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Stadler signs contract to build and maintain 52 metro trains for Liverpool City Region

Stadler has today signed a transformative deal with Merseytravel worth up to £700 million build and maintain 52 metro trains on the Merseyrail network for the Liverpool City Region from 2020. Replacing one of the oldest fleets in the UK, the new trains will provide fully step free access for all passengers, making Merseyrail the most accessible traditional network in the UK. A new Kirkdale maintenance depot will be entirely designed, built and operated by Stadler.

Transforming rail travel

The current Merseytravel fleet is one of the oldest in the UK, with an average age of almost 40 years. This contract will entirely replace the existing fleet, making it one of the most modern in the country and transforming the passenger experience. The trains will be able to carry 60% more passengers, while retaining the same number of seats, and will cut journey times by up to 10%.

The new four-car trains will all be in service by 2021, with the first unit arriving for testing by the middle of 2019. The value of the manufacture and maintenance contracts for the 52 trains is up to £700m and Merseytravel also has the option to procure an additional 60 units of rolling stock.

The trains will have lower floors, only 960 mm above rail level, and will be entirely walk-through, increasing their capacity to 486 people (182 seated, 302 standing, and two wheelchair users). Strong but lightweight carriages, built from aluminium extrusions, mean they will be safer and more energy efficient.

The 64.98 metres long and 2.82 metres wide trains will operate on a 750V DC third rail network with a maximum speed of 75 mph (120 km/h). The units will also be equipped with batteries that allow independent movement of the units in the workshop and depot areas. The trains will be able to be retrofitted for 25 kV AC operation and ETCS Level II.

Transforming safety

The new vehicles have been designed for the specific needs of customers travelling on the Merseyrail network, with many features reflecting what people said they wanted in research done by passenger watchdog, Transport Focus, in 2013.

Providing a new level of safety, intelligent sliding steps, combined with infrastructure improvements, will virtually eliminate the gap between the platform and the train, providing step free access at all entrances. With

no 'gap to mind', the new fleet will be highly accessible for all, from wheelchair users and the elderly, to cyclists and passengers with luggage. Sensitive door sensors will detect obstructions, while door illuminations will inform passengers when it is safe to embark and alight.

On-board safety will be enhanced by open and airy compartments with no dividing doors, as well as CCTV and a transparent cabin for the driver. The trains will have wider aisles, larger vestibules at the doorways, more grab handles, making the train safer to use for standing passengers too.

All the interior fittings will be damage resistant and the exterior will be graffiti and spray paint resistant. The driver's cab offers a comfortable working environment with enhanced sight lines, an ergonomic desk arrangement and all of the functionality required for flexible, modern trains.

Transforming Stadler's presence in the UK

Through the maintenance contract, Stadler will undertake light and heavy maintenance of the units throughout their 35 year life cycle. Ensuring the highest possible availability of trains and the most efficient maintenance turnaround, Stadler will design, construct and operate a brand new, state of the art depot at Kirkdale. Stadler will also oversee the maintenance of the existing fleet, which will be carried out at the current facility in Birkenhead.

Stadler will transfer 155 maintenance workers from Merseyrail into its own operations, bringing the total number of Stadler employees in the UK to over 200 people by 2019.

Peter Jenelten, Executive Vice President and Head of Marketing & Sales of Stadler said: "This contract with Merseytravel marks a very important milestone for Stadler in the UK. It will bring safer, more comfortable trains that can carry more people and will help provide the Liverpool City Region with the metro service it deserves.

"The UK is a key part of our global strategy and this contract represents the latest step in our growth here. We have recently been successful in several high profile tenders, including the provision of 58 multiple units for the East Anglia franchise and the delivery of 17 metro trains for the Glasgow Subway, and we now look forward to working with Merseytravel to deliver its new trains on schedule."

Frank Rogers, Chief Executive of Merseytravel said: "We are very much looking forward to working with Stadler. The fleet of new trains will provide the foundations of our City Region's long term rail strategy and we anticipate our relationship with Stadler developing into a strong, enduring partnership.

Merseyrail is already high performing network and these trains, designed with local people in mind, will help support that for decades to come. The new trains will be safer and able to carry more people, more quickly and, when combined with infrastructure improvements, the new fleet will make Merseyrail the most accessible traditional network in the UK."

About the Stadler Rail Group

Established 75 years ago, headquartered in Bussnang, Switzerland and operating globally with 7,000 employees in 18 countries, Stadler is a system provider of train manufacturing and maintenance services. Stadler's range of products is comprehensive. It includes high speed trains, intercity, regional and commuter trains, trams, tram-trains and underground trains. Stadler manufactures dual mode locomotives, shunting locomotives and passenger carriages, and offers the most powerful diesel-electric locomotive in Europe. It

remains the world's leading manufacturer of rack and pinion rail vehicles. Stadler's service division maintains vehicle fleets in 16 countries.

In the UK, Stadler's Variobahn trams operate on the London Tramlink. Its Class 68 diesel locomotive is the most powerful to run in the UK, and the Class 88 dual mode locomotives are used on freight and passenger services. It has recently been awarded a contract to build electric and bi-mode multiple units for the new East Anglia franchise, part of the largest ever rolling stock procurement in the history of the UK, and is providing the vehicles for the Sheffield tram-train, the first of its kind in the UK. It is also part of the consortium supplying a new fleet of trains for the Glasgow Subway.

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