

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: - (2019)
Heft: 140

Artikel: The Re 460 in Hong Kong
Autor: Pong, Owen
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-853853>

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SkiTube opened from the lower terminus to the major resort of Perisher valley on 26 July 1987 and to Blue Cow on 31 March 1988. The line is entirely rack on the Von Roll system. It climbs 655 metres in 8.5 kilometres. The line is single with crossing loops.

The railway is privately owned by the company which controls the two ski resorts it serves.

Unfortunately, since 2004 SkiTube has only operated in the Winter ski season, June to early October. However, during this period an intensive service operates. Because there are no roads to Blue Cow, SkiTube sometimes operates mixed trains,

with the EMUs pushing a freight wagon uphill and pulling it downhill. This provides all of Blue Cow's supplies and takes away its rubbish.

Although SkiTube has Australian built carriages, it has a real Swiss atmosphere because of its mountain setting and Swiss-type operation. The scenery on the short open-air valley section provides great mountain views, especially after snowfalls.

More details are at <https://www.perisher.com.au/plan-your-trip/new-to-perisher/skitube> and at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skitube_Alpine_Railway. 

The Re 460 in Hong Kong

by Owen Pong



Photos: Kazuaki Yokokawa

The Re 460 locomotive was built for the SBB, and also for export to Norway and Finland. The only other export success was to Hong Kong, and what are believed to be the last two locomotives constructed by SLM Winterthur, went there, being delivered on 11th May 1997. Numbered TLN001 and TLS002, they power 12-coach trains of KTT double-decker coaches, with a train capacity of 1,268 passengers on the service from Hung Hom (Kowloon) to Guangzhoudong (Guangzhou East).

There are nine train pairs per day, six operated by China Railways (CR) and three by Hong Kong Railways (MTR Corporation Ltd., MTRCL) with the Re 460s working in "top and tail" mode to avoid running round at each end. 

