

UP's UX / UTX Utah Manifest Freight Trains - Final Report

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To all:

It's time to write a final report for the UP's eastbound UX and UTX freight trains, so I'll try to do this with limited info

Train: UP's UX and UTX

Direction: Eastbound only.

Description: UX is the morning Utah Manifest, and UTX is the afternoon Utah Manifest. These are blocks of cars, not entire trains.

UX (morning Utah Manifest) handles all manifest and perishables assembling in Los Angeles and Colton territory for Salt Lake City, east, and north, and will protect basic CN (Colton Fruit) schedule from Colton. It will handle the first fruit block from Colton when tonnage warrants. The combined symbol is UX-CN.

UTX (afternoon Utah Manifest, normally combined with a CN Colton Fruit block) handles all perishable and manifest assembled at Los Angeles and Colton for Salt Lake City, eastern, and northern destinations. The combined symbol is UTX-CN.

Origin: Los Angeles, often with a CN fruit block added at Colton.

Destination: Salt Lake City and eastern and northern destinations.

(UTX connected at Ogden with CUX to Council Bluffs, as of 1949.)

Railroads Represented: UP and connecting roads like the MILW, IC, Wabash, and especially the C&NW.

Also foreign-road cars from the northeastern and midwestern industrial belt, especially PRR, NYC, and B&O. Some smaller RRs contributed cars to this service out of all proportion to the size of their freight car fleets because of the nature of the westbound traffic -- GTW, PM, and DT&I, for example which handled a lot of auto parts, AC&Y which shipped tires from Ohio, and NH, which served the Pratt & Whitney aircraft engine plants in New England.

The most common petroleum cars were UTLX, but Shell (SCCX), Shell Chemical (SCMX), Union (UOCX), Associated (AOX), and Richfield (ROX) were also seen.

Products: Manifest freight (products made in So. Calif. and exported to other parts of the country) plus many empties; UTX is mostly empties.

Refinery products from So. Calif. oil companies to wholesalers in the mountain west and northwest.

Car Types: Considerable box car traffic, carrying products made in So. Calif. and exported to other parts of the country, and many empty boxcars returning east. Tank cars from So. Calif. oil companies to wholesalers in the mountain west and northwest.

The more prevalent car types were boxcars, with some gondolas and flat cars. Hopper cars were relatively rare. There were also empty UP, D&RGW, and UCR GS coal gondolas returning east, though UP sometimes used its ballast hoppers as well.

Train Length and Weight: Total train lengths were 70-90 cars (longer in the 1950s than in the 1940s), with 3,000 to 4,000 tons. But each block such as UX or UTX was maybe about half of the total train length, with the reefer block maybe being the other half.

Typical Schedule:

1946:

UX - Lv. LA East Yard 11:00 AM, Colton 2:30 PM.

1947:

UX - Lv. LA 11:00 AM, Colton 2:30 PM, SB 4:00 PM, Ar. Yermo 9:30 PM.

1948:

UX - Lv. SB 1:00 PM.

1949:

UX - Lv. LA 10:30 AM, Colton 1:30 PM, SB 2:00 PM.

UTX - Lv. LA 3:30 AM, Colton 6:30 AM, SB 7:00 AM.

1952:

UX - Lv. LA 7:00 AM, Colton 10:00 AM, SB 11:00 AM, Ar. Yermo 4:00 PM.

UTX-CN - Lv. LA 5:00 PM, Colton 8:00 PM, SB 8:45 PM, Ar. Yermo 1:30 AM.

1955:

UX - Lv. San Berdo 10:45 AM, Ar. Yermo 3:15 PM.

CN-UTX (with Colton Fruit) - Lv. San Berdo 12:30 AM, Ar. Yermo 4:30 AM.

1957:

UX - Lv. LA 7:00 AM, Colton 10:00 AM, Berdoo 10:45 AM, Ar. Yermo 3:15 PM.

UTX-CN (with Colton Fruit) - Lv. LA 8:00 PM, Colton 11:59 PM, Berdoo 12:30 AM, Ar. Yermo 4:30 AM.

1964:

UX-Mdse - Lv. LA 7:30 AM, Colton 9:30 AM, Ar. Yermo 2:05 PM.

UTX-CN - Lv. LA 5:00 PM, Colton 9:00 PM, Berdoo 9:30 PM, Yermo 1:00 AM.

Road Power: Early Challengers into 1947, then Alco FAs, sometimes EMD F3s. It was GP9 sets that took over the trains in 1954 from the FA and F3 sets.

Helper Power: There were steam helpers into 1947 (2-10-2s, 2-8-2s, 4-8-2s, 4-10-2s), but the FM H20-44s took over from 1947-1950. Then we had the return of the same steam helpers during 1950-1951, until being replaced by TR5s and GP7s in 1951. In 1954 the TR5s were replaced by GP9 helpers (with the GP7s still in the helper pool too).

Operations Details:

UP typically operated five "through" trains east out of the Los Angeles area daily. These included:

- UX, the "Utah Manifest"- was scheduled to leave each morning, roughly 7 am out of LA. It handled any loaded cars that were on-hand (there were never many) and was filled out with empty cars.

- The UTX - was basically the afternoon counterpart of the (morning) UX, handling a few loaded cars but mainly hauling empty cars that were returning east. It was usually an evening train, scheduled to leave LA around 5pm to 8pm most years. It looks like it was often consolidated with the CN train, especially in the mid/late '50s.

So those symbol "trains" weren't really trains at all, more like groups (blocks) of cars in most cases.

So a typical 1950s operation would be that the UTX train would depart LA with (let's say) 50 cars and he would stop at Colton and pick up a perishable block. At that point, the train would be known as CN-UTX and it would continue east toward Salt Lake City. Schedules varied for the CN trains over the years, but they were normally to leave Colton between 8 pm and midnight. The train symbol used over Cajon on any particular day depended upon the UP train out of ELA that stopped at Colton to pick up the perishable block(s). Examples: "CN-UTX", "CN-CUX", "CU-CN" trains.

"C" Yard in Los Angeles handled all eastbound traffic. As of 1955, before trailers and containers, almost all eastbound traffic from Los Angeles was empty cars. They were dumped into "C" Yard 2,3, or 4, which were long tracks, to become 104-car trains (minus any bad orders cars that had to be thrown out).

"C" Yard 15 was a shorter track used for whatever eastbound loads and "hot" empties there were. There was a morning and evening train off "C" Yard 15. It was everything for Salt Lake City and beyond, without blocking of cars. The morning train was the UX, the afternoon train the UTX.

Let's say eastbound train "UTX" picked up 15 perishable cars at Colton that afternoon. Departing Colton, its train symbol would have had "CN" added to it, since he added a Colton perishable block. So departing Colton the full symbol for the train would have been (something like) "UTX11 - CN108".

To explain that, conventional freight train symbols included a number that indicated scheduled day of the month departure from initial terminal, such as using "11" for April 11th. Reefer block numbers worked differently, they counted up consecutively from Jan 1 each year. The next eastbound train that picked up that day (say it was train symbol "UX") would have been "UX11" arriving Colton and "UX11 - CN109" leaving. Note that 109 would have been used for the CN block, since it follows 108 assigned to the previous block that departed earlier that day.

Here are a few real-world examples to help tie all of this together, from some 1950s Las Vegas dispatcher's reports:

Oct 31, 1950 lineup at Las Vegas arriving from the west that evening / next morning:

- UTX31 8:30pm.

- UX31-CN722 5:00am Nov 1.

(note that the UX was handling a reefer block that day while the earlier "afternoon train" (UTX) wasn't).

Sept 28, 1951 eastbound LV evening lineup from the west:

- UTX28-CN580 9pm.

- UX28-CN581 6am.

The Eastbound trains came up the B Yard in SB, then the wye at West Yard Tower, and ran through the passenger station platform.

Modeling the Train: Use mostly boxcars from UP, C&NW, MILW, IC, Wabash, PRR, NYC, B&O, GTW, PM, DT&I, AC&Y, and NH. Plus some tank cars (Shell, Union, and others), gondolas, and flat cars. And maybe a few empty UP, D&RGW, and UCR drop-bottom gons returning east.

The UX or UTX block of cars was often combined with a loaded CN block of mostly PFE reefers going east from Colton, to fill out the train, and then the full-length train was called UX-CN or UTX-CN, but the loaded reefers should always be on the front.

That's all I have on this for now.

John Thompson