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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

MEMBERS' SALES

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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