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Like David we can always write and point out that something has gone wrong, and there is no excuse for the poor customer service he received from the MGB, but railway customers rarely write and thank operators and their staff when things go better than planned. For example, I recently had two minor investigations undertaken at my local hospital and I subsequently wrote to the director of the NHS Trust asking him to pass on my thanks to his staff for their excellent service. I hope when any SRS members travel with FGW, or are provided with a better than expected service from anyone in any walk of life, they won't hesitate to say so. In the United Kingdom we find it easy to complain but very difficult to praise

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SWISS NUMBERING

- Part 3 UIC Numbering & Classification Scheme (EVN numbers)

Alec Loftus and Brian Hemming

The UIC (Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer / International Union of Railways) is an organisation made up of railway companies which controls operational and technical standards and practices. The UIC agreed a common numbering scheme in 1965 to indicate ownership, use and interoperability of rolling stock ahead of companies adopting computerised schemes.

UIC numbers on standard gauge passenger coaches and freight wagons have been common for years but the scheme also covered traction rolling stock from the start. Most companies only used it internally for traction on computer schemes until recently, being free to display locomotive and unit numbers as they wished as the scheme was designed to cover this.

The most recent update of the scheme (known as leaflet 438-3) takes into account the rapid privatisation of railways and the opening up of cross border working of modern traction in Europe especially. This has led to more and more traction carrying UIC numbers, sometimes to the confusion of both the enthusiast and railway companies alike!

The way the numbering scheme works conveys a lot of information about a vehicle if you know how to read it and is designed for staff to identify things such as which vehicles can work together, for example coaches with different heating supply systems, or restrictions on routes or countries where vehicles can work.

UIC numbers are made up of 12 digits, these being broken down into 5 groups as follows:-

Exchange Code – digits 1 & 2 - identifies the basic type of vehicle and its interoperability. Ranges are:-

- 01-49 Freight wagons
- 50-79 Passenger coaches
- 80-89 Freight wagons
- 90-99 Traction & special vehicles

Codes ok for coaches and wagons are:-

- 40 - Fixed or variable gauge non-bogie service wagon
- 42 - Variable gauge non-bogie wagon, RIV railway owned
- 50 - RIC railway owned coach. Domestic traffic only
- 51 - RIC railway owned coach. International use, single gauge, not air-conditioned.
- 55 - Non RIC railway owned coach (i.e. a private owner coach)
- 60 - RIC railway undertaking. Service vehicle for domestic traffic only
- 61 - RIC Euro-City coach, fixed gauge, air-conditioned
- 70 - RIC railway owned coach, domestic traffic only,
- 80 - Fixed or variable gauge bogie service wagon
- 81 - Single gauge bogie wagon, RIV railway owned

Note: RIC and RIV are a sub-group of railway companies within the UIC that have an agreement on the standards and use of each other's vehicles in their countries. Coaches shown as domestic use only can visit neighbouring countries by special agreements.

The new exchange codes for traction and special vehicles are:-

- 90 - Miscellaneous
- 91 - Electric Locomotive
- 92 - Diesel Locomotive
- 93 - High speed EMU power car or trailer
- 94 - EMU power car or trailer (other than high speed)
- 95 - DMU power car or trailer
- 96 - Specialised trailer
- 97 - Electric shunting locomotive
- 98 - Diesel shunting locomotive
- 99 - Special vehicle

Country Code – digits 3 & 4 -The second group identify the country of the owning company of the vehicle, this is a change from the original scheme where until recently the code identified the registering authority in a country, usually the state railway. The old scheme also recognised the large number of private companies in Switzerland by allocating them 'country codes', some duplicating in different countries for example code 45 was the SZU in Switzerland and the GKE in Austria. Under the new scheme these numbers will be reallocated to other countries and the private companies will renumber their stock under the correct country codes. A new part of the scheme related to this is the 'keeper code' made up of a country letter and up to 5 letters to show the operator of the vehicle. For example the BLS is CH-BLS

The codes currently in use that will be absorbed by the above country codes are:
35 TRN, 36 CJ, 37 TMR, 38 RM, 39 LSE (now part of ZB), 45 SZU, 47 THURBO,
63 BLS

Country codes of stock most likely to be seen in Switzerland are:
80 (Germany), 81 (Austria), 82 (Luxemburg), 83 (Italy), 84 (Netherlands),
85 (Switzerland), 87 (France), 88 (Belgium). The United Kingdom is 70.

Class / Type Code – digits 5 to 8 - For traction the owner can define their own classification system and this is explained in each country's section. The coaching stock class number is part of a detailed code where digit 5 & 6 identifies the seating class or use and digits 7 & 8 relate to speed and heating. Freight stock has defined four figure codes for individual types used by all.

Serial number – digits 9 to 11 - Numbers can range from 000 to 999.

Check Digit – digit 12 -The check digit is a number generated from digits 1 to 11 to prove it has been recorded correctly. They are calculated by multiplying the digits alternatively by 2 and 1, adding together the results, finally deducting the sum from the next multiple of 10. So if a sum came to 32 the check digit would be 8. Numbers from the multiplication stage being 10 and above are taken as individual digits for calculation purposes i.e. 14 = 1+4. For example the check digit for 560 411 which has the UIC number 98 85 7 560 411 is calculated thus:

Number	9	4	8	5	7	5	6	0	4	1	1
Multiplier	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Result	1+8	4	1+6	5	1+4	5	1+2	0	8	1	2 = 49

The next multiple of 10 above the sum is 50 so (50-49) gives a check digit of 1 in this example.

The full number carried on this unit is: RBD^e 560 DO RA 94 85 7 560 411-1 CH RA where DO indicates a Domino conversion and RA is the 'keeper code' for the Rhône Alpes Region. Numbers are underlined as shown.

Country Letters & Keeper Code. A new part of the scheme is the use of country letters and an up to 5 letter 'keeper code'. Country letters used are D (Germany), A (Austria), L (Luxemburg), I (Italy), NL (Netherlands), CH (Switzerland), F (France), B (Belgium). For example the BLS is CH-BLS and locomotives leased from MRCE Dispolok, Germany are D-DISPO

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(see <http://www.aebrail.co.uk> for details)*