

The Ramble - Number 327

The Ramble

There will not be a Ramble next Sunday as I am away. The next one should be 328 on Sunday 13th September.



Belgische Nachrichten
Nouvelles belges
Belgisch Nieuws

Gentbrugge Works

Here is a great set of photos from the inside of Gentbrugge Works. I cannot help thinking what a great set of buildings for a preservation centre or even a railway museum. Perhaps the Belgians could use Gentbrugge as a railway museum annex like Shildon as a room like this enables you to display whole trains and units.

<http://2403.be/album.php?id=72>



If you go back to the home page and look under "Urbex" there are plenty more places that have been visited both railway and non railway.

Bocq Gala

<https://www.cfbcq.be/index.php/fr/reservation>

Bienvenue sur notre page de réservation

Suite à la situation actuelle, nos trajets se font exclusivement sur réservation.

L'embarquement et le débarquement est uniquement possible qu'à Spontin. Le port du masque est obligatoire.

Welcome to our booking page

Following the current situation, our trips are made exclusively by reservation.

Embarkation and disembarkation is only possible at Spontin. Wearing a mask is compulsory.

There then follows quite a good booking form where you indicate which train you wish to travel on and the number of people travelling. It looks as if it currently a two hour round trip.

Under an old photo of 5528 on the HLE 13 etc website on Facebook is this,

Jean-Louis Chevalier

-Elle est beaucoup plus belle, comme cela. 😊 😊 😊

Venez admirez la vraie le week end du 19-20 Septembre à Spontin, Namur; attention sous réservation, voir notre site web

<https://www.cfbcq.be/index.php/fr/reservation>

Decision day for me is Sunday 13th September when I decide whether I am going to Belgium or doing Plan B which is going to South Wales. If the Belgian infection rates do start to drop this next week then it may be game on, otherwise it is Wales.

One of the reasons for choosing Wales was a short section of required track from Ebbw Vale Parkway to Ebbw Vale Town. The line is shut the whole time I am there north of Newbridge for bridge replacement works.

HLR 77/78

7701 will come back next Monday after a GR by Voith Turbo at Kiel.

7708 has left Antwerpen for a revision at Voith Turbo.

7717 left Antwerpen last week for a R2 Revision at Jacko Fijn Techniek.

Vectron In Belgium

193 341 was to be the first commercial Vectron in Belgium. It was supposed to come within the consist of E47068, an empty Exxon-train, to Belgium. But due to an IT-error at Infrabel it wasn't possible to put the Vectron and the freight wagons in their train management systems as one consist. So the Vectron came light engine [see the Front Page of the Spreadsheet] and the Exxon-train hauled by 186 340 passed a few minutes later.

Here is 186 340 hauling 47068 at Ekeren in a photo by Robin Mellis.





Nederlands Nieuws

Railexperts

Ruben, the owner of Railexperts writes that on 26-4-2001, as an 18-year-old, I took the exam for the first type of locomotive I was allowed to ride, the DH6000/V60D and became a shunting driver.

Over the years, I spent many, many, many hours on locomotives of this type.

Now more than 19 years after that happy moment, my company has put the first loco of this type back into service.



Photo by Henk Zwoferink

Railexperts has bought the four V60D locomotives off RRS (EETC). These are

501 / ex-ACTS 6004 / LEW1979/16539.

502 / ex-ACTS 6005 / LEW1982/18001.

504 / ex-Volker Rail 106-1 / LEW1980/16144.

505 / ex-ACTS 6002 / LEW1982/17699.

505 / 6002 was sat at s'Hertogenbosch for a long time as it had been used to shunt the motorail terminal there. When these trains stopped the loco remained there.

Formally the four V60D locos are owned by RXP Tractie B.V. which is also the formal owner of 9901, 6703 and 6705.

Ruben started his working life off with ACTS and this is perhaps why the ACTS blue is his choice of colours. When things came unstuck with 1215 and Railpromo, 1215 needed to be repainted. Railexperts put up the money for the paint and got to choose the livery!

Man and machine!



SOMDA Posting

You will remember a few weeks ago I mentioned about NS planning not to order any more ICNG trains for the Belgian services apart from the two they have agreed to buy.

From Ramble 315 [7th June 2020]

“The original contract with Alstom was for 79 sets. There were 49 x five car sets and 30 x eight car sets. This was agreed in July 2016.

In March 2017 NS then ordered two x eight car sets to act as test vehicles/prototypes to gain approval to run in Belgium.

In July 2019 NS then ordered another 18 x Benelux sets.

49 x five car [3101 to 3149]

30 x eight car [3201 to 3230]

20 x eight car Benelux [3301 to 3320].

This made 99 sets in total.



Word on the streets is that on 19th May 2020 it was decided that the option on the 18 ICNG - B would not be taken up and the order remains at 49 x 5 car, 30 x 8 car [NL only] and 2 x 8 car [NL & BE]. So there will be 81 sets numbered as 3101-3149, 3221-3230 and 3301-3302.”

This information came from a good source and then a week or two later, it was confirmed by someone else. There was no confirmation from any other source and then I speculated that NS may “convert” the order for the 18 ICNG-B into sets for Germany as it had been announced that ICNG were going to run to Aachen.

From Ramble 319 [5th July 2020]

“So I am wondering if the decision has been whether to proceed with the 18 sets for Belgium or convert these to German compatible sets instead if there are problems. So it could be 18 tri-current units for Belgium or 18 tri-current units for Germany. If things work out in Belgium then it could be an additional 18 x ICNG-D.

It was noticeable that there was no noise from Alstom about the loss of 18 units.

There was no noise anywhere about the 18 units being cancelled. However, something has happened for two people to independently say something.”

It was reported on SOMDA on 23rd August that,

“De redactie van het tijdschrift Spoorwegjournaal editie 236 (voorwoord) meldt dat de NS van plan zijn om de bestelling van de ICNG-B treinstellen te annuleren na aanleiden van de COVID-19 gebeurtenissen:

In Nederland bijvoorbeeld, een land waar in dergelijke omstandigheden meestal snel de broekriem wordt aangehaald, zou de NS van plan zijn om de aflevering te vertragen van hun ICNG-motorstellen (InterCity Nieuwe Generatie, met een snelheid van 200 km/u) en zelfs de bestelling te annuleren van de 'ICNG-B'-motorstellen voor de 'Benelux'-relatie tussen Amsterdam CS en Brussel-Zuid via de hogesnelheidslijnen!"

Translated as

The editors of the magazine Spoorwegjournaal edition 236 (foreword) report that the NS are planning to cancel the order for the ICNG-B trainsets following the COVID-19 events:

In the Netherlands, for example, a country where the belts are usually quickly tightened in such circumstances, the NS would plan to delay the delivery of their ICNG railcars (InterCity New Generation, with a speed of 200 km / h) and even the cancel order for the 'ICNG-B' railcars for the 'Benelux' relationship between Amsterdam CS and Brussels-South via the high-speed lines!

Spoorwegjournaal is edited by Max Delie and around him are a number of people who are in the know. Spoorwegjournaal is not known for wibble and has support among senior rail staff. Perhaps some of the people who get the Ramble, may have pointed out what I had written and it was investigated by Spoorwegjournaal. As I have found out, the Dutch Railway Press does not usually say anything if it is asked not to. A little bit like the [UK Lobby System](#), briefings are given off the record and sometimes certain things are asked not to be reported until the Government wishes to. This does not apply to other countries and does not work so well now in the Internet age.

It is one thing being able to ignore some bloke sat at home doing a private newsletter, it is different when respected magazines start writing things. On the 27th August, **four** days after the posting on SOMDA, The Head of NS Media Relations put this out.

<https://nieuws.ns.nl/ns-in-2024-nieuwe-treinen-en-flink-sneller-naar-berlijn-en-brussel/>

"Train passengers will travel faster to Berlin and Brussels from 2024. NS is currently working on plans to drive faster on the Amsterdam-Brussels and Amsterdam-Berlin routes. In 2024, new trains will start running on both routes, which will take travellers from one capital to another much faster and more comfortably. Half an hour is gained to Berlin and travel time savings of up to half an hour to Brussels also seem possible."

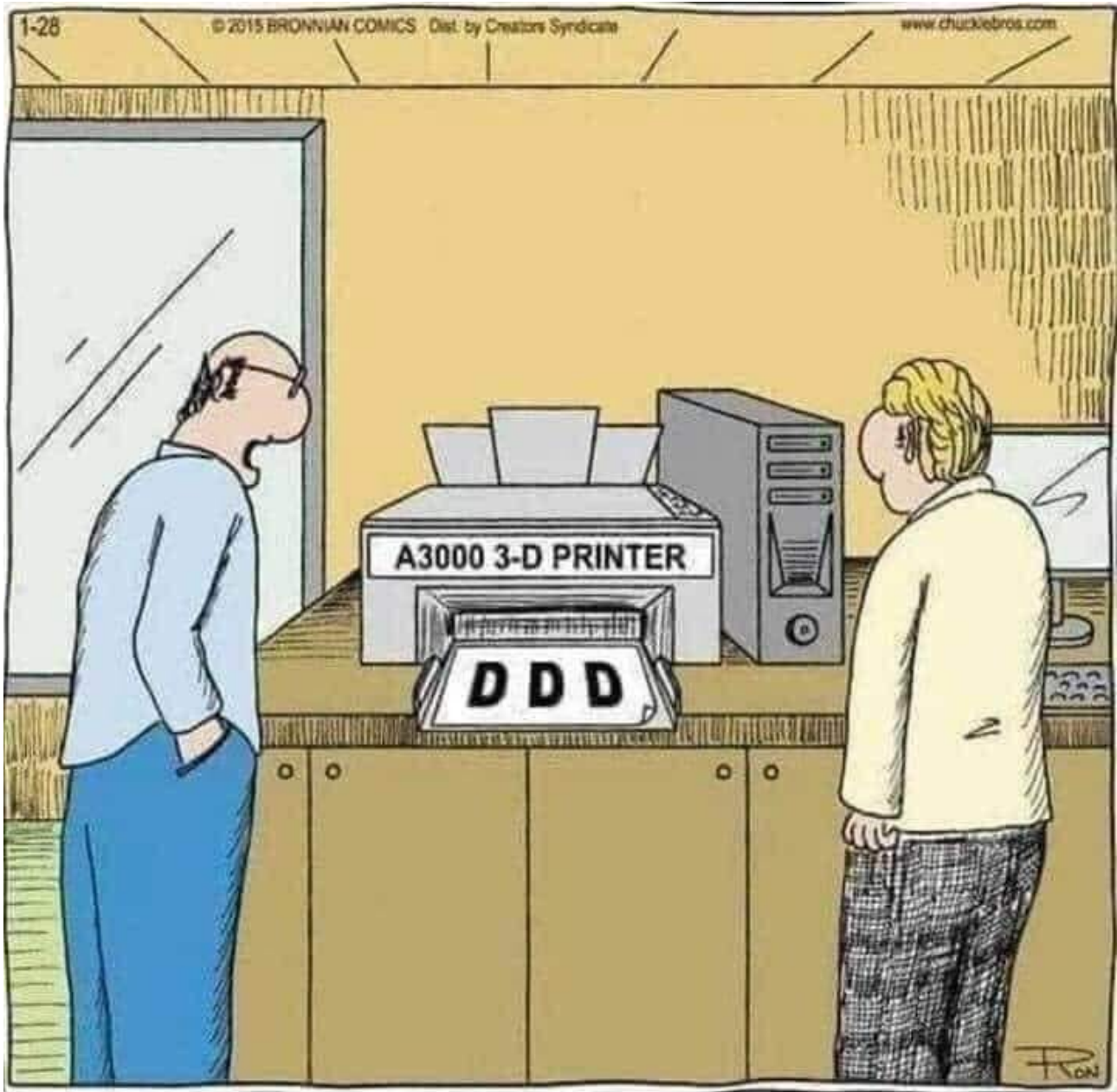
Something has happened with the ICNG-B and I do not know what it is.

I suspect that the NS have looked at the risks of trying to get new trains passed off for Belgium and made an assessment. Covid has become a convenient [scapegoat](#) perhaps to hide the real problems and concerns.

So it is possible a decision was made in May on whether to proceed with the 18 sets for Belgium. Perhaps people then got thinking and Plan B became to convert these 18 to German compatible sets instead if there are problems. So it could be 18 tri-current units for Belgium or 18 tri-current units for Germany. If things work out in Belgium then it could be an additional 18 x ICNG-D or the train to Aachen quietly gets dropped by NS.



Other News



“I hate to be the one to tell you this, Jerry, but I think you’ve been ripped off.”



Have a nice week

Tain