



LGV Rhin-Rhône Ready For Inauguration

On 11 December 2011 the LGV Rhin-Rhône, the seventh part of France's domestic high speed network, is scheduled for inauguration. The line is 137.8 km long, linking Dijon with Mulhouse, and journey time between this pair of cities will be reduced to 65 minutes. The line also opens up new high speed service possibilities, an east to west one between Paris, Dijon, Besançon, Belfort, Mulhouse, Basel and Zürich, and a south to north route between Marseille/Montpellier, Lyon, Dijon, Strasbourg and Frankfurt.

The Marseille - Frankfurt services will start up in spring 2012, but from 11 December 2011 there will be six train pairs daily between Paris, Basel and Zürich, operated by the SNCF-SBB joint venture TGV Lyria. The latter is to use 13 of the 55 third-generation Duplex 2N2 trains which SNCF ordered from Alstom (see R 3/11, p. 34). Of these trains, 30 will be fitted with the French, Luxembourg, German, and Swiss ATP systems (see R 4/10, p. 24). Although they are actually DASyEs equipped for international operation, Ten will be fitted to run in both France and Spain, able to operate off 3 kV DC and equipped with the Spanish ASFA ATP, and fifteen more will be used only in

France. Branded Euroduplex by SNCF, these Duploxes are still being built, which means that until all are delivered in 2014 they will work this service together with the single deck TGV-POS trains. It is estimated that about 12 million passengers will use the LGV Rhin-Rhône annually.

The LGV Rhin-Rhône will eventually comprise three branches, forming a Y lying on its side. A north to east chord is to be built from Montbéliard to Genlis near Dijon, and a south to east chord from near Lyon to Genlis. These are still at the project stage, and will take many years to complete. Construction of the first section of the 2.312 billion EUR eastern arm began in 2006, and was financed by the French Government (751 million EUR), Réseau Ferré de France (642 million), the EU (200 million), Switzerland (66 million), and by the Regions of Bourgogne (131 million), Franche-Comté (316 million) and Alsace (206 million).

13 viaducts, one 1,970 m tunnel and 160 bridges were built and in total 600 km of rail were laid. There are two additional sections of line planned on the eastern arm: an extension from Luttenbach to Petit-Croix (35 km), to the southeast of Belfort, is to be inaugurated in 2016, and a 25 km line from Genlis to Villiers les Pots, near



Dijon. A new interchange station has been built at Belfort-Montbéliard, 15 km from Montbéliard and 12 km from Belfort. Connecting trains from the Biel and Jura regions in Switzerland will stop at platforms immediately above the high speed line (see left-hand photo, the bridge with the station buildings on it) and 20 km of the old line between Delle and Belfort-Montbéliard, closed to passengers in 1992, are being revived and re-electrified. Completion of this project is scheduled for 2015, and this line is expected to carry as many as 800,000 passengers per year. There is one other intermediate station on the eastern arm of the LGV Rhin-Rhône, at Besançon Franche-Comté.

In July 2010 the pre-series third-generation Duplex, 4701, visited Switzerland for tests (see R 4/10, p. 24), and it paid another visit to the latter country in October 2011, accompanied by the other pre-series train, 4702, for authorisation procedures. Between Grenchen-Süd and Solothurn and

between Sion and Sierré overhead wire/pantograph interactions under type F and types N and M catenary were tested with the trains running in multiple. The right-hand photo shows both trains, 4701 and 4702, at Uvrier, running from Sion to Sierré on 21 October 2011.

On 13 October 2011 a TGV 2N2 was presented to the public at Frankfurt am Main Hbf. to publicise the new direct Frankfurt - Marseille service which is to be introduced on 23 March 2012, via Mannheim, Karlsruhe, Baden-Baden, Strasbourg, Mulhouse, Belfort, Besançon, Chalon-sur-Saône, Macon, Lyon, Avignon and Aix-en-Provence. The southbound train will leave Frankfurt at 14.01 and arrive in Marseille at 21.45. Northbound it will depart from Marseille at 08.14 and arrive at Frankfurt at 15.58. Moreover, the TGV 2N2s will be used on the Frankfurt - Saarbrücken - Paris line, thus offering about 100 seats more than offered now by the TGV POS.

Armin Schmutz



Photo: Leoš Novotný

WESTBahn Approaching Reality - Fast!

Austria is poised to follow in the footsteps of the Czech Republic (see pp. 18 - 20 of this number), with an open access passenger operator making its debut. The upper photo shows part of the WESTBahn team on 19 August 2011 during a small ceremony held to commemorate the first arrival of the KISS EMU, 4010 001, at Wien Westbahnhof, during the series of first test runs

undertaken with the first two trains in Austria (see R 4/11, p. 70). Second from the left is Stefan Wehinger, CEO of the company.

WESTBahn has released photos of the passenger accommodation, so we can offer readers two views of the train's interior. The upper right-hand view is of the upper deck, fitted with seats by the Barcelona-based manufacturer Fainsa, while the lower right-hand photo shows the lower deck bistro.



Photo: WESTBahn

On 29 August 2011 4010 003 arrived in Austria, running as special working SLP 17599 from Buchs (SG) to Innsbruck Hbf. The fourth KISS reached the WESTBahn depot in Linz in mid-September, so that leaves only three more to arrive, scheduled for November. Class 4010 certification is running according to schedule and is expected to be granted in November. Construction of the WESTBahn depot and works in Linz, on LogServ premises, was completed in summer 2011, and



Photo: WESTBahn

the complex has since been in use as a home for the new EMUs.

Jaromír Pernička