

Railtalk Magazine Xtra

Issue 242x
November 2026
ISSN 1756 - 5030

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Content

Pg 2 - Welcome

Pg 4 - Pictures

Pg 72 - World News

Pg 81 - From the Archives

Submissions & Contributions

Railtalk Magazine Xtra, a magazine written by the Enthusiast for the Enthusiast. So why not join the team. We are always looking for talented photographers and writers to join us at Railtalk. Be it though pictorial submissions or via a written article featuring an event or railtour, we greatly appreciate any contributions to the magazine however big or small.

Photographic Contributions

All Photographic contributions should to be sent to us via email, post or via the members section page on our website. Contact addresses are provided above.

All images should be provided at a resolution of at least 2400px x 1700px at 240dpi.



Welcome to Issue 242Xtra

With a squeeze on cash flow, many countries are looking at cost saving measures and service improvements on their current situation. One of them is Spain where.....

The cabinet of the Catalan regional government and the board of Renfe Passenger, the operating subsidiary of the state-owned operator, have approved a new agreement formalising the existing framework under which Renfe operates commuter and regional services within Catalonia.

"It will give us stability and legal certainty while also defining the commitments and obligations of the operator," says Sílvia Paneque i Sureda, the Catalan minister of land, housing and ecological transition. Running until December 31st 2028, the regional government will pay Renfe €1.4bn to operate commuter and regional services under the contract.

Paneque says that the new agreement specifies the services that Renfe will be required to operate, as well as the control and supervision mechanisms that the regional government will have to ensure compliance with terms of the contract. A new a monitoring committee will be created for this purpose, which will also be responsible for operational and economic supervision. According to local media reports, the penalty regime introduced by the new contract will enable the regional government to reduce its payments by up to €5m in any given year if Renfe fails to meet its service quality and punctuality targets. This will exclude events beyond Renfe's direct control, such as infrastructure faults or vandalism.

Under the contract, Renfe will be obliged to provide better information on delays, incidents, and service alterations, providing advance warning of changes to the published timetable and a stronger staff presence at stations. For incidents taking less than 1h 30min to resolve, the priority will be to restore the scheduled service, with alternative road transport provided above this threshold.

And also in Austria, where the government are restructuring OBB.....

The governing coalition of the conservative ÖVP, the social democratic SPÖ and the liberal NEOS agreed a plan to restructure the ÖBB group on October 22nd. This would turn the current holding company from a strategic parent into an operational business, taking direct control of its passenger and freight operating units. Stripping out duplicated management is expected to cut costs, as ÖBB's debt and its call on the state budget have been rising amid deepening losses at its freight arm Rail Cargo Group.

Passenger operator ÖBB-Personenverkehr AG and freight operator Rail Cargo Austria AG are to be converted from joint stock companies (AGs) into limited liability companies (GmbHs) whose managers would have to follow instructions from the parent company. Infrastructure manager ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG will remain a joint stock company. The changes are to be implemented through an amendment to the Federal Railways Act, which currently lays down in detail how the ÖBB group must be organised.

The traction supplier ÖBB-Produktion GmbH and maintenance unit ÖBB-Technische Services GmbH, which currently sit under the passenger and freight companies, are to become direct subsidiaries of ÖBB-Holding AG. A Chief Operating Officer will join the holding's management board to run production across the group, joining the existing CEO and CFO.

The plan unwinds a central element of Austria's 2003 rail reform, which split ÖBB into separate companies and wrote the group's structure into law. The ministry explained that 'these current legal requirements restrict entrepreneurial freedom and hinder efficient processes', adding that in future the group should be able to adapt its structures more flexibly. The draft is to go out for consultation before a vote in parliament, but the amended law is due to take effect on January 1st 2027. The ministry says ÖBB's expected savings could add up to around €250m by the end of the legislative period in 2029.

Until next month... **David**

This Page

GYSEV Vectron Class 1293.204 heads through Rosenheim on October 4th with an eastbound intermodal.

Steve Chapman

Front Cover

Swiss based former SNCF steam loco No. 241-A-65 stands on shed at Benešov u Prahy on September 20th.

Mark Pichowicz



On October 10th, Class 101.110 departs Frankfurt Sud with the IC50 tour from Wiesbaden to Hamburg - the last of the IC1 stock. *Mark Enderby*

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Railtalk Magazine is published by HAD-PRINT a trading name of HAD-IT LIMITED.

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With Thanks

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed, it really makes our task of putting these magazines together a joy when we see so many great photos.

These issues wouldn't be possible without contributions from:
Michael J Alderdice, John Alsop, Steve Andrews, Ray Anslow, Mark Armstrong, John Balaam, Brian Battersby, Steven Beesley, Barry Beeston, Levi Bennett, Mark Bennett, Michael Bennett, Ben Bucki, Ian Callander, Keith Chapman, Steve Chapman, Julian Churchill, Russell Clarke, Nick Clemson, Keith Davies, Brian Dobbs, Derek Elston, Eddie Emmott, Mark Enderby, Colin Gildersleve, Paul Godding, Vernon Goodey, John Goodrich, Greig Gibson, Carl Grocott,Richard Hargreaves, Dave Harris, James Haywood, Brian Hewertson, Paul Hewertson, Stuart Hillis, Pete Holloway, David Hollowood, Colin Irwin, John Johnson, Richard Jones, Anton Kendall, Colin Kennington, Ken Livermore, Mathijs Kok, David Lindsell, Barry Longson, Michael Lynam, Harold Hull, Kevin McCormick, Phil Martin, David Mead, Chris Morrison, Ken Mumford, Alan Naylor, Gerald Nicholl, Jeff Nicholls, Chris Perkins, Mark Pichowicz, Colin Pidgeon, Neil Pugh, Andy Pratt, Andre Pronk, Alan Rigby, Charlie Robbins, Bryan Roberts, Barry Robinson, Dennis Rowland, Tim Saunders, Neil Scarlett, Paul Senior, Alan Sinclair, John Sloane, Laurence Sly, Lee Stanford, Steve Stepney, Steven Thompson, Mark Torkington, Brian Turner, Allison Twycross, Gerard van Vliet, David Wood, Leuan Wood, Shep Woolley, Erik de Zeeuw and the guys at RailUK.

On October 3rd, numerous special trains featuring various historic EMUs ran to mark the 140th anniversary of the Salzburg local railway (Salzburger Lokalbahn). Regular scheduled services are currently operated using 6- and 8-axle EMU from the 1980s. Additionally, there is limited freight traffic, which is handled by vintage electric locomotives dating back to the 1950s. The transfer of freight wagons to the ÖBB network is carried out using diesel locomotives - Class V100/2048 - formerly operated by DB and the ÖBB. On September 28th, units Nos. ET42 and ET49 working train No. S92016 head towards Salzburg near to the halt of Muntigl. *Thomas Niederl*

On October 3rd, numerous special trains featuring various historic EMUs ran to mark the 140th anniversary of the Salzburg local railway (Salzburger Lokalbahn). Regular scheduled services are currently operated using 6- and 8-axle EMU from the 1980s. Additionally, there is limited freight traffic, which is handled by vintage electric locomotives dating back to the 1950s. The transfer of freight wagons to the ÖBB network is carried out using diesel locomotives - Class V100/2048 - formerly operated by DB and the ÖBB. On September 28th, electric loco No. E62 is seen operating a local freight near to Hagenau. *Thomas Niederl*

Austria

On October 3rd, numerous special trains featuring various historic EMUs ran to mark the 140th anniversary of the Salzburg local railway (Salzburger Lokalbahn). Regular scheduled services are currently operated using 6- and 8-axle EMU from the 1980s. Additionally, there is limited freight traffic, which is handled by vintage electric locomotives dating back to the 1950s. The transfer of freight wagons to the ÖBB network is carried out using diesel locomotives - Class V100/2048 - formerly operated by DB and the ÖBB. On September 28th, diesel loco No. V83 is seen at Salzburg Itzling, the operational 'central' station of the Lokalbahn. *Thomas Niederl*



Austria

On October 3rd, numerous special trains featuring various historic EMUs ran to mark the 140th anniversary of the Salzburg local railway (Salzburger Lokalbahn). Regular scheduled services are currently operated using 6- and 8-axle EMU from the 1980s. Additionally, there is limited freight traffic, which is handled by vintage electric locomotives dating back to the 1950s. The transfer of freight wagons to the ÖBB network is carried out using diesel locomotives - Class V100/2048 - formerly operated by DB and the ÖBB. On October 3rd, historical EMU No. ET33 running as train No. 992 is seen near to Siggerwiesen halt. *Thomas Niederl*

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On October 3rd, numerous special trains featuring various historic EMUs ran to mark the 140th anniversary of the Salzburg local railway (Salzburger Lokalbahn). Regular scheduled services are currently operated using 6- and 8-axle EMU from the 1980s. Additionally, there is limited freight traffic, which is handled by vintage electric locomotives dating back to the 1950s. The transfer of freight wagons to the ÖBB network is carried out using diesel locomotives - Class V100/2048 - formerly operated by DB and the ÖBB. A very famous place for taking photos of the Lokalbahn is near the halt at Ziegelhaiden, and on October 3rd, EMU No. ET6 passes the Marterl with train No. 912.
Thomas Niederl

Austria

During the Salzburger Lokalbahn celebrations on October 3rd, EMU No. ET7 with train No. 904 is seen near Acharting halt. *Thomas Niederl*

During the Salzburger Lokalbahn celebrations on October 3rd, EMU No. ET6 with train No. 904 is seen between Acharting and Pabing. *Thomas Niederl*

During the Salzburger Lokalbahn celebrations on October 3rd, EMU No. ET49 with the regular service train No. 92034 is seen near Ziegelhaiden. *Thomas Niederl*





A crisp autumn morning at Wels Hbf and ÖBB Class 2016.068 drops onto train No. EC1218, the 07:13 Wien Hbf - München Hbf on October 30th. The Herkules Lok will work the train forward from here via Simbach and Mühldorf to the Bavarian capital city. *Andy Pratt*

Train No. EC1218, the 07:13 Wien Hbf - München Hbf stands at Simbach (Inn) with ÖBB Herkules Class 2016.068 in charge on October 30th. *Andy Pratt*

OBB Class 1144.040 stands at Wien Franz Josefs Bahnhof with train No. R2120 16:28 to Sigmundsherberg on September 21st. *Mark Pichowicz*

On October 8th, Zillertalbahn No. D14 departs Jenbach with a train up the valley. *Mark Enderby*



OBB Class 2070.072 shunts containers of woodchips at Jenbach on October 8th. *Mark Enderby*

OBB Class 1293.005 and 1144.104 head west at Worgl with a freight on October 8th. *Mark Enderby*

A lineup of Vectrons at are seen at Kufstein on October 8th. *Mark Enderby*

Mosolf shifts BYD vehicle transport to rail

A single ÖBB Rail Cargo Group (RCG) train can carry around 230 new BYD vehicles. RCG transports the electric cars from the port of Wilhelmshaven to inland locations for vehicle logistics provider Mosolf – using a rail solution that adapts flexibly to import volumes.

The electric car market is booming, with more and more new vehicles arriving in Germany and Europe via Wilhelmshaven. For vehicle logistics provider Mosolf, this means additional transport capacity is needed. As part of a new contract for Chinese car manufacturer BYD, Mosolf is therefore making greater use of rail – and has been working with RCG since 2026. Rail is increasingly taking over the volumes that cannot be handled entirely by road.

From ship to rail

After arriving in Wilhelmshaven, the new BYD vehicles are loaded onto special Laaers double-deck car-carrying wagons. A single block train can accommodate around 230 cars and then travels to Mosolf Group's inland locations in southern and eastern Germany. There, the vehicles are taken over for the next stage of their journey. RCG provides the necessary wagons and organises the long-distance transport. This brings together several elements to create a seamless supply chain from the port to the hinterland.

Flexibility with TransFLEX

The service uses TransFLEX, RCG's flexible block train solution. It is specifically designed for transport operations where demand and planning requirements may change at short notice. Unlike regular TransFER services, which operate according to a timetable, TransFLEX allows the timing, volume and route to be flexibly tailored to individual transport requirements. This flexibility is particularly important in vehicle logistics, as the timing and number of vehicles requiring onward transport depend, among other things, on arriving ships and the respective import volumes. TransFLEX combines this flexibility with a key advantage of rail: the ability to carry large volumes at once.

Capacity when it is needed

To ensure that transport operations are not only flexible but also reliable, locomotive and wagon capacity is specifically allocated to these services. This gives Mosolf planning certainty while also providing room to respond to changing volumes. Rail thus becomes an important additional component of BYD imports via Wilhelmshaven: it accommodates large volumes, reduces the burden on road transport and moves vehicles together to the locations where they continue their journey.



Belgium

The Belgian Type 1 Pacific No. 1.002 steam locomotive is seen on display in Antwerp Central station to celebrate the 100 Year existence of the NMBS (Belgian Railway). Built in 1935 by the Consortium Belge for luxury express passenger trains. In 1935 fifteen locomotives were delivered and in 1938 twenty more were delivered and were in service untill 1962. No. 1.002 is the only member of the 35-unit Type 1 class to have been preserved. While it occasionally ran special heritage excursions in the decades following its restoration, it is currently non-operational. It is beautifully preserved and normally on static display as a museum exhibit at the Chemin de Fer à Vapeur des 3 Vallées (CFV3V) in Treignes, Belgium. *Andre Pronk*

Czech Republic

CD Class 193.696 slows at Olbramovice with train No. R713 10:46 Praha hl.n. to České Budějovice on September 19th.
Mark Pichowicz

Czech Republic

Former East German 4000hp Ludmilla No. 142.001 pauses at Veselí nad Lužnicí working 15:00 Benešov u Prahy to České Velenice on September 20th. *Mark Pichowicz*

Czech Republic

CD Class 754.057 stands at Veselí nad Lužnicí with train No. R323 17:46 Praha hl.n. to České Velenice. *Mark Pichowicz*

Germany

Timetable 2027: stable prices, new Sprinter trains, more European connections

Deutsche Bahn (DB) is offering new Sprinter connections and more international services in its 2027 timetable. Prices will remain stable. Commuters and group travellers will benefit from new, more affordable fares.

DB had already announced in early October that it would be permanently introducing the family ticket. The 2027 timetable comes into effect on December 13th. Tickets will be available from October 14th via bahn.de, the DB Navigator app, as well as at travel centres and agencies. “In times of expensive fuel, rail remains a good and affordable alternative to cars and planes. The 2027 timetable offers a strong service for everyone. We offer fast sprinter trains between major cities, long-distance services to rural areas, and more connections to Europe,” says Michael Peterson, DB Board Member for Long-Distance Passenger Transport.

From the timetable change onwards, there will be a new ICE Sprinter line between Hamburg and Munich: three times daily in each direction, stopping only in Hanover and Nuremberg. This reduces the journey time by 20 minutes to 5 hours and 20 minutes. Between Berlin and Stuttgart, the Sprinter will run three times daily in each direction instead of once, in 4 hours and 45 minutes – about an hour faster than the regular service via Frankfurt. This means that there will be around 70 Sprinter services daily on key routes across Germany.

Following the completion of construction work, trains between Berlin and Hamburg are once again running every half hour. The Intercity Dresden–Berlin–Rostock service resumes its two-hourly route to Warnemünde, with one ICE train per day in each direction running from Warnemünde via Berlin and Leipzig to Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich. Jena has regained a direct connection to Berlin, and East Westphalia has a daily connection to Munich. Offenburg and Baden-Baden are served hourly, and Saarbrücken has its first direct connection to Hamburg. Due to construction, Halle and Erfurt have direct connections to Switzerland every two hours.

Over 320 international trips daily

With the 2027 timetable, the international service will also increase to more than 320 journeys per day – around 20 percent more than five years ago. This means that over 200 cities in 14 countries will be directly accessible from Germany. There will be more trains to Italy, France, Austria, and Denmark. Between Hamburg and Copenhagen, Deutsche Bahn will operate seven trains daily in each direction starting in March, with departures approximately every two hours from 7 a.m.

In cooperation with the Italian railway company Trenitalia, the Frecciarossa high-speed train will operate in Germany for the first time. From summer 2027, it will connect Munich directly with Milan and Rome with one daily round trip train in each direction.

Deutsche Bahn (DB) is also expanding its connections to France and Austria with its respective partner railway companies. Twelve trains will run daily between Stuttgart and Paris – two more than before. Following the completion of the Nuremberg–Passau corridor renovation, 14 long-distance trains will run daily between Frankfurt, Nuremberg, and Vienna – two more than before the construction work began. Booking tickets for Europe is now even easier: Tickets from ÖBB, SBB, Trenitalia, SNCF, Eurostar, SJ and National Rail are available directly on bahn.de and in the DB Navigator app. This is made possible by the OSDM interface standard. This already allows booking for more than 10,000 additional European destinations – and the expansion continues.
Long-distance transport services continue to take into account high construction volumes

In 2027, DB InfraGO will also be undertaking extensive renovations on further main lines, including Hanover–Berlin, Hanau–Fulda, and Rosenheim–Freilassing/Salzburg. The timetable is designed accordingly, and long-distance services will continue to run: diversions and revised departure times for the major construction projects are already available in the online travel information system. Passengers booking tickets will see the applicable departure times. Specifically, during the renovation work, direct ICE trains will run at least hourly between North Rhine-Westphalia and Berlin, adding approximately 80 minutes to the journey time. Three EC train pairs will run daily between Munich and Salzburg via Mühldorf.

Improved offers for families, groups and commuters

Deutsche Bahn is permanently introducing the DB Family Ticket, which was successfully launched this summer. It will be available for booking again from October 26th, with the first travel date being November 1st. For €99.99, up to five people can travel round-trip on long-distance trains throughout Germany in 2nd class; seat reservation is already included.

Commuters also benefit: Starting October 21st, monthly and student monthly tickets for long-distance travel without a subscription will be 25 percent cheaper. Furthermore, Deutsche Bahn (DB) is simplifying its season ticket offerings and will only offer route-specific season tickets without a subscription. Online services for group travelers are being expanded. Groups can now reserve the Sparpreis Gruppe (Group Saver Fare) online for up to 14 days without obligation, allowing for better trip planning



DB Netz Class 218.477 propels a test train towards Muldorf at Schwindegg on October 9th.
Mark Enderby

On October 9th, Class 159.258 heads a tank train towards Muldorf at Schwindegg past semaphores due to be taken down in December.
Mark Enderby

OBB Class 2016.068 with train No. EC1218 from Vienna to Munich passes Schwindegg on October 9th (this is a temporary service while the line through Passau is shut). *Mark Enderby*

Class 077.009 passes Heiligenstatt heading down the Burghausen branch with a rake of tanks on October 9th. *Mark Enderby*

Rail Force One liveried Class 159.258 is seen at Heiligenstatt heading off the Burghausen branch on October 9th.
Mark Enderby

Class 111.095 on an RE2 service from Munchen to Hof Hbf is seen at Landshut on October 9th.
Mark Enderby

On October 10th, RTB Cargo Class 193.791 is seen on a northbound tank train at Gemunden.
Mark Enderby

Germany

DB Class 185.198 passes 146.254 at Frankfurt Sud on October 10th. *Mark Enderby*

Germany

Becon Rail liveried Class 193.628 heads west through Prien am Chiemsee on October 5th with an intermodal train. *Steve Chapman*

DB Class 218.426, top and tailing with 218.422, departs Dorfen on October 7th with the 16:58 München Ost - Mühldorf RB40 service.
Steve Chapman

OBB Nightjet-liveried Class 1116.195, top and tailing with 1116.171, passes Teisendorf on October 5th with a southbound EC service.
Steve Chapman







DB Class 218.422 arrives at Mühldorf on October 6th with the 08:58 München - Mühldorf RB40 service.
Steve Chapman

Euro Cargo Rail Class 77.006 approaches Tüßling with a waste train from Mühldorf to Burghausen on October 6th. *Steve Chapman*

Class 218.308, on hire to SmartRail, approaches Tüßling with a tank train for Burghausen on October 6th. *Steve Chapman*

On October 8th, OBB Class 1293.047 is seen with a Railjet service from Munich to Austria at Assling.
Mark Enderby



Germany

Silver jubilee for DB Cargo Italia and liberalisation in Italy



Since the first private freight train in 2001, Italian rail freight transport has changed significantly. Today, DB Cargo Italia connects over 70 locations with the European markets. On September 25th 2001, the first private freight train ran on Italy's national rail network. It was operated by Ferrovienord, the freight division of Ferrovie Nord Milano (FNM). The train officially opened the liberalisation of rail freight transport in Italy. A few years later, an independent railway undertaking called NordCargo was set up.

Meanwhile, DB acquired a private startup and renamed it Railion Italia. In 2009, the two companies were merged and this formed what we now know as DB Cargo Italia. Since then, the market has opened up further and become more international. The Italian market has evolved from a standalone market into an integral part of the European rail freight network.

Across the Alps to Europe

Italy is a key production and destination market in Europe and its mediterranean ports are growing importantly. Much of the freight traffic travels across the Alps to Germany and other European countries. Its geographical location thus makes Italy a vital component of Europe's north-south connections. DB Cargo Italia is now integrated into this network. Transport operations are organised across national borders and linked to services in neighbouring countries along the north-south corridors. The Alps remain a key hub in this context. A journey from Italy to Germany is not regarded as two separate national journeys, but as a continuous transport chain spanning several countries.

When a full train is not required

A distinctive feature of Italian freight transport is the large number of industrial production sites with varying transport volumes. Not every consignment fills an entire train. This is where single-wagon transport comes into play. Individual freight wagons are consolidated with other consignments and transported via the network to their destination. This enables even smaller volumes to be moved by rail over longer distances. DB Cargo Italia has many years' experience in this field. The connections extend beyond Italy into the European network. Single-wagon transit between Germany and Italy is also organised on a cross-border basis. Since the start of 2026, the operational management of this transit has been reorganised. DB Cargo Switzerland has taken over the management of services from Mannheim via Switzerland to Chiasso. In Italy, DB Cargo Italia is responsible, amongst other things, for shunting and dispatching and manages six marshalling yards. This demonstrates in day-to-day operations what has changed since the first private freight train: national networks are now closely interlinked.

A partnership with a long history

The link with FNM also dates back to the early days of liberalised freight transport. The collaboration with DB subsequently developed further and continues to this day. FNM continues to hold a stake in DB Cargo Italia. What began as a regional initiative has thus evolved over many years into a link with the European rail freight sector.
This important anniversary also represents 25 years of work by the people who have driven this development: staff, former employees, customers, partners and service providers.

Italy remains part of the European development

Italian rail freight transport has changed significantly since 2001. New providers have entered the market, cross-border services have been expanded, Italian production sites and its market are now more closely linked to Europe. The demands placed on transport chains are also changing. Reliable international connections and consistent operational quality remain key prerequisites for rail freight transport. At the same time, there is growing interest in transport solutions that combine economic and environmental requirements. DB Cargo Italia plays an important role in this context. The company brings many years of experience, a high degree of flexibility, and technical expertise to the handling of complex transport operations.

What began in 2001 with the first private freight train has, over the past 25 years, developed into an integral part of European rail freight transport. The history of DB Cargo Italia illustrates just how closely the European freight transport markets are now interconnected.

Germany

New Design Unveiled for Battery-Powered Trains in Westphalia-Lippe

Nahverkehr Westfalen-Lippe (NWL), Rock Rail, and Siemens Mobility have unveiled the design of the 61 new Mireo Plus B battery-powered trains for the Northern Westphalia network. The trains, financed and provided by Rock Rail, will be manufactured by Siemens Mobility and are scheduled to gradually replace the current diesel fleet starting in December 2029.

With an operating volume of around 7.1 million train kilometres per year, this order represents the largest modernization of regional rail transport in East Westphalia-Lippe and the Münsterland region. The fleet will be the second-largest battery-electric train fleet in Germany. The new visual design is part of a long-term, unified branding strategy for regional public transport in Westphalia-Lippe. Moving forward, this consistent look will be extended to other passenger touchpoints, providing greater recognition and easier orientation for passengers.

A Consistent Identity Across Operator Changes

For the first time, NWL is the sole commissioning authority for a vehicle fleet of this scale. This has enabled the transport authority to develop a consistent design for the entire new fleet. Until now, the appearance of regional trains has largely been shaped by the respective rail operator, which may change over a train's service life. The new trains for the Northern Westphalia network, however, are dedicated to long-term service in the region, regardless of which operator runs the lines.

Christiane Auffermann, Executive Director of NWL: "As the transit authority, we want to view public transport much more through the eyes of our passengers. For us, that includes a reliable and familiar appearance - regardless of who operates the service. This advanced train fleet gives us the opportunity to make this commitment visible on such a scale for the first time."

Long-Term Investment in a Modern Fleet

Rock Rail is financing the 61 battery trains and providing them to NWL on a long-term basis for operation in the Northern Westphalia network. This ensures that the trains remain dedicated to the network and the region for many years, regardless of future operator changes. Nick Watson, General Manager, Rock Rail Germany: "We are proud to finance and deliver 61 Mireo Plus B trains for the Northern Westphalia network. Their new design gives the fleet a strong, distinctive identity, while battery-electric technology delivers quieter, locally emission-free mobility across the entire region. As a long-term rail vehicle financier, we are delighted to help provide a modern fleet that will serve passengers, neighboring towns and municipalities, and NWL for 30 years."

Major Fleet Order for Siemens Mobility

Siemens Mobility will manufacture the two-car Mireo Plus B trains. This order is among the largest contracts for battery-powered regional trains in Germany, underscoring the growing demand for alternative drive technologies in rail transport.

Andre Rodenbeck, Executive Vice President Rolling Stock, Siemens Mobility: "The new battery-powered Mireo Plus B trains combine emission-free mobility with a high level of passenger comfort and a distinctive design for regional transport in Westphalia-Lippe. This significant order for our Mireo Plus B platform is an important contribution to the decarbonization of regional rail and the transition toward more sustainable mobility."

Locally Emission-Free with Enhanced Passenger Comfort

The new trains belong to the BEMU (Battery Electric Multiple Unit) category. These trains charge their batteries along sections equipped with overhead lines and stored battery power to operate on non-electrified sections of the network. Thanks to intelligent energy management systems, they operate locally emission-free and significantly quieter than conventional diesel multiple units. Energy generated during braking is also recovered and stored in the batteries, further increasing efficiency.

The new fleet will also offer passengers greater comfort. Features include Wi-Fi, power outlets, and USB charging ports, spacious multipurpose areas, room for 18 bicycles and two wheelchairs, as well as step-free boarding. Modern interior lighting and low noise levels further contribute to a pleasant travel experience.

DB employee survey 2026: Railway workers are once again prouder and more optimistic

The vast majority of DB employees support the restart initiated by CEO Evelyn Palla. Sixty percent of employees are convinced that it was necessary. This is shown by the latest results of the company-wide employee survey. Pride and optimism about the future are also rising again for the first time after several years of decline: 64 percent of employees are proud to work for DB. Operational staff, in particular, are more optimistic about the company's future: at 45 percent, their optimism has increased by 14 percentage points compared to the previous year (31 percent).

The employee satisfaction index stands at 3.7 out of 5 points this year. This represents an increase of 0.1 points since a sample survey last year. The value remains unchanged compared to the 2024 employee survey.

DB CEO Evelyn Palla: "We are restructuring Deutsche Bahn more fundamentally than at any time since the railway reform. I thank all employees for their tireless commitment, especially now, when circumstances are sometimes challenging. The results show that this change of course is giving our employees renewed confidence. And for the first time in six years of decline, pride in being a railway worker is growing. That is precisely my goal. Now we are staying the course. Our objective is clear: a high-performing and reliable railway that inspires pride. And I also know that we are not there yet. That is why we are working hard to improve every single day."

The group is now deriving improvements from the results. The individual business units and service units will receive their own results and, based on these, will independently set their priorities.



DB Chief Human Resources Officer Martin Seiler: "The survey paints an honest picture: We're on the right track. However, we're all aware that there's still a long way to go. The increased optimism for the future and the broad support for the restart are a vote of confidence from our colleagues – I would like to sincerely thank all employees for that. They are seeing initial improvements, but they are also clearly identifying where they are being held back in their daily work. For us, this is the most important insight: We must support the motivation and commitment of our employees by simplifying processes, strengthening responsibility, and consistently removing obstacles."

Since 2012, Deutsche Bahn (DB) has regularly surveyed its workforce. From September 8th to October 2nd, 2026, approximately 230,000 employees were invited to participate in the survey. More than 137,000 employees took part, representing a consistently high participation rate of 58.3 percent. In addition to employee satisfaction, the survey covered topics such as working conditions, collaboration, and DB's restructuring.

Germany

World's largest battery train order: Siemens accelerates decarbonization of rail transport in Lower Saxony



Siemens Mobility has received a major order from the Landesnahverkehrsgesellschaft Niedersachsen (LNVG) and the Regionalverband Großraum Braunschweig (RGB) for battery-powered regional trains. The order includes 113 three-car Mireo Plus B trains, an extensive 30-year service package, and the construction of two Rail Service Centres in Lower Saxony. The contract also includes options for up to 132 additional rail vehicles. The trains will enter passenger service starting at the end of 2031.

Michael Peter, President, Siemens Mobility: "With the world's largest order for battery-powered trains, we are working alongside our partners in Lower Saxony to drive forward the decarbonisation of rail transport and demonstrate that sustainable mobility is already economically viable and scalable today. Our Mireo Plus B battery-powered trains offer emission-free operation, high availability and first-class passenger comfort. In combination with our digital service and maintenance concept, Railigent X, we are laying the foundations for efficient and reliable fleet operation throughout the vehicles' 30-year life cycle. At the same time, we are investing in service and maintenance capacity as well as skilled local jobs. In this way, we are creating long-term added value for passengers, transport authorities and the region."

About Mireo Plus B

With the proven Mireo Plus B, Siemens Mobility offers a tried-and-tested battery-electric platform for sustainable and economical regional transport on routes that are only partially electrified. The high-performance, three-car vehicles, valued at around 1.1 billion euros, enable emission-free operation without continuous overhead lines, reach speeds of up to 160 km/h, and make a significant contribution to the decarbonization of rail transport. The batteries are charged while traveling under overhead lines and subsequently enable emission-free operation on route sections without catenary wires. The 113 three-car, battery-electric Mireo Plus B trains offer an exceptionally high level of accessibility and passenger comfort. Due to doors with different levels of entry height, level boarding and a comfortable entry at different platform heights is mostly possible. Two wheelchair spaces, spacious multi-purpose areas, as well as modern passenger information systems and Wi-Fi ensure a pleasant journey for all passengers. Furthermore, the trains features more than 170 seats, including at least six seats in 1st class. For bicycle transport, there are at least six storage spaces per train, which can be expanded to up to 18 spaces if required.

30-Year service contract and two new rail service centres

In addition to vehicle delivery, the contract includes comprehensive customer service provisions. For long-term and reliable operation of the fleet, the contract relies on Siemens Mobility's comprehensive operations and maintenance concept, Railigent X. The core of the project is a 30-year full-service contract for the 113 battery-electric Mireo Plus B trains. Siemens Mobility will assume full maintenance of the vehicles and support a near-hundred-percent operational availability. The service package includes modern digital services for condition-based maintenance and fleet performance optimization, comprehensive asset management, supply of spare parts, and maintenance services throughout the entire lifecycle of the trains. Additionally, training programs for operations and maintenance personnel ensure that reliable expertise is built up and that efficient and resource-saving operation is guaranteed.

For the Lower Saxony BEMU project, a modern maintenance infrastructure for the battery-electric vehicles is planned. This involves a workshop concept that encompasses both operational running maintenance of the vehicles and the centralization of overhauls and heavy maintenance work in a center of competence. This is complemented by additional local facilities for regional vehicle care. Up to 100 future-proof jobs will be created. The concept combines high fleet availability with economical operational processes, therefore establishing the foundation for long-term reliable and sustainable rail transport in Lower Saxony.

Germany

Deutsche Bahn bids farewell to Intercity 1 – modern ICE and Intercity 2 take over

With a special train journey from Hamburg and Munich to Wiesbaden, Deutsche Bahn (DB) has officially bid farewell to the Intercity 1. After decades in service, modern ICE or Intercity 2 trains have now replaced the classic passenger train carriage across the board.

The Intercity 1 laid the foundations for fast, regular-interval rail services in Germany, if not in all of Europe. Today's standards, such as fixed hourly departures, a restaurant car in the middle of the train between the two classes, and connecting trains on the same platform, were introduced with the Intercity.

The ICE fleet currently comprises around 400 trains. Approximately half of these are less than ten years old. This means that Deutsche Bahn currently has the most modern ICE fleet ever. And the modernization continues: this year alone, DB will take delivery of 16 ICE 3neo and nine ICE L trains – an average of two new ICE trains per month. In addition, Deutsche Bahn operates 70 Intercity 2 double-decker trains, which provide connections to smaller towns and cities across the region.

Modernizing the fleet also has a positive impact on availability and reliability. The newest trains, such as the ICE 4 and the ICE 3neo, have an availability of around 90 percent. Furthermore, through improved maintenance concepts, DB has reduced the number of drive system malfunctions on initial deployment of our ICE trains by 56 percent between 2019 and 2025. Similarly, comfort-related malfunctions (toilets, galley, and air conditioning) on initial deployment have decreased significantly in recent years.

The aging Intercity 1 trains were recently only in service on a few routes, such as the tourist connections to Sylt



or the Allgäu region. The ICE L replaced the Intercity 1 on these routes in May and July, respectively. The last regular service with this classic passenger train, from Cologne to Gera, was discontinued in September due to construction work.

To mark the farewell of the Intercity 1, Intercity trains formed from the classic passenger carriages ran from Hamburg and Munich to Wiesbaden. There, an exhibition of carriages and locomotives from 55 years of Intercity history was on display. Among other things, carriages from the early years and a Class 103 locomotive, which for many years was the flagship of IC services, could be seen.

ARS Altmann AG opts for ELP's Euro9000



European Loc Pool (ELP) and ARS Altmann AG are entering into a new partnership. With the signing of a contract for two Euro9000 locomotives, ARS Altmann AG is adding this powerful six-axle hybrid locomotive type to its fleet, thereby increasing flexibility and efficiency in cross-border rail freight transport. A key factor in choosing the Euro9000 is the ability to operate long-distance services with just one locomotive. Thanks to its combination of electric operation and diesel modules, the Euro9000 can be used on both electrified and non-electrified sections. At the same time, it provides the power required for demanding freight operations across the Brenner Pass.

"Three factors were decisive for us. The Euro9000 operates both electrically and on diesel, so we are not dependent on the overhead line. It is approved in all the countries in which we operate our trains. And it has enough power to haul our trains over the Brenner Pass on its own.

Particularly important is the 3 kV Diesel Boost Mode, in which the diesel engines increase the traction power to almost 8 MW while running under the overhead line. This improves our efficiency and punctuality," says Matthias Prochazka, Managing Director of Altmann Rail Traction. The Euro9000 offers up to 9 MW of electric power and a starting tractive effort of up to 500 kN. Two diesel engines with a combined output of around 1.9 MW provide additional flexibility on non-electrified sections as well as for shunting and last-mile operations.

For ARS Altmann AG, one of the key advantages is the ability to reduce or even eliminate locomotive changes along the route. This removes time-consuming operational interfaces and allows services to be planned and operated more seamlessly. At the same time, this places greater demands on the technical availability of the locomotive in service. Accordingly, alongside the performance of the Euro9000, ELP's full-service leasing concept also plays a central role in the new partnership. Comprehensive service and maintenance solutions, together with a workshop network along relevant transport corridors, are designed to ensure high locomotive availability throughout operations.

"ELP is there when we need them, and the team is hands-on. In addition, there is a workshop network that covers our routes. That is crucial for us: a locomotive is only as good as the service behind it," adds Matthias Prochazka. "We are very pleased to welcome ARS Altmann AG as a new partner at ELP. The requirements of cross-border operations on demanding corridors such as the Brenner Pass show exactly what the Euro9000 was developed for: high performance, flexibility and the ability to operate services as seamlessly as possible with a single locomotive. Together with our full-service concept, we aim to support ARS Altmann AG in making optimal use of these advantages in day-to-day operations," says Willem Goosen, CEO of European Loc Pool.

About ARS Altmann AG

ARS Altmann AG is a Europe-wide service provider in automotive logistics. Founded in 1975, the forwarding and logistics company is headquartered in Wolnzach, Bavaria, and operates 25 locations in Germany, Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania, covering a total area of more than 5 million m^2. ARS Altmann AG employs around 1,000 people and transports vehicles for commercial customers, including manufacturers, dealers, fleet operators and mobility service providers, using, among other assets, 850 specialised trucks and a rail fleet of more than 4,000 railway wagons specifically designed for vehicle transport. The company's sites also offer a range of vehicle-related services, including PDI and Smart Repair.

Germany

BMV and DB InfraGO are further developing their corridor renovation strategy in a comprehensive manner

The Federal Ministry of Transport (BMV) and DB InfraGO have jointly developed a comprehensive new concept for corridor upgrades. The goal is greater reliability on the railways, both in terms of traffic and the necessary construction work. A key element of the now-presented five-point plan is the reduction to 13 corridor upgrades between 2027 and 2031 – previously, 21 corridor upgrades were planned for the next five years. This is intended to ensure that the enormous construction volumes can be completed more reliably and remain within both the time and budget constraints. At the same time, this reduction takes into account the limited transport capacity on the busy German rail network and the resources of the construction industry. The further developed concept also envisions more realistic construction and traffic planning, as well as more stable diversion routes. Phased commissioning after completion of the construction work is another possible component intended to make the resumption of traffic more reliable. It was also agreed that ETCS (European Train Control System) should be prepared and installed as a matter of principle during corridor upgrades. The implementation of the measures on the individual corridors will be discussed and developed jointly by the Federal Ministry of Transport (BMV) and DB InfraGO with industry representatives and the federal states. Corresponding dialogue formats have been initiated and will continue.

Steffen Bilger, Federal Minister of Transport : “The idea of corridor upgrades is sound. However, in the past, implementation has too often failed to deliver the desired results. Therefore, we are now drawing conclusions from these experiences and improving the strategy. In the future, corridor upgrades must demonstrably lead to greater reliability and punctuality on the railways. To achieve this, we are focusing on fewer corridors, setting clearer guidelines for digitalization, and demanding better planning of construction projects as well as diversionary services for passenger and freight traffic. Together with Deutsche Bahn, the federal states, and the industry, we have developed a viable solution. I am grateful for this constructive collaboration. Now it is crucial that the expectations associated with the corridor upgrades are actually and fully met.”

Evelyn Palla, CEO of Deutsche Bahn : “The principle of corridor upgrades remains the right approach. Without the consistent bundling of construction projects, the renovation of our dilapidated infrastructure would take even longer. At the same time, we have learned from the initial corridor upgrades. That’s why, together with the Federal Ministry of Transport, I initiated a revision of the concept this summer. With the 5-point plan, we are now drawing the necessary conclusions: We want to implement the upgrades more efficiently and, above all, keep the disruption for our customers during the construction work to a minimum. Because the upgrade of the network is essential – but how we build it is also crucial.”

5-point plan for more reliable corridor renovations

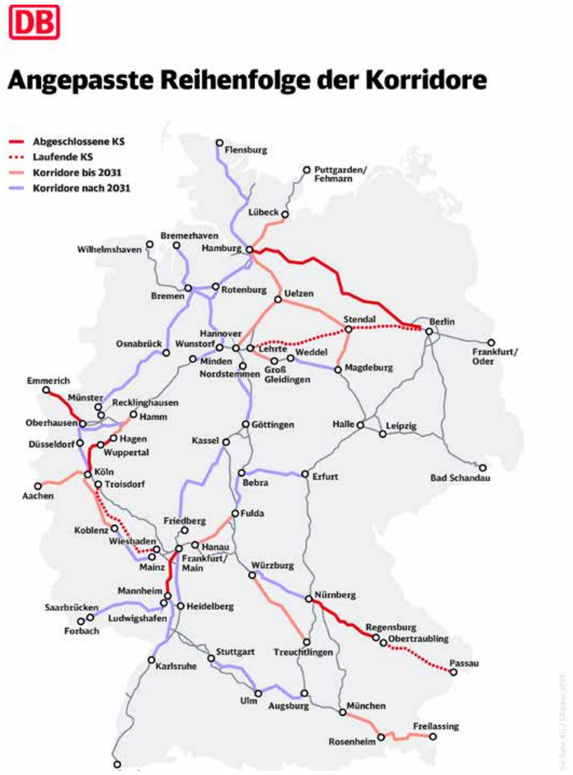
1. Prioritizing corridor upgrades: Only 13 corridor upgrades are planned for the period from 2027 to 2031, instead of the originally planned 21. The ranking has been specifically adjusted to focus on the projects offering the greatest benefit in terms of quality, stability, and punctuality. No corridor upgrades will be canceled, only postponed. Necessary replacement investments and, where applicable, even improvements will be implemented regardless of the postponement. The prioritization of corridor upgrades from 2032 onward will take place next year.

2. Securing and better managing network capacity: DB InfraGO is intensifying preparations for diversion routes and comprehensively coordinating the construction schedule of corridor upgrades with other construction activities on the network. This means, for example, that construction sites are being rescheduled or their processes adjusted to create more capacity for traffic. For the Lehrte – Berlin corridor upgrade, a second diversion route for freight traffic will be available from February.

3. Digitalization – ETCS is the new standard: From the beginning of the 2030s, “ETCS Level 2 without signals” will be installed as a matter of course in every corridor upgrade. This is contingent upon appropriate consultations with the railway undertakings in accordance with the applicable legal regulations. In the years leading up to the upgrade, DB InfraGO generally prepares for modern digital train control, to the extent technically feasible. This means that all modernized signal boxes are already ETCS-compatible, and that adapted signal locations and modern axle counting technology are installed – as is the case on the Hamburg-Berlin line. This ensures the best possible preparation for the later conversion to “ETCS Level 2 without signals.” This conversion can take place once the rolling stock has been largely converted. On some sections, such as Troisdorf-Wiesbaden and Rosenheim-Salzburg, the interim technology “ETCS Level 2 with signals” is planned for installation, as agreed with the industry. This technology has been fully operational between Frankfurt and Mannheim since the middle of the year.

4. Reliable commissioning and a stable ramp-up: Train services will be gradually ramped up in the future, generally starting with freight trains (test runs), with passenger trains following somewhat later. During the first few weeks, additional buffer time can be planned, certain operational restrictions can be maintained, or capacities below the eventual full-scale operation can be maintained. These plans will be discussed extensively with the industry. A commissioning team manages the transition from the construction project to regular operation and ensures that minor defects, which only become apparent during operation, are quickly addressed. Planning is already underway for the commissioning of the Obertraubling – Passau and Troisdorf – Wiesbaden corridors, scheduled for mid-December 2026. DB InfraGO is also introducing a three-phase model for corridor upgrades, consisting of preparatory, main, and follow-up phases. Measures that do not require major operational restrictions will be carried out before or after the main closure whenever possible. This is intended to reduce risks during the main closure and ensure that agreed-upon deadlines are reliably met. This applies particularly to the complex work on the signaling and safety systems. For the two currently ongoing corridor upgrades, this means: Construction of the new signaling technology will be completed during the main closure; commissioning will then take place partially afterward, with short, temporary closures in 2027. These closures will be incorporated into the timetables.

5. Keeping the renovation promise: The corridor renovations continue to represent a clear promise: one construction phase, one comprehensive modernization phase – and then keeping the route largely free of major construction-related disruptions for up to 10 years. DB InfraGO is ensuring compliance with this promise more consistently. At the same time, more realism is needed here as well. The Federal Ministry of Transport (BMV) and DB InfraGO are maintaining their goal that infrastructure-related disruptions will decrease by 80 percent after a corridor renovation – but not immediately, rather no later than 100 days after commissioning.



Successes of previous corridor renovations

Despite all the justified criticism, no other approach would have allowed so many necessary renovation measures to be implemented in such a short time. Furthermore, significant improvements in disruption frequency and punctuality are measurable in the completed corridor renovations – albeit gradually and over time. For example, long-distance trains now depart from the Riedbahn (Frankfurt – Mannheim) 20 percent more punctually than they entered. Before the renovation, they had lost punctuality there. Another example: On the Nuremberg – Regensburg line, infrastructure-related disruptions have decreased by over 90 percent since the completion of the corridor renovation in the summer. This corridor renovation also remained below the projected costs, as did the Hagen – Wuppertal – Cologne corridor renovation.

Germany

Euro Cargo Rail Class 077.006 passes Kastl with a tank train bound for Burghausen on October 6th. *Steve Chapman*

OBB Class 1293.051 is pictured at Heimeranplatz on October 7th with a Railjet service bound for Austria. *Steve Chapman*

Euro Cargo Rail Class 266.407 passes the 6.6km post at Tüßling on October 6th with a train of northbound tanks from Burghausen.
Steve Chapman







Germany

Class 185.661 passes Heimeranplatz on October 7th with a westbound intermodal working. *Steve Chapman*

PRESS Class 185.061 (ex-SBB 482.031) heads west past München Nord Yard on October 7th with a tank train. *Steve Chapman*

DB Class 185.249 runs through Traunstein on October 5th with a rake of box wagons. *Steve Chapman*







Class 185.617 rushes through München Ost on October 7th with an eastbound intermodal train.
Steve Chapman

DB Class 185.063 departs from München Nord Yard on October 7th with an eastbound freight.
Steve Chapman

Hungary

Class 182.563 stands on the blocks at Budapest Nyugati station with an unknown IC arrival on October 11th. *Mark Torkington*

H-Start No. V43.238 sets off from Vac with a short local train on October 14th.
Mark Torkington



Ex Danish locomotive No. 1504 stands at Fonyod with a Tapolca to Kaposvar service on October 12th. *Mark Torkington*

Hungary

MAV Vectron Class 7193.604 sits at the beautiful Budapest Keleti station with an IC service towards the east of the country on October 13th. *Mark Torkington*



H-StartClass418.308passesBalatonfenyves with a local service on October 12th.
Mark Torkington

Hungary

On October 14th, No. MK48.2018 sits at Kiralyet with the morning service from Kismaros on the Kiralyret Forest Railway. *Mark Torkington*



Hungary

On October 12th, No. MK48.2036 heads towards Imremajor with a train from Balatonfenyves to Csisztafurdo. *Mark Torkington*

Hungary

On October 13th, No. C50.5727 stands at the lonely outpost of Somogyszentpal with the single coach to form the early morning commuter train back to Balatonfenyves.
Mark Torkington

On October 12th, No. MK48.2013 departs Balatonfenyves with a service to Somogyszentpal. *Mark Torkington*

No. MK48.412 arrives in the suburbs of Gyongyos with a train from Matrafured on the Gyongyos State Forest Railway on October 13th.
Mark Torkington







Lithuania

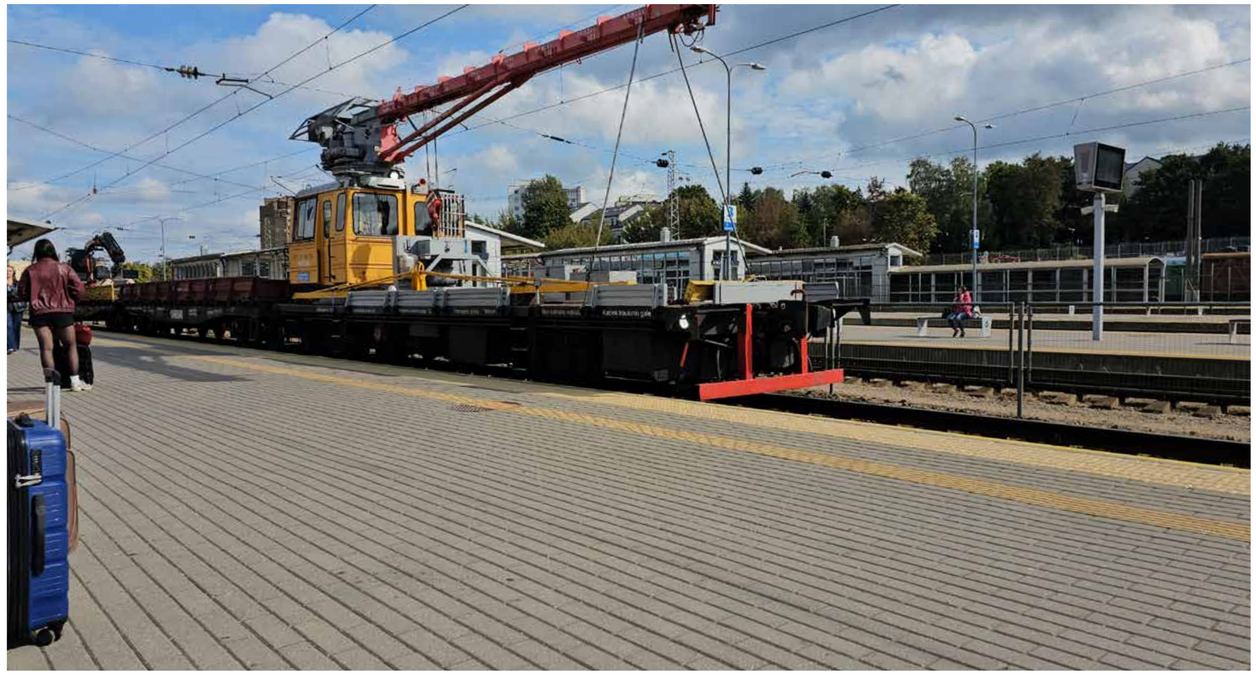
A look inside unit No. DR194249003001 shows how clean and well kept these units are. *Mark Armstrong*

Yellow Plant No. MTP 6 rolls through Vilnius on September 18th. *Mark Armstrong*

On September 18th, unit No. 630MiL-004 is seen at Vilnius working a service. *Mark Armstrong*







Lithuania

On September 18th, DMU No. 620M-015 stands at Vilnius Airport station.
Mark Armstrong

On September 20th, a Siemens Eurorunner ER20, EJ757 EMU and a 620M EMU are seen lined up at Vilnius station. *Mark Armstrong*

No. 730ML-007 stands at Vilnius on September 18th working a service to Varsuva.
Mark Armstrong







Lithuania

On September 18th, Siemens Eurorunner No. ER20-044 arrives at Vilnius station.
Mark Armstrong

Lithuania

On September 18th, No. DR1AM 94249002893 is seen at Vilnus with a service to Turmantas. *Mark Armstrong*



Montenegro

Preserved at Podgorica Station is this 750mm gauge 0-8-0T named Lovcen. It was built by O&K, Berlin in 1910, and used on a line from the port of Bar. *Bryan Roberts*



Montenegro

Class 461-033 of ZpCG was ready to leave Podgorica on October 16th with a short well-filled local service. *Bryan Roberts*

Montenegro

ZpCG's Class 412-045 was seen calling at Podgorica on October 16th. *Bryan Roberts*

Montenegro

ZpCG operates this EMU, Nos. 412-046 and 412-045, on local services. It was originally built for Yugoslav Railways (JŽ) by RVR (Riga Carriage Works, Latvia) and is seen at Podgorica on October 16th. *Bryan Roberts*



Montenegro

GM design A1A-A1A No. 644-015 was looking smart in the sidings at Podgorica on October 16th. *Bryan Roberts*

Class 461-035 and 461-040 of ZpCG, are seen being coupled together at Podgorica on October 16th. *Bryan Roberts*

Amongst the diesel locos stabled in Podgorica Yard on October 16th was MonteCargo's GM (EMD) 'Kenedi Class' No. 661-326. *Bryan Roberts*







EMU's, old and modern, are seen stabled at the depot in Podgorica on October 16th. Even the newer CAF built Civity units suffer from graffiti attacks. *Bryan Roberts*

Montenegro

Macosa of Spain built Class 644-007 to a GM design in 1973. It was busy in use as a station pilot at Podgorica on October 16th. *Bryan Roberts*



Montenegro

Co-Co electric loco No. 461-026 of MonteCargo stands at Podgorica after arriving with a freight train on October 16th. This loco was built in 1972 by Electroputere in Romania. *Bryan Roberts*

Portugal

CP Class 1400 No. 1415 catches first daylight at Livração on October 7th with train No. IR861, the 07:30 Porto Campanhã - Pocinho. *Andy Pratt*



Medway No. 1904 passes Ermida working freight train No. 50234 15:27 Godim to Porto Campanhã on October 25th.
Mark Pichowicz

On October 26th, CP Class 1400 No. 1454 catches the last of the evening sun at Pocinho as it runs round after arriving with train No. IR869 13:20 from Porto Campanhã. *Mark Pichowicz*



No. 1413 pauses at Ermida whilst working train No. IR868 13:08 Pocinho to Porto Campanhã on October 25th. *Mark Pichowicz*

Somafel operated Class 1400 No. 1441 is seen stabled at Pocinho on October 25th. *Mark Pichowicz*

On October 26th, Class 1400 No. 1415 waits to depart Pocinho with train No. IR868 13:08 to Porto Campanhã. *Mark Pichowicz*

Portugal

CP Class 1400 No. 1454 arrives at Tua on October 5th with train No. IR865, the 09:30 Porto Campanhã - Pocinho. *Andy Pratt*



Medway No. 1964 arrives at Mosteiro with train No. 50321, the 07:10 Porto Campanhã - Godim cement train on October 7th. *Andy Pratt*



CP Class 1400 No. 1454 departs Pocinho with the slightly delayed train No. IR868, the 13:08 to Porto Campanhã on October 5th.
Andy Pratt



U.K.

Alstom achieves key approval milestone for high-speed digital signalling in the United Kingdom



Alstom has reached a major milestone in the delivery of digital signalling technology for Grand Central in the United Kingdom, with the operator's Class 180 fleet receiving the regulatory approval – Authorisation for Placing into Service (APiS) – for the 'first in class' fitment of the European Train Control System (ETCS).

No. 180108 achieving APiS paves the way for the wider fleet of ten vehicles, retrofitted by Alstom with digital signalling equipment, to operate with its ETCS enabled and moves the country's first high-speed digitally signalled services a step closer.

Grand Central, Arriva Group's open access operator, will see their Angel Trains-owned fleet undergo software updates and then enter an extended period of 50,000 miles of 'fault free running' in December. Alongside this, the company's train drivers are being trained in using Level National Train Control (L-NTC) mode, for operating ETCS fitted trains over conventionally signalled routes.

"Reaching APiS for the Class 180 – our first passenger fleet retrofit – is a significant milestone and the culmination of years of hard work, determination and technical innovation. It is a real testament to the collaborative approach across Alstom, Grand Central, Angel Trains, the National Joint ROSCO Project and the East Coast Digital Programme. I would like to recognise everyone, past and present, who has contributed to getting us to this point," said Steve Wilson, Project Director at Alstom. He added: "APiS is an important achievement but it is also the start of the next phase of our journey. Our focus now turns to supporting the fleet through fault-free running and towards ETCS Level 2 operation on the East Coast Main Line in 2027."

The introduction of digital signalling through the East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP), will deliver more efficient, more reliable and greener services over the long term. The system also makes the railway even safer as it supervises the train's speed and can bring it to a stop if needed.

Alstom-built fleet

Built by Alstom in the UK between 2000 and 2001 – and part of the company's Coradiafamily of trains – Grand Central's Class 180 fleet is expected to begin using digital in-cab signalling (ETCS Level 2) on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) between Welwyn and Hitchin by Spring 2027. The Class 180 trains are maintained around the clock by Alstom out of their Crofton Depot near Wakefield in West Yorkshire.

"It is a pivotal achievement for us to receive approval for a retrofitted fleet, and I am grateful for the hard work across all partners involved in what has been quite a challenging process," said Chris Hobden, Programme Director ECDP at Network Rail.

He added: "Securing this approval supports our progressive roll out of digital signalling on the ECML. The Grand Central 180 fleet will point the way for further major passenger fleets, to begin using digital signalling between Welwyn and Hitchin during 2027."

The ECDP is a landmark scheme that will introduce digital in-cab signalling on the southern part of the East Coast Main Line. In 2025 it delivered the country's first 'no signals' commuter railway, between Finsbury Park and Moorgate.

Since August 2026 some Great Northern services have begun using digital signalling in the Welwyn to Hitchin area on the ECML. More fleets and services are expected to begin using digital signalling during 2027.

Photo: Grand Central Class 180 test train traversing the Digswell Viaduct on the East Coast Main Line (©Grand Central)

U.K.

Alstom secures 15-year services contract extension worth nearly 1 billion euro from Greater Anglia in the United Kingdom



Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has signed a 15-year extension to its Train Services Agreement (TSA) with Greater Anglia in the United Kingdom for the operator's Class 720 Aventra fleet. The contract, valued at approximately 800 million British pounds (947 million euros), provides continuity for the Aventra fleet and a long-term framework for Alstom, Greater Anglia and future Great British Railways (GBR) to collaborate on performance, reliability and the passenger experience.

Under the agreement, Alstom will continue to maintain Greater Anglia's fleet of 133 five-car Class 720 Aventra electric multiple units (EMUs) at Greater Anglia's Seven Kings Depot, ensuring the fleet remains available to support intensive commuter and regional services throughout the region. The fleet – financed and owned by Angel Trains – was built at Derby Litchurch Lane Works, one of Alstom's global Centres of Excellence for rolling stock. The Aventra platform has become a British success story, combining UK design, engineering and manufacturing with strong in-service performance. This long-term agreement marks the next chapter for the Class 720 fleet, supporting Greater Anglia's objective of delivering an even better service for its customers and communities during its journey to GBR.

"We are delighted to extend our partnership with Greater Anglia through this long-term maintenance agreement for the Alstom-built Class 720 fleet. These trains represent one of the most modern commuter fleets in the country, which are already delivering excellent levels of reliability and performance," said Steve Harvey, Services Director UK and Ireland at Alstom.

He added: "This contract reflects the trust that Greater Anglia places in Alstom and demonstrates how the best whole-life outcomes are secured for passengers and taxpayers when owners, operators and manufacturers work in partnership for the long term. We look forward to continuing our collaborative approach to deliver outstanding service for passengers across the region for many years to come."

The TSA covers all planned maintenance activities, including major overhauls, as well as unplanned maintenance, fault rectification, material supply and a comprehensive programme of reliability growth initiatives. The contract also includes the ongoing delivery of performance improvements aimed at maximising fleet availability and supporting Greater Anglia's operational requirements. The agreement supports around 100 roles at Alstom.

Award-Winning Reliability

The Class 720 fleet has established a strong reliability performance since entering service, achieving more than 40,000 miles per technical incident (MTIN) in recent periods, significantly exceeding contractual requirements. Meanwhile, in 2024 the trains picked up a Silver Spanner award at the Modern Railways Fourth Friday Club Golden Spanners Awards, meaning they were the most improved train of their type, with a 98.4% year-on-year improvement.

"Greater Anglia is pleased to confirm this new 15-year maintenance agreement with Alstom for our fleet of Class 720 trains. We're looking forward to working with Alstom and Angel Trains to build on the major improvements in service and reliability these new trains have already been delivering for our customers and communities," said Martin Beable, Chief Operating Officer at GBR Anglia.

The Class 720 Aventra fleet was ordered in 2016, alongside the initial TSA, with vehicles entering service progressively over a five-year period. Today, all 133 units are fully operational, delivering modern, accessible and sustainable rail services across the Greater Anglia network, part of GBR Anglia.

Alstom has produced 2,660 Aventra cars at its Derby factory for customers across the UK since 2015 – making it the biggest train manufacturing programme in a generation. Proven at scale across England for customers including c2c, Greater Anglia, South Western Railway, Transport for London (for the Elizabeth line and London Overground) and West Midlands Trains (incorporating London Northwestern Railway and West Midlands Railway), Alstom's Aventra fleets have already delivered over 18 billion passenger miles.

The contract with Greater Anglia also reinforces Alstom's position as a leading provider of long-term rolling stock services in the UK, combining engineering expertise, digital capability and a strong local presence to help customers deliver safe, reliable and sustainable rail services for passengers.

Alstom is the market leader in rail services, supporting customers over the entire asset lifecycle with the broadest portfolio of services solutions. Alstom's FlexCare Perform maintenance services are tailored to customer needs and operational requirements, from technical support with spares to fully outsourced maintenance solutions. Alstom maintains over 36,000 vehicles worldwide and is a trusted partner for servicing both Alstom and non-Alstom rail assets.

ALSTOM™, Adessia™, Aventra™ and FlexCare Perform™ are protected trademarks of the Alstom Group.

Photo: All 133 Class 720 Aventra trains ordered in 2016 are now in service, operating in the east of England and Greater London (©: ALSTOM S.A. 2026 | Aventra™)

India

Alstom unveils its first trainset for the Mumbai Metro Line 4 & 4A

On October 14th, Alstom, a global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, unveiled its first Metropolis trainset for the Mumbai Metro Line 4 & 4A at its state-of-the-art Sri City facility in Andhra Pradesh, in presence of dignitaries from Larsen & Toubro (L&T). Engineered and built at a record time of 14 months, it is first of the 39 driverless metro trainsets, Alstom will deliver as part of a system also comprising of signalling system, depot equipment and maintenance. Alstom is supplying trainsets and other solutions to L&T, which is executing the Integrated Systems Package for Mumbai Metro Lines 4 and 4A.

The first trainset was designed in Bengaluru, Karnataka, manufactured at Sri City, Andhra Pradesh, with propulsion systems and bogies from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu and Savli, Gujarat, respectively. With over substantial localisation, the project reinforces Alstom's commitment to Make in India and the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.

Presenting the first trainset at Sri City, Olivier Loison, Managing Director, Alstom India, said, "Our long-standing partnership with Mumbai's metro network continues to grow and we are proud to consistently deliver next generation rail solutions for the urban metro network in the city. The Mumbai Line 4 & 4A project also establishes our collaboration with L&T to support MMRDA in its metro network expansion, today is a proud moment for us at Alstom to be showcasing the first trainset at a record time. As a preferred partner in Mumbai's sustainable urban mobility journey, we are confident that our advanced rail products and technologies will deliver a world-class travel experience to every Mumbaikar."

S Ramkumar, Sr. VP and Head - Transportation Infrastructure, Larsen & Toubro, said, "Our partnership with Alstom on Mumbai Metro Line 4 reflects a shared commitment to delivering world-class mobility solutions for Mumbai. By bringing together L&T's expertise in large-scale EPC execution and systems integration with Alstom's leadership in rolling stock, we are proud to contribute to the Government of Maharashtra's and MMRDA's vision of a safe, efficient and sustainable urban mobility network for Greater Mumbai. We deeply value MMRDA's trust and leadership in driving this landmark project. With L&T also executing the Power Supply and Track Systems packages for Metro Lines 4 and 4A, we are well positioned to seamlessly integrate multiple systems in close coordination with Alstom and other stakeholders, helping deliver a world-class commuter experience for millions of Mumbaikars".

Inspired by MMRDA's vision for a connected, sustainable and future-ready Mumbai, the metro trains combine global expertise adapted to Indian conditions, featuring a distinctive green-and-blue identity that reflects progress, trust and environmental responsibility. Designed for a safe speed of 90 km/h and an operational speed of 80 km/h, the trains will offer enhanced passenger comfort and accessibility through airflow-based cooling, wheelchair access and, India's first time on an Alstom train, dedicated bicycle racks to support sustainable mobility and last-mile connectivity. The train has also been developed using Alstom's Eco-design approach, with materials selected with fire-safety requirements and environmental considerations in mind.



Alstom has a long-standing contribution to Mumbai's metro network. The company supplied Metropolis trains and signalling solutions for the Mumbai Metro Aqua Line, now in commercial operation and transporting more than 1.6 million passengers per day. Alstom is also providing signalling and telecommunications solutions for Mumbai Metro Lines 2 and 7, and signalling for Lines 7A and 9.

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New Zealand

Alstom expands KiwiRail's Onvia Vision system across New Zealand's Lower North Island

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has successfully delivered Area 1 of KiwiRail's Traffic Management System (TMS) into operational service, expanding rail operations across approximately 1,200 kilometres of rail corridor and close to 90 stations throughout New Zealand's Lower North Island from Hamilton to Wellington. The rollout marks a significant step in the modernisation and digitisation of New Zealand's rail network.

Alstom's Onvia Vision traffic management system brings trains, stations and rail corridors together within a single digital platform, enabling network-wide visibility and more efficient rail operations. By managing a larger, more complex section of the network through one system, KiwiRail can better respond to operational events, optimise traffic flow and support future network growth.

Building on the successful pilot phase on the Wairarapa Line in May 2025, the deployment expands the system from an eight-station pilot environment to large-scale operations across one of the country's most important passenger and freight corridors.

"This milestone reflects the strength of the partnership between Alstom and KiwiRail and our shared commitment to modernising New Zealand's railway network," said Guillaume Tritter, Managing Director, Alstom Australia and New Zealand. "From day one, our teams have worked closely with KiwiRail to understand the realities of network operations and deliver a solution designed for New Zealand's unique requirements. Today, that partnership has delivered a traffic management system operating across the Lower North Island and created a strong foundation for the continued rollout of advanced rail technologies across the country."

"This milestone is the result of a true partnership between KiwiRail and Alstom," said Carl Mills, KiwiRail Project Director. "From the outset, Alstom's experts worked alongside our team to understand our network, our operations and our long-term ambitions. Together we have introduced modern traffic management capabilities that give our teams greater visibility of network operations and support more informed decision-making. The result is a safer, more resilient and more efficient railway for our customers and communities."

Formerly known as Iconis, Alstom's Onvia Vision Traffic Management System supports rail operations in more than 30 countries and leverages over three decades of expertise in rail operations and signalling. The solution helps rail operators improve network performance through enhanced traffic management, optimised scheduling and more efficient use of rail infrastructure.

India

Alstom powers Chennai Metro Phase II with its driverless Metropolis trainsets

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, celebrates the commencement of passenger service for its advanced driverless Metropolis trainsets on Corridor 4 of Chennai Metro Phase II. In presence of Honourable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, the inauguration marks a transformative milestone for Chennai's transport network and reinforces Alstom's longstanding partnership with Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL).

Alstom has completed the manufacturing of all 36 Metropolis trainsets – a total 108 cars, redefining the commuting experience for the residents of Chennai by offering passengers smooth rides aboard the innovative, comfortable and reliable metro cars.

The 26-kilometre corridor 4 connects Poonamallee Bypass to Light House across 28 stations - 18 elevated and 10 underground, linking key residential, commercial and cultural zones, and providing Chennai's more than 11 million citizens a faster, safer and more sustainable alternative to road travel.

Commenting on the occasion, Olivier Loison, Managing Director, Alstom India, said: "The commencement of passenger service on Chennai Metro Phase II is a proud moment for Alstom and a testament to our enduring partnership with CMRL. The manufacturing completion of all 36 trainsets designed in Bengaluru and manufactured at Sri City reflects India's engineering capabilities and our commitment to world-class indigenous mobility solutions. We remain deeply committed to supporting Chennai's vision of a modern, connected and sustainable metro network."

The metro trainsets were developed at Alstom's engineering centre of excellence for rolling stock and digital solutions in Bengaluru (Karnataka) and manufactured at the Sri City rolling stock plant built in Andhra Pradesh to deliver the first ever metro for Chennai. These latest-generation trainsets for Corridor 4 are designed and configured for driverless operations at up to 80 kmh. Awarded in 2023 and valued at 124 million euros, the contract covered the design, manufacture, supply, testing, commissioning and CMRL drivers training for the full fleet on Corridor 4. The 36th and final trainset will be delivered by end of October 2026.

Designed for Chennai and the city's commuters

Inspired by Chennai's cultural heritage, the exterior front mask draws from the Mudras of Bharatanatyam, while interior platform screen patterns celebrate Tamil Nadu's Kolam art form. Each three-car trainset accommodates up to 1,000 passengers, with regenerative braking, air conditioning, dedicated spaces for women - with one entire car reserving two-thirds of its space as a ladies' section- and differently abled individuals. The metro trains are further equipped with perch seats, real-time passenger information displays, CCTV cameras, emergency evacuation doors, and military-grade cybersecurity.

A long-term partnership with Chennai and a strong legacy in India

Alstom has supported Chennai's metro network since 2010, previously supplying 208 metro cars, signalling and power systems for the 54 km Phase I network across Corridors I and II. Beyond the successful 108 cars delivery for Phase II, an additional 96 driverless Metropolis metro cars, ordered in 2025 are commencing manufacturing at Sri City, reaffirming the enduring strength of the Alstom–CMRL partnership.

Alstom is the only multinational sustainable mobility provider in India, to have a comprehensive portfolio to meet customer specific needs and continues to be a strategic partner in supporting India's rail revolution. With six industrial sites and five major engineering centres, the company caters to domestic as well as international project needs. Fully aligned with the country's vision of Make-in-India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, Alstom remains deeply committed to strengthening its local sourcing and supply chain ecosystem.

Alstom has led the way in bringing cutting-edge technologies to India, offering world-class rolling stock, components, rail equipment, infrastructure, signalling, and services. Alstom has successfully delivered metro trains to Delhi, Chennai, Lucknow, Kochi and Mumbai, as well as the Agra-Kanpur and Indore-Bhopal metro projects, resulting in every third metro in India is made by Alstom.

Austria

On October 8th, 'Theodor' heads to refuel at Jenbach before another trip up the Achenseebahn. *Mark Enderby*



Europe

Virgin and Alstom join forces to support the growth of cross-Channel high-speed rail

Alstom, a global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, and Virgin have signed agreements supporting the development of future cross-Channel rail services planned to commence from 2030.

The agreements cover the supply of 12 Avelia Stream high-speed trains together with long-term maintenance services, combining Virgin's ambition to expand international rail travel with Alstom's expertise in high-speed mobility.

Virgin has changed the way people travel for decades. We are incredibly excited to be working with Virgin once again, a brand we greatly admire for its commitment to innovation, customer experience and growing sustainable rail travel. Across Europe, passengers are increasingly looking for more seamless cross-border high-speed rail connections, and this project will help deliver exactly that," said Andrew DeLeone, Europe Region President at Alstom.

He added: "Our Avelia Stream platform combines proven high-speed performance with outstanding energy efficiency, passenger comfort and operational flexibility. As both the train supplier and fleet maintainer, Alstom will support Virgin throughout the full lifecycle of the project – from delivery into service through to long-term operations – helping to ensure a reliable, high-quality service for decades to come."

Under the agreements, the trains will be designed and manufactured by Alstom's teams in Savigliano, Italy. As a Global Centre for Excellence for High-Speed Rail, Alstom's Savigliano site is dedicated to manufacturing international rolling stock required for Virgin's new European routes. Despite being one of Alstom's most modern facilities, the site of Savigliano has been producing trains continuously for almost 150 years.

Meanwhile, maintenance activities will be delivered by Alstom in the UK, supporting long-term fleet performance and reliability.

The announcement follows Virgin's unveiling of the distinctive livery for its future Avelia Stream fleet, offering a first glimpse of the Alstom trains intended to operate the new services.

The decision to partner with Alstom extends Virgin's longstanding relationship with the rail firm, which previously built the Class 390 Pendolino trains that were operated by Virgin Trains on the UK's West Coast Main Line. "We are delighted to be back working with Alstom. We share a long and proud history with the company, most memorably with the manufacture and maintenance of our iconic UK Pendolino fleet," said Josh Bayliss, Chief Executive Officer at Virgin Group.

He added: "Securing this agreement is significant step in our plans to start cross-Channel services and Alstom is a fantastic partner to work with as we turn our ambition into reality. Our plans will unlock significant growth and investment in European rail, support more than 1,000 jobs across the UK and Europe and add millions of seats to the cross-Channel network, encouraging more people to travel by train and supporting tourism and local economies. Alstom's expertise in high-speed rail and long track record of innovation make it the ideal partner for this exciting next chapter. We're looking forward to seeing our distinctive red and black trains travelling across Europe."
The project reflects growing demand for sustainable international mobility solutions and reinforces Alstom's commitment to supporting the development of rail services that connect people, cities and economies across Europe.

Photo: The agreements cover the supply of 12 Avelia Stream high-speed trains together with long-term maintenance services, combining Virgin's ambition to expand international rail travel with Alstom's expertise in high-speed mobility.©Virgin



Czech Republic

Austrian Kriegslok No. 555.129 departs Čerčany working 09:19 Benešov u Prahy to Zruč nad Sázavou as part of the Benešov steam festival on September 20th. *Mark Pichowicz*



Poland

Alstom delivered 18 Traxx Universal locomotives to CLIP Intermodal, accelerating Poland's development as a regional transport hub



Alstom, a global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has delivered 18 of the ordered third-generation Traxx Universal locomotives to CLIP Intermodal. Capable of operating at speeds of up to 160 km/h, the locomotives can haul heavier freight trains than other locomotives in the same class. Their design is based on a modular platform used in both passenger and freight transport and is available in AC, DC and multi-system configurations. The locomotive bodies were manufactured at Alstom's facility in Wrocław, Poland.

The locomotives were delivered under several contracts covering the manufacture of 13 vehicles approved for operation in Poland, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria and France, as well as five locomotives intended for operation in Poland, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. In addition to rolling stock production, the contracts also include two years of preventive maintenance services during the warranty period.

The delivery of the locomotives marks another milestone in the partnership between Alstom and CLIP Intermodal, a member of CLIP Group. The Traxx locomotives will enable the logistics operator to expand its international intermodal transport operations, strengthening its presence both on routes connecting Poland with Western Europe and along key transport corridors across Central Europe. The multi-system locomotives will support CLIP Intermodal's participation in key logistics supply chains, delivering high operational efficiency in cross-border freight transport.

"CLIP Intermodal is today one of the leaders of the logistics transformation in Poland and the wider region. We are impressed by the company's continued investment in infrastructure and services that strengthen Poland's position as a strategic transport hub in Europe. We are proud that Alstom locomotives can support such a dynamic and fast-growing business. We believe that combining innovative rail technologies with CLIP's vision for growth is accelerating the development of a modern, sustainable and competitive transport system across Europe," said Beata Rusinowicz, the Managing Director of Alstom in Poland.

The locomotives for CLIP Intermodal are equipped with Alstom's Onvia Cab onboard European Train Control System (ETCS) solution, enabling seamless cross-border operations in compliance with European railway signalling standards. Alstom has delivered more than 300 ETCS onboard projects worldwide, with more than 25,000 onboard units installed on over 200 vehicle types. Traxx Universal locomotives have been approved for operation in 20 countries, collectively covering more than 300 million kilometres each year. Since 2000, more than 6,000 Alstom locomotives have been ordered for operation across Europe as well as in Asia, North America and Africa.

Alstom is also a leader in the locomotive maintenance segment, currently providing maintenance services for more than 2,450 locomotives worldwide, including over 600 Traxx locomotives.

Brazil

Wabtec's Contagem Plant Celebrates its 1,000th Locomotive

On October 29th, Wabtec (NYSE: WAB) celebrated a historic milestone with the production of the1,000th locomotive at its Contagem plant in the metropolitan area of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais. The achievement symbolizes more than five decades of transformation when the Brazilian operation evolved from a component repair center into one of the company's leading railway manufacturing and technology development hubs.

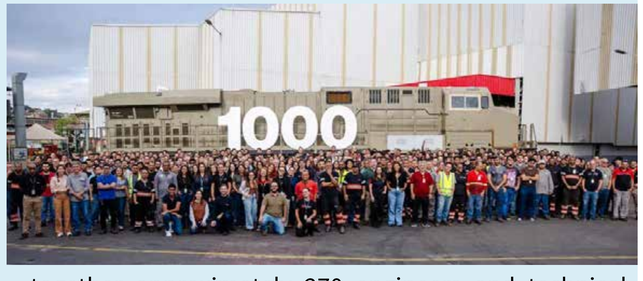
"Reaching the milestone of 1,000 locomotives is a source of great pride, but also of great responsibility," said Danilo Miyasato, President and Regional Leader of Wabtec Latin America. "This achievement celebrates a journey built over more than 50 years and reinforces our confidence in the future, as well as our commitment to continue delivering technology, quality, and innovation to our customers."

Established in 1972, the Contagem site began operations focused on component repairs. Over the years, it expanded its capabilities and reached new levels of industrial development. One of the key milestones in this journey came in 2008, with the advancement of the localization process, enabling the onsite production of the AC44 locomotive and other large-scale models supported by a strong local supplier network.

Wabtec transformed its locomotive production system with the launch of a Mix-Moving Line in 2017. This innovative manufacturing approach, one of the first in the heavy-haul rail industry, drove increased productivity at the site. More recently, the company took another significant step forward with the addition of a new locomotive manufacturing line, increasing capacity by approximately 28 percent and providing greater flexibility to serve different projects and markets. This expansion helped drive the plant's highest production performance since 2017, achieved in 2025, amid strong demand from the railway industry.

Over this period, approximately 15 percent of the locomotives produced at the Contagem plant were exported to customers across South America, Africa, and Oceania. The Evolution Series locomotives feature high-efficiency engines compatible with alternative fuels such as biofuels. The locomotives also include advanced onboard technologies like Trip OptimizerTM automatic train operation systems and other digital solutions designed to improve productivity, operational efficiency, and sustainability.

The operation's technical capabilities also support the development of other locomotive projects for specific customer requirements. Recent examples include the CM20ACi and EVOBBW locomotives. In addition to its manufacturing operation, Contagem is also home to Wabtec's Global Engineering Center, located next to the factory and inaugurated in late 2025. The center brings



together approximately 270 engineers and technical specialists dedicated to developing rail technologies and safety systems for Brazil and global markets. As part of Wabtec's worldwide engineering network, the facility plays a strategic role in advancing innovation and supporting the development of next-generation rail solutions.

The Contagem facility employs approximately 600 professionals, whose expertise supports one of Wabtec's most important railway manufacturing hubs worldwide.

Sweden

InfraRed Capital Partners acquires Hector Rail Group

InfraRed Capital Partners ("InfraRed"), a leading international infrastructure asset manager, have announced that InfraRed-managed funds have agreed to acquire 100% of Hector Rail AB, the largest private rail freight operator in Scandinavia, from Ancala. The investment will help Hector Rail continue to enhance its critical freight transportation services and further invest in its fleet, strengthening its offering in sustainable rail freight transport.

Hector Rail was founded in 2004 and is today Scandinavia's largest privately owned rail operator. Together with its German operations, the company has just over 300 locomotive drivers and a fleet of more than 100 locomotives. Hector Rail is one of the few rail operators with the resources and capacity to conduct cross-border freight traffic between Scandinavia and Germany.

The company's primary business is sustainable and efficient rail freight transport. Hector Rail transports among other things, lumber, steel, energy products and wood chips as well as consumer and industrial goods in containers.

Ancala's exit follows a successful six year partnership with Hector Rail. Since Ancala invested in 2020, Hector Rail has invested in its electric fleet, strengthened its management team and supported the integration of its Scandinavian and German operations to create a more efficient organisation that better delivers for its customers. With Ancala's support, the business has also optimised locomotive utilisation, maintenance planning and procurement to respond more efficiently to customer needs and to enhance services in partnership with its customers.

InfraRed believes its extensive experience in the rail sector, together with Hector Rail's established management team, can help accelerate the next phase of the business's development. To meet rising customer demand, planned investment includes additional locomotives and a programme of heavy maintenance and upgrades.

Carsten Hinne, Group CEO at Hector Rail AB said:"This transaction is a major milestone for Hector Rail. It reflects the collective effort across the business to strengthen how we serve our customers and grow our position as Scandinavia's leading private rail freight operator. Hector Rail's growth would not have been achievable without the close collaboration, expertise and trust of the Ancala team. In addition, the board's experience and strategic guidance have been invaluable in helping us capitalise on opportunities and address challenges. It's a partnership that I have valued greatly and one that has actively supported us to deliver industry-leading and customer-centric transport solutions. With our new owner, we look forward to continuing to deliver our critical services for customers and further develop Hector Rail and our position in the EU."

Ankur Ajmera, Partner, Ancala, commented: "We invested in Hector Rail during a period of exceptional uncertainty for the transport sector on the basis of our analysis of Hector Rail's infrastructure fundamentals. This supported our confidence in the resilience and long-term importance of Hector Rail's business. Since then, we have worked proactively with management to create a more flexible and efficient organisation that is trusted to deliver critical freight services to its growing base of long-term customers. Carsten and the Hector Rail team are perfectly positioned to build on this success and continue to provide innovative, reliable and efficient transport services."

Sean Watson, Partner at InfraRed, said: "Hector Rail has the attributes that we look for: a well-established, robust business with solid infrastructure credentials. Importantly, there are also extensive opportunities for growth, building on its strong position in Scandinavia and its critical role in customers' supply chains. We are excited to be working with its exceptional management team and, having built and grown multiple infrastructure assets and businesses in the rail sector, we will draw on that experience to help Hector Rail achieve its potential."

The transaction is subject to customary regulatory conditions and is expected to be completed in late 2026.

Finland

Follow-up order from Finland: Stadler to deliver 21 additional FLIRT trains



RailStock Finland Oy has exercised an option for 21 additional Stadler FLIRT electric trains, known locally in Finland as Sm7. The new vehicles will expand the Stadler-fleet operated in the state-subsidized passenger rail services to a total of 41 units. The trains are particularly energy-efficient and have been specially designed to cope with the harsh climatic conditions in Finland.
The order for 21 additional trains was placed under an option included in the agreement originally signed by Finnish railway operater VR and Stadler in November 2022 and later transferred to RailStock Finland Oy in March 2026 as part of an asset purchase agreement between VR and RailStock. The original contract covered the delivery of 20 trains, with an option for a further 50 units. RailStock Finland Oy is a Finnish state-owned company responsible for managing, developing and leasing rolling stock used in publicly funded passenger rail transport. RailStock provides the trains to state-funded PSO rail services.

“We are pleased to sign this option agreement with Stadler, marking another important step in securing the future of publicly supported passenger rail services in Finland. Our goal is to enable competition-neutral and sustainable publicly supported passenger rail services in Finland by providing reliable, high-quality rolling stock for use by all operators across the country. New rolling stock investments will ensure the conditions for maintaining and developing publicly subsidised passenger rail services in Finland in the coming decades”, says Joakim Mette, CEO of RailStock Finland Oy.

“We are honoured by RailStock Finland’s decision to sign this contract”, says Ansgar Brockmeyer, EVP Sales & Marketing at Stadler. “This agreement reflects the trust placed in our FLIRT platform and underlines our shared commitment to supporting the long-term development of passenger rail transport in Finland. We look forward to delivering these additional trains and contributing to a reliable and sustainable rail system for future generations.”

Designed for Finnish winters
The newly ordered trains will further expand the fleet of Sm7 trains developed by Stadler to meet the requirements of Finland’s commuter rail network. These four-car, low-floor vehicles have been designed to ensure reliable operation throughout the year, including in challenging climatic conditions.

“Extreme cold, snow and significant temperature fluctuations place high demands on rail vehicles. Our extensive experience in developing and manufacturing trains for the demanding weather conditions enables us to tailor our vehicles and their equipment to local needs. This trains are well prepared to meet the specific requirements of the Finish climate and ensure reliable operations throughout the year”, says Michael Schwarz, sales director Nordic Countries at Stadler.
The Sm7 vehicles are equipped with features including larger snow ploughs, floor heating and enhanced thermal insulation. The trains have a maximum operating speed of 160 km/h. Each train offers 340 seats and can accommodate up to 700 passengers in total. New vehicles will be designed and manufactured in compliance with the CRA regulations, which come into force in December 2027.

Advanced technology for sustainable mobility
The new trains support the development of more sustainable public transport in Finland. Their lightweight aluminium construction, combined with state-of-the-art converter technology, helps reduce energy consumption during operation. Other features that contribute to energy efficiency and environmental performance include the use of propane as a refrigerant and oil-free air compressors. The trains are also designed to allow a significant proportion of their materials to be recycled at the end of their service life.

Manufactured in Siedlce, delivered to Finland
The fleet of FLIRT Sm7 trains is manufactured at Stadler’s facility in Siedlce, Poland. The first train arrived at the port of Hanko in May 2025. To date, four units have been delivered to the customer, while a further five are scheduled for acceptance in 2026. The remaining trains are at various stages of production and commissioning. Completion of the base order is scheduled for the end of 2027. Following fulfilment of the base order and delivery of the 21 trains ordered under the option, Finnish passengers will be served by 2030 a total of 41 modern Stadler FLIRT trains. The option to order a further 29 vehicles remain available till 2036, giving RailStock Finland flexibility to plan the future expansion of its fleet.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Railways orders ten additional tailor-made intercity trains from Stadler



Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) has exercised the option included in the contract signed in 2024 and ordered ten additional intercity trains from Stadler. This doubles the fleet of vehicles specially developed for Saudi Arabia from ten to a total of twenty train sets. The existing maintenance agreement will also be extended to cover the additional vehicles. The contract value exceeds 300 million Swiss francs. The trains will be built in Switzerland. The order followed a financing agreement that Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) signed at InnoTrans, the world’s largest rail industry trade fair, in Berlin at the end of September 2026. The contract demonstrates the confidence of SAR in Stadler’s tailor-made solution. Designed for the requirements of Saudi Arabia The new intercity trains were developed jointly by Stadler and SAR to meet the climatic and operational requirements of Saudi Arabia. Extreme heat, sand, and demanding expectations regarding availability and passenger comfort have shaped the vehicle concept.

The approximately 175-metre-long trains feature two independent power cars and numerous redundant systems. Special protection and filtration systems help ensure reliable operation even under challenging environmental conditions. The trains accommodate around 320 passengers and meet the highest international standards.

Strong vote of confidence
“The exercise of this option is a great honour for us and a strong sign of trust. Together with SAR, we have developed a tailor-made solution that meets the highest standards in both technology and passenger comfort. The fact that our customer is already doubling the fleet at this stage underlines the strength of our partnership and makes us proud,” says Lucius Gerig, Executive Vice President Division Switzerland and Member of the Group Executive Board.

More capacity and greater comfort
By doubling the fleet, SAR continues to invest in a train concept that combines high performance with an exceptional travel experience. The vehicles feature different comfort classes, generous luggage areas, and various other amenities tailored to the needs of the Saudi Arabian market.
The trains are intended for operation on SAR’s East-West line and will connect the regions of Riyadh, Hofuf, Abqaiq and Dammam.

Production in Switzerland
The additional vehicles will be produced primarily at Stadler’s facilities in Switzerland. The car bodies for the power cars will be manufactured at Stadler’s plant in Valencia, Spain. Production will commence directly following the first series, which entered production in April 2026.

Commercial passenger service is expected to begin in the second half of 2029. One milestone has already been confirmed: Stadler and SAR will present the new train to the public at InnoTrans 2028, the world’s largest rail industry trade fair.

Switzerland

Stadler delivers the last double-deck InterRegio train for SBB

On October 2nd, Stadler handed over the last of a total of 60 RABe 512 double-deck InterRegio trains to Swiss Feder Railways (SBB). All 60 vehicles have been delivered on schedule. The trains have been well received by passengers and have been operating reliably since mid-2023 in the Zurich region, the Swiss Midlands and Western Switzerland.

Together, the fleet has already accumulated more than 23 million kilometres in passenger service. If all 60 RABe 512 trainsets were coupled together, they would form a train more than nine kilometres long. Since entering passenger service in mid-2023, the fleet has covered over 23 million kilometres, which is equivalent to 30 trips to the moon. The trains have demonstrated high availability while using innovative technologies. This includes a propane-based air conditioning system that is significantly more environmentally friendly than conventional solutions. With the on-time handover of the final vehicle to SBB on October 2nd, Stadler has successfully completed the production phase of the SBB InterRegio double-deck trains.

All vehicles delivered according to schedule
The successful completion of production was achieved despite a number of challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic, global supply chain disruptions and the flooding of Constellium's aluminium plant in Valais, Switzerland, in the summer of 2024 repeatedly put the project under pressure. Nevertheless, the project teams at SBB and Stadler succeeded in keeping production on track. "Delivering 60 vehicles on time and in outstanding quality demonstrates what can be achieved when customer and manufacturer work closely together with a shared focus on successfully bringing the trains into service. I would like to thank SBB for their trust and the project teams for their big commitment," said Lucius Gerig, Head of Division Switzerland at Stadler.



Belgium

Lineas expands strategic Railport footprint with Area 7 in Port of Antwerp

Lineas has been awarded the operation of Railport Area 7 in the Port of Antwerp, following Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6B in 2025. Operating area 7 further strengthens Lineas' position at the heart of one of Europe's most important logistics hubs.

From January 1st 2027, Lineas will thus operate Railport Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6B and 7. This marks another important milestone in Lineas' long-term commitment to the Port of Antwerp and its customers. It reflects the progress made over the past years, with a consistent focus on service, quality and stability, combined with continuous improvement and close communication with customers.

Lineas was selected following a transparent, objective, and independent process overseen by Railport. Various rail carriers were evaluated based on the same commercial and operational criteria. The final decision was made by the shippers involved.

The award of Area 7 is therefore not only a commercial success, but also a recognition of the daily efforts of Lineas teams working across the Port of Antwerp.

"Freight shippers are sending a clear message: we want to work together to build a stronger rail service in the Port of Antwerp. We invite other companies to join us. Every additional freight stream makes the model stronger, more efficient, and more attractive for everyone." - Nils van Vliet, CEO of Railport
Building a stronger rail ecosystem in Antwerp
Railport's approach aims to make rail operations within the port more efficient by bundling volumes and operations. For Lineas, the expanded scope creates further opportunities to optimise operations across the different areas, improve reliability and contribute to a stronger and more competitive rail freight ecosystem in the port.

"Adding Area 7 to our operations, provides us with a solid foundation to further build a strategic partnership with Port of Antwerp-Bruges. Over the past years, our teams have worked relentlessly on service, quality and stability while staying very close to our customers. This award is a strong recognition of that progress and of the trust we have built together."— Erik van Ockenburg, CEO, Lineas

With Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6B and now 7 under its operation, Lineas further consolidates its role in connecting terminals and industrial customers in the Port of Antwerp with its Belgian and European rail freight network.

The new Area 7 operations will start on January 1st 2027.



From the Archives

Austria

On February 7th 2019, OBB Class 1063.040 with timber wagons for Admont on train No. VG73625 passes Frauenberg a. d. Enns.
Thomas Niederl

From the Archives

Austria

OBB Class 1142.589 and 1116.131 with train No. LGAG58665 conveying empty wagons for iron ore are seen on the way to Eisenerz at Frauenberg station on February 7th 2019. *Thomas Niederl*

From the Archives

Belgium

SNCB No. 2801 sits inside the depot at Schaerbeek on June 11th 1994.
John Sloane



From the Archives

France

SNCF No. 2D2-9134 is seen at Charolais depot outside the Gare de Lyon in Paris on October 31st 1986. *John Sloane*



From the Archives

France

RAPT Bo-Bo locos No. E4907 and E4905 stand at Massy Palaiseau depot outside Paris on October 30th 1992. *John Sloane*



From the Archives

Germany

No. 044-1093 is about to depart Erfurt with an enthusiast special early in the morning of February 23rd 1986. *John Sloane*

From the Archives

Germany

Dual voltage Class 181.204 awaits departure from Frankfurt Hbf with the 17:56 to Luxembourg on October 28th 2004.
John Sloane

From the Archives

Greece

Ex USATC S100 type No. D68 is seen at Athens with a set of fuel oil tanks on August 27th 1973. *John Sloane*