

From: "Stedall, Richard"

Date: Mon Aug 19 08:24:33 2002

To: 'Michael TaylorNoonan' <mtn@canada.com>

Subject: RE: Tridents in Langley

Mike,

Ahhhh - this is where it gets complex !!!

Today Plaxton, Alexander, Dennis and the former Duple Metsec are all part of TransBus International (c. 70% owned by Mayflower who were the owners of Metsec, Alexander & Dennis - and c. 30% owned by Henleys - owners of Plaxton).

The first batch of Tridents were ordered and built before TransBus came in to being. The bodies were by Duple Metsec - who only did kit built bodies - someone else always put them together. The original intention was that Plaxton would put the bodies together (like they were doing for some Hong Kong Tridents) - but then the battle for Dennis erupted (Mayflower -vs- Henleys) and the contract was switched to Caetano in Portugal (again a company that had built up a number of Metsec bodies for HK bound buses).

So the original batch had what would be called by the PSV Circle "Duple Metsec / Caetano" bodies.

By the time the second batch was built peace had broken out and TransBus International formed. At this time the separate Metsec factory was closed and a new "kit-build" factory opened near Alexander's factory in Scotland. The Duple Metsec name was kind of dropped, although their designs have remained. So the new batch are actually Alexander bodies built to the Duple Metsec design (with me so far ????).

Now to add to the confusion at your end - the "Plaxton Pointer" body on the Dart is no longer built at the Plaxton factory (which builds coaches only) - it is now built at the main Alexander factory (along with Alexander's own ALX range of bodywork - the Thomas SLF200 is based on the Alexander ALX200 product) - so your latest batch of Darts are almost certainly "Alexander" bodied vehicles (now I bet you are REALLY confused !!).

TransBus are to replace the entire range over the next few years with

"TransBus" products - although the chassis will still be built by Dennis and the bodies by the Alexander and Plaxton (Wigan) plant - the latter still builds double deckers at the former Northern Counties plant.

Already the "full size" single decker product (the Enviro 300) has been launched and the new "export" double decker (the Enviro 500) is apparently due to be launched later this year - at first I think mostly for the Far East, but eventually this will replace the Trident.

So I hope that helps explains things !! Eventually all will become nice and simple - until then CHAOS REIGNS !!!

Richard