

Siemens Mobility to retrofit the Belgian Railways train fleet with ETCS Level 2 technology

- Siemens Mobility to retrofit 305 Siemens Desiro commuter trains, 64 M6 steering cars and 21 I11 steering cars supplied by Bombardier/Alstom
- The Belgian Railways fleet will now meet the latest European standards baseline V3.6.0 for rail safety interoperability
- Siemens Mobility will provide 10 years of maintenance for ETCS system

Siemens Mobility has been awarded a contract by NMBS/SNCB, the Belgian National Railways, to retrofit 390 trains and steering cars with European Train Control System (ETCS) Level 2 technology. With the ETCS Level 2 upgrade, the fleet will be able to operate with a greater degree of efficiency and meet the latest European standards for rail safety interoperability. Siemens Mobility will provide the onboard unit equipment and installation support for trains across the fleet. The new technology will not only support the existing national functions in Belgium and Luxembourg, the re-authorisation of a number of the retrofitted vehicles will also allow the vehicles to potentially operate in Germany and the Netherlands. In addition, Siemens Mobility will provide 10 years of maintenance for the ETCS system and will also provide an Online Key Management Solution which will further digitalize train operation.

“We are excited to once again partner with the Belgian Railways to help modernize their rail operations. Our sophisticated and field proven ETCS products and applications will improve safety and increase capacity,” said Andre Rodenbeck, CEO of Rail Infrastructure at Siemens Mobility. “Furthermore, this project is another important step in transforming the European railway towards a harmonized and interoperable system that safely paves the way for cross border rail transportation.”

The retrofitting of the fleet will be carried out through a comprehensive approach that includes the design of a vehicle-specific system integration concept. Where feasible, essential parts of the existing ETCS onboard unit equipment will be maintained. Siemens Mobility has already equipped the Desiro trains in the fleet with a previous version of the Trainguard ETCS Level 1 solution. This approach will also enable the upgrade of the Alstom based ETCS on-board solutions that were equipped on the I11 and M6-style steering cars supplied by Bombardier. Siemens Mobility will initially retrofit and re-authorize a prototype of each vehicle type.

By investing in the ETCS Level 2 upgrade, the Belgian Railways will meet the latest European standards baseline V3.6.0 for rail safety. The new system will also simplify future upgrades to the next ETCS versions according to TSI standards (Technical Specifications for Interoperability), which provides the basis for additional functionalities like Automatic Train Operation (ATO).

With its decision to opt for ETCS, Europe has paved the way for futureproof, cross-border rail traffic. Promoted by political leaders and driven by railway operators and leading providers such as Siemens, a network of ETCS-equipped lines is being created within Europe and beyond. In parallel to new construction projects, many railway companies are refitting their railway vehicles and fleets with ETCS onboard solutions. As one of the ETCS pioneers, Siemens Mobility has already implemented retrofit projects in several countries, including Switzerland, Great Britain, and Spain.

Siemens Mobility has been a leading rail technology provider in Belgium for many years. This includes several rail infrastructure projects in signalling, electrification, and solutions to digitalize rail. Siemens Mobility has also previously partnered with the Belgian Railways to deliver new trains and locomotives, provide route guidance and signalling for workshops as well as solutions to facilitate the passenger journey.

This press release is available at <https://sie.ag/3mepDOp>

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