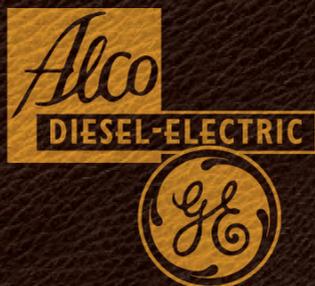


2024

Operating Manual



**1500-HP
ROAD LOCOMOTIVE UNITS**

**RAPIDO TRAINS INCORPORATED
MARKHAM • ONTARIO • CANADA**

ALCO FA-1/FB-1 LOCOMOTIVE PRODUCT GUIDELINES

Thank you for purchasing this model of the American Locomotive Co. FA-1/FB-1. When introduced after World War II, these ALCO models in multi-unit sets replaced many steam engines on railroads across North America. By the way, we're not printing different manuals for the FA-1 and the FB-1; if you have an FB-1, just imagine from here on that every time you read FA-1 it means FB-1.

If this is your first Rapido locomotive, we must ask – why is this your first Rapido locomotive? No, seriously, we've been around for 20 years now and we're not just a Canadian company, eh? We've produced a US customary ton of American products, like GE U25Bs, EMD E8s, ALCO PAs, EP-5s, Northeastern cabooses, SP B-50 boxcars, X-3 tank cars, etc. So just for that, we're going to make sure you LOVE your ALCO FA-1. And then you'll say to yourself, "What have we missed out on all these years? We need to find and buy every Rapido model that has ever been released, in every scale! Even the Rapido UK ones!"

If you are a returning customer, welcome back! Just put your engine on the track. All we ask is you don't intentionally set it on fire, don't use it for a daredevil stunt off the end of the layout, and don't MU it to anything made by Tyco. Oh, and REALLY keep it away from cheap DC controllers. Junky power packs can quickly and easily make any Rapido loco circuit board resemble a flaming charcoal briquet.

If this is your first Rapido Manual, we should warn you up front – there's usually a good amount of humor through these manuals. Well, at least we think so. We have gotten some comments from people that don't agree but we suspect that they have had their sense of humor surgically removed (we think it's near the spleen). After all, model railroading is supposed to be fun!

As always, if there is anything amiss with your FA-1, please do not hesitate to contact us. We stand by our products 100%. The best way to contact us is through email (service@rapidotrains.com) but you can also try to reach us by phone, the postal service, or by Morse Code using signal mirrors. Our contact info is near the back of this manual.

However, PLEASE do not send a faulty model back to us without first getting authorization. You wouldn't believe how many times we get a delivery of a broken locomotive with only a name inside (sometimes only the FIRST name), meaning we have no idea what's wrong with it! (Hey Rick – your pantographs are still sitting on the shelf in our bathroom.) If the issue with your model is something simple – like a loose grab iron – then we'll likely tell you how to fix it yourself. While we generally will support repairs to your FA-1 for a considerable length of time, please realize that eventually the parts supply will run out. That, or a Canadian hockey team will actually win the Stanley Cup meaning there will be a drunken party that will last for years. Unfortunately, that will dictate when we can no longer help you. Again, please make sure you contact us first so we can tell you whether there's enough parts (or sobriety) left to do your repair.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prototype History..... 4
 Break-In 4
 How to Hold Your Locomotive 5
 Checking and Adjusting Your Locomotive 5
 Missing or Damaged Parts 6
 Removing the Shell..... 6
 Operation – DC (Silent) 7
 Installing a DCC Decoder..... 8
 Operation – DC (Sound) 9
 Operation – DCC (Sound) 10

- Locomotive Address 10
- Turn On the Sound 10
- Functions 11
- Functions: More Information 11
- Custom Sound Settings 14
- Mo-Power..... 15
- Sound Volume Settings 15
- Sound Volume Settings Chart 16
- Factory Reset 16
- More Information 17
- Limited Warranty 17

Acknowledgements 18
 Contact Us 18

		Sound-equipped Rapido models feature ESU Loksound V5 decoders. For more information, please visit www.esu.eu .
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FA-1 DCC FUNCTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| F0 Front Headlight | F10 Mars Light <i>(if equipped)</i> |
| F1 Bell | F11 Brake Set/Release |
| F2 Horn | F12 Switching Mode |
| F3 Drive Hold | F14 Rear Backup Light |
| F4 Dynamic Brake | F15 Flange Squeal |
| F5 Doppler Horn | F16 Independant Brake |
| F7 Dim the Headlights | F18 Short Air Let Off |
| F8 Startup/Mute/Shutdown | F19 Track Inspection Lights |
| F9 White/Green Class Lights | F20 Numberboards |

PROTOTYPE HISTORY

Between January 1946 and October 1950 a total of 440 FA-1s and 240 FB-1s were built by ALCo and their Canadian subsidiary, Montreal Locomotive Works (MLW). They were originally sold to twenty-five railroads in the US, Canada and Mexico. The FA-1 cab unit and booster FB-1 were both rated at 1500 horsepower, and they were designed primarily as a freight hauler, although photo evidence shows some railroads used them as commuter train power during warm weather months.

In a market that was becoming dominated by EMD F-unit products, the FA-1 came in a distant second due to reliability issues with its 244 prime mover. In ALCO's rush to get something ready for the expected post-war boom in diesel sales, they neglected to do enough testing before production resulting in numerous early engine failures. Fixes were made, and if proper preventative maintenance was done, the 244 could be a reliable and powerful prime mover. On railroads replacing steam power with FA-1s, it allowed for the elimination of helpers, increased train tonnage by 50% or more, reduced enginehouse needs, and lowered labor costs significantly.

FA-1s could still be found at the head of freights into the early 1970s, and some were used on the Long Island RR as "power pack" HEP cabs until 1999. Today, several examples still exist in museums and on tourist lines across North America.

BREAK-IN

Just so we're clear, that doesn't mean break into anyone's layout room to steal their ALCO FA-1. And don't break into a hobby shop either because that is really frowned upon. Just buy more for yourself. But this isn't about that kind of break-in.

Every locomotive needs a break-in period. Your ALCO FA-1 has been tested at our factory for about two minutes...maybe...just to make sure everything functions as it should. That is certainly not enough time to get the gears to mesh nicely or to even out any jerky operation in a new motor. We suggest that, after reading this manual, you put your ALCO FA-1 on a test loop and just let it run in each direction for an hour or two. Fast and slow. Don't have it pulling anything either while you're breaking it in.

There already should be enough grease in the gearbox so you don't need to add any. Just let the thing run. If you are running this thing on track on the carpet, please vacuum first. You have no idea how many models come back to us with gearboxes full of carpet fluff and pet fur. Our models are not cat-proof.



HOW TO HOLD YOUR LOCOMOTIVE

Hold your ALCO FA-1 gently, and with much love, care, and attention. Your model has numerous delicate parts, especially on the roof and underframe. If you want to back date it to be the quality of a model produced in the 1970s, then rip all the parts off and handle it like a doughnut from Dunkies after skipping breakfast. We're assuming you don't want to do that, so the ALCO FA-1 should be picked up carefully. It is best to pick it up with your fingers along the bottom edge of the fuel tank. That way you won't leave greasy fingerprints on the sides and you also won't stress any of the delicate parts. Always make sure your hands are free of shmutz before touching your engine, otherwise you'll shmutz up your fuel tank. Hey – if your hands have enough oil on them that could be realistic.

If you are taking your ALCO FA-1 to the club all the time and regularly handling it, stuff will likely break off. Sorry. The little bits are made of plastic and metal and attached with glue, which is all a bit fragile. We wanted to make the small parts out of unobtainium and use Steady-State Micro Welding to install them. Unfortunately, with the current global supply crisis, unobtainium has become unobtainable.

We suggest wrapping your ALCO FA-1 in a plastic bag before placing it in the packaging or in your holder so you can catch bits that fall off. White glue is the recommended adhesive for reattaching the bits, although you are welcome to use CA but only if you are very careful or very brave. Remember to apply the CA to just the part and not the model (don't ask us how we know this).

CHECKING AND ADJUSTING YOUR LOCOMOTIVE

We try and make sure that every locomotive is perfectly up to spec before it leaves the factory, but if it was a Monday night and our factory workers were placing bets on last night's football game between Taiwan and Singapore rather than assembling models, there may be a couple of bugs. Doing a quick pre-service check will solve most operational glitches.

- Check to see that all wheelsets are correctly in gauge using an NMRA RP-2 Standards Gauge. Should any of the wheelsets be out of gauge, then remove the affected wheelset from the truck by prying off the bottom lid of the gearbox with a small flat screwdriver and then spreading apart the sideframes. The wheelset can be regauged by grabbing each wheel and twisting. Reverse the steps to replace the wheelset and ensure the gearbox cover is snapped into place before placing it on the track.
- Check that all underbody piping and appliances are firmly installed and clear of the track. Of particular note are the air hoses on the ends of the locomotive and both coupler trip pins. Bend up any low coupler trip pins so they don't

interfere with your switches and crossings. We recommend using Kadee part #237 (Trip Pin Pliers) or Micro-Mark part #80600 (Trip Pin Bending Plier). If your track transitions from flat to a 12% grade in three inches, you might also want to cut off the pilot and the fuel tank as they will foul the rails. Have you ever considered roller coaster modeling? That might be more your style.

- Make sure that the trucks swivel freely and without binding. If they catch on anything, check to ensure that the sides of the trucks don't bind against the steps. If they do, see that everything is firmly installed.

MISSING OR DAMAGED PARTS

If you open your ALCO FA-1 box and discover that something has obviously been bumped in transit and is damaged, please contact us. We know that some of you don't like the idea of human beings touching your models, but if it is a matter of gluing an exhaust stack back on you can do it yourself in less than a minute with a drop of white glue. If you really want to send your model back to us for us to install that, we would be happy to. But if you do send it back for us to put that one part back on and other stuff falls off when we send it back to you, then tough tooties. We're not fixing it again.

We try to make our models courier- and mail-proof, but there really is no way to protect a model from damage when it is used in a game of football at the UPS or FedEx distribution center. Model trains generally don't survive well after being "spiked" because Bobby scored a touchdown near the warehouse receiving doors.

If you see some grab irons are missing and they are not floating around the packaging, let us know and we will send you replacements. More information about our warranty can be found toward the end of this manual.

REMOVING THE SHELL

If you need to open your ALCO FA-1 to install a crew or a decoder, things should be pretty straightforward and easy. To get inside your ALCO FA-1, you will need to follow these steps:

- To remove the shell, remove the screws from the coupler boxes and slide the coupler boxes out from the frame. Set these aside. Now carefully spread the body sides out away from the chassis. There are six clips (three on each side) that engage slots in the chassis. It may help to install toothpicks or stiff paper (such as a business card) by each tab to help hold it open apart while you work on the others. If you are working in a zero-gravity environment, then the chassis will slowly drift away from the shell. On the other hand, if you are not in a zero-gravity environment; remember – gravity sucks. If you hold your loco

upright the chassis will now plummet to the nearest solid object. Hopefully that is not a concrete floor. You may want to do this carefully over your workbench with some foam or a cloth underneath.

- If you wish to install a crew inside your ALCO FA-1, the cab floor is secured to the body shell by two clips – one on each side. With a little manipulation the cab floor should come free after spreading the sides of the shell and maybe using a small prying tool. Patience will be key here as the clips are also the clear window material. Don't jam a tool in there too hard or you might scratch the glass (it will not buff out).
- If you wish to change out the decoder, then just follow the previous steps about removing the shell. It will expose all the wonders that lie within.

At this point you should have the entire shell off the frame, as long as you followed our super simple instructions. We don't know how to put it back together, so from here you're on your own. Just read the instructions backwards and you should be OK. If you find a cryptic message while reading the instructions backwards, it's not our fault.

Any requests for replacement bodies because you broke the little clips will be met with laughter, followed by sadness, then laughter again, and then a very polite suggestion that you should model a locomotive rebuilder and use your recently broken body as scenery. We did warn you after all. If we can assist, then all joking aside we'll make every effort to do so. But note that we don't have a warehouse full of shells and cabs to replace the broken ones.

OPERATION – DC (SILENT)

If your ALCO FA-1 locomotive is not equipped with a sound decoder, it should function like most other HO scale locomotives. Put it on the track. Give it some juice. Watch it go. In DC, the number boards are always on and the headlights are directional. All other lights – including class lights and optional beacons – are wired, but they will not work in DC.

If you are new to the hobby (or just like to occasionally “play trains”) and you have a DC-powered train set, please contact us before operating your ALCO FA-1 as it may not be safe (for your engine and/or your wallet) for you to use your controller.

Some train set throttles put out a very high maximum voltage that is not suitable for scale model trains. The maximum recommended voltage is 15 volts DC. Similarly, controllers designed for large scale trains put out a much higher voltage than your ALCO FA-1 can handle. Please see the highlighted warning not too much further in this manual.

If you use a train set throttle or a throttle designed for large scale trains, your locomotive's circuitry may end up looking like a TV dinner forgotten in the microwave after you accidentally punched in an extra digit into the timer. In such situations, we'll try our best to fix it for you, but it may be beyond salvaging. Please note we may have to charge you for the replacement parts and/or the labor involved in restoring it to its former self. That's because you didn't read this bit of the manual. For those of you who are reading this, hi! How's it going? You in the mood for pizza? Just plain cheese for me, thanks.

INSTALLING A DCC DECODER

The ALCO FA-1 contains a motherboard specially designed for our decoders. This is connected to the track, motor and lighting outputs. A blind plug is attached to the motherboard using a 21-pin connector. To install a decoder, remove the blind plug and install a 21-pin decoder. Your chosen decoder should have eight function outputs.

At the time of writing, we recommend only the following non-sound 21-pin decoders:

- ESU #59029 - LokPilot 5 Basic with 21MTC
- ESU #59629 - LokPilot 5 DCC with 21MTC

We feel the 21-pin connectors are superior because there are enough pins to ensure that all your lighting functions are connected. The necessary resistors are included on our motherboard so you don't have to futz around with resistors. Just plug in one of the recommended decoders and you have DCC. We know some of you prefer a different brand of decoder, but we honestly can't help you install it or map the functions.

We have made a ALCO FA-1 function mapping which can be downloaded onto ESU decoders so that the function buttons and motor control are exactly the same as our factory-released sound versions. This should be available for download from the Support section of our web site. If it isn't, bug us. You will need an ESU LokProgrammer to write the function mapping to the 59029 or 59629 decoders. If you don't have a LokProgrammer, you can adjust CVs in the usual way.

We will be selling ALCO FA-1 sound decoders separately; if they aren't on our web site by the time you read this, call our office, pick a random number between 1 and 75, divide by $\frac{3}{4}$, multiply by $\sqrt{\pi}$, and then take the second last number. Call that extension and you'll be redirected to someone whom you can yell at. Look at us – we use the correct pronoun and then end the sentence with a preposition. This is a metaphor for the contradictory nature of human existence! You can find further editions of this manual in the philosophy department of your local bookstore.

If you want to install a decoder other than the one we suggest, it's more than just plugging in the decoder and then playing trains. You will have to custom map all the functions. It's just how it is. We won't apologize for that. Sorry.

OPERATION – DC (SOUND)

To operate your sound-equipped ALCO FA-1 locomotive on a DC layout, just give the throttle some juice. The engine will start up once sufficient voltage has been reached (around seven volts). See the note above (in Operation – DC (Silent)) about using train-set or large-scale throttles. With DC layouts, you have very little control over the sounds of your model.

– WARNING –

Rapido products are designed to operate safely between 0V and 16V. Voltages in excess of 16V - as well as irregular waveforms, voltage spikes or short circuits - may cause severe and sometimes irreversible damage to the product. "Train set" power packs are known to suffer from any one of these unexpected irregularities, whereas higher-end systems have safeguards in place to prevent this. Rapido always recommends using a power supply system that matches the quality of the models you are running. If you're reading this, you've obviously invested in top-of-the-line, museum-quality motive power and equipment, so we hope you've made the same investment with your model railroad power supply too.

While many power supply systems exist, some are known to have caused problems with model train circuitry in the past. If you have any one of the following systems, PLEASE DO NOT USE IT until you contact us for more information: MRC RailPower 1300/1370-series, Bachman Spectrum Magnum, Atlas 313 Universal Power Pack.

The DC lighting is limited. Some throttle manufacturers produce special gadget-like thingies which are meant to trigger the sounds in locomotives on DC layouts. As we have no involvement in the development of those gadget-like thingies, we have absolutely no idea how they will affect your ALCO FA-1, for good or for ill, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in...sorry, wrong transcript. As always, we'll try to help you fix your ALCO FA-1 if one of these gadget-like thingies turns your locomotive's circuitry into something akin to glowing magma, but we can't guarantee we'll be able to.

It is usually at this point in the manual that Jason inserts a gentle dig at his fellow modelers who won't switch from DC to DCC. The rest of the staff continue to repeatedly

remind him what happened the last time he did that. Something about being chased down the county highway by a group of townsfolk wielding transformers and potentiometers. As long as we can keep reminding him of this event, he'll be nice to DC modelers. Not that we're calling DC modelers Luddites – No, sir, not us!

OPERATION – DCC (SOUND)

We go to extreme lengths for accuracy, in sounds as well as in looks. Our sound decoders are LokSound V5 decoders by ESU, with Full Throttle functionality. The sounds are about as bang-on accurate as we can make them. ALCO FA-1s weighed in at some 121 tons in working order. Therefore a certain amount of starting momentum has been pre-programmed into the decoder to replicate that massive weight. If you want to eliminate the delay to speed up, program CV3=00, but when freight customers complain about their damaged cargo, don't blame us!

More detailed decoder instructions, including all sorts of weird CV settings we don't understand, can be found in the ESU LokSound V5 decoder manual. It is available for download from the support section of our web site or directly from the ESU website.

LOCOMOTIVE ADDRESS

Your Rapido ALCO FA-1 comes from the factory with a decoder address of 3. We suggest if you are using DCC control that you first test that the locomotive responds on address 3 to all functions – motor, lights, sounds, everything. Once you have verified that the locomotive is responding you should assign it a unique address (normally the road number of the unit) before going any further. This can be done either on your programming track (recommended) or on the main if your system supports programming on the main. Be aware however that if you do program the locomotive on the main and you have any other locomotives assigned to address 3 (the normal default address for new locomotives) that ALL of them will also be changed to your new address! This is great if you want to simulate a bunch of kids getting into the engine shop, notching the controllers, and then heading for the hills.

Note that some DCC systems get a little wonky when programming sound-equipped locomotives on the programming track because of the high current draw. If weird stuff happens, try programming on the main or use a programming track booster.

TURN ON THE SOUND

Press F8 and you will hear the ALCO FA-1 startup sequence followed by the sound of it idling. You can adjust CVs to prevent the locomotive from moving until the startup sequence has played out. Most of us at Rapido are really impatient so we turned this feature off. Refer to a full ESU LokSound V5 decoder manual for more

information. You can now download it from the Support section of our web site. The feature is called the “Prime Mover Startup Delay” and is Section 13.2 on Page 89 of the ESU LokSound V5 manual.

If you press F8 when the locomotive is already moving, it will skip the startup and the sound will just turn on. Press F8 again to turn the sound off.

Note that if you are listening to your ALCO FA-1 idling nicely and then you select another engine, your locomotive still thinks F8 is pressed so it will keep idling along. However, if someone else selects your locomotive’s number and F8 isn’t pressed on their controller, the ALCO FA-1 will promptly shut down. They will need to press F8 again.

FUNCTIONS

F0	Front Headlight	F10	Mars Light <i>(if equipped)</i>
F1	Bell	F11	Brake Set/Release
F2	Horn	F12	Switching Mode
F3	Drive Hold	F14	Rear Backup Light
F4	Dynamic Brake	F15	Flange Squeal
F5	Doppler Horn	F16	Independant Brake
F7	Dim the Headlights	F18	Short Air Let Off
F8	Startup/Mute/Shutdown	F19	Track Inspection Lights
F9	White/Green Class Lights	F20	Numberboards

FUNCTIONS: MORE INFORMATION

F0 Front Headlight

Just like the real thing, our ALCO FA-1 headlight is not directional. No matter which way you’re going, the front headlight IS the front headlight. If you want the headlight facing the opposite way of travel to be on, then read a little further on under the F14 Rear Backup Light.

F1 Bell

Probably one of the most difficult sounds to master is the bell because it’s such a noticeable feature, and no matter what, chances are they all had their own unique tone to them. We have provided three slightly different bell sounds so that you can add a little variety to your huge fleet of ALCO FA-1s. You DO have a huge fleet of ALCO FA-1s, don’t you? You can choose between the bells by changing CV164.

F2 Horn

We love our horns. Like really! Seriously, who doesn’t love a good sounding horn? So, we’re now providing a wide range of horns for you to apply to your locomotive

as appropriate or as you see fit (even if it's not appropriate). To get a short "toot" just tap F2 or your "HORN" button. If you hear a long tail-off, you are tapping for too long. If, no matter what you do, you just can't get the darn thing to make a short "toot," switch to NCE. The default horn is a WABCO E-2, but we've included a few others. Refer to the "Custom Sound Settings" section below.

F3 Drive Hold

ESU's "Full Throttle" feature allows you to play the prime mover of your ALCO FA-1 like a musical instrument. When you press F3, you turn on "drive hold." This keeps the speed of the engine constant at whatever speed step your throttle happens to be on. Then as you increase the throttle, you hear the prime mover revving up. This sounds awesome, especially when you're taking off with a hot shot TOFC job.

"Full Throttle" is even neater when you throttle down, as it allows you to simulate "coasting" which is such an important part of running a real train. When you press F3 again you turn off "Full Throttle" and the engine will accelerate or decelerate to whatever speed step your throttle happens to be on. For realism it's a good idea to take note of what speed step your throttle was on when you turned on "Full Throttle" and be back at that speed step when you turn "Full Throttle" off. Otherwise, your ALCO FA-1 may fly like an eagle, to the sea. Yes, fly like an eagle. Please don't make us sing the whole chorus.

F4 Dynamic Brake (if equipped)

Press F4 to get dynamic brake sounds. Who does that? Well apparently a lot of people because once upon a time, we got flak for putting it in the higher tiers of functions on our old locomotives. So for that, we apologize and have brought it to the forefront of functions for your acoustic pleasure. If your unit does not have dynamic brakes, you can *think* about using F4 but that would be so wrong.

F5 Doppler Horn

You can play this when approaching level crossings or any other whistle post. The doppler is nicely timed for a moderately paced train blowing for a level crossing. When you change the default horn for F2, the doppler horn will also change to the appropriate tone as well. It's like we're wizards or something!

F7 Dim the Headlights

When approaching a station stop or an oncoming train, press F7 to dim your lights and turn off your ditch lights – you don't want to blind your passengers or the oncoming train's engineers. It will also turn off any other potentially blinding lights you may be running. Not dimming your lights is a direct violation of what's

commonly referred to as "Rule 17". The internet can answer all your questions about said rule.

F8 Startup/Mute/Shutdown

While your locomotive is stationary, pressing F8 will begin the startup sequence of the engine sounds. If your locomotive is silent but already in motion, pressing F8 will skip the startup sequence and simply turn on the sound. If the sound is already on, press F8 to mute the sounds. If your locomotive is stationary, then you will hear the engine shut down sequence before the sound turns off.

If you have a DCC system that only allows eight functions, you can remap the following functions following the guidelines in the ESU LokSound V5 manual, which can be downloaded from the support section of our web site. Or you can upgrade to a newer DCC system, which may be less stressful.

F9 White/Green Class Lights

When you press F9, the white class lights will turn on. Hitting F9 a second time will cycle the lights off. Press it again to get green class lights, press again to shut them off. White class lights were used to signify a train was running as an extra unscheduled train in train order territory, green class lights indicated a second section is following.

F10 Mars Light (if equipped)

Some roads equipped their ALCO FA-1 units with a flashing Mars light, replicated on our model by using function F10. This light fixture moves the beam of light around in a circular pattern ahead of the loco. In addition to warning pedestrians and cars along the right of way, it also signals to low-flying aircraft and possibly UFOs.

F11 Automatic Brake Set/Release

With F11 turned on, the sounds of locomotive brakes being applied will automatically play when coming to a stop. When moving from rest, the sounds of the brakes releasing will be played. This does not effect loco performance, just the sounds.

F12 Switching Mode

Do you have lengthy light engine moves between engine storage and the arrival/departure yard? Then this function is for you! Function F12 turns on and dims both the headlight and the rear light so as not to blind your trainmen on the ground.

F14 Rear Backup Light On/Off

Pressing F14 will simply toggle the rear light 'on' and 'off'. Hey, when it's midnight and you're trying to make a hitch, that little backup light makes a difference.

F15 Flange Squeal

Just as you're easing into a sharp curve on your layout, press F15 to hear the metal-on-metal squealing sound all trains are known for. I SAID YOU CAN TURN OFF THE SQUEALING SOUND WITH F15!

F16 Independent Brake

F16 works just like the brakes on a real engine. Press F16, the brakes apply, and your engine stops. Turn off F16, the brakes release, and you can start moving again. Note that if F16 is on and the engine is stopped, IT WILL NOT MOVE until F16 is turned off again no matter what you do. It will just sit there...staring at you... waiting to be released...

F18 Short Air Let Off

No, this is not about the Wednesday after Taco Tuesday. You get a simple release of air when you hit F18, that's it. "Psssst!" Kind of like shushing someone at the local library.

F19 Track Inspection Lights

These lights shine down onto the roadbed. Why did we include them? Because they look neat, of course. Oh, and your engineer will be happy at night when he's making a shove so he can see how far he's moving. By default they are on. Pressing F19 will turn them off.

F20 Number Board Lights

The number boards are on all the time as a default. We hate having to turn number boards back on after a power failure. If you want to turn off the number boards, just press F20.

CUSTOM SOUND SETTINGS

The ALCO FA-1 was used by several railroads and, as such, were equipped with a multitude of different horns, and could even feature slightly different bell tones, different brake materials and everything else in between.

The default horn on your model is a WABCO E-2. We have justified doing this because most FA-1s were delivered with these horns but some had others. You can change the default horn by changing the value of CV163. We've also chosen defaults in the remaining category because someone had to make the important decisions. They can be changed by adjusting the value of their respective CVs. Just take a look at the chart on the next page.

Horns

- CV163=0 WABCO E-2 (*Default*)
- CV163=1 Nathan M3H
- CV163=2 Nathan P3
- CV163=3 Nathan M5

Bells

- CV 164=0 Bell #1 (*Default*)
- CV 164=1 Bell #2
- CV 164=2 Bell #3

Note that after you change the horn, bell or any other sound effect, you may need to cycle the power (turn it off and on). And changing the default horn automatically changes the doppler recording on F5 too.

MO-POWER

This model is equipped with Mo-Power, our capacitor-based temporary energy storage system that lets a locomotive travel over dirty (or dead) rail spots without stopping. The length each loco can move without track power varies by condition of both track and model; your mileage may vary, long-distance rates may apply. NOTE: You will not have control of the loco when running on Mo-Power energy, and if you're used to a loco stopping when it shorts at a mis-aligned switch, forget it. Like the prototype, it's not going to stop just because the points are thrown against you (at least until the capacitors are drained). The lengths we go to for more realism.

SOUND VOLUME SETTINGS

The sound volumes on your decoder have been pre-set at the factory to levels that we found comfortable on our test tracks.

Sound levels are very much a matter of personal taste (especially if you are showing signs of advanced deafness like we are), and what sounds great in one layout environment may sound too loud or too soft in another. Fortunately, the sound levels can be easily adjusted to best suit your own requirements and we recommend that you experiment with different settings if you don't care for the default levels. Go ahead, try it out! What's the worst that could happen?

To set the volume levels go into the program mode on your DCC system (refer to your system's manual for instructions on how to do this as each system is slightly different); enter the desired CV number; then enter the desired levels. Note that this can be done either on a programming track or on the main (Ops mode) if your DCC system supports programming on the main.

We strongly recommend that you keep notes on which settings you have changed, and which values were used. If you ever need to do a reset on the decoder (see

“Factory Reset” below) then having good notes will allow you to easily re-enter any changes that you wish to keep.

— VERY IMPORTANT —

Before you manually change any of the volume control CVs, you must set CV 31 to 16 and then CV 32 to 1. CV 31 and CV 32 are used as index selection registers and if you don't set them first, unspeakable things may happen to your unit. You must set the CVs every time before changing any volume CV settings.

Or just get a LokProgrammer. No, we will not teach you how to use it!

ALCO FA-1 SOUND VOLUME SETTINGS

KEY	FUNCTION	SOUND SLOT	CV	DEFAULT	RANGE	YOUR VALUE
	Master Volume		63	155	0-192	
F1	Bell	4	283	125	0-255	
F2	Horn	3	275	225	0-255	
F3	Drive Hold	2	267	128	0-255	
F4	Dynamic Brakes	6	299	40	0-255	
F5	Doppler Horn	11	339	250	0-255	
F8	Diesel	1	259	225	0-255	
F11	Auto Brake Set/Release	12	347	70	0-255	
F15	Flange Squeal	16	379	128	0-255	
F16	Independent Brake	13	355	128	0-255	
F18	Short Air Let Off	14	363	128	0-255	

FACTORY RESET

On your ALCO FA-1 you can perform a factory reset by entering a value of “8” into CV 8. Note that this will cause all of your new volume and motor settings to be lost, so you will need to reprogram any settings that you want to keep. What do you mean, you didn't take any notes? WE JUST TOLD YOU TAKE NOTES! If we had a band, you'd be kicked out of it. Again!

You can NOT lose all the pre-recorded sounds on your ALCO FA-1 decoder by doing a factory reset. However, after performing a factory reset, your ALCO FA-1 may begin to binge watch *Doctor Who* episodes and recite lines from the song *Love Shack* by the B-52's. If that happens, you have probably lost your mind. But don't worry. Just sit back, grab some popcorn, and enjoy the show.

By the way, pay no attention to the person breaking into your layout room attempting to steal your Rapido ALCO FA-1 because they misread the instructions on Page 4.

MORE INFORMATION

While addressing the features that most modelers will need for normal operation, these instructions have covered just a small number of the many customizable features of your ESU LokSound decoder. For advanced users who want to more fully explore the capabilities of the decoder we suggest downloading the ESU LokSound V5 decoder manual. This is available in the Support section of our web site.

LIMITED WARRANTY

We will do our best to solve any problems or issues that you may have with your ALCO FA-1 locomotive. If your locomotive has any defects that originate from the factory, we will repair your locomotive using new components or replace it outright should a repair not be possible. However, we can only replace your locomotive while we have additional ones in stock. While we would love to have an infinite supply of spare parts and do our best to keep as many on hand as possible, eventually these will run out too. In some cases, future productions of the same locomotive may result in a parts supply being restocked, but that is not always guaranteed. If you are like most of us and – after purchasing this locomotive – you put it on the collection shelf under the darkest corner of your layout and are now just discovering it 30 years later after your friend at the club ran theirs, then you are on your own if there are any issues. Jason is long retired and probably touring the country on our restored sleeping car, *Edmundston*. The rest of us have also retired but probably don't have the luxury of our own private rail car. And we're not bitter at all. Really. Not...at...all....

There are several things that this warranty cannot cover. If your ALCO FA-1 arrives with a couple of loose grab irons or underbody bits, there is a very good chance that you can affect a repair in less time and effort than it would take to contact us. Don't be afraid to do some model railroading! White glue works wonders for securing all sorts of parts and will not mar or damage your paint. However, if parts are missing that is another story – contact us directly through our website or give us a call and we'll send you some replacements.

Of course, damage caused by running your locomotive at full speed around a 15" radius curve along the edge of your 60" high layout, weathering it with canola oil, or any other unique damage caused by you and that we haven't been able to cover

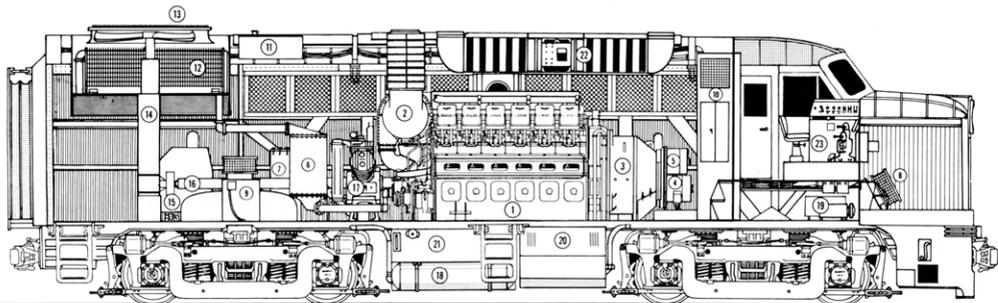
here is not covered by the warranty. If catastrophe does strike – even as the result of your own actions (or possible inactions) – and your locomotive gets damaged, please give us a shout and we'll do our best to help you out if possible. Don't be shy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ALCO FA-1 project was very much a labor of love as many of us on the Rapido team also love these locomotives. However, this project would not have been possible without the extensive help and expertise provided by the following folks:

Dan Biernacki, Jack Consoli, Paul Cutler III, Ken Goslett, Scott Hartley, Richard Jahn, Schuyler Larrabee, the New Haven Railroad Historical & Technical Association, Steve Orth, Rick Remiarz, and Paul Tupaczewski.

And of course we must say *merci!* to the one-and-only Richard Longpre for the great and no doubt last minute French translation of this manual. *Merci mille fois!*



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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 12 Cyl. 244 Prime Mover | 7. Oil Filter Tank | 13. Cooling Fan | 19. Control Air Reservoirs |
| 2. Turbocharger | 8. #1 Traction Motor Blower | 14. Fan Drive Pedestal | 20. Battery Box |
| 3. Main Generator | 9. #2 Traction Motor Blower | 15. Eddy Current Clutch | 21. Fuel Tank |
| 4. Auxiliary Generator | 10. Electrical Cabinet | 16. Cooling Fan Drive Shaft | 22. Dynamic Brake Unit |
| 5. Amplidyne Exciter | 11. Coolant Expansion Tank | 17. Air Compressor | 23. Engineer's Position |
| 6. Oil Cooler | 12. Radiator Core | 18. Main Air Reservoir | |



CONTACT US!

Rapido Trains Inc.
500 Alden Road, Unit 21
Markham, Ontario
L3R 5H5 Canada

Tel. (905) 474-3314
Toll Free 1-855-LRC-6917
Fax. (905) 474-3325
Email. trains@rapidotrains.com
service@rapidotrains.com