

Strong demand for HESS trolleybuses and e-buses

HESS, the Swiss bus manufacturer, has received a strong intake of new orders. The latest example is from VBZ, the public transport operator for the city of Zurich. In the next few years they will be replacing their fleet of trolleybuses. After an international call for tenders, HESS was awarded the contract, which is worth a total of about 330 million Swiss francs. It was only a few weeks ago that the French cities of Nancy and Clermont-Ferrand plus the Austrian city of Salzburg had ordered e-buses from HESS, while last spring it was the Swiss cities of Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds.

The first delivery for VBZ comprises 13 articulated battery-powered trolleybuses and 13 HESS lighTram® bi-articulated battery-powered trolleybuses. The new HESS lighTram® buses will be running on VBZ routes from 2024. In subsequent years there are plans for up to a further 140 vehicles, i.e. 85 lighTram® 19 DC and 55 lighTram® 25 DC buses. The contract also includes part of the preventive maintenance of the vehicles by HESS.

The new vehicles require less energy and will allow further diesel routes to be operated electrically. They are recharged during the journey under the existing overhead lines without loss of time. The innovative energy management system allows the integrated optimisation of all energy consumption on board the vehicles. Having everything from a single source guarantees the customer maximum flexibility in the event of changing conditions over the long service life of the vehicles.

The new design increases the attraction of public road transport both in terms of the image of the city and during use. The internal layout facilitates an efficient flow of passengers and generous standing areas by doors 2, 3 and 4.



Picture caption: Design study for the VBZ bi-articulated e-bus / Source: HESS

These benefits helped HESS to win new orders this year in other cities:

Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds:	18 lighTram® ^{19 DC}	(DC stands for dynamic charging on the overhead line)
Nancy (FR):	25 lighTram® ^{25 DC}	
Brisbane (AUS):	60 lighTram® ^{25 TOSA}	(TOSA stands for power supply optimisation with flash charging along the route)
Clermont-Ferrand (FR):	40 lighTram® ^{19 TOSA}	
Salzburg (AT):	8 lighTram® ^{19 DC}	

HESS currently employs 650 people and trains 47 apprentices in 12 different professions. To meet the high demand, HESS will start a new additional plant in Porto (Portugal) in December 2022.

HESS has established itself as a pioneer in bus construction when it comes to **design, quality** and **reliability**. The environmentally friendly HESS buses improve the quality of life in cities and agglomerations, which is why public transport companies in Switzerland, Europe and overseas have been relying on the bus solutions from Bellach for many years. The **CO-BOLT® modular system** has been developed over the decades and is used to build means of transport that are precisely tailored to their area of use. The electric buses in the "**lighTram®**" family are available with a total length of between 10.7 m and 24.7 m and are testament to the leading technical role played by HESS in this area.

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