

Alco Delivers First Century Locomotives

The Erie-Lackawanna has received the first three of 15 new Alco locomotives it will operate 18,000 to 20,000 miles monthly in high-speed freight service between Marion, Ohio, and the east.

Last week the Erie-Lackawanna put into service the first three of 15 new Alco 2,400-horsepower Century 424 locomotives. The four-axle four-motor high-speed units are hauling priority mainline freight between Marion, Ohio, and New England and the New York metropolitan areas.

The 15 units will replace 36 locomotives of 1,350 horsepower each, built in 1944. "Although they'll be doing basically the same job," said Milton G. McInnes, president, Erie-Lackawanna, "the smaller number of these high-horsepower, modern-design locomotives will enable us to operate longer distances with fewer terminal handlings and service requirements than with the older locomotives. The result should be increased dependability of service, improved on-time performance and greater economies in both operating and maintenance costs. We expect the locomotives will pay for themselves in five years of operation."

All locomotives in the order will be delivered in June. The 15 Century locomotives, costing approximately \$3,000,000, are to be operated in three-unit 7,200-horsepower consists to haul trains of approximately 100 loaded cars, replacing five-unit consists of the older power. Principal cargo is piggy-back freight, new automobiles either on highway trailer or multi-level cars, forwarder freight, general merchandise and perishables.

The Century locomotives will haul two eastbound and two westbound high-speed freight trains every day, with running time of about 22 hours. Each of the new locomotives is expected to operate 18,000 to 20,000 miles per month, a high figure for freight locomotives, Mr. McInnes said.

Eastbound trains will travel from Marion, Ohio, to Jersey City in serving the New York area, and to Maybrook, N.Y., to connect with the New Haven in serving the New England area. Westbound trains return to Marion where other locomotives will be substituted for the remaining trip over Erie-Lackawanna tracks to Chicago.

Mr. McInnes said the Century locomotives would not operate west of Marion because they will be the line's "work-horse" locomotives and will not be needed over the relatively flat terrain between Marion and Chicago.

"Our purchase of the new Century locomotives marks the first addition to

our motive power fleet since the merger of the Erie and Lackawanna railroads in 1960," Mr. McInnes said. He noted that both railroads had completed the transition from steam to diesel-electric locomotives by 1954 and were among the first in the East to replace steam by diesel-electric power.

The three Erie-Lackawanna locomotives delivered last week are the first of the Century units to be produced. Alco introduced the series early this year (RA, Feb. 4, p. 16), announcing that they "are designed to replace aging locomotives with more power at less cost than previous models." In announcing the new series on January 29, Alco's president, William S. Miller, said, "From 5,000 to 6,000 present units will require replacement within the next five years." Besides the Century 424 model, two other models, the Century 420 and the 624, were announced on the same date.



FIRST ALCO CENTURY LOCOMOTIVE is shown during inspection by W. G. Carlson, chief mechanical officer, E-L (left) and W. F. Lewis, executive vice president, Alco. The 2,400-horsepower unit has a pressurized engine compartment.