

60001 The Railway Observer
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The one hundred Class 60s were all built at the Brush Traction factory at Loughborough, for Trainload Freight, and 60001 was the first to be delivered. After a formal handing-over ceremony on 30th June 1989, it left Loughborough light engine to begin testing in the charge of the Railway Technical Centre.

Works Number BEM 903/89 was allotted, BEM standing for Brush Electrical Machines. The design code for the class at the time of construction was 60-OAA. The only amended design code subsequently issued applies to those engines that have increased fuel capacity, up from 4546 to 5225 litres; 60001 has not received this modification.

The early problems with the class were well publicised, with numerous faults being reported in the early days. As a result, the first sixteen class members were used principally for driving and fitter training pending a recall to the Brush factory for retrospective modifications to be completed.

Accordingly, 60001 was not finally accepted into traffic until August 1991, when it was allocated to Stewarts Lane depot (SL) in its FASB Construction Pool.

At the end of March 1994 this pool code was changed to ESAB Stewarts Lane Class 60 when the British Rail freight operation was split into three divisions prior to privatisation. Stewarts Lane was included in the newly established Trainload Freight Southeast Division, later Mainline Freight.

In March 1996, ownership transferred to English Welsh & Scottish Railway (EWS) on the privatisation of British Rail. 60001 remained at Stewarts Lane in pool ESAB. In September 1996, it was transferred to pool ENAN Class 60, Toton although still allocated to Stewarts Lane but was transferred to Toton in the following month.

In September 1997, EWS centralised the allocation of class 60 locomotives at Toton, with other class members from Cardiff Canton and Immingham transferred to Toton pool ENAN. The code of this pool was changed to WCAN class 60, systemwide in a reorganisation of the EWS pools in January 1999.

In November 2000, EWS moved back to the previous system of allocating locomotives to specific depots for maintenance purposes and 60001 was moved to Thornaby (TE) in pool WCAT, designated Class 60 North Eastern (North). This allocation still applied at the time of naming.

60001 The Railway Observer

All members of the class were allocated names from the outset, and the plates were fitted by Brush before the locomotives were delivered. Those expected to go to the Construction sub-sector were to be named after British mountains but, as the first of its class, 60001 was an exception in being named 'Steadfast'. After EWS took over, names were removed from many of these locomotives and 60001 was so treated in September 1996.

The standard Trainload Freight 'triple grey' livery was applied to 60001 when built, together with the correct Construction sub-sector decals, formed of blue and yellow squares. As a point of interest, it can be seen from old records that some of the class were allocated to duties differing from those envisaged at the time of ordering and, as a result, carried the 'wrong' names and sub-sector markings. Subsequently, these decals were replaced with Mainline Freight logos, this change being reported in the June 1996 RO. 60001 was then one of the earlier recipients of the now standard EWS red and yellow livery, in its revised form with the letters EWS on the yellow band and the EWS logo on the right-hand cab side. The change was reported in the April 1997 RO.

This livery was carried at the naming ceremony on 23rd February at Toton, seven years to the day since 'The Railway Observer' nameplates were applied to 37890 at Hither Green. 60001 also carries a secondary plate inscribed 'The Journal of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society Founded in 1928 RCTS www.rcts.org.uk'; the text on this plate is all in upper case, using a smaller font except for RCTS which is in larger font, except for the final line which gives the society's website address in lower case. 60001 is unique among EWS locomotives in having a website address on a nameplate; it was also the first class 60 to have nameplates with pale blue background.

60001 failed with a 'burst' engine on the evening of 24th February 2006 while working a loaded MGR on the Liverpool Gladstone Dock to Fiddlers Ferry coal circuit. It was hauled dead in tow to Warrington and subsequently moved to Toton where it was stored on 2nd March in pool WNTS - EWS tactical stored. Damage to the engine is thought to be 'terminal' so 60001 is unlikely to work again unless a replacement engine becomes available.

After being stored in Toton depot sidings for almost two years, 60001 was moved to into the Compound on 26th February 2008 and has since been joined there by other stored class 60s.

60001 The Railway Observer

On 3rd September 2010 DB Schenker, formerly EWS, put 103 stored locomotives up for sale by tender. These included 60001 and 19 other members of the class, the first time that class 60s had been offered for sale. On 23rd September these 20 class 60s were all reallocated to pool WNXX – DBS stored unserviceable (the company was no longer using the more appropriate pool WNZX – locomotives for disposal). They were later withdrawn from sale; it is assumed that any offers didn't meet the reserve price.

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