

Media release

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Stadler to build new trains for the Voralpen-Express

A new generation of modern trains will be carrying passengers along the popular St. Gallen–Lucerne route when the timetable change comes around in 2019/2020. Swiss manufacturer Stadler beat the competition and secured a contract to supply 11 FLIRTs to the Schweizerische Südostbahn AG (SOB) with a total order volume of CHF 170 million. Hans Altherr, Chairman of the SOB Board of Directors, and Peter Spuhler, Group CEO and owner of Stadler, signed the contract today in Herisau.

After winning the international invitation to tender, Stadler was awarded the contract to supply the replacement vehicles for the Voralpen-Express. The older vehicles, some of which have been in service for 40 years, will be replaced with 11 new FLIRTs when the new timetable is introduced in 2019/2020. Hans Altherr, Peter Spuhler, Thomas Kuchler, CEO of SOB, and Pascal Cantin, Sales Director Switzerland at Stadler, all signed the contract for the 11 FLIRTs today in Herisau.

This is a historic moment for the SOB: “After the Federal Government and the cantons decided to replace the rolling stock in 2014, the signing of the contract today represents a further milestone. We set the bar very high with around 1500 different requirements for the new vehicles, which were specifically aimed at meeting the needs of our passengers. But we are confident that, in cooperation with our local partner, we will be able to put this new generation of high-quality vehicles into operation on schedule,” commented Hans Altherr, Chairman of the SOB Board of Directors.

“We are absolutely delighted to be given the opportunity to build the new trains for the popular St. Gallen–Lucerne route. Contributing to the success of the Voralpen-Express is something of which we are very proud. The new trains will offer passengers on this wonderful route even higher levels of comfort and a much more enjoyable travel experience,” said Peter Spuhler. He is particularly pleased that this contract offers Stadler the chance to work on the Voralpen-Express again. The company carried out a comprehensive modernisation project of the existing fleet at the end of the 1990s – and now, almost 20 years later, has been awarded the contract to replace the Voralpen-Express vehicles.

The 11 FLIRTs include six 8-carriage and five 4-carriage new-generation multiple-unit trains. Their high-quality interior has been designed to meet the requirements of the different passenger groups: commuters can find space in which to work in peace and quiet, tourists and weekend travellers can enjoy the fantastic views from the panoramic windows, skiers and cyclists can store their equipment and have something to eat and drink in the catering zones, and families can sit together in the specially designed family area.

The 8-carriage trains have 361 seats, 70 of which are in first class. There are 198 seats available in the 4-carriage trains, with 23 seats in first class. All seats have power sockets available for passengers to use. The trains have a maximum operating speed of 160 km/h.

As with all FLIRTs, these trains also include the following features as standard: stepless platform-level access, a clear and spacious interior, large multi-purpose spaces in the entrance areas and vehicle bodies made from lightweight aluminium, leading to significantly lower energy consumption and thus also substantially lower energy costs. Innovative running-gear technology ensures minimal wear as the trains travel along the winding routes of the SOB.

About the Schweizerische Südostbahn AG

The Schweizerische Südostbahn AG (SOB) is an independent rail company based in Eastern and Central Switzerland that employs around 550 staff. It is a driver of knowledge and innovation within the industry and a technology and system leader. The SOB provides support to the Federal Government and the cantons in reaching their transport goals by acting as a creative innovator and pioneer. Passenger transport represents the core business of the SOB. The company focuses on providing optimal services for its passengers, from advice in travel centres to quick and punctual connections with modern rolling stock. In recent years, the integrated rail company has optimised its operating processes, expanded its range of services and increased investment in infrastructure, rolling stock and safety.

www.sob.ch

About Stadler

Stadler has been building trains for 75 years. The system provider of rail vehicle construction solutions is headquartered in Bussnang in Eastern Switzerland, and has a workforce of around 7000 based in various locations across Switzerland, Germany, Spain, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Belarus, Algeria, Australia and the United States. Stadler provides a comprehensive range of products in the commuter rail and railway segments: trams, tram trains, underground trains, regional and commuter rail trains, intercity trains and high-speed trains. In addition, Stadler manufactures main-line dual-mode locomotives, shunting locomotives and passenger carriages, including the most powerful diesel-electric locomotive in Europe. Stadler remains the world's leading manufacturer in the rack-and-pinion rail vehicle industry.

Stadler is part of a historic event, as the longest train tunnel in the world, the Gotthard Base Tunnel, was officially opened from 1 to 5 June 2016. From 2019 onwards, the new Giruno trains produced by Stadler for the Gotthard Base Tunnel will carry passengers from Zurich to Milan, and later from Frankfurt to Milan, in record time.

More Stadler figures: the best-selling FLIRT (Fast Light Innovative Regional Train) vehicle has already sold 1200 units in a total of 17 countries. The KISS vehicle (the name is an acronym of the German for comfortable innovative speedy suburban train) is also very popular: it has sold 216 units in 6 countries. The most powerful diesel-electric locomotive in Europe, the EURO 4000, has sold 130 units in 7 countries. Additionally, Stadler Service maintains 15 vehicle fleets made up of over 300 vehicles that cover a combined annual distance of 60 million kilometres.

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