

Media release

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Green rail transport in Austria: Stadler wins a contract for battery-powered trains

Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) has awarded Stadler a framework agreement for up to 120 battery-powered trains. The FLIRT Akku vehicles are designed to replace the current diesel fleet and will enable sustainable operation on lines that are only partially electrified. The signing of the framework agreement and the initial order for 16 FLIRT battery is expected to take place in autumn 2023. This contract and the recent successes in the USA, Germany and Italy once again confirm Stadler's leading position in battery and hydrogen green propulsion technology.

"If we are to meet the climate targets, rail transport in turn must become even more sustainable. That is why Stadler has invested heavily in green propulsion solutions to replace diesel fleets and has established its position as a leading provider of sustainable rail transport in recent years – both in Europe and the USA. We are delighted to be working with ÖBB to drive forward the decarbonisation of rail transport in Austria," says Peter Spuhler, Chairman of Stadler's Board of Directors.

The new trains are FLIRT Akku vehicles – the battery-powered version of Stadler's best-selling FLIRT model, which has already sold over 2,500 units worldwide. They are intended for use in the eastern region in Austria, where they will replace the current diesel fleet. The FLIRT Akku model allows sustainable rail operation on non-electrified line sections by charging the traction batteries while travelling under an overhead contact line.

Stadler: an innovative decarbonisation partner

Rail transport is the most sustainable mobility solution of all. Shifting passenger and freight transport to rail therefore plays a central role in combating climate change. However, the rail networks in many countries are only partially electrified or not electrified at all – as is the case in Austria. Stadler has consistently expanded its alternative propulsion portfolio in recent years and is currently assisting rail operators worldwide with the decarbonisation of rail transport. Depending on the area of application, Stadler offers its customers tailor-made solutions with battery, hydrogen or even hybrid propulsion.

Battery-powered FLIRT Akku: the world record-beating train

Stadler has more than 80 years of experience in the construction of battery-powered rail vehicles. Its modern battery-powered vehicles can run both with and without overhead contact lines, and can be recharged during operation or even when braking. The FLIRT Akku is the battery-operated version of Stadler's FLIRT model. The vehicle has an operating range of around 100 kilometres. This means that the regional train can be battery operated on almost all of the non-electrified routes in Austria, for example. After successfully covering 224 kilometres in battery-only mode, the FLIRT Akku holds the world record for the longest journey travelled by a regional train in battery-only mode without additional charging. As well as delivering new trains for ÖBB, Stadler

is also supplying 55 FLIRT Akku vehicles for the Schleswig-Holstein local transport network, 44 trains for the Palatinate network and 14 trains for Deutsche Bahn's H-Netz. The vehicles for Schleswig-Holstein are currently undergoing approval tests and will start passenger service later this year. In addition, Stadler is also manufacturing six FLIRT Akku for the Lithuanian rail operator LTG Link.

Sustainable hydrogen propulsion

In addition to battery-powered trains, Stadler is also pushing ahead with the development of rail vehicles that run on hydrogen. These allow low-emission rail operation, especially on lines without an overhead contact line. Stadler designed and built the first multiple unit with hydrogen propulsion for SBCTA in California (USA). After a successful test phase this spring, the vehicle is due to start operating in 2024. Stadler is also supplying the world's first narrow-gauge trains with hydrogen propulsion for the Italian regions of Calabria and Sardinia.

About Stadler

Stadler has been building trains for over 80 years. The provider of mobility solutions in rail vehicle construction, service and signalling technology has its headquarters in Bussnang, eastern Switzerland. It has a workforce of around 13,500 based in various production and engineering locations as well as more than 70 service locations. The company is conscious of its social responsibility for sustainable mobility and therefore stands for innovative, sustainable and durable quality products. The product range in the field of mainline railways and city transport includes high-speed trains, intercity trains, regional and suburban trains, metros, tramways and trams. Stadler also manufactures main-line locomotives, shunting locomotives and passenger carriages. It is the world's leading manufacturer in the rack-and-pinion rail vehicle industry.

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