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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 236Xtra

After much 'doom and gloom' regarding many railway networks, particularly the freight sector both in the UK and Europe, it is good to read this month that Africa seems to be having a revival.....

There is no doubt that the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East is a factor, accelerating trends that had been emerging for some time, but there is now an unambiguous momentum across the continent, spanning many facets of the rail domain. At various times over recent decades, a flurry of Chinese investment promised to spark a new era of railway development across the continent, most notably in Ethiopia and Kenya.

But now it seems that a more multilateral ecosystem is emerging, not least because of the debt traps into which some China-backed rail projects seem to have fallen. To mitigate the risk, governments and project promoters have increasingly sought to tap into a slew of alternative funding options; examples include the European Union's Global Gateway programme, launched at the end of 2021. That aims to offer countries around the world a 'values-driven' alternative to Beijing's Belt & Road Initiative when they are considering how best to meet their infrastructure development needs.

Five years after it was established, Global Gateway is underpinning the development of the Lobito Corridor in Angola, one of the clear hotspots for rail spending. According to the European Commission, the EU is 'mobilising over €2bn of investments in the people and places that bring the corridor to life — improving transport, boosting local economies, and creating lasting benefits for communities along the way'.

The Lobito Corridor scheme — like many of the rail projects now taking off in Africa — is centred on revitalising a legacy railway. The 1 067 mm gauge Benguela Railway that runs for 1 344 km from the Angolan port to the border with DR Congo offers a vital outlet for mineral shipments from the landlocked Copperbelt region. Here again, there is a familiar context: the line was initially rebuilt in 2002-15 with the help of various Chinese companies after being badly damaged in the Angolan civil war from 1975 to 2002.

A long-held desire to develop and expand the Lobito Corridor finally came to fruition in November 2022, when the Ministry of Transport signed a concession agreement in Luanda, under which the Lobito Atlantic Railway consortium of Trafigura Group, Belgian rail consultancy Vecturis, and Mota-Engil Engenharia e Construção África will maintain the line and operate freight transport services for 30 years.

With the concession now well established, more investment is coming into the region: in January, LAR secured US$753m in loan financing from the US-based International Development Finance Corp and the Development Bank of Southern Africa to support the ongoing rehabilitation work. The following month, the signing of a construction contract and a groundbreaking ceremony on the same day launched the start of work on a 260 km Luena – Saurimo line, diverging from the Benguela Railway as the first stage of a planned north-south corridor. This is just the latest sign of rail enhancing access to critical mining activities across the region.

If the Lobito Corridor is a reflection of renewed multilateral appetite for investment in railway hardware, the evolving policy and governance landscape of Africa's railways strengthens the argument that this 'moment' of rail expansion across the continent could be more than a passing phase. Meanwhile, external investment from a mix of European and private sources is flowing to Zambia Railways, which has appointed a transaction adviser to help raise US$60m. This is to complement a €50m grant from the EU Railway Sector Support Programme to rehabilitate infrastructure, signalling and telecoms. 'By bringing onboard Pangaea Securities, we are leveraging private sector expertise to help us optimally structure and mobilise the additional financing required', explained ZRL Managing Director Cuthbert Malindi.

Until next month... **David**

This Page

2-10-0 No. 50.3616 awaits departure from Schwarzenberg Erzg on Easter Sunday April 5th with the Verein Sächsischer Freunde's charter train to Bečov nad Teplou in Czech Republic. *Andy Pratt*

Front Cover

SBB Cargo Class 197.079 rounds the curve as it approaches the former station at Ligerz on April 7th.

Mark Pichowicz

Czech Republic

KŽC's Class 749.006 departs Všetaty with train No. R1272 Kokořínský Rychlík, the 08:37 Praha hl.n. - Mšeno on April 25th. *Andy Pratt*

Czech Republic

ČD Class 162.086 waits to depart Dečin hl.n. on Apri 25th with train No. R685, the 13:25 to Praha hl.n.
Andy Pratt

Czech Republic

Správa železnic opens its doors to new suppliers to reduce contract prices

On April 14th, Správa železnic, the Czech railway infrastructure manager, held the very first 'Day with Suppliers' The event, took place in the historic premises of Prague Main Station, is one of a series of steps designed to open up the domestic railway market to a higher number of companies, including foreign ones. The purpose is to increase competition and thereby contribute to lower prices in tenders.

The event was aimed at companies that supply technology and modernise infrastructure, for example. Over 250 company representatives, including around thirty from abroad, attended the event in person at the Fanta Hall. More than 150 participants watched the live online stream.

'The high turnout at the first Day with Suppliers of Správa železnic confirms huge interest among companies in investing into the Czech rail system. This is good news, as it will help us implement our plan to build more cost-effectively, with higher quality, fast and with an emphasis on safety. I am convinced that opening up the market to a broader portfolio of suppliers is a step in this direction, and today we have shown that we are serious about this plan,' says Minister of Transport Ivan Bednárik.

'We have a major task to restore the confidence of both the government and society in the Czech rail system. We are pursuing the path of maximum transparency, and the Day with Suppliers should mark the start of a long-term dialogue. Opening the market to bidders from abroad has a clear objective: to increase competition, reduce the cost of contracts and thereby create scope for the further development of the Czech rail infrastructure,' adds the new CEO of Správa železnic, Tomáš Tóth.

The programme introduced not only the technical requirements and the approval process for products for Czech railway infrastructure, but also the outlook for infrastructure investment in the upcoming years. Správa železnic is also revising the qualification requirements, the rules for using preliminary market consultations, and the recognition of selected foreign certifications. Správa železnic plans to hold further meetings with suppliers in the coming years.

Czech railway sector has recently seen some success in reducing contract prices. For example, the modernisation of the railway line between Kolín and Kutná Hora had an estimated value of CZK 2.1 billion, but the winning bid came in at 1.65 billion crowns. The reconstruction of the section between Ruzyně in Prague and Kladno was also successfully tendered for hundreds of millions crowns less than expected. Tenders for the cyclical renewal of tracks have also resulted in significant savings.

Správa železnic is a state-owned organisation responsible for the management, development and modernisation of railway infrastructure in the Czech Republic. It manages a network spanning more than 9,000 kilometres, including part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). In 2026, Správa železnic manages a budget of over CZK 70 billion, with funds directed primarily towards the modernisation of tracks, station buildings and the preparation of high-speed lines.

Leo Express has won the tender Ex36 by the Czech Ministry of Transport for the line Prague – Pilsen – Regensburg – Munich

Leo Express trains will be operated on the line Prague, Pilsen, Holýšov, Domažlice, Furth im Wald, Schwandorf, Regensburg, Landshut, Freising and Munich from. December 13th 2026. The operator plans to offer international tickets starting from EUR 9.

"The Prague – Pilsen – Regensburg – Munich connection deserves to be resuscitated after years of customer dissatisfaction, and we are honoured to assist the Czech Ministry of Transport in this important international project. We will introduce popular Leo Express services to this route and at the same time offer through connections via Prague towards Warsaw, Krakow, Przemyśl, Prešov or Bratislava. Our services will also include modern and efficient catering services in a fully air-conditioned 200km/h train with Wi-Fi, electric sockets, racks for bicycles and wheelchair and pram places," says Peter Köhler, CEO of Leo Express.

On the 439-kilometre-long Prague – Munich route, Leo Express will dispatch a total of 8 connections a day in a two-hour frequency from December 2026. Leo Express offered the lowest price of CZK 427 million for 5 years without infrastructure access charges. Modernized Intercity coaches, made available through its strategic partnership with Renfe, with a maximum speed of 200 km per hour, air conditioning, Wi-Fi and an audiovisual system, which will be pulled by a multi-system locomotive, will be deployed on the route.

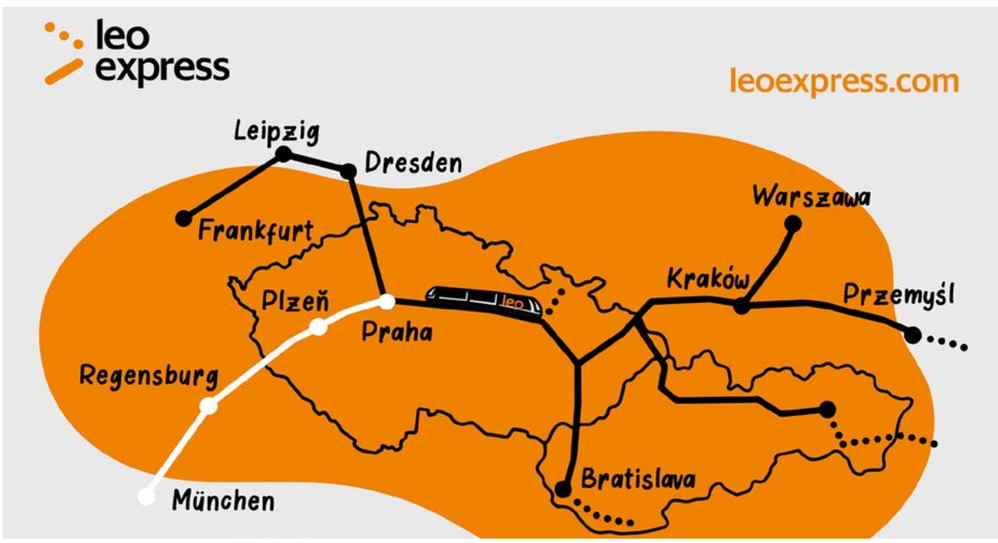
In addition to the Leo Express tariff, the SJT/One ticket ministerial tariff will also apply on the line. Leo Express will strive to maintain ticket sales for these connections also through the ČD network. It will also be possible to use the integrated tariffs of the Pilsen Region on the trains, as well as InterRail, Eurail and CIV international tickets. Snacks and a selection of hot and cold drinks, including beer, will be available. There will also be places on the train for people with reduced mobility and the transport of bicycles. The connection, which continues to Munich after crossing the border, is operated in cooperation with a German carrier that is contracted with the state of Bavaria.

This year, the second route to Germany, another to Poland and Slovakia

In addition to the new trans-European commercial connection to Dresden, Leipzig, Erfurt and Frankfurt from June this year, Leo Express will offer a second connection to Germany from December 13th 2026. "Leo Express is once again proving that it is a leading international carrier of European format," adds Peter Köhler.

On March 1st 2026, Leo Express launched a new line from Krakow to Warsaw, which runs twice a day in both directions, increasing the number of connections between Prague and Krakow up to four per day. From 25 June 2026, the operator will add additional services. From April 30th, the carrier will launch a new route to Bratislava and at the same time return to the region of Moravian Slovakia in the southeastern part of the Czech Republic, where Leo Express connections have historically been very popular.

Trains will again run on the route Prague – Přerov – Hulín – Otrokovice – Staré Město u Uherského Hradiště, and the line will now continue via Hodonín and Břeclav to Bratislava. Leo Express will offer two return connections per day.



Czech Republic

Extra trains were laid on for the Plasy Air Show over the weekend of April 25th/26th. ČD Museum supplied 4 coaches while Praha-Vršovice depot provided Class 749.107 for the 3 return trips each day between Plzeñ hl.n. and Plasy. Price for a single journey was 44 CzK, approx £1.55. The Grumpy is seen at Plzen hl.n. having completed the second trip of the day before running round for the last trip on Saturday. *Andy Pratt*

Czech Republic

Leo Express launched Talgo trainsets to Bratislava and Prešov

Newly deployed Talgo trainsets departed on April 30th on the routes Prague – Olomouc – Bratislava and Prague – Ostrava – Prešov. With this expansion, Leo Express returns to the Moravian Slovakia region, once again serving the stations of Hulín, Otrokovice and Staré Město u Uherského Hradiště.

The service has now been extended to Hodonín and Břeclav, continuing onwards to Bratislava. Via Ostrava, Leo Express also reconnects to Žilina and Prešov.

On both routes, Leo Express operates two daily return services using Talgo trainsets, which stand out for their generous seat pitch, low-floor design and barrier-free access, as well as onboard Wi-Fi, refreshments delivered directly to passenger's seat complemented by the option to visit a bistro carriage. Tickets for both domestic and international connections are available from EUR 4.

"Today marks the launch of an exceptional train into full operation on Czech and Slovak railways, distinguished by its spacious interior, low-floor accessibility and smooth ride even on tighter curves. In addition to returning to the Moravian Slovakia region and connecting Prague with Bratislava and other Slovak cities, we are now introducing services that previously did not exist at all. I am also excited about the continued growth of our Slovak network and its integration with our regional Bratislava – Komárno line," said Peter Köhler, CEO of Leo Express.

"During the first days of operation, passengers may also encounter some of our managers onboard, overseeing service quality. We kindly ask customers to share any feedback via the customer review e-mail they receive after their journey, so that we can continue improving our services," adds Peter Köhler.

In total, Leo Express operates two return services between Prague and Bratislava, one of which continues to the Petržalka district, as well as two return services to Prešov.

Prague – Otrokovice – Bratislava (Bratislava-Peržalka)
- 06:25 – 09:47 – 12:07
- 14:23 – 17:23 – 20:00 (20:19)

(Bratislava-Petržalka) - Bratislava – Otrokovice – Prague
- (03:32) - 03:51 – 06:49 – 09:55
- 13:05 – 15:41 – 18:55

Prague - Žilina - Prešov
- 10:23 – 15:56 - 19:59
- 19:23 – 00:41 - 03:41

Prešov - Žilina - Prague
- 20:49 – 00:17 – 06:15
- 04:50 – 08:21 – 13:43

Trains with maximum space and comfort
Leo Express operates Talgo trainsets on these routes. Talgo trainsets in Leo Express livery are modern thirteen-carriage units with a capacity of 350 passengers.

They feature articulated bogies known as "rodales," in which the wheels are individually mounted. This system allows for gauge change while in motion and continues to be used by Talgo even in its latest high-speed trains. Thanks to their low center of gravity, passive tilting system, and independently rotating wheels, these trains deliver exceptional passenger comfort and represent a new offering for rail enthusiasts.

In the past, Renfe has operated these trainsets in countries such as Germany and Switzerland. Leo Express is introducing them in a new white-and-orange livery. They offer a unique combination of low-floor design and full accessibility. Onboard amenities include air conditioning and Wi-Fi connectivity. Thanks to the tilting system and bogie design, the ride remains smooth and comfortable even on curved tracks. The trains can reach speeds of up to 200 km/h and will be operated by Leo Express using the most modern multi-system locomotives. These trains are currently still in operation in Spain.

Refurbished interiors and high-capacity carriages with generous seating space
The train interiors have undergone a complete refurbishment and have been enhanced with new visual elements representing the Leo Express brand. Passengers will appreciate comfortable seats with leather headrests and a modern open-plan layout. The trains offer seat pitch of up to 1 meter even in Economy class, providing a level of comfort comparable to first class with other operators and the largest seat pitch in second class available in the Czech Republic.

Passengers can choose between Economy (308 seats) and Business (40 seats) classes, with services consistent with existing Leo Express long-distance routes. Both Economy and Business classes now also include a quiet zone (two carriages in total), designed for passengers who prefer a calm environment free from disturbances. This space is ideal for work, relaxation or reading, with restrictions on loud conversations, phone calls and audio playback without headphones to ensure maximum comfort.

Onboard catering delivered to your seat and a bistro carriage
Passengers will be able to order refreshments delivered directly to their seat or purchase them from a mobile minibar. A new feature on Talgo trains is the modern bistro carriage, available on every trainset, where passengers can order and enjoy food and beverages during their journey. The trains also feature a popular kids' zone with space for strollers, providing a comfortable environment for families.

Ouigo Train Classique No. 54 from Brussels Midi - Paris Gare du Nord pauses at Aulnoye-Aymeries on April 21st. Engineering work saw the train retimed to depart the Belgian capital at 13:20 and diverted to run via the Erquelinnes - Jeumont Belgian/French border crossing. *Andy Pratt*

Railpool Class 188.121 stands at Paris Gare du Nord ready to depart with the train No. ES475, the 18:03 European Sleeper service on April 21st. *Andy Pratt*

France

CFBS No. 101 passes the barriers on the Somme Canal at St. Valéry with the 11:05 Cayeux to Le Crotoy. *Steve Chapman*

CFBS No. 15 waits at Noyelles with the 17:05 Cayeux to le Crotoy service. *Steve Chapman*

At the Fête de la Vapeur at the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme on April 25th, visiting steam tram engine No. HL.303 passes preserved RhB locomotive No. 14 on the 09:45 St. Valéry to Le Crotoy service. *Steve Chapman*

France

No. E327, visiting from the Chemin de Fer de Provence, has arrived at Cayeux with the 11:00 from Le Crotoy. *Steve Chapman*

Built in 1888, steam tram No. HL.303 makes a smoky departure from St. Valéry Canal on the 15:05 service from Cayeux to le Crotoy. *Steve Chapman*

Captrain Eurodual No. E4001-3977 heads an empty stone train north through Amiens on April 27th. *Steve Chapman*

France

Away from its home on the Chemins de Fer de Jura, RhB No. 14 approaches St. Valéry Canal with the 15:00 from Le Crotoy to Cayeux. *Steve Chapman*

CFBS diesel No. BB60002 and locomotive No. 3 'Christiane', from the Chemin de Fer Touristique du Rhin, operated shuttles between Noyelles for most of the weekend at the Fête de la Vapeur, April 25th/26th. *Steve Chapman*

Visiting Corpet-Louvet steam locomotive No. 26 arrives at Cayeux with a demonstration goods train from Lanchères. *Steve Chapman*

SNCF bi-mode unit No. 84709 leads a Calais-Ville to Paris Nord service into Amiens on April 27th. *Steve Chapman*

Class 66 208 storms through Abbeville on April 27th with a southbound loaded stone train. *Steve Chapman*

ECR's Class 66 210 is pictured at Amiens with a northbound empty stone train on April 27th. *Steve Chapman*

On April 27th, Nos. 60079 and 60021 double-head a train of new Peugeot vans north through Abbeville. *Steve Chapman*

SNCF Nos. 67593 and 67514 are seen stabled at Noyelles on April 25th waiting to form a return charter train from the Fête de la Vapeur. *Steve Chapman*

SNCF en voyage liveried No. 72074 picks up passengers at Noyelles on April 26th for its return charter service from the Fête de la Vapeur. *Steve Chapman*

SNCF diesel unit No. 76595 heads through Longueau on April 27th with a service for Amiens. *Steve Chapman*

Germany

DB Cargo UK secures long-term transport contract for Jaguar Land Rover's vehicle logistics

Seven-year agreement strengthens rail freight transport between Halewood and the Port of Southampton

DB Cargo UK has entered into a new seven-year contract with CAT UK to transport finished Jaguar Land Rover vehicles from the Halewood production site in Merseyside to the Port of Southampton.

Currently, DB Cargo UK teams based in Cheshire, the West Midlands, and Hampshire operate approximately three connections per week between the two locations. In light of Jaguar Land Rover's planned investments in Halewood, which are intended to enable the production of the next generation of electric vehicles, an increase in transport volume is expected in the future.

The partnership between DB Cargo UK and CAT UK has been in place for more than two decades. During this time, high-quality automobiles have been reliably transported by rail within the UK as well as in European import and export traffic.

The new contract underscores the importance of rail freight transport for automotive logistics. Rail offers an efficient alternative to road transport, particularly for large volumes. A freight train generates up to 80 percent fewer CO_2 emissions than comparable road transport, thereby contributing to more sustainable supply chains.

Partnership with Große-Vehne

DB Cargo Automotive, together with its long-standing partner Große-Vehne, has established a new transhipment point in Kecskemét, Hungary.

The terminal expands the Automotive RailNet with an additional network access point for intermodal and conventional transport, whilst also being located just around seven kilometres from a key production site of a major customer in the automotive industry. The proximity to the plant enables particularly short final-mile routes and significantly increases the efficiency of existing transport chains. At the same time, DB Cargo Automotive is consistently developing its existing partnership with Große-Vehne and, together, creating new logistics options for the automotive industry and other sectors.

Since January 2026, trailers have been delivered daily by rail from the terminal in Kornwestheim to the terminal in Kecskemét and handled using a reach stacker. DB Cargo Automotive manages door-to-door transport from a single source – from the main leg by rail to final distribution by road. Together, both partners enable seamless, multimodal management of the transport chain.

Investing together – stronger together

The terminal in Kecskemét already had a rail connection and a transhipment hall and has now been specifically upgraded by the two partners to handle current traffic. Together, they have redefined the transhipment processes and carried out trial loadings to enable a stable and efficient solution for intermodal transport. DB Cargo Automotive and Große-Vehne also plan to continue investing in the site: an additional reach stacker will increase resilience and create extra transhipment capacity – for example, for potential battery shipments in the future. "DB Cargo Automotive and Große-Vehne have a long-standing partnership in various transport solutions. With the new transhipment hub in Kecskemét, we are further expanding this cooperation and integrating our services even more closely along the intermodal transportchain," says Beatrix Belánné Ábel, Branch Manager at Große-Vehne.

Strategic access point in the Automotive RailNet

With the transhipment terminal, DB Cargo Automotive is specifically strengthening its Europe-wide network – the Automotive RailNet – and improving intermodal transport connections to South-East Europe. "We have created another strategic access point in the immediate vicinity of a key future location for the automotive industry," explains Martin Fildebrandt, key account management at DB Cargo Logistics. "This benefits not only existing transport operations – other customers with intermodal and conventional volumes can also make use of this connection."

Sächsische IV K 0-4-4-0T No. 99.1594 stands at Schmalzgrube station, midway point on the Preßnitztalbahn between Jöhstadt and Steinbach with the return working of the first train of the day on Good Friday, April 3rd. *Andy Pratt*

0-10-0T No. 99.1715 awaits departure time at Steinach on Good Friday, April 3rd with the 14:00 Preßnitztalbahn service to Jöhstadt. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

Transfesa Logistics becomes DB Cargo Iberia - strong presence on the Spanish market

DB Cargo Iberia strengthens its presence in Spain and bundles international rail logistics and cross-border transport solutions.

With the renaming of Transfesa Logistics to DB Cargo Iberia, DB Cargo is strengthening its presence on the Spanish market.

The name change follows the recent reorganisation within the Transfesa Group and underlines the clear focus on international rail logistics and integrated transport and logistics solutions for the Iberian Peninsula.

DB Cargo Iberia is thus fully integrated into the brand world of Europe's largest freight operating company.

The realignment provides additional impetus for the further development of international freight corridors between Spain and the most important European freight corridors.

In future, DB Cargo Iberia will increasingly focus on three strategic areas: international rail freight transport, logistics supply for the automotive industry and integrated transport solutions with a strong European network. These segments are among the central growth areas and build on many years of expertise.

Despite the new name, business continuity will be maintained. DB Cargo Iberia will continue to operate with the familiar teams and the technical expertise that has grown over decades. The company thus continues to stand for reliable, experienced and Europe-wide networked logistics services - with rail as the backbone of modern, sustainable supply chains.

As part of the DB Cargo family, DB Cargo Iberia will play an important role in the further development of intermodal freight transport. The aim is to further increase the competitiveness and efficiency of international transport chains and at the same time strengthen rail as a climate-friendly core route in European freight transport.

Double traction control in diesel operation: Testing an extended solution at DB Cargo Hungária

First operational test period of double traction control in diesel operation to evaluate synchronisation and tractive output under real conditions.

DB Cargo Hungária is currently testing the use of double traction control in diesel operation. Two locomotives are coupled via an electrical wire connection and operated as one functional unit. The control commands are transmitted synchronously so that both vehicles react in the same coordinated manner. With this solution, a single train driver is able to control both locomotives simultaneously, delivering double performance with optimized resource usage. The aim is to validate the technical implementation, the interaction of the units under operational conditions, and to obtain the final approval for operation from the NSA. The focus here is on aspects such as control accuracy, power output and driving behaviour.

This development creates the opportunity to further enhance operational flexibility within DB Cargo Hungária's fleet of 19 diesel locomotives by introducing a double traction solution that relies on two units working in coordinated operation, thereby opening new possibilities such as ultra heavy shunting, special transport tasks and—where required—their deployment as traction units. In addition, the solution provides a reliable alternative for mainline operations on non electrified routes, strengthening overall operational resilience. However, this potential is currently still being tested and evaluated under real operating conditions.

With the current test phase, DB Cargo Hungária is creating the basis for the technical and operational evaluation and further development of double traction in diesel operation. The knowledge gained will serve as a basis for possible future applications in rail freight transport. In parallel with the development work, both locomotives involved in the trials underwent significant technical upgrades: a complete engine overhaul was executed on both units, one of them received a full gearbox overhaul, and both vehicles were equipped with a new air conditioning system in the driver's cab to increase comfort and operational reliability.

Germany

2-10-2T No. 99.1775 adorned with Easter decoration stands at Cranzahl on April 4th waiting to depart with the 12:56 service train to Kurort Oberwiesenthal. The train has been strengthened to 11 coaches for the Easter traffic requiring the assistance of Romanian built Diesel L45H-084 inside the steam lok. *Andy Pratt*

Verein Sächsischer Eisenbahnfreunde's Class 628.256 departs Schwarzenberg Erzg with the 08:56 service to Annaberg Buchholz Unterer Bf on Easter Sunday April 5th. *Andy Pratt*

0-4-4-0T No. 99.582 tackles the gradient back into Schönheide station with the 10:35 from Stützengrün on Easter Monday, April 6th on the Schönheide Museumsbahn. *Andy Pratt*

With HSB's Harzquerbahn severed between Ilfeld and Eisfelder Talmühle for engineering work, the daily steam service from Nordhausen is unable to operate this summer. In its place a combination of tram, bus and diesel hauled train runs between Nordhausen and Drei Annen Hohne. On April 7th, Nordhausen Duo Tram No. 201 has just arrived at Ilfeld with the 10:33 from Nordhausen Nord. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

ČD Vectron Class 193.983 is seen in the depths of Berlin Hbf on April 22nd waiting to depart with Railjet No. rj175, the 11:28 to Budapest-Nyugati. *Andy Pratt*

After it's marathon 15 hour overnight journey from Paris, Railpool's Class 188.121 rests under the glass roof of Berlin Hbf on April 22nd. The European Sleeper arriving 3mins early at its destination. *Andy Pratt*

PKP Vectron Class 370.074 heads through Berlin-Alexanderplatz on April 22nd with train No. EC45, the 09:52 Berlin Hbf - Warszawa Wschodnia. *Andy Pratt*

HSB's Harzkamel Class 199.872 waits to cross the 11:00 service from Brocken at Elend with train No. 8920, the 11:26 Eisfelder Talmühle - Wernigerode on April 7th. *Andy Pratt*

Germany

DB Class 112.180 stands at Hamburg Hbf waiting to depart with train No. R11322 14:41 to Bad Oldesloe on March 21st.
Mark Pichowicz

DB Class 218.409 departs Lübeck Hbf with train No. R56849 09:02 to Bad Kleinen on March 22nd. *Mark Pichowicz*

On March 20th, Class 218.322 stands at Westerland (Sylt) after arriving with train No. IC2374 13:46 from Hamburg Hbf. *Mark Pichowicz*

Germany

Class 245.026 runs around at Niebüll after arriving with a car shuttle from Westerland on March 20th. *Mark Pichowicz*

Slovakia

ZSSK Class 757.015 departs Zvolen Mesto on April 23rd with train No. R937, the 11:50 Žilina - Zvolen os st. *Andy Pratt*

ZSSK Large Hektor No. 721.098 is station pilot at the rebuilt and electrified Humenné station. It's caught rearranging coaching stock on April 24th. *Andy Pratt*

Slovakia

ZSSK Cargo Grumpys, Class 751.037 and 752.048 are stabled at Strážske station, their work complete for the day. Strážske station has changed considerably having been rebuilt when the line to Humenné was electrified. *Andy Pratt*

ZSSK Gorilla Class 350.019 and Pershing No. 362.021 rest between duties at Humenné on April 24th. The Gorilla's next move will be to work the overnight to Bratislava while the Pershing has the night off before working the following day's 04:31 to Košice. *Andy Pratt*

ZSSK Class 757.011 awaits departure from Humenné station on April 24th with train No. Os9128, the 17:39 to Prešov. *Andy Pratt*

Switzerland

SBB Cargo Class 193.066 passes Ligerz with an eastbound tank train on April 7th.
Mark Pichowicz

Switzerland

SBB Cargo Re 4/4ii No. 420.245 (11245) passes alongside Bielersee at Ligerz with a postal working on April 7th. *Mark Pichowicz*

Switzerland

On April 7th, SBB Cargo Class 420.249 passes alongside Bielersee at Ligerz with an eastbound postal working. This single track line alongside the lake is a bottleneck on the route and is due to close in 2029 with the opening of the 2.1 km double track Ligerz tunnel under the hillside. *Mark Pichowicz*

Switzerland

Siemens to Deliver Up to 200 Double-Deck Trains to SBB

Order for 116 six-car Siemens Desiro DoSto double-deck trains with an option for up to 84 additional trains
Trains will be deployed on the Zurich S-Bahn network and in Western Switzerland starting in 2031
Siemens' train is optimally designed to meet the needs of future metropolitan areas, offering ample space and comfort, and setting new standards in sustainability

SBB has signed a contract with Siemens Mobility Switzerland for the delivery of 116 six-car Desiro DoSto double-deck trains, along with an option for up to 84 additional trains. The order value is approximately 2 billion Swiss Francs. The new double-deck trains will be used on the Zurich S-Bahn network starting in 2031.

"This contract, worth around 2 billion Swiss francs, underscores SBB's confidence in Siemens," says Roland Busch, CEO of Siemens AG. "Reliability, sustainability and quality of life – that is what people in Switzerland associate with the railways. And we are proud to meet these high standards for the future with our new trains and our leading technology. The fact that key parts of the project – from project management through testing and approval runs to the start of operations – are taking place in Switzerland also demonstrates our deep ties with the country."

"The Desiro double-decker is based on our tried-and-tested Desiro HC platform, which has proven to be highly reliable in daily passenger service across numerous countries. Building on this proven foundation, we are providing SBB with an advanced solution that combines high capacity, comfort and sustainability, and is optimally designed to meet the requirements of modern commuter rail networks," says Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility. "With more than 440 trains from the Desiro HC family sold and over 200 million kilometres travelled, this platform stands for the highest levels of reliability, availability and cost-effectiveness."

The Desiro DoSto is designed to meet the needs of future metropolitan areas optimally, offering ample space and comfort, and setting new standards in sustainability. With approximately 540 seats and eight spacious multi-purpose zones for easy boarding and alighting, the train offers significantly more capacity for highly frequented lines. Compared to the first generation, which will be replaced by the new vehicles, there will be approximately 30% more standing room and 10% more seating available.

The Desiro DoSto also sets new standards in travel comfort and safety: Low-floor entrances at all doors facilitate access for all passengers. In 1st class, adjustable seats, fold-out tables, and greater seat pitch provide additional comfort. Power outlets at the seats in both 1st and 2nd class allow for charging mobile devices on the go; in the multi-purpose zones, power outlets are also available for charging e-bikes. Improved customer information in the passenger compartment with more and large screens aids orientation, complemented by a light strip above the doors that indicates the correct exit side. Additional emergency intercoms allow passengers to quickly request assistance if needed.

The train is characterized by low energy consumption thanks to efficient traction components, an integrated heat pump, and intelligent energy management via the vehicle control system. The car bodies are constructed using 100% CO2-reduced aluminium.

The new double-deck trains will be delivered by Siemens Mobility, based in Wallisellen, which has been active in Switzerland for over 100 years and operates several development departments and production facilities. The manufacturing of the car bodies is planned in Krefeld. In Switzerland, in addition to project management, testing, approval runs, commissioning, and operational introduction will be carried out with local partners, as will maintenance work during the warranty period. Siemens Mobility and SBB have been successfully collaborating in various areas for decades.

Furthermore, for ten years, over 180 Vectron locomotives from Siemens Mobility have strengthened the backbone of freight transport in Switzerland and internationally.

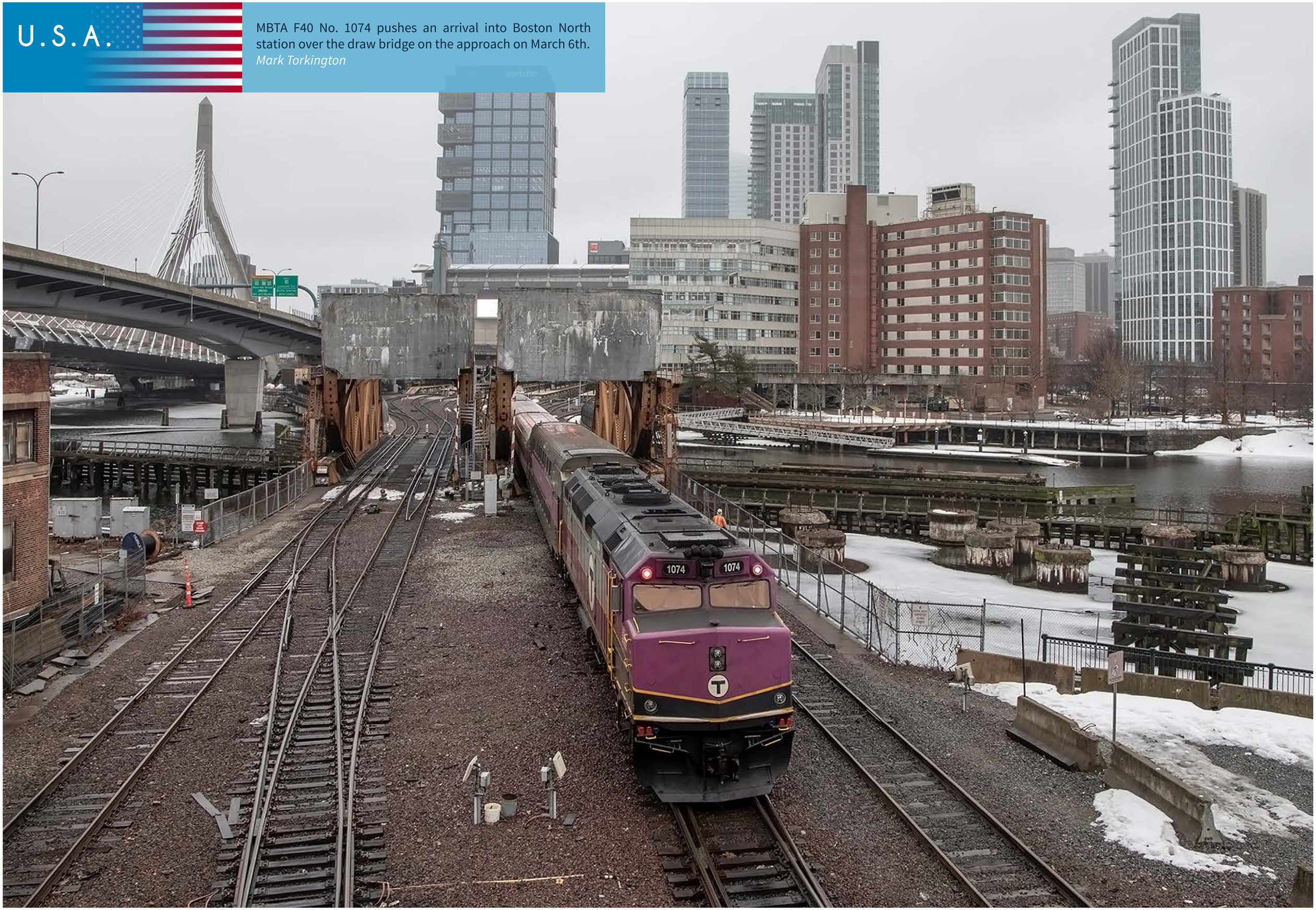
On March 8th, Amtrak's No. 120 stands at the far north eastern corner of the network at Brunswick about to lead one of six daily Down Easter trains to Boston. *Mark Torkington*

MTA's Conrail livery 'heritage unit' No. 201 approaches Harlem 125th Street station in the morning light on March 11th. *Mark Torkington*

MBTAs No. 1071 in its New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad ‘heritage’ paint scheme approaches Back Bay station on a cold morning, March 5th. *Mark Torkington*

U.S.A.

MBTA F40 No. 1074 pushes an arrival into Boston North station over the draw bridge on the approach on March 6th.
Mark Torkington



U.S.A.

MBTAs No. 1115 and 1035 stand at Boston North station with rush hour trains on March 6th. *Mark Torkington*

U.S.A.

On March 12th, No. 4120 (F40) and No. 4900 (GP40) stand under the canopy at Hoboken terminal. *Mark Torkington*

U.S.A.

One of New Jersey Transits ‘heritage units’ No. 4202 in the dark green of the old Pennsylvania - Reading Seashore Lines company stands at Hoboken terminal on March 12th. *Mark Torkington*

U.S.A.

Norfolk Southern GP38s Nos. 5611 and 5624 head a daily transfer train on the NJT network at Ho Ho Kus on March 12th. *Mark Torkington*

U.S.A.

Alstom delivers first Multilevel III commuter rail car to NJ TRANSIT, marking major step in modernizing one of the country's largest rail networks

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has announced that it has delivered the first Multilevel III commuter rail vehicle to NJ TRANSIT. The delivery marks the first car in a 374 vehicle order and begins the arrival of a new generation of higher capacity, more reliable and more comfortable trains for one of the country's busiest commuter rail systems. The new double-deck trains will replace legacy single level cars that have been in service for more than 40 years, transforming the passenger experience with more seats, improved comfort, and improved travel times. These vehicles are capable of traveling 110 mph, making them up to 30 mph faster than the previous fleet. This boost in speed enables NJ TRANSIT to enhance schedule reliability and accommodate increasing passenger demand. In addition, the Multilevel III vehicles feature amenities such as USB charging ports in every row as well as audio announcements and digital signs informing passengers of upcoming station stops.

"Governor Mikie Sherrill and NJ TRANSIT President and CEO Kris Kolluri have made clear that a strong reliable rail system is the backbone of a livable, affordable New Jersey," said Michael Keroullé, President and CEO of Alstom Americas. "The Multilevel III fleet delivers on that commitment, offering reliable vehicles with modern amenities, greater capacity, and a more comfortable ride for passengers. These vehicles are built in the USA by our skilled union employees whose dedication and expertise make this transformation possible."

"Our focus remains on delivering a rail system that customers can depend on every day," said NJ TRANSIT President and CEO Kris Kolluri. "These new multilevel cars will dramatically improve reliability, expand capacity and significantly enhance the on-board customer experience. For the first time in our agency's history, we will proudly deliver a fully modernized rail fleet for our customers by 2031."

Added capacity and greater reliability

The first car delivered to the Meadows Maintenance Complex in Kearny, NJ, is a power car, which was developed by Alstom in close partnership with NJ TRANSIT to allow train consists to operate without locomotives. The power cars include electric propulsion and more than 100 passenger seats. They will be combined with other power cars, trailer cars and cab cars to form Electric Multiple Unit consists that will accelerate faster, thus improving trip times, while also providing built in redundancy. The flexible design will enable the agency to adjust train lengths to accommodate passenger volumes for service changes and special events.

NJ TRANSIT ordered the Multilevel III vehicles in phases over the past seven years. The transit agency—the third largest in the country—has ordered 112 power cars, 100 cab cars (which include compartments where an operator can control the train), and 162 trailer cars. The vehicles are Buy-America compliant, consisting of at least 70% U.S.-made content and assembled in Plattsburgh, NY, by Alstom's skilled unionized workforce

The Multilevel III vehicles for NJ TRANSIT are part of Alstom's Adessia commuter rail portfolio. The versatile Adessia platform has been proven worldwide, with 45,000+ commuter cars sold across more than 60 systems in 15 countries, enabling over 20 million passenger journeys every day.

Alstom, a long-term U.S. mobility partner

Alstom is a leading rolling stock and rail services provider in the U.S. It has delivered more than 12,000 new or renovated vehicles for domestic rail agencies, including those in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and New Jersey, and delivered the first high-speed trains made in America. Alstom is also the number one private rail operator in the country, serving more than 10 rail and airport customers and moving millions of passengers daily.

Sweden

Talgo gets a new train order in Sweden

The Swedish Transport Administration (Trafikverket) and the Basque company signed a contract for the supply and comprehensive maintenance of a new fleet of long-distance trains that will cover routes from Stockholm to northernmost cities

The contract, worth approx. €756 million, is composed of an initial order for 9 daytime compositions and 11 overnight compositions plus 10 locomotives, with an option to further increase of all of them

The customer also has the option to extend this first order, by ordering additional rolling stock and extending the maintenance period

This contract demonstrates Trafikverket's confidence in Talgo and in its ability to supply trains for extreme climate conditions and consolidates Talgo position as a reliable partner for the largest European railway companies

On April 20th, Talgo, a leading Spanish company in the design, manufacture and maintenance of high-speed, lightweight rail vehicles, signed in Stockholm an agreement with the Swedish Transport Administration (Trafikverket) for the supply and comprehensive maintenance of a new fleet of long-distance daytime and overnight trains, which will cover routes from the south of the country to the northernmost cities, running through latitudes above the Arctic Circle.

The award, worth approx. €756 million, includes an initial firm order for the supply of 10 locomotives, 9 daytime compositions, and 11 overnight compositions of the Talgo 230 intercity platform, as well as their maintenance for a period of 10 years, including the supply of spare parts and special tools.

The client has also the option to extend the initial order by requesting the supply of 9 additional locomotives, 7 daytime compositions, and 11 overnight compositions, as well as extending the maintenance period by two years.

The signing ceremony of the contract was attended by the Minister of Infrastructure and Housing of Sweden, Andreas Carlson, the CEO of Trafikverket, Roberto Maiorana; the Spanish ambassador to Sweden, Luis Cuesta; and the president of Talgo, José Antonio Jainaga. Jainaga has indicated in Sweden after the signing of the contract that "these trains, which will be part of the Talgo 230 platform, will be able to run at 200 km/h. Due to the extreme weather conditions they will endure, reaching temperatures of up to -40°C during the northern winter, Talgo will develop a complete set of technical solutions aimed at ensuring the safety, operational reliability, service availability of these trains, and above all maximum passenger comfort."

Overnight, cross-border trains

The signed order consists of modular trains capable of operating at a maximum commercial speed of 200 km/h in Sweden and Norway, with full interoperability enabling seamless cross-border operations, which may be extended in the future to other Central European countries.

The trains will run over long distances and on latitudes above the Arctic Circle, and Talgo has thus guaranteed their full functionality, comfort and safety. They will be able to operate normally in scenarios where temperatures can drop to -40ºC during the boreal winter. Talgo has extensive experience in the design, manufacture and operation of trains in the range of -40ºC (in Russia and Kazakhstan) to +50ºC (in Saudi Arabia).

The award after a competitive bidding process open to all manufacturers, shows Trafikverket's confidence in Talgo and in its ability to supply trains for extreme climate conditions. It also consolidates the position of the Basque company as a reliable partner for the largest European railway companies.

With this new contract Talgo increases its order book which, after the recent award of trains for Saudi Arabia, stands at a new historical record for the company: c. 6,500 million euros.

The Talgo 230 trains

The product selected by the Swedish company will have a maximum speed of 200km/h and is part of the Talgo 230 platform, already in service in Scandinavia in the fleet of the Danish operator DSB (commercial name EuroCity) and connecting Copenhagen with Hamburg daily.

In Germany, the Talgo 230 platform operates on the route between Berlin and Cologne (commercial name

ICE L) with Deutsche Bahn: the largest company on the continent. Talgo 230 trains will also soon operate in Germany with Flix, soon to be world's biggest private passenger train operating company.

With this new award, Talgo achieves a fourth iteration for the Talgo 230 platform and consolidates its role as the supplier of the leading long-distance (Intercity) passenger transport solution in Europe.

As a technologically interoperable platform, the 10 locomotives for Talgo trains will be manufactured for Talgo by a third party (Siemens Vectron), a technological solution that has amply demonstrated its compatibility in commercial service conditions in Germany and Denmark.

With a smart and innovative interior designed by Talgo, the overnight trains will offer a real and attractive alternative to the most carbon-intensive transport modes (road and plane), and all the comfort of rail travel with a range of options guaranteeing hygiene and privacy. With this contract, the client will replace a nearly four-decade-old fleet of sleepers from previous generations. Talgo 230 trains are manufactured entirely by highly qualified personnel at the company's plants in Rivabellosa (Álava) and Las Matas (Madrid).

About Talgo

Talgo is the leading company in the design, manufacture and maintenance of high-speed light rail trains with an industrial presence, among other countries: in Spain, Germany, Denmark, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United States. The company is recognized globally for its innovation capability, distinctive unique technology, and reliability.

Talgo is Renfe's main supplier of high- and very-high-speed trains and the train supplier in the very high-speed project for the "Haramain" railway line between Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia. Talgo is also the manufacturer chosen by the German operator Deutsche Bahn and the Danish operator DSB to decarbonise their mobility with Talgo 230 long-distance trains, and by the giant Flix to become the first private operator in the European market.

Finland

80th Vectron locomotive delivered:
Siemens completes major contract for Finland

Siemens Mobility has handed over the last of the initially ordered 80 Vectron electric locomotives to Finnish railway company VR, completing the supply contract signed at the beginning of 2014. At the time of signing, the order was the largest single contract for the Vectron platform and marked the first deployment of the platform on Finland's broad gauge network. It also represented the largest rolling stock investment in VR Group's history at the time. All locomotives were delivered within the contractually agreed timeframe.

"The completion of this order underlines the versatility of the Vectron platform and our experience in managing complex locomotive projects from design adaptation through to final delivery," said Steffen Bobsien, Vice President Locomotives and Coaches at Siemens Mobility. "It also reflects the strong partnership we have built with VR Group throughout this project. We are pleased to have supported VR Group in modernizing its fleet for rail operations in Finland."

"Operational reliability is a key factor for our customers in rail transport, which is why we invest in rolling stock in a long-term and systematic manner. Developed for Finland's demanding operating conditions, Sr3 electric locomotives serve both passenger and heavy freight traffic, and the investment further strengthens operational reliability across rail transport, supporting Finnish industry and reliable passenger services now and in the future," says Joonas Roivainen, Vice President, Fleet Management at VR.

The locomotives were adapted to ensure reliable performance under demanding climatic conditions, including temperatures as low as –40 degrees Celsius, and to meet the operational and regulatory requirements of rail transport in Northern Europe. The vehicles were manufactured at the Siemens Mobility plant in Munich, Germany, while the bogies were produced in Graz, Austria.

Delivered in phases over the course of the project, the locomotives have since been fully integrated into VR Group's fleet for passenger and freight transport. To date, the fleet has completed around 72 million kilometres in operation.

With the completion of this contract, Siemens Mobility reinforces its track record in delivering standardized yet highly adaptable locomotive platforms designed for different track gauges, operating environments, and regulatory frameworks worldwide. As a modular and highly flexible platform, Vectron locomotives are designed for operation across a wide range of climatic conditions – from extreme cold in polar regions to high temperatures in desert environments. To date, Siemens Mobility has sold more than 2,900 locomotives of the Vectron family to over 110 customers, and the fleet has covered around 1.35 billion kilometres in service. Locomotives based on the Vectron platform have been approved for operation in 20 European countries.

Slovenia

European Loc Pool receives approval for the Balkan region

Croatia

Serbia

New operational opportunities along key freight corridors in Southeast Europe

European Loc Pool (ELP) has reached another important milestone: the EuroDual locomotives have received approval for operation in the Balkan region.

This includes successful homologations in Croatia and Slovenia, following Serbia, which was already approved in 2023. With this, ELP expands the geographical availability of its fleet and creates new opportunities for cross-border Rail Freight transport in Southeast Europe.

The approval covers key countries along major corridors between Northern and Central Europe and the Balkans. This region is becoming increasingly important for industry, logistics, and international trade. In particular, the corridor connecting the Adriatic region, between Koper and Jesenice (via Ljubljana), via Maribor, as well as Rijeka and Zagreb, with Central European industrial hubs is developing into a strategic backbone for freight transport.

With the newly obtained approvals, ELP locomotives can now be deployed flexibly on these routes, both on electrified and non-electrified lines.

The EuroDual locomotive combines electric and diesel traction in one platform and is specifically designed for demanding freight operations. With its high tractive effort and the ability to operate reliably without overhead lines, it is particularly well suited for countries and routes with mixed infrastructure, as commonly found in the Balkan region.

With 6.2 MW of electric power and a 2.8 MW diesel engine, the EuroDual enables seamless operations without locomotive changes at electrification boundaries and/or on last-mile sections. Especially in Southeast Europe, where such transitions are frequent, this results in significant efficiency gains and reduced idle times.

At the same time, the EuroDual contributes to the sustainable transformation of freight transport: higher hauling capacities reduce the number of required trips, while modern propulsion technology, including a Stage V-compliant diesel engine and the possibility to use HVO fuels, significantly lowers emissions. On electrified routes, regenerative braking additionally supports energy efficiency.

“With the approval in the Balkan region, we are opening up another strategically important market for our customers,” says Willem Goosen, CEO of European Loc Pool.

“Flexibility is key, especially on international corridors. Our locomotives enable seamless transport without locomotive changes, contributing to more efficient and stable transport chains.” Successful operations and test runs in Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia have already demonstrated that the EuroDual reliably delivers its performance under real operating conditions, including on steep gradients and along demanding corridors.

With this step, ELP strengthens its position as a pan-European leasing provider for modern locomotives and reinforces its commitment to supporting customers along the most important freight corridors. Further approvals in Southeast Europe are already in preparation to continuously expand the operational reach of the EuroDual towards Turkey.

Leidenschaft für Zugkraft *Passion for Traction*

More about hybrid locomotives

European Loc Pool (ELP) focuses on innovative six-axle hybrid locomotives from Stadler, setting new standards in European rail freight transport. The EuroDual and Euro9000 locomotives combine electric and diesel operation, enabling seamless last-mile and shunting operations.

The Euro9000 is the new hybrid multi-system locomotive designed for pan-European use. It offers tractive effort of up to 500 kN, with 1.9 MW diesel power and up to 9 MW electric power. The Euro9000 platform is a further development of the successful EuroDual and Euro4000 locomotive families from Stadler.

Romania

Siemens to deliver Romania's First Hydrogen-Powered Train Fleet

Siemens Mobility has been awarded a contract by Romania's Railway Reform Authority (ARF) for the delivery of 12 two-car hydrogen-powered electric multiple units based on the Mireo Plus H platform, marking the first hydrogen train contract in Romania and one of the first hydrogen projects in Eastern Europe. The project represents a significant step towards the decarbonization of regional rail transport and the modernization of passenger services across the country. The agreement includes the delivery of the trains as well as full maintenance and repair services for an initial term of 15 years. The trains are due in passenger service in 2029.

"We are proud to deliver the first fleet of hydrogen trains for Romania. With the Mireo Plus H, we combine a proven regional train platform with state of the art hydrogen technology, enabling zero emission rail operations on non electrified lines. Hydrogen will play a key role in achieving climate neutral mobility in Europe, and this project clearly demonstrates how innovation can be translated into reliable and economically attractive rail solutions," said Andre Rodenbeck, CEO Rolling Stock at Siemens Mobility.

Hydrogen propulsion and energy efficiency
The Mireo Plus H features a hydrogen fuel cell-based electric propulsion system, complemented by battery energy storage. The batteries are charged either via the fuel cell system or through regenerative braking, enabling highly efficient energy use and zero local emissions during operation. Siemens Mobility has optimized the vehicle concept to significantly reduce weight, component complexity, energy consumption, and maintenance costs. All key onboard components have already been validated in previous Siemens Mobility projects, ensuring a high level of technical maturity and operational reliability.

Mireo Plus H – a modern regional train for Romania
The trains for Romania are based on the Siemens Mireo platform and configured as articulated two-unit trainsets with a maximum operating speed of 120 km/h. Each trainset offers 131 fixed seats plus 5 folding seats, providing a high level of passenger comfort while ensuring operational efficiency. The trains can be operated in multiple traction of up to two coupled units, offering flexibility for both current and future operational requirements.

Safety systems and passenger information
The vehicles will be equipped with PZB (intermittent train control) train protection systems and European Train Control System, ensuring compliance with European safety and interoperability standards. A modern Passenger Information System will provide continuous travel information through interior and exterior displays as well as automated announcements, enhancing the travel experience for passengers and supporting operational staff.

Comprehensive service scope and local presence
In addition to vehicle delivery, the contract includes a comprehensive full-service maintenance package with a duration of 15 years, extendable by another 15 years. Maintenance activities will be carried out locally in Romania, including at a dedicated depot in Bucharest, by Siemens Mobility personnel, supported by Railigent X digital maintenance and fleet management systems designed to optimize availability and extend component and battery lifetimes.

The scope delivers a fully integrated, end-to-end service solution, combining preventive and corrective maintenance, comprehensive overhauls, full Entity in Charge of Maintenance responsibility, and seamless material supply, ensuring optimal train availability and consistently smooth, reliable operations.

By replacing diesel-powered rolling stock, the new hydrogen trains will contribute to a significant reduction of emissions and noise in regional rail transport, supporting Romania's long-term sustainability and climate objectives. The Mireo Plus H and the Mireo Plus B are part of Siemens Mobility's successful Mireo platform, which comprises 24 fleets and nearly 600 trains. They stand for modern technology, high energy efficiency with savings of up to 25 percent, and the advantages of a standardized vehicle platform that enables synergies and economic benefits.

Croatia

Four years of waiting are over! AŽD begins work on securing key Croatian line

Although the Czech technology company AŽD concluded a contract with HŽ Infrastruktura (Croatian Railways) in 2022 for the supply of signalling for the Hrvatski Leskovac – Karlovac project, it was not possible to start the implementation due to delays in selecting the construction contractor in a separate competition.

These complications were only resolved on April 17th, 2026, when HŽ Infrastruktura finally concluded a contract with the construction company COMSA after four years. This also paved the way for the start of work by AŽD. The original value of the contract of EUR 35 million will be increased by inflation over the last four years, and the implementation will take 36 months.

As part of the modernization of the signalling, AŽD will install fully electronic station interlocking equipment ESA 44 in Croatia, which will control railway traffic in three railway stations (Hrvatski Leskovac, Jastrebarsko, Karlovac) and in six stops.

The delivery also includes an integrated line signalling system, securing 62 switches, installing an axle counting system and equipping all mentioned railway stations and track sections with more than 200 modern LED signals. AŽD also provides the supply of 8 railway level crossing systems, point heating systems, telecommunications and modifications to existing buildings under architectural protection. AŽD will also equip the entire line (total length of 44 km) with the unified European Train Control System ETCS level L1 with the extension of one Radio Block Centre for ETCS level L2. This section is part of the pan-European corridor (Zagreb – Rijeka).

„Croatia has been in long term the one of strategic territories where our company has always wanted to supply modern railway signalling technologies. Given the pressures we faced to cancel the contract, we are very pleased that we have resisted and managed to defend this first major project and now can start its implementation. For us, the project is both the culmination of considerable effort and a great challenge to demonstrate the quality of Czech systems and the professionalism of AŽD. The trust in our company, expressed by Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and the ministers of the Croatian government when signing the contract, obliges us,“said the director of AŽD for Croatia René Šigut.

By signing the contract, AŽD confirmed its significant position in the Balkan countries, where, in addition to Croatia, it is currently implementing large-scale projects in Serbia, Montenegro and also in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Luxembourg

Alpha Trains and Rolls-Royce strengthen strategic partnership

Alpha Trains, Europe's leading private lessor of locomotives and trains, and Rolls Royce Power Systems have signed a long term framework agreement for the overhaul of mtu PowerPacks. It covers the entire operational life of Alpha Trains' diesel multiple units, all of which are powered by mtu PowerPacks from Rolls Royce. It lays the foundation for a sustainable, long term strategic partnership focused on maximizing availability, ensuring planning reliability, and supporting efficient rail operations.

mtu PowerPacks integrate the engine, power transmission and all essential auxiliary systems – including cooling and exhaust aftertreatment – into a compact, modular unit. As the central propulsion system of diesel multiple units, they are essential for reliable day to day operations. High quality overhauls ensure consistently high technical availability, thereby making a significant contribution to smooth, dependable rail services for passengers.

Optimised maintenance and long term planning reliability

By bundling the overhaul of its entire diesel fleet, which is operated by various rail companies, under a single long term framework agreement with an expanded scope of services, Alpha Trains and Rolls Royce are establishing a robust foundation for maintenance planning and fleet reliability. This partnership allows Alpha Trains to offer customers even more comprehensive and attractive leasing solutions. Moving forward, mtu PowerPack overhauls will be integrated into the company's service-oriented leasing structures to ensure maximum fleet availability. The agreement aims to align maintenance processes more closely with Alpha Trains' and its customers' requirements. A key element of this collaboration is the joint development of technical solutions to identify and prevent potential obsolescence at an early stage. Components will be made available in the long term, and this will be planned proactively.

Additionally, Rolls-Royce will be responsible for developing and delivering maintenance services for the PowerPacks, further strengthening the high standard of maintenance through the expertise of its service engineers. The agreement is a holistic partnership-based framework, with comprehensive provisions covering scheduling, warranty, spare parts supply, training for operator workshops and cost development over the entire contract term Alpha Trains' customers will benefit from this reliable, transparent structure in the long term. Another key element of the agreement is the option to operate all mtu PowerPacks of the 1800 series manufactured from 2006 onwards using HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil). This synthetic fuel, which is produced from waste and residual materials such as used cooking oils and animal by-products, can reduce CO_2 emissions by up to 90 per cent compared with conventional diesel fuel. By signing this framework agreement, Alpha Trains and Rolls Royce are marking an important milestone in their collaboration, while also contributing to the development of a more efficient and sustainable rail transport system.

Jörg Hagemeyer, Engineering Director of the Passenger division at Alpha Trains, commented: "With this framework agreement, we are sending a clear signal about the quality and high availability of our diesel multiple units. Together with Rolls Royce, we are creating a comprehensive, worry free package for our customers and operators. We are enhancing the attractiveness of our fleet and ensuring that the propulsion systems of our diesel railcars remain efficient and reliable throughout their entire service life."

Andreas Görtz, President of the Mobile & Sustainable business unit at Rolls Royce Power Systems, added: "Being a long term and reliable industrial partner for Alpha Trains is extremely important to us. Through our investments in service engineering and the introduction of EU maintenance certifications ECM 2 and ECM 4, Alpha Trains and its customers will benefit from the highest quality standards, high availability and efficient railway operations."

Romania

Alstom delivers Romania's first next generation electric locomotive for ARF, advancing sustainable rail mobility

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, has delivered the first serial Traxx Passenger electric locomotive produced for the Romanian Railway Reform Authority (ARF), marking an important milestone towards a new generation of cleaner, faster and more efficient passenger services, enabled through the contract signed with ARF in January 2024. "ARF's long-term ambition has been to modernise Romania's passenger rail services and expand sustainable, high performance mobility, and this first delivered locomotive marks an important step in making that vision a reality. We are proud to support these national goals by providing reliable, energy efficient rolling stock that will enable cleaner, faster and more dependable rail travel for passengers across the country," said Serban Iorga, Alstom Managing Director for Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova.

The Traxx Passenger locomotive has successfully completed its full testing for the market authorisation process, confirming its readiness for safe, efficient operations at speeds up to 200 km/h. The endurance testing phase for the fleet will begin in the coming weeks, in parallel with driver training, and deliveries will continue throughout 2026. This locomotive is the first unit to be delivered to ARF.

The four-axle electric locomotives come with a fully suspended drive system enabling faster long distance journeys and can tow up to 16 passenger cars, improving transport capacity. They are equipped with Alstom's state-of-the-art onboard ERTMS system for optimal efficiency and high levels of safety and security, while ensuring full interoperability. The contract for 16 Traxx locomotives includes 20-year maintenance and repair services that can be extended by a further 20 years.

Traxx locomotives have been homologated in 20 countries, covering a total annual distance of more than 300 million kilometres, with more than 3,000 units sold since the year 2000.

Alstom has maintained a strong presence in Romania for over three decades, establishing itself as a leader in railway electrification and signalling solutions that now employ over 2,000 people. The company plays a key role in delivering electrification and signalling projects along the Rhine-Danube railway corridor and in the Cluj region. The first CBTC urban signalling solution in the country is under implementation by Alstom on Bucharest's metro Line 5, to which Alstom also supplies new trains. Additionally, Alstom has provided maintenance services for the Bucharest metro fleet for over 20 years, with a current contract extending until 2036. The company's rolling stock contracts include supplying electric trains for ARF, accompanied by comprehensive maintenance services.

Poland

Alstom and Mazovian Railways signed a contract for P5 overhauls of Traxx locomotives

Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, will repair 11 Traxx locomotives from the fleet of Mazovian Railways – Poland's largest regional passenger rail operator, serving the Mazovian province, including the Warsaw metropolitan area. The repairs will be carried out in 2026–2027. Each locomotive will be covered by an 19 month warranty period from the date of acceptance by Mazovian Railways.

The scope of the P5 overhaul will include, among others, comprehensive inspections and repairs of components and assemblies in accordance with the maintenance system documentation and technical and operational documentation. This will involve detailed inspections, diagnostics and overhauls of mechanical, electrical and pneumatic systems, as well as renewal of the locomotive body paint coatings. Bogie overhauls will include the required non-destructive testing, including ultrasonic (UT) and magnetic particle (MT) tests, as well as overhauls of wheelsets. Alstom's FlexCare Perform service solutions will ensure that Mazovian Railways' Traxx locomotives operate at the highest levels of performance and availability in the years ahead.

Traxx locomotives from Alstom's portfolio are characterised by high operational performance, reliability, energy efficiency and extended maintenance intervals. They are designed on the basis of a modular platform used in both passenger and freight transport, for domestic and cross-border services, and are available in various configurations (AC, DC and multi-system).

"We are pleased that in the coming quarters we will be supporting Mazovian Railways in modernising its fleet, enabling Traxx locomotives to reliably serve the regional operator, which has been breaking passenger transport records, for many years to come. Worldwide, Alstom currently provides maintenance services for more than 2,450 locomotives, including over 600 modern multi-system Traxx locomotives. We proudly observe the growing position of Traxx locomotives on the Polish market as one of the pillars of safe, reliable and cost-effective railways, both in passenger and freight transport. In Alstom's Polish sites, we are continuously developing the value chain related to the production and maintenance of Traxx locomotives – from manufacturing key components to consistently strengthening service capabilities," emphasises Beata Rusinowicz, Managing Director of Alstom in Poland.

More than 100 Traxx locomotives are currently in operation on Polish railways. Their number will increase in the coming months, with orders currently underway for more than 60 Traxx Universal locomotives. Key locomotive components, including car bodies, are manufactured in Wrocław, highlighting the importance of Poland's industrial base in the global supply chain. The dynamic development of the locomotive market translates into growing demand from railway operators for comprehensive and professional maintenance services that ensure high fleet availability and reliability.

"Mazovian Railways are one of the leaders in the passenger rail market. Last year, a record number of passengers used our services – over 70 million. We continuously improve the quality of our transport services by investing in the purchase of modern rolling stock. In 2023–2025 alone, we signed contracts for the purchase of 101 vehicles of various types. We also focus on modernising the vehicles already in operation, including Traxx locomotives.

Thanks to them, we were the first operator in the country to launch push pull services. Locomotives play a key role in operating accelerated services on lines with high passenger volumes. The major overhaul they will soon undergo will undoubtedly contribute to improved safety and travel comfort on our trains," says Robert Stępień, CEO of Mazovian Railways.

From the Archives

Czech Republic

Class 751.004 arrives at Nedvedice with a special working on July 5th 2008.
John Sloane

From the Archives

Italy

Genova Principe Pio station on August 11th 1983 saw Class E636.367 and E646.151 waiting to depart with northbound services.
John Sloane

From the Archives

Kenya

2-8-2 No. 2910 'Galla' marshals the stock for the overnight train to Nairobi at Mombasa on July 21st 1978. *John Sloane*

From the Archives

Poland

TKt48-142 storms along with a branch train from Zagorz to Lupkow on March 13th 1984. *John Sloane*

From the Archives

Switzerland

BLS No. 195 stands at Brig with a service to Basel on August 21st 1990. *John Sloane*