

railway update

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40th modern rolling stock conference in Graz

Rail services to the new Berlin airport

Gauge changeable dual power Talgo

Mismanagement at Greek Railways

The Stadler problems in Austria

New LGV Rhin – Rhône opened

Flexity 2 trams in Blackpool

ETCS L1 LS at SBB



6 issues
per year



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COVER

Roll-out of the first Eem 923 dual-power locomotive for SBB Cargo in Winterthur (photo: A. Schmutz, 14 October 2011).

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News

Veolia and FS launch Thello

The French operator Veolia Transdev and FS Trenitalia have been jointly operating the pair of night trains between Paris and Venezia (Venice) under the brand name "Thello" since 11 December 2011. The train crosses Switzerland via Vallorbe, Lausanne and Domodossola. But the also announced services between Paris and Roma are not operating at the moment – rumours suggest that this is because of civil works in France.

The Thello train leaves Paris Gare de Lyon daily at 7.45 p.m. for its journey south; it arrives in Venezia Santa Lucia at 9.34 a.m. The train provides three comfort categories: couchettes with six or four berths and sleeping cars with wash basins for one to three people. The companies are planning to introduce sleeping cars with showers in compartments. Three Class 36 300 locomotives leased long-term from Akiem haul the trains from Paris to Vallorbe: two are required to pull the 14-coach trains (including one restaurant car), and the third loco is kept in reserve. The currently ten train drivers have been recruited from a private freight train company and are stationed in Dijon.

Prior to 11 December 2011, the Paris – Italy night trains were still being operated by SNCF and FS Trenitalia under the "Artesia" brand name. This cooperation arrangement ended with the timetable change. (meil/mr)

Talgo trains for Mecca – Medina

The Spanish manufacturer Patentes Talgo is to deliver 35 trains of type Talgo 350 for the approximately 450-kilometre-long high-speed line from Mecca to Medina in Saudi Arabia. There is also an option on an additional 23 trains. The value of the order for Talgo totals EUR 1.6 billion.

The Talgo trains will each consist of two power cars and 13 intermediate coaches. All coaches are to be equipped with the passive Talgo tilting technology and are designed with a floor height of 760 mm. They are based on the trains deployed by RENFE on the Spanish high-speed network of which it

Designer's impression of the Talgo train for Saudi Railways Organization (drawing: pd).



has 46 in service. Particularly challenging for the Saudi project are the extreme temperatures in the desert and the effects of sand.

Apart from the trains themselves the project also comprises construction of the track and catenary, the signalling system (ETCS Level 2), the power supply, construction of workshops, and operation and maintenance of the line and the trains for a period of twelve years. Five consortia from Spain, France, Germany, China and South Korea had submitted bids for the huge order worth EUR 6.5 billion which was put out to tender five years ago. The Spanish and French made it to the final phase. The successful Spanish consortium consists of twelve Spanish companies and two Saudi partners. Apart from RENFE and infrastructure company ADIF it also includes Dimetric, the Spanish Invensys Rail subsidiary which is to supply the ETCS equipment. (pd/mr)

DB signs outline agreement with Alstom, CAF and Stadler

DB Regio has signed an outline agreement with three manufacturers, Alstom Transport Deutschland GmbH, Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles SA (CAF) and Stadler Pankow GmbH, for the delivery of EMUs. The inclusion of the Spanish manufacturer CAF is a first in Germany and certainly came as a surprise. The major absentee in this deal is Bombardier, which is hardly surprising after the commercial launch of the large number of Talent 2 trains on order has been delayed for some years now. Siemens is not among the names either, but will be occupied for many years coping with the enormous ICx order.

The outline agreement enables DB Regio to call on as many as 400 trains during the next few years, according to requirements. EMUs with a maximum speed of 160 km/h and with 90 to 350 seats per unit will be needed.

DB Regio and Stadler Pankow had issued an invitation to attend the signing of an agreement in Mainz on 4 November 2011. The delivery of 28 Stadler Flirt EMUs worth EUR 165 million was meant to be sealed there. According to the invitation text they are destined for use on the "RE-Netz Südwest" (Regio Express south-west network), i.e. the Koblenz – Mannheim, Koblenz – Frankfurt (Main), Mainz – Karlsruhe and Mainz – Mannheim routes. However, the event was cancelled because of "unforeseen difficulties with the date". (mr)

New SBB double-decker S-Bahn trains not yet in service

SBB has delayed the introduction of the new Stadler Class RABe 511 double-decker trains. There were plans to use six trains on the S12 Zürich S-Bahn line from 11 December 2011 onwards. The date has now been postponed for two months to 12 February 2012. Prior to this, the new double-decker trains are to be extensively tested on passenger services on the relatively insignificant S14 line between Zürich and Hinwil. (mr)