press release

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Luxembourg/Cologne, 4 January 2022

Climate-friendly and sustainable mobility

State-of-the-art battery-powered trains expand Alpha Trains fleet

- Battery-powered trains leased for first time
- 31 vehicles leased to Niederbarnimer Eisenbahn GmbH long-term
- Operation in East Brandenburg network for Verkehrsverbund Berlin Brandenburg

Alpha Trains is among the first lessors in Europe to offer battery-powered trains on lease – once again playing a pioneering role in providing 'green' mobility concepts. The 31 battery-electric Siemens Mireo Plus B multiple units are not only a welcome addition to the existing fleet of the Luxembourg-based lessor – they also send out a strong signal for sustainability.

Niederbarnimer Eisenbahn GmbH (NEB) will lease the vehicles, which are financed by the Alpha Trains Group, and intends to operate them on ten lines in East Brandenburg between Berlin and the Polish border. Operations are planned to begin at the end of 2024, which means Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg (VBB) will be deploying battery-hybrid multiple units on its routes for the first time.

Apart from the KfW IPEX-Bank and Nord/LB, the European Investment Bank (EIB) is also involved in financing the multiple units and the project fully meets its sustainability targets. The project is also being supported by the European Commission via the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for transportation projects, which is also supplemented by funds from the European NER300 programme.

These state-of-the-art multiple units draw the electricity needed to charge their lithium-ion batteries from the overhead lines along the electrified sections of track as well as from recovered braking energy. On routes where the external power supply ceases, the vehicles utilise the energy from their charged batteries, which provide a range of more than 90 km. Additional charging stations will be built along the routes in order to fully secure operations going forward. The power drawn from the electrified lines and the charging stations will be generated entirely from renewable sources and the trains will run on a carbon-neutral basis. The new multiple units are expected to save more than four million litres of diesel fuel per year, thus reducing local carbon emissions by more than 11,000 tonnes and making an important contribution to minimising particulate matter emissions.

The NEB was already awarded the transport contract put out to tender by Verkehrsverbund Berlin Brandenburg (VBB) in June 2021, following a Europe-wide tendering process. In addition to the competitive leasing concept and the eco-friendly drive technology, the new battery-powered vehicles also provide extra space as well as greater comfort and convenience for passengers. The additional seating and increased frequency make them particularly attractive for commuters. Based on a commitment to continued use provided by the public transport authorities, these innovative vehicles will enhance the quality of transport on the East Brandenburg network until the end of 2048.

Shaun Mills, CEO of the Alpha Trains Group comments: “Alpha Trains offers solutions that are both sustainable and affordable. The battery-electric trains for NEB are the best example: competitive leasing offers and eco-friendly propulsion systems are key factors in driving the transition to green mobility forward.”

“We are proud that Niederbarnimer Eisenbahn GmbH, which has been our customer for many years, has placed its trust in us to support them with our experience, technical expertise and passion in this ambitious, forward-looking project,” says **Thomas Schmidt, Managing Director of Alpha Trains Europa GmbH**.

“The purchase of 31 battery-electric trains for the East Brandenburg network is a major step towards zero-emission mobility. We are pleased to be pursuing this new technology in the transport transition together with our long-standing partner Alpha Trains,” **says Detlef Bröcker, Managing Director of Niederbarnimer Eisenbahn**.

EIB Vice-President Ambroise Fayolle welcomes the exemplary green transport project: “We are pleased to be able to take such a big step on the road to carbon-neutral regional transport in the surrounding area of Berlin. Attractive regional trains are essential for the transition to climate-friendly mobility as they encourage commuters to switch from road to rail, thus avoiding the CO2 emissions and congestion caused by the use of private transport.”

European Commissioner for Transport Adina Vălean said: “Solutions such as innovative regional railways that combine the use of overhead contact lines and battery power are helping to make rail transport in Europe even more sustainable. As this initiative demonstrates, by combining EIB loans and Connecting Europe Facility funds, we can maximise the impact of our investments in achieving this objective.”

About Alpha Trains
Alpha Trains is the leading rolling stock lessor in Europe. 130 employees from 17 countries work in offices in Luxembourg, Antwerp, Cologne, Madrid and Paris. Alpha Trains owns more than 900 locomotives and passenger trains and offers tailor-made leasing solutions, comprehensive know-how in maintenance and vehicle repairs as well as long-term experience in the financing of new build projects. Alpha Trains' fleets are in use by many public and private operators in 19 European countries. Alpha Trains' shareholders are APG, Arcus European Trains, PGGM and Swiss Life.

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