



The Ramble 423 - 05/12/22

The next Rambles will be on:-

Monday 12th December [424]

Monday 19th December [425]

Monday 5th January 2023 [426]

Monday 12th January 2023 [427]

Monday 19th January 2023 [428]

Monday 26th January 2023 [429]

Ramble Readers

Here Mr Daff doing his thing with 68001 on Tuesday 29th November 2022.

<https://www.facebook.com/shane.hollingworth/videos/5732877110131710/>

Dallas Air Show Update

I mentioned about the Dallas Air Show Collision last week and the NTSB has issued a Preliminary Report. This is covered in this You Tube video by the same excellent commentator that did the You Tube film I mentioned last week.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRVqg-pCb6o>

An angry Juan does not mince his words here!

Something Christmassy - Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital 03/12/20 Adrian Roberts





Belgische Nachrichten Nouvelles belges Belgisch Nieuws

HLE 21

Many thanks to all the people who sent me the gen about the Polish HLE 21s.

<https://www.rynek-kolejowy.pl/wiadomosci/belgijskie-lokomotywy-pociagna-pkp-intercity-jest-oferta-110948.html>

Google Translate - "As we reported in the middle of the month, PKP Intercity announced a tender for the lease of ten electric locomotives for a period of one year . The company admits that the plan to rent electric locomotives is related to the inability to perform P4 inspections on time . This problem is especially true for EP09 vehicles, after Olkol was declared bankrupt .

The procedure announced by the carrier had a very short course. There was one bid, from Seville Rail Rent. The company applied for all five parts of the order (each part covers two locomotives). The offered price is PLN 4,413,241.35 gross for each part, which means PLN 2.2 million for one locomotive.

These offers are only partly included in the cost estimate of PKP Intercity. For the three parts concerning locomotives with a service speed of at least 160 km/h, the carrier set a budget of PLN 5,455,872.23 gross – and Seville's offer falls within it. In the remaining two parts, concerning locomotives with a minimum operating speed of 125 km/h, the budget of each part is only PLN 3,438,728.12 gross. And here the offers exceed it.

Seville Rail Rent recently imported to Poland a large batch of 160 km/h locomotives from Belgium, which it wants to introduce to the national passenger and freight network within six months. The "Rynek Kolejowy" portal was the first to publish verified information on this subject and photos."

Iain's Comment - The last batch of HLE 21s were moved directly to Dąbrowa Górnicza Ząbkowice which is within spitting distance of the Protor works at Dąbrowa Górnicza. Then they were moved to join the rest of the HLE 21s at Jaworzno Szczakowa. Why would you do that if you had a firm proposal from someone to use them? You would think that at least one would be put through the Protor Works as use as a demonstrator and to assess the work needed to make them suitable for use in Poland. Seville Rail Rent can then say, this is what we have, this is what it is capable of and this is what it looks like. Instead all 28 HLE 21s are parked up outside in the Polish Winter at Jaworzno Szczakowa.

In this [article](#) from Rynek Kolejowy that was published on 7th September 2022 it said, "Most importantly, the first locomotives on the route can be expected in the first quarter of 2023. Seville Rail Rent plans to start both with its own transport and renting rolling stock. – Expected interest in subleasing both freight and passenger carriers, says Krzysztof Oziembłowski." The more observant may have noticed that the first quarter of 2023 starts at the end of this month.

There does appear to be a lot of bluster and wind and no hard facts. Had this article being illustrated with a photo of a HLE 21 being repaired in the Protor Works then I would have accepted it, but there are no photograph except Huib's of the HLE 21s sat outside in the cold.....

HLE 28 / 29 / 186

This is a video clip from Facebook of 186 226 on the back of a flat railway wagon being moved [I have also attached it to this e-mail].

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=479556220978687>

Various things to note.

- One The loco is being moved by rail without it's bogies, it is not being moved as a locomotive but as a load.
- Two It is not obvious how the frame is being supported. The front end is packed but the rear is ? If the frame is not bent or distorted then you will do **everything** to make sure that there is no damage during transit. If the frame is distorted and is a write off, it doesn't really matter what you do as the frame is already broken. This is why a video like this can be very informative.
- Three There is damage to the front end but there are no obvious ripples in the body shell that I can see on this video. However, like a modern car, the body shell is designed to absorb the energy of the impact. In absorbing the impact, it effectively destroys itself but the human inside survives. In a locomotive cab there is no air bag so the driver can be injured hitting the drivers desk.



This is a test cab for a TRAXX after an impact test has been done.

If you look at this shot of 2836 being taken away from scrap you can see where the frame distorted in exactly the same place as the test cab did above. The shell of 2836 did exactly as it was designed to do and the driver survived a head on crash.



186 295 hit an excavator near Deurne on the line between Eindhoven and Venlo on 24th April 2017 and there was not too much wrong with the frame. It was cheaper to build a new body shell and transfer the innards over. See [here](#) for newspaper report.



The first body shell of 186 295 ended up in a scrapyard.



Ex-2831 / 186 223 has gone off lease from NS and is reportedly moving to Medway.

Ex-2837 / 186 229 has/is going off lease from Medway and returning to Alpha Trains.

2843 / 186 235 *****WILL***** be going back at the end of January as Alpha Trains have a customer for the loco. 2843 is acting as cover for locomotives away at Revision and the loco will be returning to Alpha even if 2808 is still in Brugge Works. The Haltelink Tracker is not working for the Benelux Trains at the moment and so I do not know if 2811 has been revised and 2810 has gone in.

NSR Units

SNG

In Service: 3041

ICNG

This unit arrived in the Netherlands on Sunday 4th December 2022



The most obvious thing is the livery is different. There are two schools on-line, one is that this livery is only for the Belgian units and the other is that all ICNG units will get this modified livery which is similar to the Vectrons and VIRM units.

After the FYRA Fiasco NS developed a plan to prevent a re-occurrence. Firstly they would only buy a proven product from a proven manufacturer and secondly the old trains would be placed in hot store for a period of time in case the new trains failed. The idea of refurbishing the sidings at Arnhem was to keep the hot store trains safe and in working order. There would be some rotation to keep everything fully serviceable. Then when NS were happy with the ICNG, the TRAXX would go off lease and the ICRm coaches sold on or scrapped.

A letter has surfaced from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management to the Dutch Parliament [see attached in Nederlands and English]. It turns out that NS had a two year period for the hot spares to be kept and the clock was started some time ago. It has been happily ticking away whilst Alstom/NS/etc have been fannying around. The problem now is that some of the locomotives have to contractually go off lease from September 2023. The ICNG trains are expected to enter service in the Spring of 2023 [May/June] and instead of having two years of being able to keep all of the hot spares,

NS are going to have three months! If there are problems with the ICNG units then NS say in the letter they will simply run a reduced service with whatever TRAXX they have!

Covid has caused problems with the ICNG delivery schedule and the Ukraine produced a lot of parts for the trains. Also there were quite a few Ukrainian people working in Poland and quite a few of these have gone home to fight the invaders. Then problems with the welds have been found and some commentators have drawn parallels with the IETs here in the UK [see [here](#)]. Unfortunately in a train brimming with electronics and micro-processors you cannot just do the welding, as the welding process creates a lot of damaging electrical noise. Just think what an electrical spike does to your PC at home or Lap Top on the train. So you have to strip out the vulnerable electronic parts, do the remediation welding work and then put it all back.

This is the DeepL Translation from the ILT Letter.

“Back-up equipment

The introduction of new rolling stock should always take into account teething problems that only come to light and need to be solved after the start of passenger service. NS therefore uses a back-up period of two years when introducing new rolling stock on the HSL. That period has expired, but by extending lease contracts for locomotives and adjusted maintenance of carriages, NS has been able to extend the duration of the back-up for most of the fleet. For a limited number of locomotives, renewal of the lease contracts is not possible due to the current market situation because the leasing company has insufficient locomotives available. NS itself does not have other suitable equipment and HSL-capable equipment is not available on the market in the short term. Despite the current difficult leasing market, NS has managed to have a full back-up available until September 2023 for the timetable we are running in 2023. From September 2023, the back up for ICNG gradually diminishes. If there are group breakdowns of ICNG at that time, we will no longer be able to run the full timetable with backup.”

Alpha Trains have customers for the TRAXX that NS are currently using and they will be returning on schedule regardless of any need NS have for them. That is nailed on. It is expected that two Alpha Trains TRAXX will be returned each month probably from September 2023 but they may start earlier [186 223 has already gone].

Things are a lot more flexible for the TRAXX NS lease from Akiem [186 001 to 186 045]. It is rumbled that these 45 TRAXX also have a home to go to as well when NS have finished with them.

In December 2024, the current Benelux Agreement ends. The Belgians will run a Brussels - Rotterdam via the Airport and Breda and NS will run an Amsterdam - Brussels service with ICNG.

Between the locos finishing with NS and starting a new lease, the locos have to be de-branded, checked over and in the case of some locomotives, repainted. The basic check over takes a week plus and so locos cannot come out of service on Friday and start with someone new on Monday morning. The other problem is the paperwork that comes with ownership and responsibility for maintenance. The Keeper Mark on the vehicle shows who is responsible for the vehicle, change it, and there is a venerable plume of paperwork as all the documentation changes. Not an overnight job and is one reason why most Alpha TRAXX have a keeper mark of ATLU - the keeper mark and core paperwork stays the same regardless of who leases it.

You can see this with 186 384 as the loco has worked for Lineas for some time but it's keeper mark is the leasing company who retains control over the locomotive. So if 186 348 finishes with Lineas one morning, it can start with someone else that afternoon.

In the age when national operators kept a loco for it's entire life, it was simple. But in an age of leasing, assigning a loco to a particular operator causes problems.



What is certain is that far from a glut of TRAXX locomotives coming on the market looking for a home, there are homes available now for all the NS leased TRAXX locomotives.

186 223 has gone off lease with NS and has, or will, move to Brugge Works very shortly. After a stay the loco will come out and start with it's new organisation.



The loco has had the NS stickers removed. Seen here on 7th July in a photo by Thom1986 on Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/51852888@N08/52200890457/>

ICNG Timeline

Now - 186 223 has gone off lease so NS have 45 x Akiem TRAXX and 19 x Alpha TRAXX.

January 2023 - 2843 goes off lease with B-Transport.

March 2023 - NS will start a program of shadow running with the ICNG units on the 900 and 1000 Series Trains between Amsterdam - Rotterdam - Breda. The Dutch name for this shadow running is CTV (Commerciele Validatie Treindienst = Commercial Validation Train Service). It is expected that this non-passenger shadow period will last about two months.

May 2023 - NS hopes to start commercial passenger carrying service with the ICNG Sets on the 900 and 1000 Series Trains between Amsterdam - Rotterdam - Breda. I am expecting these trains to be operated by the eight car trains in the ICNG 32xx series. It may be that the Amsterdam - Rotterdam trains are operated with five car units and possible that some of the peak hour trains are operated by two five car sets.

July 2023 - NS expects to operate the 900 and 1000 series with ICNG only.

Late Summer/Autumn 2023 - NS expects to start to operate some of the trains in the 1100 series (Den Haag - Rotterdam - Breda - Eindhoven) with ICNG. The takeover here will be a lot slower as I am assuming the sets have to be finished off.

September 2023 - NS start to send their Alpha TRAXX locomotives off lease at the rate of two per month. They could send all the grey and green ones first or perhaps one grey/green and one yellow/blue per month. The blue and yellow locos are likely to need repainting probably into the new Alpha Trains Livery or perhaps the livery of the next company leasing them. If one grey/green and one blue/yellow TRAXX goes off lease each month then only one loco will be being repainted each month. It is likely that some sets of ICRm coaches will be decommissioned at the same time as they cannot be kept as hot spares as there will be nothing to move them. Watergraafsmeer is full now, so the only way this can work is for a new ICNG unit to come in and the old ICRm set to go somewhere else [Arnhem]. There is not enough space to keep old and new together on the 'meer.

December 2023 - The first services to receive ICNG sets outside IC Direct will be 700 & 1800 Series Services (Den Haag - Schiphol - Zwolle - Groningen/Leeuwarden) in about a year from now. These will be five car sets.

Spring 2024 - The only trains operated by TRAXX and ICRm are the Benelux Trains. More ICRm sets are decommissioned and the TRAXX owned by Akiem start to go off lease.

December 2024 - The last ICRm coaches are taken from service and the remaining Akiem locos are sent off lease. ICNG-B operates the Amsterdam - Brussel services.

December 2024 - The only TRAXX left in service are the 15/16 that B-Transport have for operating the Brussel - Airport - Antwerpen - Noordercarpark - Breda [?] - Rotterdam service. These will go back to freight when the HLE 17s begin to enter service.

Here is the future at Bad Bentheim in the early evening of Sunday 4th December 2022. The unit came from Salzbergen and was moved to Bad Bentheim by 111 082. 3303 was moved forward to Amersfoort, later on in the evening, by 9903.



Photo by Daan van den Brink and posted to the ICNG Intercity Nieuwe Generatie NS on Facebook. If you are on Facebook you are advised to join this Group as there is lots of information posted by people in the know. As the whole ICNG thing develops then groups like this is where it will be at.

900 Series Trains

From the December Timetable Change most, if not all of the 900 Series trains will only run from Amsterdam to Rotterdam and not to Breda. This is due to staff shortages.

Alstom Shunter

Alstom demonstrates fully autonomous driving of a shunting locomotive in the Netherlands.

<https://www.alstom.com/press-releases-news/2022/11/alstom-demonstrates-fully-autonomous-driving-shunting-locomotive-netherlands>

It would be interesting to see what happens on a blowy and wet day when water is being blown onto the sensors. 7776 moved up to the wagon but the film did not show how it was coupled up.

TEE Update

The NTM museum was due to close on 31st October but is still OPEN and will remain so until the 8th of January 2023. There are some talks going on with the owner of our building on staying until the end of 2023. So fingers crossed! The new Dutch building rules (about nitrogen calculations) are causing housing projects to be delayed and permits for building houses will not be given either. The NTM site is earmarked for housing which is why it is being closed and demolished. The longer these problems go on for, the longer the building remains standing. To be continued....

Meanwhile the team keeps on going with the TEE-project (pronounced by us as TEA project ;-) We still try to stop the roofs from rusting by conserving them with a special coating and putting some grey paint on. Looks smart eh... ? And because of the low temperatures we work inside too, were our professional painter as well is taking care of some old ceilings. Quiet a difference with the purple dark ONR colour ! And we had some new number plates printed so the former ONR number 1982 is back on the front. Getting somewhere but still a lot to be done of course....

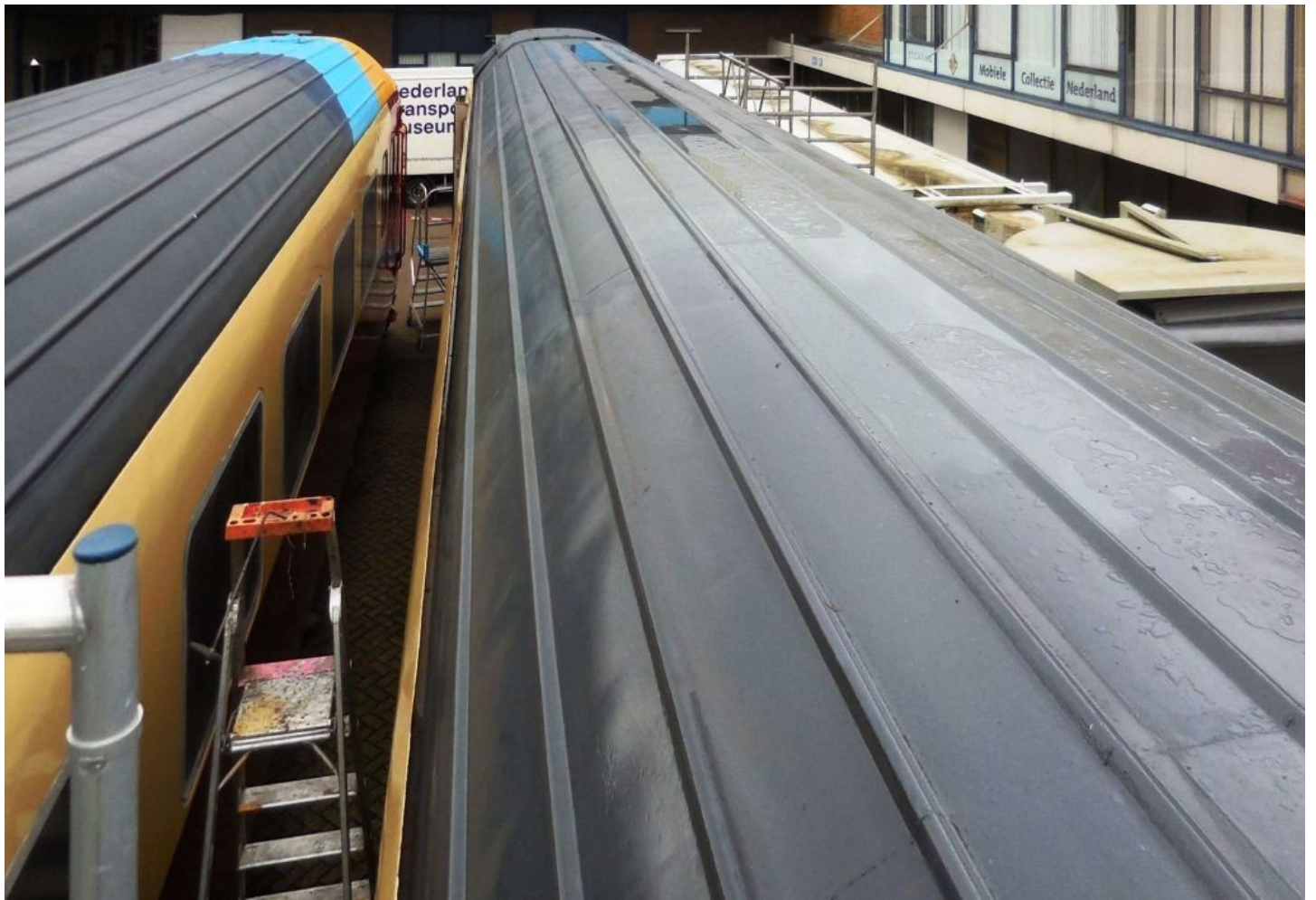
I would like to thanks Hans for the update and photographs.



Here is the roller man, Wouter Koetsier, doing his thing.



The roofs have been painted to stop further corrosion



The numbers have been re-made for the front of the cars.





Sik Corner

Sik 268 was destroyed in WW2.

I cannot find a photograph of Sik 269 which was cut up in August 1973.

This week's Sik is 270 which has recently been located at the front of Transit Oost Museum Building with an old Gbs freight truck. If you look on Google Earth you can see the loco and truck on the Winterswijk Station side of the museum building.



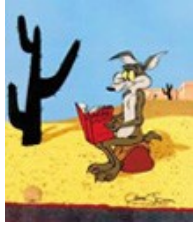
Photo by Ronnie Venhorst - 18th June 2022

270 was built by Werkspoor and is Works Number 723 of 1936.

Owner - Transit Oost - <https://www.transitoost.nl/> .

Location - Kleine Parallelweg 6, 7101 HP Winterswijk, Netherlands.

Information from <http://locomotor.nl/index.php/locaties/>



Other News

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Christmas pub wankers, please think hard.

It's that festive time of year when decent, honest boozers are plagued by non-drinkers. And not real non-drinkers, not people who don't ever drink, they're fine. We're talking about people who don't go near a pub for 11 months out of the year, the kind of awful human beings who buy their beer from supermarkets with the weekly shop, people who consume such a laughable quantity of alcohol that they can only be designated as "non-drinkers".

Whether it's the Christmas Work's Do or a Festive Drink With Friends, you are ruining pubs for the rest of us. Everyone hates you. Every actual drinker in the pub hates you and all the serving staff hate you. You're awful. Here's a guide on how to not be quite so awful

DO NOT APPROACH THE BAR UNTIL YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT

- The bar is an intricate machine full of separate-yet-interconnecting cogs. It is NOT the place to think or choose or decide. The engine only works if everyone knows their place and performs their function. Do you hear that collective groan as you ask the Bartender if they've got Cranberry Juice? Or as you turn around to ask Barbara what she wants to drink? That groan is you single-handedly sucking life away from your fellow drinkers. Make a decision first, then go to the bar and order what you've selected. Just like ANY OTHER FORM OF COMMERCE!

DON'T START DRINKING AT 4pm

- You're NOT a drinker. We haven't seen you all year. You're an amateur, so don't start out with a Marathon. You can't just rock up to the Premier League one day saying "I'm Match Fit, lads!" This is why you're puking and crying before nine o'clock at night.

YOU ARE IN A ROUND

- I don't care who you're with, how many of you there are or how well you know them. You are in a Round with all the people you came in with. That's how it works. You see those twenty-five loud, burly, drunken Rugby Players on the other side of the pub? They are a pleasure to serve compared to you. They order eight pints of lager, eight pints of Guinness, six pints of bitter and three Jack Daniels, then they pay the bill in one fell swoop. Your group orders ten drinks one-at-a-time and then pays for them all one-at-a-time as the rest of pub creeps closer to Death's eternal grasp waiting for you to finish, despite the fact nine of you are drinking the same fucking drink and the last person, THE LAST PERSON, wants a Guinness putting on. Every single person waiting to get served wants your group to die in a complicated house fire.

KNOW WHERE YOU ARE

- Look around you. What kind of drinking establishment are you in? Is it a pub or a bar? If there's 85 lads watching football on the telly, stop trying to be a drunk, flirty attention-whore because it won't work. If the walls are cluttered with offers of 6 Shots Of Neon

Sourz For A Fiver, don't try asking for that Single Malt whiskey you memorized from Mad Men. Equally, if it's a pub adorned with wood furnishings and hand-pulls, stop trying to get the Landlord to make that shitty cocktail you saw on Sex And The City.

iPHONE ETTIQUETTE

- Okay, the music isn't great. It's nothing to write home about. But it's been specifically selected to offend the least amount of people. It's background music. If you want anything else, then you want to be at a club or a gig. If, however, you've decided to "do the pub a favour" by blaring out a playlist from your iPhone, then you are a twat. A prize, prize twat. Other expletives come to mind. Likewise don't get offended if the barman politely gives you a pound and rejects all six Abba songs you paid for.

ATTRACTING ATTENTION

- Newsflash: You are NOT next. You might have been in the bar queue longer than anybody else, but that doesn't mean you're next. Do you know why? Because there are no "Official Rules Of Queueing At The Bar." The Bartender is 100% in charge of who is next. So do not piss them off. Yes, they can see you. You do not need to bang your change on the top of the bar. You do not need to wave your money around in the air, as if you're the only person in the room with a tenner (unless it's a Strip Club). You especially do not need to click your fingers like a Parisian Cafe prick or whistle like a Shepherd herding his flock. These tactics will only achieve one outcome: no matter how long you've been waiting up until this point, you've just moved yourself to the back of the queue.

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

- If an old bloke sat at the bar gets served before you do, and the Bartender knows him by name and even seems to know what he's drinking before he orders it, just shut the fuck up. That's Bob. Bob drinks here all the time. Bob drinks here five times a week, every week. Bob's custom pays the bills. Bob and the other Regulars keep the pub open eleven months of the year whilst you're having dinner parties and bulk-buying booze from the supermarket. Yes, they get preferential treatment. Accept it and shut the fuck up.





off the mark.com

by Mark Parisi





Historic photo of children listening to Mariah Carey's "All I want for Christmas"





Have a nice week

Tain