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**Sersa Am 843 152 0 "Barbara" on a ballast train at Ersfeld.**

**PHOTOS: Keith Scotland**

Sersa is an international civil engineering company, specialising in railway infrastructure work. It has a large array of machinery, including many road and rail vehicles together with on-track plant for ballast cleaning, etc. Its vehicles include conventional two-axle vans, and flat wagons with various containers on them. Their rail vehicles are painted white, and can be seen in the UK as well as Switzerland.

Sersa was heavily involved in the construction work of the Lötschberg base tunnel, and are currently working on aspects of the Gotthard base tunnel. To cope with this increase in their workload, they ordered three MaK (Vossloh) 1700 B-B diesel locomotives, receiving them in 2004. These locos have Caterpillar CAT3512 engines, producing 1500 kw at 1800 rpm, and the drive is through Voith hydraulic transmission. They are fitted with particle filters, and are classified as "clean emission" engines and so they are particularly suited for work in and around tunnels. These locomotives are the same as the Am843 diesel hydraulics of the SBB (the first time that the SBB has invested heavily in hydraulic transmission) who have Nos.843 001

to 843 028 in their Infrastructure livery, and Nos.843 051 to 843 095 in SBB Cargo colours. The SBB is the biggest user of these locos, but they can also be seen on the railways of Germany, Austria, Spain and Luxembourg.

The Sersa locos are painted white, and numbered and named:- 843 151 *Trudy*; 843 152 *Barbara*; and 843 153 *Cinderella*. They complement the other Sersa locos, which are mostly ex DB shunters. These three "white ladies" can be seen just about anywhere on the Swiss standard gauge network wherever maintenance work is being carried out, but a good place to see them at the moment is in the Erstfeld /Amsteg area.

*Sersa Am 843 152 0 "Barbara" waits at Amsteg Silenan.*

