service, which will facilitate rail freight growth. Each division will have a clear focus to ensure there is a defined and recognisable link to customers and markets. The new divisions will be called EWS Energy, whose prime focus will be moving coal and other fuels for the energy sector; EWS Industrial will concentrate on moving heavy industrial materials, such as metals and petroleum products; EWS Construction will handle the task of moving products for the construction and waste industries while EWS Network will provide services for Network Rail, the logistics sector and the rail industry.

Enthusiasts will not fail to notice the rather similar appearance between the new 'innovative divisions' and the Trainload Freight sectors from several years ago.

One of the key areas in the announcement was that each of the four divisions will have a major environmental remit to help customers reduce the size of their carbon footprint and lower other damaging emissions by using EWS services.

EWS has yet to confirm how the new divisions will operate, but industry insiders suggest that locomotives, rolling stock, staff and operational facilities will be allocated to work specifically with one of the divisions. One of the key exceptions is likely to be weekend engineering work for Network Rail, when it may well become necessary to pool resources from around the four divisions in order to fulfil commitments.

Although not confirmed, ***Railway Herald*** understands that the majority of operations staff, currently based at Customer Service Delivery Centre (CSDC) will be moved out to either Toton, Knottingley or Rotherham with the empty space within CSDC being leased to outside companies.

The new structure will be formally launched later this year.

Virgin Pendolino flies Superman style to Manchester!

Virgin Trains, in assocation with Warner Brothers, has vinylled one of its Class 390 'Pendolino' sets in Superman livery!

The use of a Pendolino as a mobile billboard has been done to mark the launch of the 'Superman Returns' movie which stars Brandon Routh, Kevin Spacey and Kate Bosworth will open at cinemas on 14 July. Combining scenes from the new movie with Virgin Trains' own branding, this is the first time a domestic inter-city train has been used to carry an exterior advertisement across the country.

Class 390 No. 390029 *City of Stoke-on-Trent* was carefully prepared by staff at Alstom's Wembley Traincare Depot. The high adhesive vinyls were painstakingly applied to the sides of the 217m nine-coach train with the help of manufacturer and specialist company Halo Rail.

ABOVE: The inaugural run of the vinyl-wrapped 'Superman Returns' Pendolino Class 390 No. 390029 *City of Stoke-on-Trent* passes through Carpenders Park at speed with the 10.35 London Euston - Manchester Piccadilly service on 6 July.

BELOW: Vehicle No. 68829 displays some of the amazing vinylled graphics that will remain on the set for six-months. BOTH: BRIAN MORRISON

First re-engined power car for Angel Trains handed over!

The new fleet of re-engined power cars, owned by Angel Trains and operated by First Great Western was officially launched at Brush Traction's, Loughborough works on 6 July by the Rail Minister, Derek Twigg MP.

The work, which is being undertaken by Brush will extend the life of the HST fleet by at least 10 years, by which time an agreement for the construction of HST2 and its building should hopefully be underway. The unveiling and launch of the power car at Loughborough followed the successful conclusion to the six-month trial undertaken with First Great Western, which involved the fitting of an MTU power unit and modified cooler group to Class 43 Nos. 43004 and 43009.

With the results analysed, Angel Trains is investing nearly £75 million in upgrading 49 of its fleet of HST power cars from the Paxman Valenta to the new MTU 16V4000R41 engine. Of the 49 cars being completed, 26 are being leased to First Great Western, while a further 23 will be leased to GNER. The reminder of the First Great Western operated power cars are owned by First Group. These will also be fitted with the same

ABOVE: Class 43 No. 43175 sits in the sun in the works yard shortly after being handed over. RICHARD TUPLIN

RIGHT: The new cab design within the refurbished power cars keeps the traditional desk layout but provides all new instrumentation. COLIN J. MARSDEN

BELOW: Several power cars are currently undergoing overhaul at Brush for both Angel Trains and First Group. Here Nos. 43092 and 43098 undergo a full refurbish for First Group. RICHARD TUPLIN

ABOVE: A number of the First Group owned power cars were previously used on Cross-Country services before the introduction on the Voyager fleet. Here No. 43155, previously *The Red Arrows*, sits alongside ex-Network Rail NMT power car No. 43154, now part of the First Group fleet. RICHARD TUPLIN

MTU engine and revised cooler group, but are also being rewired and fully refurbished while at Brush Traction

The upgraded power cars deliver a 15 per cent improvement in fuel consumption, resulting in major cost efficiencies together with significant environmental benefits and lower exhaust emissions.

Class 43 No. 43175, handed over on 6 July is actually the first of the Angel Trains owned power cars to be completed, but will become the second of the current batch. First Group owned Class 43 No. 43093 was delivered back to Swansea Landore on 30 June by Cotswold Rail's Class 47 No. 47828.

One of the key changes to the delivery schedule is the livery for the First Great Western vehicles. ***Railway Herald*** understands that the planned 'neon lights' livery has been shelved by First Group and power cars will be delivered to FGW in plain blue colours.

Delivery of the remaining Angel Trains power cars for both First Great Western and GNER are due to be completed by the end of 2008.

Present at Brush Works Loughborough on 6 July were:

First Group Holdings
43092, 43094, 43097, 43098, 43153, 43154, 43155, 43158 and 43198

Angel Trains
43165 and 43175.

Notes:
No. 43133 (Angel Trains) was due to arrive at Loughborough on 7 July.

Completed No. 43175 was due to depart Loughborough on 7 July, bound for First Great Western at Swansea.

BELOW: Still carrying the base colour of its previous operator, Class 43 No. 43094 is seen on temporary stands in the workshop at Loughborough. This is one of the power cars that is being totally refurbished and re-engined for First Group, before entering traffic with First Great Western. RICHARD TUPLIN

Plans announced for new terminal at Radlett

Despite strong local opinion against the project, plans have been announced for a new rail connected warehousing and intermodal terminal near St. Albans.

The new 'rail freight interchange' is planned for construction on the former Radlett Aerodrome site near Frogmore and will incorporate a 614-acre country park along with the proposed 3.5m sq ft of development.

The plans would see each unit or warehouse provided with its own rail siding linked to a chord off the Midland Main Line, which runs alongside the site.

Traffic will also be able to be accepted from and dispatched to Europe through the Channel Tunnel. In addition railway capacity for the site will be a total of 12 trains arriving and departing every day.

Discussions have been held between the developers Helioslough and Network Rail during which it has been made clear that capacity exists on the Midland Main Line for the proposed traffic.

Lorry access to the terminal will be via a new junction from the A414, which itself has direct access to the M1, M25 and A1(M).

A planning application has yet to be submitted but a spokesman for the developers told ***Railway Herald*** that its submission was imminent.

Althought it may be two years before agreement is given for construction to start (subject to there being no complications) the developers are expecting the build period to be around five years from start to completion. Rail operations are expected to start within this period.

GNER invests in historic Durham station

GNER is investing £2.5 million in a major refurbishment project at Durham. The main focus is on the southbound platform.

Buildings on this platform date back to the 1960s and are being replaced by a new layout within the older station buildings, which themselves date back to 1872 and have been concealed from view for decades.

The design will incorporate a new travel centre and a wider choice of retail and refreshment facilities. Listed building consent has been awarded for the scheme. The rebuilding work at Durham is expected to be complete by the end of this year.

Network Rail launches bid to Government for £28.7 billion

Network Rail has launched a bid for £28.7 billion in government funding - including about £1 billion for investment in infrastructure north of the Border.

£20.8 billion of the funding is for running the existing network during the 2009-2014 period, a reduction of £4.2 billion compared with 2005/2006 prices. The extra funding is required by the company to accommodate a predicted 30% growth in passengers and freight across the 20,000 mile network.

A number of projects are planned for accomodating future growth including the redevelopment of Waterloo and Birmingham New Street stations, plus the company requires a further £300 million to reinstate the Airdrie-Bathgate line between Edinburgh and Glasgow and a further £770 million to create rail links to Edinburgh and Glasgow Airports by 2014.

Arriva take delivery of Class 121 'Bubble'

The first public views of the Arriva Trains Wales Class 121 'Bubblecar' were seen on 30 June, when No. 121032 (vehicle No. 55032) was dragged from LNWR Crewe to Cardiff Canton depot by The Fifty Fund's Class 50 No. 50049 *Defiance*.

The Class 121 has been equipped with TPWS, OTMR and Central Door Locking as part of its major refurbishment in addition to an updated fire prevention system. The vehicle has also benefited from a full internal refit, including re-upholstering original seat designs and repanelling. Major underfloor components such as bogies, brakes and engines have been thoroughly overhauled.

No. 55032 is now ready to enter traffic and is currently located on the Barry Island Railway to enable driver and guard training to take place. It is expected that the unit will enter passenger service in late July on the 15-minute interval Cardiff Bay shuttle service, from Cardiff Queen Street.

TOP: Class 50 No. 50049 *Defiance* hauls the part-completed Arriva Trains Wales-liveried Class 121 'Bubblecar' through Abergavenny on 30 June. ABOVE LEFT: The attractive Arriva livery on No. 121032. BOTH: MALCOLM LEWIS LEFT: The brightly coloured interior and attractive seat mocquette of No. 55032. ARRIVA TRAINS WALES

EWS targets the parcels sector

EWS has appealed to mail and parcel sector companies to make more use of rail during a UK Express Delivery conference in Birmingham.

By transferring parcels for all or some of their journey to EWS services, the company says that parcel distributors gain shorter delivery times, enjoy lower operating costs and avoid the risk of operating trucks without a load on their return journeys.

EWS operates nightly multi-user services from the West Midlands to Scotland. This operation works successfully for major parcel distribution companies including DHL and Business Post.

In the last year, DHL has doubled the number of parcels per night that they transport by rail with EWS, with record volumes being transported in the weeks leading up to Christmas. 75% of all DHL's parcel traffic for Inverness is now being transported using EWS services.

Electronic ticket gates for Chester

Arriva Trains Wales is to introduce new ticket gates at Chester station from 14 July.

The gates, which can read more than 30 tickets a minute, will only operate while members of the station team are on hand to supervise.

Top award for Docklands Light Railway

The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) part of Transport for London (TfL), has won the overall 2006 Railway Industry Innovation Award. The award was won following its 'Delivering a successful railway through effective partnerships' entry.

Eurostar announces winter ski trains to French Alps

Eurostar has announced its timetable for high-speed services linking the UK with the French Alps for this years winter period.

Eurostar will be operating two direct ski trains a week, stopping at Moutiers, Aime la Plagne and Bourg St Maurice. Passengers can opt for the overnight service which departs on Friday night, arriving early Saturday morning or a daytime service departing from London Waterloo on Saturday morning and passing through the beautiful Burgundy region, arriving at Bourg St Maurice early evening.

The first daytime service departs on 23 December, with overnight trains commencing on 29 December. Standard class returns start from just £179, or skiers can indulge themselves travelling Leisure Select from £269, benefiting from roomier accommodation and meals and drinks served at their seats.

Bookings can either be made online at www.eurostar.com or by calling 08705 186 186.

Freightliner takes over EWS limestone flow to Drax

Freightliner Heavy Haul has taken over the haulage of limestone from the Peak District to Drax Power Station. The limestone is used in the Flue Gas Desulphurisation process, which cleans the immissions from the power station. The first train of the new contract ran on 3 July.

Freightliner's recently announced £30m investment programme, which included the construction of new wagons, will include a fleet of HIA hoppers for use on the newly acquired contract.

TOP: The first train of the new contract from Peak Forest to Drax Power Station rounds the curve off the Sheffield lines at Doncaster on 3 July, with Class 66/6 No. 66614 in charge. The white liveried wagons make the train very distinctive.
ABOVE: A close up view of the recently built HIA hopper wagons. BOTH: RON COVER

Is Imerys' announcement the end of China Clay traffic?

The end of an era could well be approaching following an announcement by french minerals company Imerys that it is to cut 800 jobs in Devon and Cornwall.

The 260-year-old china clay industry, previously owned by English China Clay (ECC) has played a core role in the South West's freight operations for many years and today is almost the sole survivor of railfreight in the region.

The effect of the cuts on the rail industry is yet to become known as the company has not announced which terminals will close, but it is expected to be the final axe for St. Blazey depot. The loss of the majority of china clay traffic, which at current levels is only one train each day on average, would leave only the weekly fuel tanks to Long Rock at Penzance and some 'Enterprise' traffic.

The rail transportation of china clay has been steadily declining over the last few years with the end of clay workings from Tavistock Junction and Marsh Mills in Devon and the recent loss of Saturday trains altogether.

Imerys has also announced that the shipment of 'Kaolin' (china clay) from Cornwall to the Caledonian Paper Mill in Irvine, Scotland will discontinue. This will result in the final nail in the coffin for arguably the most famous, longest distance freight train in the UK. Once hauled by pairs of Class 37s and specially designed 'Bullet' wagons, the train was quickly dubbed 'the silver bullets' and is currently handled by Class 66's after they replaced the Class 60's. Regrettably this train now runs out of the south west under cover of darkness.

ABOVE: Class 66/0 No. 66194 is pictured rolling downgrade towards Lostwithiel with the 13.15 Tavistock-Lostwithiel train of CDA clay wagons. SAM FELCE

As several different clay works create wagonload traffic for the enterprise services that depart and arrive from Burngullow and St Blazey, the future of these trains could be bleak.

With the cuts expected to occur in the autumn of 2007, could this be the writing on the wall for this long standing outpost?

First TransPennine officially launches Siemens 'Desiro' Class 185s on Cleethorpes – Manchester route

First TransPennine officially launched its new Siemens-built Class 185 DMUs into traffic on the South Trans Pennine route on 4 July.

The launch was the next phase in the planned roll-out of the 51 new units across the First TransPennine network.

The first 'official' train was the 07.16 Cleethorpes - Manchester Airport service, formed of Class 185 No. 185122. The official photo-call took place at Manchester Airport station, which has undergone work to present a fresher look to the surroundings. In addition a £125,000 refurbishment of the café and waiting room area is underway to improve facilities for customers. The units are restricted to 75mph along the Hope Valley line due to their weight, but the superb acceleration of the 185 'Desiro' sets means that there is no difference in timings between Sheffield and Stockport.

The next conversion from Class 158 to Class 185 working will happen in late August on the North Trans Pennine route to Leeds, York, Middlesbrough and Newcastle.

In December 2007, new trains will begin running on services from Manchester Airport to Barrow-in-Furness, Windermere and Blackpool North and all 51 of the trains are due to be in service by early 2007.

In association with the introduction of the Class 185s to the South route, the new fueling facility which has been built at Cleethorpes as part of the Siemens maintenance contract started supporting the service the evening before the launch, its first unit being Class 185 No. 185122.

The first day of service saw no less than four Class 185s in traffic on the South route, with Nos. 185104/107/112 and 122 all being observed.

Cleethorpes is the smallest of the three maintenance facilities and joins Ardwick depot which opened in May and the new facility at York which is currently under construction and due to open during August.

Construction work on the new York depot is on target for its planned opening. The fueling and toilet facility is now complete, while the trainwash is being fitted out and the main steelwork for the maintenance building and offices has been erected this week.

ABOVE TOP: Class 185 No. 185122 stands at Manchester Airport having arrived with the inaugural Class 185 service, the 07.16 from Cleethorpes.

ABOVE: FTPE Managing Director Vernon Barker and Andrew Cornish, Managing Director (Services and Operations) for Manchester Airport welcome the 185s to Manchester. BOTH: TONY MILES

LEFT: Class 185 No. 185122 passes Althorpe, between Doncaster and Barnetby with the 10.57 Manchester Airport - Cleethorpes service on 4 July. RICHARD TUPLIN

Discover Brunel's legacy in a special exhibition at Paddington

Network Rail has launched a new exhibition at London Paddington station to celebrate the achievements of one of the greatest engineers in history.

The 'Discover the Legacy' exhibition is dedicated to Isambard Kingdom Brunel to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth.

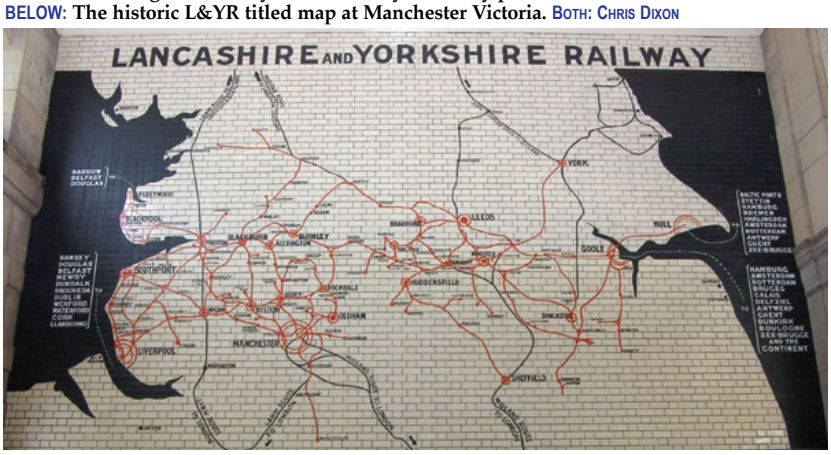
Huge banners have been suspended from the roof, and large posters dominate the concourse floor. The stands include rarely-seen drawings and plans by Brunel from Network Rail's archive, commissioned photographs and information about the great man and the 'pearls' of the Great Western route, including Box Tunnel and Bath Spa station.

This unique exhibition will stay at Paddington station until 14 July before moving to Bath Spa station for a short period, then Reading, Bristol Temple Meads and Plymouth. The final appearance for the exhibtion will be at the Swindon Steam Museum.

RIGHT: The large poster borders are pictured at London Paddington. The exhibition is on until 14 July. NETWORK RAIL

Commemorating those lost in battle, 90 years on

ABOVE: Commemorating those railway workers who lost there lives in the Battle of the Somme 90 years to the day on 1 July 1916, the Railway Chaplain, Dr Richard Cook (himself a former West Coast train manager for Virgin Trains) led the service of remembrance at the railway war memorial under the magnificent titled map inside Manchester Victoria station. The service being attended by senior railway and army personnel.
BELOW: The historic L&YR titled map at Manchester Victoria. BOTH: CHRIS DIXON



First extends 'light-sticks' to Turbos

First Great Western is to extend its emergency on-train lighting to local and regional train services in the Thames Valley, Cotswolds, North Downs, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

The company was the first in the UK to fit a revolutionary new form of emergency lighting in all its HST sets, and will now extend the 'lightsticks' to its 90mph Turbo fleet.

In total, the Turbo fleet of trains undertake more than 30 million customer journeys a year, and all 151 carriages will be fitted with the sticks, designed to be used in the event of an incident at night or in a tunnel.

The sticks, which are housed in photo-luminescent boxes, are activated when the boxes are opened and provide additional lighting for up to two hours. They can either be left in the boxes to light the carriage interior or removed to provide light to aid a train evacuation.

Up to 18 luminous light sticks will be installed in each carriage by the end of this year.

Virgin relaunches Airport Coach Link

Virgin Trains has relaunched its Watford Junction to Heathrow Airport road link as Virgin Trains ExpressCoach. The new branding emphasises that the rail-air link is part of the core Virgin Trains rail business.

The four coaches used on the Watford to Heathrow Airport route entered service last year and are finished in a colour scheme that matches Virgin's Pendolino trains. They provide connections with train services at Watford Junction. Coaches run half-hourly through most of the day seven days a week, with an average journey time of 40 minutes to Terminal 4 and 65 minutes to Terminal 1; they also serve Terminals 2 and 3.

To launch the Virgin Trains ExpressCoach brand, one of the coaches was named *Heathrow Flyer* at London Heathrow Airport on 5 July. The name was suggested by customer, Kevin O'Boyle, following a competition in West Coast Update, the monthly VWC customer newsletter.

The coaches are operated by National Express from its coach centre at Heathrow Airport as part of a three-year contract worth over £2.5 million. They are driven by a dedicated team of 14 drivers who wear Virgin Trains uniforms and have been trained in customer service excellence by Virgin Trains.

Tickets bought on the coach cost £7.50 single or £15.00 for a return.

New multi-user terminal opens at Barking

EWS and warehouse and distribution company Howard Tenens have opened a multi-user terminal at Barking, London. The terminal is receiving two trains a week of paper previously moved by road from Scotland, for Associated Press.

EWS has won the contract from paper manufacturer UPM-Kymmene Corp to move newsprint for the Finnish owned company from Ayrshire, Scotland to Barking.

The paper is destined for the Daily Mail & General Trust plc division of Associated Newspapers, which publishes the Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, Evening Standard and London Metro.

The new service, which started this month, replaces a previous road operation and will remove numerous lorry movements a year from UK roads.

Major new contract for Freightliner Intermodal

Freightliner has signed a five-year deal with Maersk Line, the container arm of Danish logistics company A.P. Moller-Maersk, to move imported containers from the ports of Southampton, Tilbury and Felixstowe to eight inland destinations.

The deal, which starts immediately and will run through to 2011, replaces two previous contracts that the rail logistics operator held between Maersk Sealand and P&O Nedlloyd. Maersk Sealand acquired P&O Nedlloyd during 2005.

Heathrow Express welcomes enthusiasts!

The operator of the direct London Paddington to Heathrow Airport rail service, Heathrow Express has officially said that it welcomes rail enthusiasts and photographers on to its platforms at Paddington.

Managing Director, Brian Raven explains, "Since our launch in 1999 there has been considerable interest in our trains from all round the globe but unfortunately there have been a few mis-understandings regarding photography and its impact on security. "

"I am happy to report that there is no reason why enthusiasts cannot take photographs of our train. We would urge everyone to be sensible and take safety precautions when photographing any train. "

New Marches Rover

Arriva Trains Wales has announced that it is to launch a new rover ticket. The rover is designed to encourage both local people and visitors to make more use of evening services on the Marches Line between Shrewsbury and Hereford.

The new 'Marches Evening Rover' ticket allows travellers to make multiple journeys to stations between Shrewsbury and Hereford after 6.30pm and costs £6.50. This represents a significant saving on a standard evening return fare to Hereford which is £13.30.

Valid for journeys between Shrewsbury; Church Stretton; Craven Arms; Ludlow; Leominster and Hereford, the ticket will allow local people and visitors to take advantage of pubs, restaurants and attractions along the line without the hassles of driving and parking. Late evening services depart Hereford for stations to Shrewsbury at 21.59 and 22.59

Children's 'Marches Evening Rover' tickets are available for accompanied travellers under the age of 16 priced at just £3.25.

Eurostar joins European Railteam alliance

Eurostar has joined forces with Europe's leading rail operators in the Railteam partnership.

Like similar schemes operated by the airline industry, the Railteam alliance will offer travellers high-speed, high-quality travel across European borders.

Other members include Deutsche Bahn (Germany), NS and HSA (Netherlands), OBB (Austria), SBB (Switzerland), SNCB (Belgium) and SNCF (France).

The alliance aims to provide passengers with seamless connections at stations, through ticketing and fares, easy access to timetables, information, booking and train services, real time journey information and universal, high-quality standards of customer service and facilities, such as on-board internet access.

Next year will see a number of improvements in European high-speed travel with the completion of TGV Est linking Paris and Strasbourg in June 2007, the movement of Eurostar services from Waterloo International to St. Pancras International and the opening of the next phase of the CTRL in the autumn. The opening of these new lines will be followed by the completion of the Dutch high-speed line linking Brussels and Amsterdam.

■ Eurostar also commences its weekly direct service to Avignon in the heart of Provence on 8 July. The service, which will run until the 9 September, has been operated during the summer months by Eurostar for five years and has a journey time of just over six hours from London.

RAILTOUR NEWS UPDATE

by John Whitehouse

ABOVE: **Still carrying the remains of its triple grey colour scheme, but with the addition of the yellow EWS bodyside badge, Class 90 No. 90022 *FreightConnection* speeds through Ricknall Grange on the East Coast Main Line on 1 July with Past Time Rail's day excursion from London King's Cross to Edinburgh.** IAN HARDY

'Tractors' to Cornwall cancelled and Newcastle's Deltic trip postponed to 2007!

Pathfinder's 'Growling Grockle' charter from York to Penzance on 14/15 July and the associated tour of Yorkshire the following day have been cancelled.

The main reason is that due to timetable changes it became impossible to path the train to Barnstaple, which for many would have been the highlight if the trip. There is a blanket 30mph speed restriction beyond Crediton for all locomotive hauled trains which even prevented the tour getting as far as Eggesford.

The charter was originally planned for last October when the timetable issues to Barnstable did not exist. An attempt to divert to Paignton fell foul of Network Rail 'operating constraints', at which point Pathfinder cancelled the train.

'The Tyne Limited' on 19 August which was due to feature Class 55 No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* from King's Cross to Newcastle and return has also been postponed to 2 January 2007, as the locomotive which is currently being overhauled will not be ready in time.

Boulby Shuttles in September

As part of the Darlington Community Rail Festival, Hertfordshire will be offering two trips to Boulby on 24 September, thanks to help from Cleveland Potash Ltd.

Trains are scheduled to depart from Darlington at 10.00 and 14.15, with unspecified traction operating in top and tail mode. For a standard class return fare of £15, this has to be one of the bargains of the year! The 'Blue Pullman' will run from London on 23 September.

Pathfinder to take 'Grid' over traditional territory in September

The highlight of Pathfinder's late summer programme is without doubt, the first scheduled use of a Fastline Freight Class 56 on a charter booked for 30 September.

Their 'Grid-Arising' is essentially an old fashioned spin and win tour running from Crewe via Shrewsbury, Birmingham New Street and Leicester to Toton Centre with an EWS Class 60, whereupon a GBRF Class 66/7 will take over to York via Nottingham, Gainsborough Lea Road and Knottingley. From York, Class 56 power takes over running to Immingham via Scunthorpe and Barnetby and returns to Toton via Gainsborough Central and Worksop, again with the Class 56 providing traction. The tour then returns to Crewe from Toton in the hands of a FL Class 57/0.

A class 57 provides the power for an earlier tour on 16 September which employs a Virgin Class 57/3 throughout from Worcester to Penzance and back. Entitled 'The Virgin Territorial, it runs via Great Malvern and Hereford to Bristol, setting down at Bodmin Parkway for the Bodmin and Wenford Diesel Gala and Par for either the Eden Project or The Lost Gardens of Heligan.

New station for Reading

A new multi-million pound station is to be constructed at Reading Green Park.

Funded by Prudential, the construction was given the green light by the Department for Transport on 6 July and it is hoped that the station will be open to passengers by December 2008.

The new two-platformed Reading Green Park on the Reading to Basingstoke line will be served by a half-hourly service connecting to the main Reading station on the Great Western Main Line.

Some of the main passenger traffic will come from match days as football fans use the station to see the newly promoted Reading FC play in the Premiership at the Madejski Stadium, but it is also hoped that commuters working in the south of Reading will see the benefits of leaving the car at home

Prudential Property Investment Managers Ltd will fund the building of the station and expect development to take 18 months.

Network Rail also announced on 6 July that funding has been included within its 10-year business plan for improvements to the main Reading station, with plans to expand capacity and construct new platforms.

GBRf refocuses on business

GB Railfreight (GBRf) is to re-focus on promoting its long established route conductor business.

Under the service, the company provides qualified route conductors to pilot specialist infrastructure or other trains across routes where client company drivers do not have the required route competency, but where GBRf has the necessary knowledge and experience.

Multimodal for Lochaber

Moves are afoot to establish a new multi-mode freight terminal on the outskirts of Fort William, the proposed location having access to Loch Linnhe, the West Highland Line and the A82.

Local council officials are pushing for some of the site to be used to allow freight to be trans-shipped between road, rail and sea. Much of the site at Annat was previously home to the Arjo Wiggins' paper mill which closed last year.

The future for part of the site is already confirmed, as BSW, the UKs largest sawmilling group is to move from its current site at Corpach into the former pulp mill.

Hatfield fine lowered

Judges have cut £2.5m from the record fine handed to the engineering firm Balfour Beatty for safety failures that led to the Hatfield rail disaster.

The Court of Appeal ruled that the fine should be cut to £7.5m as it was far higher than the £3.5m fine given to Network Rail in the same disaster.

Grand Central announces service timetable

Britain's newest open access operator, Grand Central, has announced the timetable that it is to operate once services commence in December.

The company is to operate three return services each day (see table right) although it has yet to confirm the type of rolling stock that it will use. Managing Director Ian Yeowart told Railway Herald that three options are currently under consideration and that the company will be announcing its decision shortly.

In confirming the timetable for Grand Central, Network Rail has also announced that it has recommended to the ORR, if certain constraints were removed - such as those relating to contractual rights and stopping patterns - more capacity would be found.

Sunderland	dep.	0653	1230	1730
Hartlepool	dep.	0716	1253	1755
Eaglescliffe	dep.	0738	1315	1814
Northallerton	dep.	0759	1336	1835
Thirsk	dep.	0808	1345	1844
York	dep.	0847	1410	1906
King's Cross	arr.	1042	1605	2108
King's Cross	dep.	0804	1127	1650
York	dep.	1014	1322	1847
Thirsk	dep.	1029	1337	1903
Northallerton	dep.	1038	1346	1915
Eaglescliffe	dep.	1057	1403	1933
Hartlepool	dep.	1116	1423	1955
Sunderland	arr.	1150	1450	2035

Midland Mainline most punctual operator

Figures released by the Office of Rail Regulation show that more rail services are arriving punctually and that passenger numbers across the network are growing.

The latest report details that train punctuality is at its highest level for six years with an average of 86.4% of trains on-time, compared with 83.6% the previous year. In 2002 the level was at 78.6%. For the January to March 2006 period, punctuality averaged almost 90%.

The figures are all the more remarkable due to the fact that there are more services each day than a year ago, an increase of 315 extra trains in the last year and that passenger figures are showing a 3.6% increase.

The most punctual of the long distance rail operators was Midland Mainline which had 96.1% of trains arriving at their destination on time. In second place were Virgin West Coast (89.3%) with GNER (88.4%) in third place.

Rail freight also showed an increase with the total freight moved being 7.5% between 2004-05 and 2005-06. The greatest commodity percentage increase between that period was for coal moved, which increased by nearly 23%. 104 million tonnes of freight were lifted in 2005-06, 2% more than in 2004-05 while the number of freight train movements increased by 19.3% between 2004-05 and 2005-06.

Total freight moved increased by almost 8% between January-March 2005 and January-March 2006.

Freightliner starts scrap flow to Sheerness

BELOW: Class 66/5 No. 66511 is pictured departing Hitchin Up Yard on a new scrap metal working, the train being the 19.10 Hitchin Yard to Sheerness on 6 July. The flow started a week earlier, with the first train, hauled by Class 66 No. 66608, running on 30 June. The service makes use of leased VTG bogie open wagons. DR. IAIN C. SCOTCHMAN

GNER welcomes ECML news

GNER has welcomed an announcement on 7 July from Network Rail that sufficient track capacity is potentially available for an extra 10 paths in each direction on the ECML each day.

The possible new paths were highlighted in a report on capacity on the ECML, which Network Rail has produced in response to the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR's) decision to grant new access rights to the train operating company Grand Central.

The 20 new paths would allow Grand Central to operate three new services between Sunderland and King's Cross, Hull Trains to run an additional Hull and King's Cross service and for GNER to operate six additional services between Leeds and King's Cross, which would mean a half-hourly service between King's Cross and Leeds during the day.

Coalville arrivals

The first items of rolling stock to arrive at FM Rail's new Coalville site for storage on behalf of their owners should appear within the next 14 days.

The vehicles will be four Mk. 2 coaches from HSBC rail and several currently off-lease wagons owned by one of the wagon leasing companies.

South Western franchise

Stagecoach Group submitted its bid for the new South Western rail franchise on 30 June with a commitment to customers and the Government to deliver high quality, innovative and value-for-money services.

Stagecoach Group is bidding as Stagecoach South Western Trains Limited.

NEWS IN BREIF

■ EWS is selling a further batch of locomotive nameplates. The latest plates to be auctioned off are *Victim Support, Stockton Haulage, County of Suffolk, Lindisfarne* and *Port of Hull*. Bids must be submitted by 10.00 on 13 July.

■ The two Class 458s currently being sub-leased from South West Trains to Gatwick Express, Nos. (45)8001 and (45)8002, have begun driver training in the Wimbledon area. Both vehicles now carry Gatwick Express branding over the base SWT livery. They will be used until early 2007 when the entire Class 458 fleet is due to be handed back to the leasing company.

■ The first of the recently delivered Class 66/4 locos for Direct Rail Services, No. 66411, is due to become the first of three locos to carry the Eddie Stobart livery. It should move to Glasgow Works shortly.

■ A further batch of Class 60s have been placed into the WNTR stored pool, these being Nos. 60029, 60032, 60035 and 60062.

■ The North Wales Coast Class 57 diagram is expected to end shortly as damaged Class 175 No. 175103 is due to return to traffic within the next 10 days.

■ After a period with Class 87 No. 87026 in charge, the Virgin West Coast Class 87 diagram has changed locomotives again! This time, one of the celebrity locomotives, No. 87002 *The AC Locomotive Society*, has returned to the frame. The locomotive worked its first train during the morning of 6 July.

■ DRS owned, ETH-fitted Class 37/4 No. 37423 is confirmed as currently undergoing repairs at Brush Traction, Loughborough. Also in the works is the new Network Rail power car, No. 43089.

ABOVE: Class 37/4 No. 37417 *Richard Trevithick* is pictured approaching Whitacre Junction on 1 July working 14.30 Northampton-Bescot loaded scrap train, that should have operated on 29 June as the 16.44 Northampton-Aldwarke with 66089, which was attached to the rear of this working. MIKE HOLLICK

Air-conditioning improvements for 'one' stock

'one' Railway is aiming to improve the performance of the air-conditioning equipment on its newly introduced Mk.3 vehicles.

Led by the 'one' fleet engineering team at Crown Point maintenance depot in Norwich, a partnership involving Porterbrook (the rolling stock leasing company that owns the Mk.3 vehicles), Bombardier (the company refurbishing the vehicles for 'one'), Wabtec (the company modifying the air-conditioning modules as part of the Mk.3 carriage refurbishment programme) and Techtrain (a specialist consultancy with expertise in rail vehicle air-conditioning issues) has put in place a number of actions to improve air conditioning reliability.

Some improvements have been carried out including the virtual rebuild of the air- conditioning modules, and all refurbished vehicles are checked on return from the Bombardier site in Derby and any immediate faults are being addressed under the warranty arrangements.

A continual checking regime is in place for elements of the air-conditioning systems including the refrigerant, compressor terminals, condensors, cooling efficiency and saloon and sensor temperature. Improvements have also been made to the systems that protect the equipment in extreme temperatures. These include the installation of an 'auto-reset' device, fitted by Techtrain & Wabtec to restart cooling after the air conditioning 'trips out', caused by temperatures in excess of 40C, which can often be the case when the trains are stationery in the platforms at London Liverpool Street station. All Mk 3 sets are due to be completed by the end of June.

If a problem or defect with the air conditioning equipment does occur, 'one' will provide complimentary water for customers travelling in any affected coaches, or arrange to move passengers to an alternative coach wherever possible.

Rail passengers themselves can help 'one' staff by ensuring that carriage door windows are closed and internal doors are not obstructed by luggage to ensure their normal automatic closure. Both these actions will help to keep carriages cool and the air conditioning operating efficiently.

RIGHT: As reported in our last issue, Class 66 No. 66022 has been returned from France for further modification and testing to be undertaken. Once complete the locomotive will be returned to France to complete its safety case testing. No. 66022 is pictured on 6 July within the old Derby Railway Technical Centre, clearly showing some of the external modifications which have been undertaken. These include the revised design of deflector plate and its yellow markings, plus the addition of the EWSI text on the front end, as the locomotives are required to show the operators name on the bodyside. Once the French safety case approval is granted, the Class 66s will begin working services for Euro Cargo Rail. RICHARD TUPLIN

ABOVE: **LSWR B4 0-4-0T No. 96 *Normandy* is pictured at Horsted Keynes on 3 July while carrying out the railways 'Monday' shunt. This was the last duty for the locomotive before its withdrawal from traffic for a boiler overhaul.** ANTHONY SULLIVAN

Sir Herbert Walker to leave Great Central

Class 73 No. E6003 *Sir Herbert Walker* will be moving away from the Great Central Railway in the coming weeks.

A number of new sites have been evaluated following offers made by some other preserved railways, although the owning group has declined to comment on the potential homes, except to say that one site has has emerged as clear favourite and an official announcement will be made once all interested parties agree.

However, the locomotive is not being 'evicted' from the GCR. The original running agreement brough the 'electro-diesel' to the railway for a gala event and the locomotive has since stayed on as part fo the line's diesel fleet.

The 600hp locomotive entered traffic with British Railways in 1962 and is the only Class 73/0 remaining in original condition, but as unique as it is, it does not fit in with the Great Central Railway's future plans.

By mutual agreement the 'ED' will be moving to a new home and it is expected that the locomotive could be back in action within a few weeks.

Rothley best kept station on GCR

Rothley has been voted the Great Central's best kept station in the railway chairman's new competition.

Judges from local councils and stakeholders toured Loughborough, Quorn & Woodhouse, Rothley and Leicester North on 24 June.

The railway's General Manager, Robert Crew said, "Rothley won by a short head but the judges had plenty of positive remarks to make about all of our stations. In the end Rothley stood out for the authenticity of its Edwardian style, the appearance of the staff and the well kept gardens."

Rothley will be awarded a small cash prize by the David Clarke Railway Trust to finance its future development. The competition will run again next year.

King Edward I heads to Par

The question of who uses 'King' No. 6024 *King Edward I* on the tours on 7 October seems to have been resolved. Pathfinder look to have secured the services of the 'King' for its re-dated trip from Slough to Par, featuring steam haulage from Exeter to Par and back, while the Railway Touring Company will now be using ex-LMS 'Princess Royal' No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth* on the steam section from Bristol Temple Meads to Plymouth and return on their re-dated tour on the same day, which originates at London Paddington.

PMR announce 'Duchess' dates

LMS Pacific No. 6233 *Duchess of Sutherland* is set to visit London King's Cross on 28 October. Capitalising on the locomotives legendary performance on the East Coast Main Line last year while deputising for Class A4 No. 60009 *Union of South Africa*, the 'Duchess' is due to haul the train, which originates at Sheffield, from Derby via Nottingham and Grantham to Kings Cross.

Earlier, on 30 September No. 6233 has charge of a Leicester to York and Scarborough working from Derby.

BELOW: **The sole operational Class 37/9 No. 37901 *Mirless Pioneer* is pictured approaching Glyndyfrdwy with a Carrog bound photographers freight, run by East Midlands Railway Photographic Society. This particular charter was a milestone for the EMRPS, as the £956.50 that was raised for the Llangollen Railway today means that since the first charter in January 2001, the society has over contributed over £20,000 to preservation.** GWOT

ABOVE: Freightliner Class 66/5 No. 66520 was called upon to rescue DRS Class 66/4 No. 66402 on 30 June, when the latter failed at Nuneaton while working a Coatbridge - Daventry Intermodal service. The Freightliner locomotive worked the train through to Daventry and is pictured here passing through Rugby during the early afternoon running over two hours late. NATHAN BEAHAN

BELOW: On 29 June, Class 92 No. 92036 failed while working a northbound rake of empty intermodal wagons. Rescue came in the form of Virgin Trains Class 57/3 No. 57301 *Scott Tracy*. Here the ensemble is pictured beneath the gantries passing Tamworth Low Level. DAVID MULLIGAN

The Olympian

bows out with GB Railfreight

ABOVE: The mock Network SouthEast-liveried celebrity Class 87 No. 87012 *The Olympian* is to be handed back to the leasing company by GB Railfreight. With the return of the driving cars to the Class 325 EMUs, the requirement for locomotive haulage of the units on the West Coast Main Line will diminish. Here No. 87012 speeds through Warrington Bank Quay on 2 Julywith the Willesden - Sheildmuir RMT mail service. LOUISE THOMPSON

BELOW: The locomotives final working, for the time being at least, was to move Class 325 No. 325005 south from Polmadie to Willesden PRDC on 3 July. Here the celebrity passes Tamworth. The following day it should have worked a final passenger duty, in the form of Virgin West Coast's Class 87 diagram. Unfortunately the locomotive was failed leaving Wembley with a speedometer fault. JOHN WHITEHOUSE

Recently DRS locomotives have been used on a variety of workings in the UK, accentuated by the hire of two '66/4s' for use by Freightliner Heavy Haul and two pairs of '37/6s' on Serco test duties.

Here is a selection of some recent Class 37 wanderings:

ABOVE: Although double-headed freights have been quite common over the years, quadruple headed services have always been a rare sight. With DRS services occasionally being used to move locos about, the sight of several locos at the head has become more common place. On 28 June, Class 37/6 Nos. 37606 and 37609 lead Class 20/3 Nos. 20312 and 20313 through Farrington Junction, south of Preston with a Sellafield - Crewe nuclear flask service. IAN TUNSTALL

MIDDLE: Class 37/6 Nos. 37602 and 37606 run centre-road through Kensington Olympia on 5 July with the Dungeness - Willesden Brent Sidings empty flasks.
DR. IAIN C. SCOTCHMAN

BOTTOM: The 09.00 Serco test working from Hither Green to Selhurst via London Victoria, Dover Priory, Denmark Hill and Clapham Junction passes Bickley Junction on the inward run on 5 July, powered by DRS Class 37/6s No 37611 on the front and No 37609 on the rear.
BRIAN MORRISON