

## CLASS 37 DIESEL 37607 (D6803)

As part of the large scale dieselisation under the British Rail (BR) modernisation plan a need was identified for a number of type 3 locos with a power output of between 1,500 hp and 1,999 hp. English Electric had been successful already with orders for type 1 and type 4 diesels. It had also produced locomotives of similar power for railways in East Africa.

A design, based on these exported locos, was put forward and accepted by BR in 1959. It was for a general purpose loco and found service initially in British Rail's Eastern Region. No prototype was built with an initial order for forty two straight off the drawing board. Further orders were placed before the initial batch had been completed.

The original main engine was a turbocharged English Electric 12CSVV [1,750 bhp] coupled to an English Electric EE822 main generator. This powered six DC traction motors and the loco had a top speed of 90 mph.

In all, some 309 examples were constructed and even after over 60 years in service, some remain at work on Britain's main line network.

**D6803** [37607] formed part of EE Order no. CCP 1267 dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 1961. This comprised 23 locos to be numbered D6796 to D6818. It was outshopped from English Electric's Vulcan Foundry on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1963. It's first allocation was Sheffield Darnall Depot.

The bodywork was painted plain BR Green with a small yellow warning panel on the front of both cabs to aid visibility to lineside workers. Also, it was fitted with Blue Star multiple loco fitting and a central headcode box was installed at each end. BR Automatic Warning System (AWS) equipment was also fitted as standard.

From new, D6803 had been air braked but the loco was also fitted with an exhaustor for use with vacuum braked trains. A Clayton RO2500/03 steam heat boiler was also fitted for use in cold periods when hauling BR Mk1 coaching stock.

In July 1971, the loco received additional compressors and other equipment so that it could haul air braked trains as well. In October 1973 it became allocated to Immingham Depot and was registered on TOPS in February 1974 with the number 37103. The following month saw 37103 move to Tinsley Depot.

In April 1977, 37103 had it's steam heat boiler isolated and during January 1979 the front headcode boxes were modified with black blinds and 2 marker lights. During November 1981 the loco's allocation changed to the east London depot at Stratford. It became 37511 in 1985 with further renumbering to 37607 occurring in 1986.

It was one of a small batch of 12 class 37/6's rebuilt to work Nightstar European passenger services from regional cities in the West of England and Wales as far as London Waterloo where they would hand over to a class 92. They were owned by British Rail European Passenger Services division.

However with the privatisation of the UK rail network in 1996 carving up the network they had changed owner by the end of the May. The new owner being Eurostar UK Ltd

which was the operating company set up by London & Continental Railways - the new owner of Eurostar and Nightstar services. Nightstar was abandoned by the new company before it even started operating so all the class 37/6 were eventually sold to Direct Rail Services (DRS).

37607 was withdrawn by DRS in September 2019 and was one of a batch of 37's later purchased by the Harry Needle Railroad Company (HNRC) and moved to its base at Barrow Hill. HNRC was purchased by Railway Infrastructure contractors Swietelsky who now use 37607 around the country along with several other Class 37s.

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