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Swiss Federal Railways (SBB)

Bm4/4^{II} No.18451 is at Olten depot as the loco for the emergency train.

Work on a new loco depot at Basel will begin on a site near the freight depot at Wolf at the end of 1991.

At their next major overhaul, the quadruple-voltage Ee3/3^{IV} shunters 16551-560 will receive computer numbers to become (Ee3/3)934.551-560.

RBe4/4 No.1431 has undergone an R4 overhaul, during which thyristor control and sanders were fitted. The passenger saloons have been fitted with luggage racks and the smoking/non smoking sections have been transposed (Lima please note!). It is anticipated that some RBe4/4 railcars will receive the blue/grey NPZ livery.

The body of the first Re4/4 460 was moved on 25 June from SLM Winterthur to ABB Zurich-Seebach for the installation of the electrical systems.

From Autumn 1990 the routes Wil-Nesslau and St.Gallen-Weinfelden will be worked by NPZ sets.

On the reversible double tracks between Heidlingen-Affoltern and Jona-Rapperswil, trains normally use the right-hand track in the direction of travel, in contrast of the normal Swiss practice of left-hand running.

The pair of trains 369/368 (Zurich-Prague/Berlin-Zurich) are formed, with the exception of a CSD restaurant car, entirely of SBB-RIC stock, with the result that Swiss coaches can now be seen in both Berlin and Prague.

On 25 June about a dozen passengers intending to join Regionalzug 5472, 19:10 Aarau-Olten were conveyed in the driving cabs of the Ae4/7 working the freight train 62538 Wildegg-Olten.

Freight traffic achieved new records during the first half of the year, despite increased rates. The Gotthard line ran at maximum capacity with new records set for the daily tonnage conveyed. Piggyback traffic increased by 13.9%.

As threatened in recent years, passenger closures appear to be firmly back on the agenda. Lines on the hit list are:

Monthey-St.Gingolph

La Chaux de Fonds-Le Locle

Beinwil-Beromunster

Wald-Bauma

Five other important lines would lose local passenger services but not through trains:

Travers-Les Verrieres

Brugg-Frick

Laufenburg-Koblenz

Zug-Arth Goldau

Erstfeld-Biasca

The SBB aims to ban smoking on all regional services by 1995. The scheme will commence on the Zurich S-Bahn in 1991.

A study has been launched into ways of overhauling SBB's management structure along the "sector" formula. Unlike BR, central functions like traction and maintenance would remain common to all sectors.

Under "some interesting double headed trains" (September 1990) it should be noted that the train listed as 2 x Ae4/7 is only remarkable in the context of passenger trains and of Eastern Switzerland. In Western and Central Switzerland double heading of freight with multiple unit-fitted Ae4/7s is a common feature on the main Geneva-Zurich axis.

Train 521 (Geneva Airport-Romanshorn via Neuchatel) was worked forward from Zurich by Ae8/6 No.11454 on 12 October 1990.

1991 Timetable

At the European Passenger Trains Conference on 18-27 September 1990, changes outlined for next year's timetables affecting Switzerland include the following:

New EC trains:

Otto Lilienthal

Berner Oberland

Thunersee

Robert Stoltz

New sleeper service

New 2-hourly taktfartplan

USSR sleeping car

New motorail

Improved Geneva and Bern-Milan services with about 40 minutes shorter journey times.

The SNCF's 09:44 Geneva-Nice train will start instead at Basel at 06:23 and travel via Olten and Bern.

EC107/106 Mont Blanc to Geneva will be diverted to start from Berlin instead of Hamburg. This gives Geneva a daily train from Berlin for the first time since 1939.

Talgo developments

From Autumn 1991, the SBB intends to run two Talgo-Hotel services between Basel/Zurich and Vienna. The 28-section articulated trains will offer 500 places in luxury compartments with shower and WC, 4-berth compartments and seating coaches with reclining seats. Restaurant and bar coaches will be included.

Also planned by the SBB, DB and OBB are Talgo-Hotel services between Zurich and Berlin, and Vienna and Cologne. This group of services will involve eight Talgo sets, forming the first stage of a Hotel train project involving 34 sets, some of them double deck.

Siemens is coordinating the purchase of the Talgo sets on behalf of the three railway administrations, who will then purchase or hire them. The trains will be technically similar and will be maintained at Vienna.

The SBB is considering running the Wiener-Walzer, Basel-Vienna with Talgo sleeping cars. The DB is also thinking of Zurich-Berlin services with Talgos and Baden-Wurtemberg would like to see them on the Stuttgart Zurich route.

Brunig Line

From observations on 12 October 1990 it appears that the running round of trains at Meiringen mentioned in the last issue has been discontinued. This may be a time saving move, or simply that enough HGe4/4's are now available to permit locomotive interchange.

Bern-Lotschberg-Simplon (BLS)

A BLS D2, 93-03 002, has been converted to convey bicycles. Its colourful livery includes the slogan of a large bank.

The SBB order for locomotives to work piggyback trains includes the needs of the BLS for trains worked via the Lotschberg-Simplon. However, apart from these locomotives, the BLS will have a requirement for between six and eight extra modern locomotives, which may be added to the SBB order.

All main line drivers have been "passed" on SBB Ae6/6s and Re4/4IVs

Aigle-Ollon-Monthey-Champery (AOMC)

The extension of the line from its present terminus to the foot of the cable car to Planchaux is due to be opened this winter.

Appenzeller Bahnen (AB)

The Appenzeller Bahnen have acquired the rollbock of the Bremgarten-Diekiton who now only run freights over the dual gauge to Bremgarten West.

Outline drawings have been released of a 4/4 electric locomotive being considered by the AB, mainly for its increasing rollbock traffic, but also for passenger service between Gossau and Wasserauen. The hourly rating would be in the order of 1000 Kw.

Bernese Oberland Bahn (BOB)

On Thursday 12 October 1990 the 14:48 from Grindelwald and 15:08 from Lauterbrunnen were, exceptionally, coupled at Zweilutschinen rather than on

Zurich-Basel-Frankfurt-Berlin

with connections to/from Leipzig and Dresden

Amsterdam-Cologne-Interlaken

Braunschweig-Cologne-Interlaken

Zurich-Buchs-Graz/Klagenfurt

Basel-Hamburg-Copenhagen

Zurich-Schaffhausen-Stuttgart

Moscow-Bern-Geneva

increased to three times per week

Zurich Altstetten-Renens(VD)-Narbonne

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arrival at Interlaken Ost. This was probably due to late running rather than any change in general policy.

Bern-Neuchatel (BN)

Doubling of the line between Bern Bumplitz Nord and Rosshaussen and between Ins and Marin Epagnier is under way in addition to the remodelling of Kerzers to allow direct Bern to Murten running.

Because of track relaying during August, the morning postal train 91852 Bern-Neuchatel, which is worked by a BLS Re4/4, ran via Flammat and the Sensetalbahn to regain its route at Gummeneen.

Dampfbahn Furka-Bergstrecke (DFB)

This society proposes to run a service in 1991 between Realp and Tiefenbach using HG2/3 No.8 from the BVZ. It also proposes to restore two of the four ex FO HG3/4s it is bringing back from Vietnam in time for service in 1996.

Ferrovie Autolinee Ticinesi (FART)

After considerable geological problems had been overcome, break-through of the 1835m tunnel under Locarno took place on 4 July 1990. Services through the tunnel are expected to begin in 1993.

Furka Oberalp (FO)

HGe4/4^u names: 104 Furka; 105 Oberalp.

Monte Generoso Bahn (MG)

A cable car is being considered as a replacement for the railway.

Montreux-Oberland-Bernois (MOB)

The Montreux Oberland Bernois (MOB) and Chemin de Fer Veveysans (CEV) are now under common management. The MOB therefore aims to connect the two lines by restarting regular commercial service over the former CEV Blonay-Chamby section. The Blonay-Chamby preservation group is understood to be happy with this arrangement as they will continue to be able to run tourist trains but without the financial burdens of upkeep of the infrastructure.

Two more second-hand electric railcars have been bought from the ex-VWB Bern-Muri-Worb line. They are BDeNo.37 (still in the old livery in August 1990) and Be4/4 No.72, now MOB 1004.

Nyon-St.Cergue-Morez (NSTCM)

A new station with "park and ride" facilities is being proposed in Nyon. If it comes about the fascinating road-blocking manoeuvres will cease but it must surely be further to walk from the CFF.

Oberaargau-Jura-Bahnen (OJB) + Solothurn Niederbier Bahn (SNB)

This group is now named "Regionalverkehr Oberaara" (RVO).

Orbe-Chavornay (OC)

The new Be2/2 railcar with pivoting axles has been delivered and was in service on 28 September 1990. With a tare weight of 20.2 tonnes and overall length of 13.34m, it has a maximum speed of 80 km/h and will seat 40 passengers with space for a further 24 standing. Since the normal loading rarely exceeds 12, this appears to be ample provision!

Pont-Brassus (PB)

The hourly services operated by "Kolibris" have led to an increase in traffic of 44% in 1989.

Regionalverkehrs Bern-Solothurn (RBS)

The Worb-Muri-Bern line is now expected to be extended to the Hauptbahnhof in Bern in 1994, Saving 2000 road movements daily.

Rhätische Bahn (RhB)

Objections to the Vereina tunnel from Klosters to Susch/Lavin were ruled invalid on 17 August 1990, clearing the way for construction to start this year. The Vereina tunnel will open up and probably alter for ever the unspoilt character of the Lower Engadin.

Two diesel locomotives have been ordered from Kaelble-Gmeinder for hauling construction trains.

Five radio controlled tractors, Tm2/2 85-89 of 336 Kw and capable of 50 km/h are being obtained.

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On 9 October 1990 Ge4/4^{II} No.815 *Klosters* was derailed outside Chur on a local at around 11:00. Although this delayed westbound services, careful use of the reversible double track kept delays to a minimum. The eastbound *Glacier Express*, due at Chur at 14:20 arrived at 14:30, delaying the forward connection by only 7 minutes.

Rigi Bahnen

The Vitznau-Rigi and Arth-Rigi railways amalgamated on 12 July 1990. A crossover has been put in at Rigi Staffel and the operation of the twin tracks from there to Rigi Kulm as double track is expected greatly to facilitate operation.

Sudostbahn (SOB)

The causeway service (Rapperswil-Pfaffikon) now has a two hourly Rapperswil-Wallerau-Lachen(SBB)-Pfaffikon, worked by ABe4/4 + ABt formation. Fill in services across the causeway during this period are provided by DPZ sets on extension of S5 services laying over at Rapperswil.

Freight traffic increased by 91% in the first half of 1990. Because of the acute shortage of motive power, two DR (previously East German) class 243 electric locomotives, built in 1989 (3780 Kw, 83 tonnes, V-max 120 km/h) have been rented for a year.

Sursee-Triengen Bahn (ST)

The Em2/2 No.1 has recently been returned to the line after a complete overhaul and facelift.

Tramway Sud-Ouest de Lausanne (TSOL)

Car 201 was seen on test using the overhead near the depot (about halfway along the route) on 12 September 1990.

Breakthrough on the 404.7m Flon tunnel took place on 17 July 1990. Services from Lausanne Flon to Renens are due to begin on 2 June 1991.

Waldenburgerbahn

Basel Land Canton has earmarked SFr.20 million for more new stock.

Zurich S-Bahn

Line S14 (Zurich Hbf.-Oerlikon-Uster-Hinwil)

After the third week of operation, the four trains formed of RBe4/4 push-pull sets were replaced by double-deck sets, the remainder being locotcoaches. Within these formations are coaches of types EW IV A, Schlieren-BLS A, and Bm. Similar coaches can be seen on route S12 (Winterthur-Zurich Stadelhofen-Brugg). One of the S12 sets is used at weekends for an express working between Schaffhausen and Chur and return and two local trains between Chur and Ziegelbrücke.

Line S7 (Winterthur-Zurich Stadelhofen-Meilen-Rapperswil)

Line S8 (Pfaffikon SZ-Thalwil-Zurich Hbf.-Effretikon-Winterthur)

The service of double-deck sets (DPZ) on these routes seems to have run into difficulties. Irrespective of the number of passengers leaving and joining the trains, the station time is in the region of 35-40 seconds, instead of the 25 seconds which could be achieved with the RABDe12/12 "Mirage" units. The reasons for this increase are the slow operation of the doors (demanded by disabled organisations) and, apparently, electrical problems with the locomotives which cause them to "sit and think" before starting. The situation is further acerbated by the DPZs taking longer to run between stations.

Line S4 (SZU) (Zurich Hbf.-Langnau-Sihlbrugg)

Line S10 (SZU) (Zurich Hbf.-Uetliberg)

Since the SZU began operating into Zurich Hauptbahnhof, passenger numbers have increased dramatically. Into town numbers are up 46% on the Sihltal line and 136% on the Uetliberg line. Even higher are the increases in the opposite direction, up 145% on the Sihltal line and 294% on the Uetliberg line. The Uetliberg line has shown an increase of no less than 136% and the queue for the single ticket machine at Uetliberg at peak periods can be incredible!

Three more Re4/4 locomotives have been ordered.

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Line S29 (Winterthur-Stein am Rhein)

The "Chiquita" sets (RABDe8/16) have gravitated to this route, usually singly but sometimes in pairs at weekends when traffic demands. Should door troubles enforce a replacement, either an RBe4/4 or a BDe4/4 push-pull formation replaces, whichever is available. This did happen during August when, for a period, all four units were out of service with various mechanical and electrical defects. At the beginning of September two units were back in service. On Saturday nights, train 8101 00:04 Winterthur-Frauenfeld is formed of a "Chiquita", the first working of one of these sets to Frauenfeld.

General

A railway museum has been opened in the centre of Vallorbe, over the "Musée du Fer". It is open Tuesday to Saturday, 09:00-12:00 and 13:00-17:00.

On the 700th anniversary of the foundation of the Swiss Confederation, 1 August 1991, inhabitants of Switzerland and foreign visitors will be given a ticket to ride free of charge on all cable cars.

Saloon Train Special

A Lucerne loco driver has rebuilt and repainted a withdrawn Te1 and hopes to run it on the Oenzingen-Balsthal Bahn. It has been painted in the Pullman livery of cream and chocolate and is fitted with armchairs.

Numbered TAe 5, it suggests it is capable of being operated from batteries.

Panoramic coaches for the metre gauge

Breda of Italy are building 20 panoramic coaches for Swiss metre gauge lines, although 40% of the components will be Swiss-made. Ten are for the FO, four for the BVZ and 6 for the MOB.

Those for the MOB are being styled by Pininfarina and from an artist's impression, a GDe4/4 will be sandwiched in a set of five coaches, the outer driving trailers of which appear to be completely streamlined observation cars on the pattern of the present "Super-Panoramic" cars.

Train Travel

Switzerland rates second only to Japan for the number of times each person makes a rail journey in a year. The Japanese make 60 and the Swiss 49, but the Swiss take the aggregate record for the world with 1,896 km compared with 1,691 by the Japanese. In Great Britain we come near to the bottom of the European league with a paltry 606 km, the USA coming bottom with 87 km.

Switzerland's railways carry 13% of the national passenger traffic and no less than 44% of the freight, using in the process only 4% of all energy devoted to transport. These results are notwithstanding two to three times greater investment in road travel than rail. Is anyone in our Departments of the Environment or Transport listening?

No less than 1.83 million passes, permitting the purchase of most tickets at half price are currently in use. The population of Switzerland is some 7 million. Maybe if British Railways adopted this simple and money-spinning idea, we might get further up the league table.

SWISS NEWS

SBB

New locomotives delivered up to the end of August:

RBe4/4 2174-2179

Withdrawn:

Ae4/7 11006

Bm4/4¹¹ 18452 (ex-Am4/4 1002) Motor damage.

Named:

RABDe4/4 railcars

2157 Reconville

2158 Saxon

2170 Trubeschachnen