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Release Immediate

NEW LOCOMOTIVE FOR RAILFREIGHT  
PAYLOAD EQUAL TO 50 HEAVY LORRIES

British Rail's answer to the proposed 38 tonne lorry was unveiled in Doncaster today - a 3,300 hp locomotive capable of hauling payloads of 1,000 tonnes at speeds of up to 80 mph.

The new locomotive, No. 58001, is the first of a fleet designed for BR's £600m freight business, Railfreight, and the export market. Each of Railfreight's locomotives will be painted in their striking grey and red livery with the name Railfreight on the side and be capable of hauling the equivalent of 50 heavy lorry loads.

Taking delivery of No. 58001 today at the Doncaster Works of British Rail Engineering, BR's engineering subsidiary, Henry Sanderson, Railfreight's Director, said the new fleet being delivered was the boost the freight business had been waiting for.

"I see this class of locomotive becoming the heavy freight loco for many years to come. Its low initial cost and low maintenance cost together with reliability will help Railfreight compete with the heavy lorry. It is its rugged simplicity which appeals to me", said Mr. Sanderson.

Known as the Class 58 from the fleet's numbering sequence, the new locomotive will be joining Railfreight at the same time as 250 29 tonne payload, high capacity vans ordered for Railfreight's 'truck-load' services - Speedlink. Each van, with its sliding doors, has roof-height access for fork-lift equipment throughout its 42 foot length.

The first of the locomotives off the production line are scheduled to go to Toton, Nottingham depot, where initially they will be used for hauling part of Railfreight's 95m tonne coal business. As others become available they will be deployed in the 'heavy end' of Railfreight including aggregates and petroleum.

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