

UITP exhibition in Geneva: alternative drives in focus

A trolleybus next to large Stadler posters? A low-floor articulated bus with pantograph, but without overhead wire? Such unfamiliar, though not entirely unexpected, sights were on display at the Mobility and City Transport Exhibition which traditionally accompanies the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) World Congress that takes place every two years. Following the 2011 congress in Dubai, about 2100 participants from 78 countries met this time in Geneva, Switzerland. One focus at the show, which covered two exhibition halls, was on buses with alternative drive systems. Rail traffic played a subordinate role, although Alstom was represented with two modules of a new tram for Nantes. Hidden under a black cloth, AnsaldoBreda displayed the mock-up of a coach for the Honolulu Metro; the presentation did not take place until the close of the second day of the three-day exhibition.

Stadler presented the mock-up for the Berlin S-Bahn which had already been shown in Berlin. More interesting was a trolleybus built in Minsk, on display at the second Stadler stand – in the exhibition hall dedicated to buses. The Swiss manufacturer has started a joint venture in Belarus with Belkommunmash, a domestic manufacturer of electric public transport vehicles (buses and trams), in which Stadler holds the majority share. According to Stadler, the products built there are mostly intended for the CIS market, although data sheets are

also available in German. An assembly plant outside Minsk is under construction and is to start operation at the end of 2013. The 24 double-deck trains for the Russian Aeroexpress will be built there, but half the proceeds are expected to accrue in Switzerland.

ABB and the Swiss bus manufacturer Hess introduced their electrically powered articulated bus TOSA (Trolleybus Optimisation System Alimentation). The power comes from charging stations which were specially set up outside the exhibition and at Geneva Airport in order to offer a timetabled shuttle service on the approximately two-kilometre-long route. At the airport the bus supercapacitor was charged for about two minutes and at the exhibition for 15 seconds only. In order to limit the power peak for the public grid while charging, a supercap is also integrated in the charging station itself.

At Bombardier the buzz word was "Primove"; this system of wireless power transmission has already been presented in Railway Update (9-10/2012, p. 150). In recent promotional literature Bombardier has shifted the focus from inductive power transmission to the on-board batteries, which are described as being particularly light and powerful. Siemens also presented electric buses; in Vienna the commissioning of a fleet of twelve electric medium-size ("midi") buses for two inner-city lines is in progress.

Hybrid and fuel-cell buses were of course also on display. Despite continuous progress it will probably take quite some time before any of these new drive systems becomes established on a grand scale. (lüt/mr)

No more Suissetraffic trade fairs

The Suissetraffic trade fairs, which took place in Bern in 2009 and 2011 and were organised by Bernexpo AG, were meant to provide a platform for the Swiss railway industry in particular. The third edition of this event in 2013 was to have taken place as part of the Geneva UITP Congress. However, there was no evidence in Geneva this year that the traditional exhibition accompanying the UITP Congress had anything to do with Suissetraffic. And it's more or less common knowledge that in 2015 there won't be a Suissetraffic either. For the exhibitors the returns did not justify the effort – despite some positive reports, there was insufficient public interest. None the less, the Swiss industry with its Swissrail trade association used the chance to show its presence in Geneva with a large joint stand. And as the 2015 UITP Congress will be held in Milan, this will be a further chance for a prominent display not far from the Swiss border. Thereafter, Swissrail hopes to find a fresh format at a new location. (mr)



Above: Geneva Public Transport has ordered 33 "ExquiCity" dual-axle-drive trolleybuses from Van Hool/Belgium; the first was on display in Geneva (photo: M. Rellstab).

Below: Several metres of rail were laid for the presentation of the Alstom tram for Nantes (photo: M. Rellstab).



Above: The trolleybus "Vitovt Max Duo 43303A", built in Minsk with diesel auxiliary drive, at the Stadler stand. However, there is no evidence of the Swiss manufacturer on the bus itself (photo: J. Lüthard).

Below: The prototype of the TOSA articulated bus from ABB/Hess at the Geneva Airport charging station (photo: M. Rellstab).

