

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Railways Society  
**Band:** 3 (1991-1993)  
**Heft:** 5  
  
**Rubrik:** President's report

#### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

#### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

#### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 22.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## President's Report

### S-Bahn Zurich (RTR)

The successful introduction of the RTR System has created considerable difficulties for other enterprises in the joint traffic venture, such as the Verkehrsbetriebe Zürcher Oberland (VZO), the Forchbahn (FB) and the Sihl-Zürich-Uetliberg (SZU). The number of passengers has risen beyond all expectations due to the far better connections now made possible by the S-Bahn. Therefore additional rolling stock had to be ordered to cope with the increased demand.

The SZU will get double decked trains identical to those of the Swiss Federal Railways, but in a different livery, whereas the VZO have purchased 12 additional articulated buses. The Forchbahn is acquiring additional rolling stock and intends to double track further sections of the line. A project is under consideration to make the modifications necessary to allow Forchbahn trains to run over the tramway network and for Zurich trams to operate over the Forchbahn.

### Swiss Federal Railways (SBB)

The administration board has voted a credit of 175 million SFr. for 95 Eurocity cars which will be almost exclusively used on the Gotthard line.

The SBB have budgeted a loss of 107 million SFr. for 1992, which has produced the usual reproaches against the management and resulted in a proposal to return the State owned railways to private ownership. This would have to be decided by the people again and has no chance at all at this moment. The proposal is however dangerous in one aspect, there is currently a growing demand to charge the car and lorry owners the true cost of their usage of roads, a cost estimated by a group of foreign experts at 10 billion SFr per year. Should this sum be transferred to road users, then the railways would become very competitive again and so be an attractive target for a private takeover, not the least because of the

substantial land holdings in and near large towns.

The SBB management has asked industry in Switzerland and Europe to quote for the supply of a further batch of 46 NPZ Kolibri trains:

- With angle phase control, as with previous sets.
- With converter technology and asynchronous motors.

The first of the Re4/4 460 class locomotives will be used mainly in western Switzerland on the Geneva-Brig-Domodossola, Bern-Geneva and Bern-Lotschberg routes.

### NEAT

The Federal Council has proposed an additional connection from Southern Germany via St. Margrethen and the Bodensee-Toggenburg Railway to Zug. Two new tunnels are proposed: one from Zurich to Baar (10.2km) and the other from Au (near Wädenswil) to Baar. The overall cost is estimated at 730 million SFr. In addition the BT line is to be doubled at an additional cost of 120 million SFr. Furthermore the Federal Council has hinted that the terminals for the combined traffic could be supported by foreign capital to a certain extent, provided the EC accepts the Federal Council's proposals.

The project has been approved by both Chambers of the Federal Parliament on 4 October 1991 and is now named *AlpTransit*. Various extensions requested by the Cantons have been rejected, except for the feeder line from eastern Switzerland described above. It has now to pass the people's vote, probably in May of this year. The extreme right, the road lobby, the extreme left and the Greens are insisting on a referendum, for which they will initially need 100 000 valid signatures.

*AlpTransit* is an essential part of the transit treaty signed by Switzerland and Austria with the EC. Switzerland has succeeded in maintaining the weight limit of 28 tonnes for lorries and the

absolute prohibition of night and Sunday transit and last, but by no means least, for the transit of all 40 tonne lorries by train. A concession has been made for up to 100 40 tonne lorries to pass each day providing the following three conditions are met:

1. The load must be a perishable one (vegetables, meat, milk etc).
2. The railway's transit capacity is exhausted.
3. The lorry must be less than 2 years old and of a "clean" type (ie, a low percentage of emission gases).

These conditions are cumulative, that is to say, a lorry over 2 years old carrying perishable goods is refused transit even if the railway capacity is exhausted.

The transit treaty has been made a condition sine qua non for the conclusion of an EEA treaty by the EC. Since the EC Court has now ruled the EEA treaty, in its present form, to be invalid, there is now confusion as to whether the treaty has to be re-negotiated! On 14 December 1991 the Federal Council made it clear in a first statement that Switzerland will insist on the existing treaty and has given a warning that new negotiations could lead to reconsideration for the free transit of 28 tonne lorries.

### Tilting Body Technology

*(See also article on p 9).*

Switzerland's railway industry - ABB/SLM and SIG, have presented, to a small group of railway journalists, three different proposals for tilting body technology trains:

1. A 5000 kW quadricurrent train with converter technology, comprising 12 cars with a top speed of 400 km/h, suitable for TGV lines and using the Pendolino tilting control.
2. An ABB train of 11 car formation with a top speed of 300 km/h with converter technology and one locomotive.
3. A modified Re4/4 460 class locomotive of 7500 kW rating hauling 14 coaches with active tilting technology and self-steering bogies with a top speed of 280 km/h.

The cost per seat is estimated to be: 1. 75,000 SFr.; 2. 60,000 SFr; 3. 42,000 SFr.

The SBB currently has a joint investment

and operation, with the FS, of 6-10 Pendolino trains on the Geneva-Milan-Venice service.

### Swiss Metro

A private consortium has presented a project for two metro lines (called Swiss Metro) from St.Gallen to Geneva via Zurich, Luzern, Berne and from Basle to Bellinzona via Luzern. Proposed overall running times (inclusive of stops) would be 57 minutes St.Gallen-Geneva and 27 minutes Basle-Bellinzona. Exclusively built for passenger traffic, the trains would run through two tubes in a vacuum to reduce resistance. They would be driven by magnetic suspension linear technology with a top speed of 500 km/h. The estimated cost is 25 billion SFr.

There are many questions left open, not the least of which are questions of security and acceptance by the public.

### Visp-Brig-Zermatt (VBZ)

As already reported, part of the route near Randa was covered by two gigantic rockfalls, which also dammed the river, flooding Randa station on several occasions. A temporary line has been constructed and is now in operation, but with the potential danger of further rockfalls it is considered vital to construct a long tunnel past the danger point.

### Private Railways

The investment credits allowed for the period 1993-1997 have been increased from 800 million SFr. to 1400 million SFr. Providing the Cantons and Communes release the credits set out in the Private Railway Act, an investment of between 3.5 and 8 billion SFr. can be expected. However, the conditions have been tightened up. Except for a few special cases, no orders for single locomotives or railcars will be allowed. The railway line asking for credit has to submit a program for rationalising and sales marketing which will bring the cost/earning ratio to at least 0.9 after completion of the investment. Therefore the subsidies for operational losses will be gradually reduced almost to nil.