

BR CLASS 26 DIESEL (D5300) 26007

The BRCW/Sulzer Type 2s (later Class 26 & 27) originated with twenty locomotives as part of the 1956 Modernisation Plan's initial order for 171 (later 174) locomotives, identified under the Type B category (maximum of 1,250bhp).

Eventually orders were placed with the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. (BRCW) for a total of 116 locomotives:

D5300 - D5319 (20) ER (Initial Modernisation Plan order)

D5320 - D5328 (9) ER

D5329 - D5346 (18) ScR

D5347 - D5369 (23) ScR

D5370 - D5378 (9) LMR

D5379 - D5415 (38) LMR

The 6LDA28 power unit selected for the Type 2 was available straight from the Sulzer catalogue and had already seen use in locomotives built by BRCW for export to Sierra Leone & Australia. The basic 1,160hp engine was fitted to the Derby Type 2s, later BR Class 24.

Early trials with the 1,160hp engined locomotives revealed a higher maximum speed with a little more power would be very useful for operating departments. The introduction of charge air cooling provided the necessary technical advance to introduce a 'B' variant. This created a continuous traction output of 1,250bhp at 750rpm and was employed in the Class 25 & Class 27 locomotives.

D5300 was delivered from BRCW during September 1958 to Doncaster for acceptance trials. The design specification had called for a maximum axle loading of 18.75 tons (total 73 tons), but in practice the locomotives were delivered weighing 77tons 17cwt.

From Doncaster D5300 and her sisters were sent down to Hornsey (34B) for crew training prior to handling services from Kings Cross to Hitchin, Hertford North & Welwyn Garden City. Because the locomotives were overweight they were banned from working to the Southern Region via the Metropolitan Widened Lines.

D5300 was noted at an exhibition in Noel Park station's goods yard between 12th and 14th September 1958. This was organised by local BR Management as part of Wood Green Borough Council's Charter Jubilee celebrations. D5300 appeared in (almost) ex-works condition and was on display with a variety of steam and diesel locomotives as well as other vehicles. A steam breakdown crane even gave some visitors an aerial ride to give an overview of the filled site.

Regular operation in and out of Moorgate using the 'Widened Lines' via Faringdon, commenced on 1st December 1958. Previous reference to the new diesels being overweight led SR/ER authorities to ban these BRCW Type 2s during 1959 from working inter-regional freights to the SR via the Widened Lines and Snow Hill. In light of this, consideration was given to moving the Hornsey based Type 2s (D5300 - 5319) to the Scottish Region.

Near Boston, on 20th June 1959, D5300 was seen hauling a Kings Cross - Grimsby

passenger service. Some of D 5300's working in and out of the late lamented Broad Street station (next to Liverpool Street) included the 08:26 Hertford North - Broad Street on 28th October 1959 and the 17:24 Broad Street - Hertford North on 23rd February 1960.

During early 1960 Hornsey's BRCW & NBL Type 2s reached the Scottish Region through an interesting series of moves. The NBL units were collected in pairs by Doncaster men from New England, then going light to Newcastle where Scottish Region crews would take over. For the BRCW transfers, Doncaster men worked up to Hornsey with brand new Brush Type 2s, bringing back a pair of BRCW Type 2s, with crew changes at Doncaster & Newcastle. On 12th April, D5602/03 were brought up to Hornsey with Doncaster men returning northward with D5300/01.

During the second week of June, D5300 was noted in St Rollox Workshops. Thereafter it was to be allocated to Haymarket Depot (64B) for some time. Haymarket BRCW Type 2s became solid performers on local freight and passenger services over the Waverley route. On 16th September 1962, D5300 experienced a small fire caused by sparks from the brake blocks but minimal damage was caused.

D5303 was reported at St Rollox during April 1966 as the first of a small batch of Haymarket BRCW Type 2s (D5300 - D5306) to be modified for use on the Cockenzie merry-go-round coal trains. By the end of July D5300 was noted undergoing a similar treatment at St Rollox. Alterations included the removal of the train heating boiler and boiler water tank, the fitting of slow speed control (SSC) and train air braking equipment as well as sheeting over the front end gangway doors.

In May 1970, D 5300 still carried it's original green livery although 'refreshed' from time to time during works visits. On 25th May 1974, D 5300 was renumbered when it was allocated number 26007 under BR's TOPS processing system. On 26th August 1976, the prototype Class 314 unit No.920001 was moved from Glasgow to Ilford with 26007 working this special as far as Newcastle.

From time to time the SSC equipped Class 26s strayed on to other duties with, on 1st June 1977, 26007 worked the 17.10 Edinburgh - Berwick-upon-Tweed. The following year, on 22nd July, 26004 & 26007 reached Newcastle with a Grangemouth - Haverton Hill tank train, the Class 26s returned north on the overnight Kings Cross - Aberdeen freightliner working.

26007 was outshopped from Glasgow Works in June 1979 having received an Intermediate Repair. It was further refurbished during December 1982. In November 1987 it received it's last overhaul which was classified as Component Exchange Maintenance/Light. Jumping to 1988, the loco was re-allocated from Haymarket to Eastfield depot on 15th May.

In September 1991, 26007 was repainted in 'Dutch' livery by Eastfield Depot staff. 26007 and 26043 were cleaned especially before they moved South so that they could double-head Pathfinder Tours' the 'Wye Knot' rail tour, on 12th October 1991, for the Crewe - Settle & Carlisle line - Carlisle leg. The pair put up a good performance on the 10 coach load and were only a minute late into Carlisle. 26007 and 26043 were removed and returned light engine to Eastfield later in the day.

26007+26004 were then photographed stabled at Thornton Junction, on 1st February 1992, during their eight week 'hire' for Longannet/Kincardine flows of coal trains due to Class 37 loco shortages.

On Monday 30th March 1992 26007/D5300 was pressed into action on 6N33 21:45 Bishopbriggs to Grangemouth petroleum tanks. Wednesday 3rd June saw 26007 'borrowed' to work the 7S52 18:18 Sellafield to Fairlie nuclear flask train from Falkland Yard to Fairlie and 7M22 Fairlie to Falkland Yard.

Friday 21st August saw 26001 and 26007 rolled out officially in their new as-near-as-possible-to-1958-livery at Eastfield shed during a short ceremony to mark the closure of the depot. 26007 had a standard size ScotRail blue West Highland Terrier, mounted above a plaque commemorating D5300 as the last loco to receive major attention at the depot. The logos and plaque were unveiled by two of the depot's longest-serving staff, Paul Equi (welder and blacksmith) and Jim Kerr (painter).

Sunday 23rd August 1992 had 26007 (D5300) double head with 26001 (D5301) the 08:35 1Z48 Waverley to Oban; returning on the 15:48 Oban to Waverley. The green machines had a day out West although it began badly. 26007 had been left on a battery charger since Friday at Eastfield and would not start with its frazzled batteries.

Eventually it did fire, but the farce had just begun. When the outward train pulled into Helensburgh Upper, both the driver and riding fitter climbed out and, after a ten minute discussion, decided to disconnect the Blue Star multi-working jumper cables and drive the locos in tandem. Although this had a dramatic effect on the performance of the locos for the rest of the outward and return trip, they were still not giving 100%. After the trip, 007 returned light to Eastfield and 26001 took the ECS to Perth before also running to Eastfield. The next day both were undergoing repairs there.

The entire class is reallocated to Inverness after being transferred on paper three weeks before. On Saturday and Sunday 12th and 13th September, 26007 was engaged on rail tour duties again. It was an open weekend at Longannet Power Station and BR provided a free shuttle train service between Longannet to Culross, with steam loco 44871 at one end powering to Longannet and 26007 at the other end returning the train to Culross.

Friday 18th September 1992 26001 had been selected to attend Thornaby Depot Open Day, but was failed with flat batteries, so 26007 went instead. It spent three days there and then travelled under its own power to Millerhill Depot. On Wednesday 3rd March 1993 26007 hauled the last leg of 5Z31 Tyseley to Glasgow Works, from Mossend. This consisted of 12 condemned DMUs going to be scrapped.

26007 worked 5Z76 16:15 Perth to Mossend, on Wednesday 17th March, which consisted of empty coaches bound for Shields Road Depot for tyre turning. The following day, Thursday 18th March, 26007 and 26003 worked 5Z28 16:26 Inverness to Perth. They hauled 8 empty ScotRail coaches going on short-term loan to Regional Railways North West at Edge Hill. After completing this transfer the locos and returned to Scotland.

26007 made a rare visit to the Burghead branch (between Forres and Elgin) on Thursday 25th March 1993. The purpose of the trip was to place coaches at Burghead Grain terminal for the following day's site meeting between management and staff with regard to staffing levels of future services to the branch. 26007 returned to the Burghead branch with four coaches, as a VIP special, on Friday 26th. The four coaches were meant to simulate the shunting of polybulk grain wagons. After the meeting, 007 returned to Inverness with all 6 carriages.

At the end of March, 26007 was stopped for an E exam and air tank work. On Monday 17th May, 26007 made two route-learning runs between Dingwall and Ardgay, using its newly

fitted RETB equipment for the first time.

The summer of 1993 saw a booked passenger turn for 26001+26007 from Inverness to Kyle and back on a number of Wednesdays. A change of route occurred on Saturday 14th August when 26001+26007 hauled the 1Z39 'Waverley Wizard' raitour; from Carlisle to Waverley, via Dumfries, Annbank, Paisley, Shields Junction, High Street Junction and Falkirk High. After a quick run round, they took the train back to Carlisle via the WCML, managing 85mph down Beattock and a 20 minute early arrival into Carlisle. They then returned to Motherwell, reaching Inverness on 17th, where 001 received attention to a faulty speedo.

26001 ran light from Inverness to Millerhill, en route to the Worksop Open Day, but failed at Culloden on Thursday 2nd September. 26007 was sent to rescue; but eventually continued alone to Millerhill (and on to Worksop) while 001 limped home. Monday 6th September saw 26007 arrive back at Millerhill from Worksop in the company of 37692. Later that day 26007 continued on to Inverness Depot.

The last scheduled passenger services hauled by Class 26 locos occurred on Saturday 18th September. 26001+26007 hauled 2H83 10:42 Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh and returned with 2H86 17:05 Kyle of Lochalsh to Inverness. On Monday, 26007 was sent light engine from Inverness to Motherwell.

26007 was sent from Motherwell to Corckerhill to pick up an Inspection Saloon, on Thursday 23rd September 1993, before continuing to Queen Street. From there, it left as 2Z01 at 07:40, heading for Inverkeithing where it was due to give way to A4 60009 *Union of South Africa*. However, 26007 failed at Gartshore with a possible traction motor flashover. 37167 was sent from Eastfield to drag 26007 off the main line into the loop.

37167 hauled 26007 back to Motherwell later that day. A 'patched up' 26007 managed to return to Inverness on the 28th. However, there were no funds available for an overhaul so 26007 was withdrawn officially on 4th October 1993 after a working life of well over 35 years.

The use of 26007 is courtesy of Victor Korzeniewicz and whilst the loco has appeared previously at Swanage, this will be its first time wearing Railfreight "Coal Sector" livery.

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