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INTERNATIONAL

Damage to the Simplon tunnel from the 9th June fire has proved even more extensive than originally feared, and closure of the damaged bore will continue until at least December.

SBB are investigating how to obtain approval to run ICN units into Germany to take over the Zürich – Stuttgart service.

EC 15 and 22 have reverted to loco-hauled operation, with a 38 minute extension to their journey time over the Gotthard line.

SWITZERLAND

SBB

A contract was signed with Siemens on 9th September to install ETCS Level 1 equipment across the SBB network over the next 6 years and to maintain existing signalling for 25 years.

Completion of the double track between Chämleten and Rotkreuz is scheduled for 2014-16; proposals to provide a triangular junction at Rotkreuz, providing an alternative route between Zug and Arth-Goldau, have been rejected in favour of more double track sections on the direct line via Walchwil.

Since 26th May, Re 460 006 has carried plaques commemorating it becoming the first Re460 to achieve 5 million kilometres in only 19 years of service.

The first refurbished engines for the Zürich S-Bahn LION project, Re 450 071 and Re 420 202 / 230, have emerged from Yverdon works. Test running took place in the Ticino during August.

The official launch of the Stadler-built RegioDosto units took place on 4th September when RABe511 002 was named *Stadt Zürich* at Zürich Hbf. The first public workings took place on Saturday 17th September with three free round trips out of Zürich Hbf. On the same day, RABe 511 006, with a delivery date of 14/9/11, was standing in track 5 at Chur station carrying *Ich bine der Neue!* in the destination displays but was not open to the public.

On 8th August, at Döttingen a collision injuring 8 passengers occurred between the 11:54 Baden – Waldshut and Re6/6 11666 running light in place of the scheduled Ae6/6. The NPZ Bt was derailed and taken away by road; the rest of the stock being taken away by rail in the evening. Services were suspended until the following morning.

SBB / SOB

On 27th August, the second tracks were commissioned on the northern exit from St Gallen St Fiden, over the 3km to the existing double track at Engwil in the Rorschach direction and the 300m to Bruggwaldtunnel towards Romanshorn; the SBB / SOB junction is now a true flying junction rather than a simple flyover.

BLS

The lease of Re456 142 and 143 to the SOB finished in June; the locomotives have remained at Samstagern and

Herisau while another lessee is sought.

TPF

ABDe4/4 161 has been reclassified and renumbered as Xe 537 161 for departmental service.

Zentralbahn

Bad weather damaged 1km of the line between Wolfenschiessen and Grafenort on 29th June, with the line reopening 2 days later. Further storms on the evening of 18th August blocked the line in two places between Giswil and Lungern, with the line not reopening until the 23rd.

Luzern – Interlaken IR services are now shunt released at Luzern to allow the incoming engine to work the outgoing train; this reduces the number of actively diagrammed HGe101 locomotives to 6 (4 Brünig, 2 Engelberg) which, with the hot spare at Luzern, leaves one engine spare for maintenance. On 21st September, the two De110 diagrams between Interlaken and Meiringen were covered by ex LSE De 110 121 and 122.

AB

Landslips following heavy rain on 10 July left the Herisau – Urnäsch section blocked in 10 places and a 6 car Pendelzug stranded near Zürchersmühle. The train was moved to Sulzbrunn loop pending reopening, planned for 17th August.

Approval has been given for the AB to develop the Durchmesserline which will provide an adhesion exit from St Gallen towards Gais and allow the operation of a cross-city S-bahn service.

ASm

The last three STAR Be4/8 units were delivered between June and August; all six carry names of planets and can cover the five all-day diagrams on the Solothurn – St Urban network. Two sets from the old fleet are up for sale.

On September 17th and 18th, special trips were operated between Langenthal and Melchnau; three round trips being provided on the Saturday by a STAR unit with one round trip on the Sunday using Bre 116 and Br 161.

CJ

Around 11000 passengers were transported to the national horse fair at Saingelégier on 13th and 14th August; five coach BDe4/4II Pendelzug sets, GTW2/6 sets in multiple with two trailers and a three car set of the modernised 1952 fleet were deployed in traffic.

MGB

The plan to reroute the line through tracks 1 and 2 of the main line station at Brig has been rejected, as SBB and BLS need all the existing platforms to handle their traffic requirements.

HGe4/4 31 and 36 were both active in late September; 36 being observed coupled to the snowplough at Andermatt on the 20th and 31 being used on a railtour to the Base Tunnel works at Sedrun on the 26th.

MGN

HGe2/2 3 was heavily damaged on 8th September when it derailed in the avalanche gallery at La Perche,

suspending services until the 10th.

MOB

The GoldenPass logo is being applied to all stock retaining the blue and cream livery.

RhB

ABe 4/4 46 remains available for use on works trains out of Poschiavo, being observed alongside the shed on 19th September.

During the summer, the last four Ge4/4I locomotives were all diagrammed for traffic, mostly on goods work but with a passenger diagram on the Davos – Chur portion of the Glacier Express, for which 605 “Silvretta” was the regular choice. The withdrawal for repairs of Ge4/4II 612 following collision with a digger by Klosters tunnel in April has aided their employment.

On 11th September, two coaches of train 1268 (21 59 Chur – Ilanz) derailed in the Vorderrhein gorge after striking debris on the track. The driver evacuated the seven passengers, three of whom were slightly injured, to Valendas station on foot; the line remained blocked until 13th September.

The Landquart – Davos – Filisur service has deployed an eclectic selection of stock this summer, with the four diagrams being covered by an Allegra unit, two Ge4/4III and one Ge4/4II Pendelzug formations in mid-September, with three-vehicle strengthening sets being attached / detached at Davos Platz in each direction.

Early snowfall on 18th / 19th September caused the suspension of RhB services between Litzirüti and Arosa and between Davos Platz and Filisur on the morning of the 19th due to overhead line damage. Train 1026, 08:02 Davos Platz – Landquart, was exceptionally worked by Ge6/6 701 “Raetia”, borrowed from the morning goods diagram, running with just the three coach strengthening set normally attached at Davos and running some 20 minutes late.

TPC

Between 2nd July and 28th August the Gryon – Villars service on the BVB was boosted to half-hourly by the provision of a shuttle service operated by Be2/3 15, the erstwhile Bex- Bévieux tram.

WAB

Trains were actually diverted over the new track above Wengen from 20th May to allow the old line to be relaid. The 900m double track section here will be commissioned from December 13th, allowing a half-hourly service to operate to Kleine Scheidegg.

TRAMS

Bernmobil

The junction at Zytglogge was renewed during July and August, with no service east of the Bahnhof except for the Line 6 service from Worb. From 24th September, track renewal work in the Monbijoustrasse saw Route 9 trams to Wabern diverted via Weissenbühl.

TN / TRN

Approval has been given for these two companies to merge from 1st January 2013; whether this will have any effect or the proposal from the TRN to replace the trolleybuses in La Chaux de Fonds by buses from 2014 (citing the need to modify overhead lines in the station area and the difficulty of winter operations in the Jura) remains to be seen.

TL

A 50 year concession has been granted for the construction of a tram line between Lausanne Flon and Renens Gare, subject to completion by 2018.

Heritage

SBB Historic

The 10th birthday of the SBB Historic unit was celebrated on 20th August with specials over the Lötschberg and through the Simplon tunnel using 1930s equipment, including parallel running on the Lötschberg south ramp.

Samstagern works received RABe TEE 1054 and Ae6/6 11402 and 11411 for overhaul on 8th August.

DVZO

This group has acquired Ee3/3 16363 from SBB to provide alternative electric traction to BT Be4/4 115 over the Bauma – Hinwil line.

HSB

An open day was held at the newly refurbished Hochdorf shed on 3rd September. Trips over the Seetalbahn were provided by E3/3 8492 and SBB Historic CZm1/2 31 sandwiching a WWII coach.

SEFT

The line is threatened by the desire of the commune council at Roveredo to banish the line from the village after the parallel A13 road is diverted into a tunnel. 

Swiss Tip Some good ideas and information about Switzerland from travellers.

Between trains in Brig? Since reconstruction on the ground floor of the west half of the station building there is a new and practical self-service restaurant with a good choice of well-presented and economical dishes. Sit near the window if you can for a view of the PostAutos and the MGB trains just across the road. 

Swiss Tip

Hungry in Vevey? Although the HQ of Nestlé, one of the largest food processing companies in the world, finding good-value food can be difficult in this expensive area of Switzerland. Head across the station square and sample the Manora restaurant in the Manor department store. It has a market-place self-service layout where you can choose from a wide variety of dishes from snacks to full meals. Be warned though - it can be very busy at peak lunch times as all the local office workers head there. 