



Photo: Jürg D. Lüthard

Basel FLEXTY Trams Enter Service

On 7 November 2014 Basler Verkehrs-Betriebe (BVB) presented the first of its new metro gauge Bombardier-built trams, seven-section 5001, named „Basilisk“, to the media. The left-hand photo shows it at Wiesenplatz depot (which has been renovated, and which was reinaugurated on 18 June 2011). The tram, which arrived to Basel on 4 September, entered commercial service on 10 November 2014, on Line 8.

The contract for FLEXTY trams initially involved 60 vehicles with an option clause for a further 41, and was signed in January 2012 (see R 1/12, p. 20). Following a delay in the delivery of the trams BVB announced on 3 February 2014 that thanks to the favourable conditions of the framework contract, Bombardier would build 61 trams at the price agreed for 60 (255 million CHF, including VAT). It had been hoped that the first trams would be delivered in 2013, in readiness for the extension of Line 8 from Kleinhüningen to Weil am Rhein in Germany. However the inauguration of this extension was postponed until 14 December 2014. Operator and manufacturer agreed to have the first two FLEXTIES ready in the third quarter of 2014.

FLEXTY Trams For Wien

Following an invitation to tender in 2013, on 1 December 2014 Wiener Linien announced that it had chosen Bombardier as preferred bidder to build up to 156 low floor FLEXTY trams, the contract being worth 562 million EUR. The basic FLEXTY design will be modified according to Wiener Linien's requirements, and deliveries will run from 2018 to 2026.

The new trams will replace the ageing E2 vehicles built by SGP/Bombardier between 1978 and 1990, which mostly run in formations with C5 trailers. Wiener Linien states that part of the agreement involves a maintenance contract, under which the operator's depot staff will realise the work, but „on behalf of the manufacturer, and at the latter's risk“.

On the same day that Bombardier was announced as preferred bidder a ten-day appeal period started. During this period an appeal by Siemens (the

only other bidder in the tender) was received, so the regional administrative court is now to decide what further steps must be taken. The five-section trams, which will be 34 m long and be able to accommodate up to 211 passengers, are to be built locally at Bombardier's Wien-Donaustadt factory. More information could be not published in mid-December 2014 for legal reasons.

The deliveries of ULF trams under the original contracts are still in progress: by early December 2014 282 were in service. Ultimately there will be 131 ULF A (24.2 m long) and 201 ULF B trams (35.3 m long) in the Wiener Linien fleet, in total 332 (2 prototypes, 150 from the first order and 150 from the second order, with a further 30 as an option). Deliveries will be finished by 2017.

Authorisation for Switzerland was granted by BAV in November 2014, while authorisation for Germany was granted by TAB of Stuttgart in December 2014. The trams are designed so that in 2017, authorisation in France can be realised to enable them to use the new line to Saint-Louis.

In late November 2014 the seven-section FLEXTY 5002, named „Weil am Rhein“, entered commercial service, on Line 14. Regular deliveries, at a rate of two per month, are expected to start up in spring 2015, and to run until late 2017. By late 2017 all regular services (apart from at peak periods) on the Basel tramway network will be operated using 100% low floor trams.

The uni-directional FLEXTY Basel trams are being built at Bombardier's works in Bautzen. The BVB network is electrified at 600VDC, and the maximum permitted service speed is 65 km/h. One semi-pantograph is fitted and most of the electrical equipment is roof-mounted. The trams are designed to surmount gradients as steep as 80‰ and to negotiate curves with a minimum radius of 11.8 m.

Two types are being provided, the first batch of 61 consisting of 44 seven-section and 17 five-section trams. Initially all seven-section trams will be

delivered. The latter are 42.9 m long, weigh 42.6 t tare and are rated at 8 x 120 kW (a Bo'2'Bo'Bo' axle arrangement). There are eight pairs of entrance doors, 83 seats and space for up to 174 standees at a density of four per m².

The five-section trams are 31.6 m long, weigh 40.9 t tare, are rated at 4 x 105 kW and have a Bo'2'Bo' axle arrangement. There are six pairs of entrance doors, 56 seats and space for up to 127 standees at a density of four per m². Both types of vehicle are 2,300 mm wide and 3,700 mm high above rail top (with lowered pantographs). The wheels have a diameter of



Photo: Jürg D. Lüthard

600 mm when new, wearing to a minimum of 520 mm.

There was an official inauguration of the Line 8 extension into Germany on 12 December 2014, with regular passenger services starting up on the 14th. The 2.6 km extension has two stops on the Swiss side of the border and three in Germany. On 29 September 2014 test running started, as shown in the lower photo, where Type Be 4/4 tram 489 has just crossed from Germany to Switzerland on Hiltalingerstrasse, returning from Weil am Rhein. The border checkpoint is visible in the background.

Vit Hinčica



Photo: BVB



Wiener Linien