

SR 12 TON VENTILATED VAN S 49445

This vehicle was ordered by the Southern Railway as part of Lot No. 969 to design diagram 1458. Ashford Carriage & Wagon Works constructed this batch using a 4 wheel chassis having a wheelbase of 10 ft. It was vacuum braked, using an 18 in diameter vacuum cylinder, as well as having a lever hand brake each side for use when stabled in sidings or during loading/unloading. It weighed just over 8 Tons and could carry loads up to 12 Tons.

Although SR carried the smallest amount of goods, compared to GWR; LMS and LNER, it still amassed well over 36,000 goods vehicles. Vehicles fitted with vacuum braking, like S 49445, were not considered as 'common-user' so did not form part of this pool. Unless they had a return load, all vacuum braked vehicles were meant to be returned to the SR empty and, to this end, such vehicles were marked with an 'N' on each corner to aid shunting. In BR days S49445 was coded 'Vanfit' and marked with the letters "XP" on each side.

The 'XP' rating was introduced as early as 1938 to indicate that a wagon could travel in express passenger trains. However, in practice it meant they could travel at express speeds in what became in BR days head code C and later class 3 trains. The wagons had to be fitted with vacuum brakes (or a through pipe), have oil axle boxes, long buffers, screw couplings, and a wheelbase of 10 ft or more with which S49445 complied.

XP rated vans most often travelled in trains consisting entirely of XP rated stock, typically mostly vans and container wagons, but also sometimes cattle trucks (at the front), and often fish vans, fruit vans, and open wagons. They were also used in parcels trains along with non-passenger coaching stock such as GUVs but rarely coupled onto passenger trains.

After it's eventual withdrawal from revenue earning service, S49445 was converted into one of Southern Region's Signalling & Telecommunications Department (S&T) ODM emergency generator vans. In addition to an extra two vents added to each end, below the existing vents, a steel rail inside the roof, complete with pulley block, was provided to help in the maintenance of the installed diesel generator. For these duties it was renumbered ADS 1459.

After withdrawal from Departmental Service, ADS 1459 arrived in Swanage during 2012 having been purchased by two members of the Southern Steam Trust. The generator was removed and then ADS 1459 took it's place in the refurbishment queue entering the Goods Shed at Swanage around the end of June 2018. Despite on-going chassis work it was moved outside, during mid-May 2019, to create space for another vehicle's restoration. It was transferred to it's current position of Lakeside siding at Norden and S49445, in plain Bauxite livery, is currently used by the Swanage Railway's S&T Department.

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 9th October 2021

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