1. **General**

1.1 The "direction" of a traction unit can be determined in relation to its outer shape; "forward" means per example smoke box, cab "V" or "1" in front.

1.2 The "direction of traffic" on a track can be determined in relation to the route, for example from A to B (Fig. 1).

2. **Two-rail operation**

2.1 The polarity of the rails determines the direction of traffic.

2.2 The position of the locomotives on the track is of no importance.

2.3 The right-hand rail in the direction of traffic is positive (Figs. 1 and 2).

3. **Overhead wire operation**

3.1 The polarity of the overhead wire determines the direction of travel.

3.2 The NEM 621 standard determines the position of the traction unit on the track.

3.3 The "common side" of the traction unit, marked by the symbol "Q", is located on the left-hand rail in the direction of travel if the overhead wire is positive (Figs. 3 and 6). The other rail has no significance for this type of electricity supply.