

TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 64 No. 765

April 2025



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*NESA No. 5
The Erzberg Trolley-trucks
Naryn*

TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the
British Trolleybus Society

No. 765. April 2025

Editor: Dave Chick

23 Pryor Close, Purley on Thames,
Berkshire RG31 6UG
editor@britishtrolley.org.uk

Assistant Editor: Dave Hall

9 Hanover Court, Fieldfare,
Swindon SN3 5BG
wiltshireman@aol.com

Production Editor:

Peter Braybrooke

6 Tubbenden Lane, Orpington,
Kent BR6 9PN
prodeditor@britishtrolley.org.uk

Preservation News Editor:

Jody White

20 Cunningham Crescent,
Chatham, Kent ME5 0ES
museumnews@britishtrolley.org.uk

World News Editor: Colin Page

worldnews@britishtrolley.org.uk

Distribution: Derek Pearson

25 Caldbeck Drive, Woodley,
Berkshire RG5 4LA
distribution@britishtrolley.org.uk

Subscriptions and

Membership: Paul Dicken

8 Glan Llyn, Llanfairpwll,
Ynys Môn LL61 5YX
secretary@britishtrolley.org.uk

Website:

<https://www.britishtrolley.org.uk>

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BTS NOTICE BOARD

Reading Meetings

Held at the Reading District Oddfellows' Hall, 118b Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7NQ. Admission: Adults £3.00, Juniors £1.50. Non-members £4.00. Meetings commence at 19.30. Organised by the BTS. NTA members welcome.

Meetings Organiser Graham Bilbé, 12 Belle Avenue, Reading RG6 7BL. Email grahamebilbe@btinternet.com

Friday 2 May 2025. Graham Bilbé presents a selection of very interesting black and white transport related photos.

London Meetings

Held at The Model Railway Club, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA (nearest Underground station: King's Cross). See meeting details for start time. Organised by the NTA. BTS members welcome.

Meetings Organiser John Parkin, 59 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton SM5 2QA. Email trolleybus654@aol.com.

Wednesday 16 April 2025 (Meeting starts at 19.00)

Martin Eady shows films including Esslingen, Essen, Coimbra, Porto, Innsbruck, EATM and Transperience then John Parkin shows films including Derby and Cardiff, France including Limoges, Grenoble, Nancy and Marseilles, plus Sandtoft

Wednesday 21 May 2025 From Diddlers to Q1s – London Trolleybuses on film.

West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTTC meetings on the second Wednesday of each month (not August) at Bradmore Community Centre, Wolverhampton. Start 19.30, finish 21.45. At half-time we have a break with tea/coffee/biscuits! Visitor entry £3. Full details of upcoming talks are on the website <https://westmidlandstransportcircle.wordpress.com/>

Wednesday 9 Apr 2025 P Jones presents 'Sentinel Steam Vehicles' on DVD.

Wednesday 14 May 2025 K Hodgkins (Black Country Society) – subject to be advised

Monthly Prize Draw Winners

£50 Keith Manning, Knaresborough
£40 Francis Terry, Oundle
£30 Chris Williams, Southampton

New Members

We welcome Oliver King from Reading.



The last journey of Ostrava's four Solaris Trollino 15AC 15m trolleybuses was 3602 on 17 February. No. 3604, seen closely followed by Škoda 26 Tr/Solaris on Českobratrská on 10 April 2013, is to be transferred to the operator's museum collection.
[DG Chick]

Trolleybus Statistics

Trolley:motion is a non-profit association which promotes the conservation, development and expansion of electrical bus systems as well as the further development of the trolleybus system.

The organisation compiles an annual survey and publishes data on trolleybus systems worldwide.

Trolley:motion reports that at the end of 2024 the number of trolleybus operators around the world remained static, at 257. The number of trolleybuses in the EU (plus Switzerland and Norway, a total of 27 member countries plus the two non-member countries) remained constant at around 4,800 units. The share of battery-powered trolleybuses has increased again and now accounts for 38% of the total number of trolleybuses in the EU. The number of new vehicles put into service in 2024 rose to a record high of 372 units. In the last 15 years, the number of new

vehicles has only exceeded 300 twice, in 2020 (316 units) and 2014 (324 units).

Solaris provided 63% of the trolleybuses put into service in 2024, while SOR took second place last year with 110 units delivered (30%). With 27 units entering service in 2024, Hess retained third place in the delivery ranking.

Out of the 372 trolleybuses entering service in the 27 countries in 2024, only 12 had no battery. The majority of vehicles (59%) were 12m rigid.

The total number of trolleybuses worldwide has fallen to around 22,100 units. The number of operators has been calculated as 257, assuming that North Korea has ten operators, although the exact number could not be determined. The number of trolleybuses is based on the entries on the transphoto.org/ website which lists the fleet of individual tram and trolleybus companies.



Solaris provided almost two-thirds of the new trolleybuses in the EU last year. Saint-Étienne 153, one of 23 Solaris Trollinos purchased in 2019 - 2021 to renew and revitalise the system, is seen on 16 September 2024.
[Tim Hall]

Sixty Years Ago: NESA (Copenhagen) No.5 returning to the UK on 5 April 1965. By Tony Belton

Well known enthusiast Don Jones visited the defunct Copenhagen trolleybus system in the summer of 1964. Whilst visiting the former trolleybus depot he found in a corner, waiting to be scrapped, No.5, a 1927 Garrett which had been converted to one-man operation in 1950 and withdrawn in 1960. Don returned from his holidays and contacted me to discuss the possibilities of purchasing the vehicle to add to our growing fleet of preserved trolleybuses. We decided to draft a letter of intent and posted it to:

**NORDSJÆLLANDS ELEKTRICITETS OG
SPORVEJS AKTIESELSKAB**



**The North Zealand Electricity & Tramway Co., Limited,
102, Strandvejen, Hellerup, Copenhagen, DENMARK**

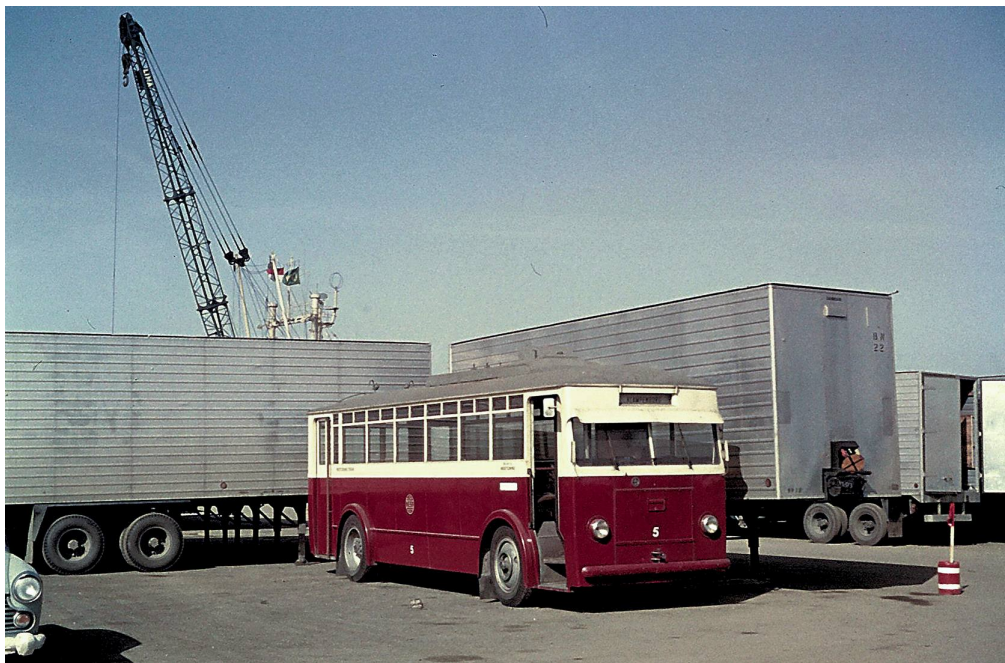
A reply came very quickly explaining that: "We want to point out that the present look of the vehicle deviates considerably from the original one owing to the rebuilding which took place in about 1950 when the buses were changed from two-man operated to one-man

operated. The conversion comprised installation of pneumatic doors, extension of the body before the front axle, total replacement of front axle and steering gear, and installation of air-brakes on both axles substituting the original mechanical foot-brake which only worked on the rear axle".

Following lengthy discussions with NESA, the vehicle was very kindly presented to us, the delay allegedly being due to the fact that No.5 had to be purchased back from the scrap dealers first!

The next step was to arrange the shipping back to the UK; the first two estimates we received for the trip from Copenhagen to Harwich were £184 and £384, which was a huge amount in those days! Quite by chance the head of the third firm I phoned, Mann & Co (London) Ltd, was a vintage car enthusiast and was sympathetic to our cause and agreed to ship No.5 for £75 which Don was only too pleased to pay.

**Number 1 in the charts was
Concrete & Clay by Unit 4 Plus 2**





Page 63: No.5 arrived at Harwich Docks in the very early hours of 5 April 1965 so we were unable to see it being unloaded, which was a shame. However, it was parked neatly on the quayside waiting for us. Don was absolutely over the moon when he saw No.5 as the last time he had seen the trolleybus it was stripped of many items and looked unkempt; but now all parts had been replaced and it looked splendid.

[Tony Belton]

Above: With KJH 900 now attached to NESA 5 we are about to depart for its new temporary home at Ernie Quinten's yard in Uxbridge.

[Tony Belton]

Below: On the way to London we took a break at the "Wayfarer's Rest". The tow so far had been very challenging due to No.5 being left hand drive! This made it very difficult for both drivers, especially the one being towed who had to struggle to keep the vehicle straight and always lined up with KJH 900.

[Don Jones]



Erzberg's Trolley-trucks

Words and photographs by Francis Terry

I was part of a group that was given a specially detailed tour of the installations at Erzberg, guided by the head traction engineer.

The vehicles are not really what we would call trolleybuses, more a kind of giant electric dumper truck, though they have poles and draw current from standard Kummner + Matter overhead.

They have low-powered diesel engines for manoeuvring, but their purpose is to lift 100 tonne payloads of iron ore from the 'benches' in the opencast mine up to the washery. The freight trolleys, as we heard them described, also convey waste material from excavations, uphill to a huge dumping area which is steadily infilling the adjacent valley. We were taken to the trolley route aboard an enormous dump truck fitted with an enclosed seating area and an external viewing platform. Our photographs of the 'trolleys' were therefore taken from about 20' up.

We followed the two main trolley routes, pausing at key points for

photos of passing vehicles. In all there are 4.7km of overhead rated at 900v, traversing a maximum 10% gradient.

The trolleys were introduced in 2020 and are reckoned to be far more economic than gas-guzzling diesels.

We also had a visit to the former underground mines, riding aboard a narrow-gauge train hauled by a small electric loco with pantograph. It was built by Karl Goldeband of Vienna in 1942, with electrics by Brown Boveri-Werke AG.

Background. The Erzberg is the largest opencast mine in Central Europe and a central part of the Iron Route. Rock has been produced at this Austrian mine for more than 1300 years. A total of 12 million tons of rock is produced annually in the multi-level mine using state-of-the-art technology. The annual quantity of 3.2 million tons of pure iron ore is shipped to Voestalpine AG, based in Linz and Donawitz.

Right: The current collection gear.

Page 67: A freight trolley hauls a full load uphill.





Kyrgyzstan's Trolleybuses Part 2 Naryn

Article and photographs by Lars F. Richter

Following our visit to Bishkek we travelled to Naryn by taxi for five hours, including a breakfast stop and a short break near the summit of 3,000 metres; it is cold and full of snow up there in October! There were splendid views along the way. We went straight to the depot and noticed that the gate was locked (and we had not seen any trolleybuses on the road).

An old man with a plank approached the gate and it turned out that he had the phone number of the boss. What luck for us! With almost no wait (he appeared in his car very quickly) we got shown round the very small and cramped depot which has a tiny workshop building which is unfinished and thus completely unused and all the vehicles just sit in the open. We saw the latest additions to the fleet (from Bishkek – everything they have is from Bishkek) but some (most) of the newer vehicles will need some attention before they can be used. Many retired vehicles also fill up the space.

Why was the service not running? The week before the substation had developed a fault and no electricity was available. A specialist from Russia was working on it (we were told) but it would not be ready in time before we had to leave the next day.

Naryn is a nice small town but there is not much going on there, so we had only planned one night in an apartment (we mostly stayed in apartments during our whole trip). There are plenty of trolleybuses, but we understand that when they run only one or two vehicles are used. They did receive 5 new battery buses in July and we did spot only two of them running on two lines but it took forever for them to appear and just by observing the scene at the eastern trolleybus terminus

(which was locked with a chain) one could clearly see that people just take the minibuses (marshrutkas) and even taxis (they seem to offer shared rides, people even tried to hail our Bishkek taxi). These appear every few minutes.

I wish that we had been able to see how busy the trolleybuses can get there. To be honest, we are not sure that the trolleybuses are really needed (the replacement buses go beyond the wires of course and this way they manage to have two lines serving different outlying areas) and they need to invest a lot of money into the depot and the vehicles as well. We only saw two of the battery buses during our brief stay (the next day a third one was parked in the depot but we are not sure if two were running that day – yes, we returned for more photos as the sun was different allowing different angles. We did not find out where the other buses were (maybe there is a charging location somewhere). We ran into a tram enthusiast from Russia in the depot on day 2 who was taking photos (they have since appeared on transphoto.org). We may return one day if the trolleybuses are running. Note (from December 2024): service has not resumed yet (will it ever?)

Part 1 of Lars' series of articles about his October 2024 visit with friends to see the trolleybuses of Kyrgyzstan appeared in the February edition of Trolleybus. Sadly, their hope to see trolleybuses running here will not be realised. In World News this month we report that the system has been officially declared as closed, although it is likely that trolleybuses last ran here in May 2024.

This series will continue with Kyrgyzstan's last trolleybus system, Osh, followed by Almaty in Kazakhstan.

Page 69, upper: A general view of some of the fleet in the small depot, with nice mountains behind. (17.10.2024)

Page 69 lower: 1116 in the depot has seen better days. It was withdrawn around 2021 and awaits scrapping. (17.10.2024)

Page 70, upper: 1517 was still listed as active. (18.10.2024)

Page 70, lower: 1532 arrived in Naryn in January 2023. (17.10.2024)

Page 71, upper: 1724 was new to Naryn in September 2024, but it would have needed a lot of work before it could run. (17.10.2024)

Page 71, lower: 1813 is also one of the recent arrivals from Bishkek and is still displaying line 14, but it will never run here. (17.10.2024)







Commemorating Rotherham's Trolleybuses – Sixty Years On



Following a month when bookings were restricted to Rotherham Trolleybus Group members, non-members may now book for the Rotherham Trolleybus Group's anniversary tour of the former Rotherham area trolleybus routes.

The tour will be held on 11 October, departing Rotherham Railway Station at 11.00, using a preserved vintage bus from

South Yorkshire, availability permitting of course!

Anyone can join the tour, but reserving a place is essential by emailing David Hanchett

david.hanchett@talktalk.net

The RTG's AGM will take place at the South Yorkshire Transport Museum at 2.00pm on the same day, for members only.

Trolleybuses of the Don Valley Exhibition

Rotherham's trolleybuses will feature in the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's "Trolleybuses of the Don Valley" exhibition, which it is hoped will open before the 60th anniversary of the system's closure. The exhibition will also include Mexborough & Swinton and Doncaster and when it is added to the "Trolleybuses of the Humber"

exhibition, which was launched in 2022, the six trolleybus systems which were closest to Sandtoft will all be covered.

If you remember any of these three systems and would like to be interviewed for the oral history project which will form part of the exhibition, please contact [Dave Chick](mailto:Dave.Chick@sandtoft.org) dchick@sandtoft.org

New NARTM President

The National Association of Road Transport Museums (NARTM) is the representative body for organisations or individuals with collections of historic buses and coaches, goods vehicles and other large road vehicles who wish to make their collections accessible to the public. NARTM represents the large majority of UK road transport collections and the BTS is one of

almost 100 members with more than 3000 historic vehicles in their collections.

Lord Peter Hendy stood down as the NARTM President when he was appointed Transport Minister last year. He has been succeeded by James Freeman, who is also a BTS Vice President. We congratulate James on his appointment and wish him well in his new role.
DGC

The Bus Inspectors

This is a NARTM project to document the significance of every one of the UK's 10,000 or so preserved buses and coaches. A member of the team will be visiting the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft to understand the Museum's collection, including the British Trolleybus Society

fleet. This process will help owners and funders to prioritise and protect historic vehicles.

As part of the project a very interesting series of podcasts is available.

[The Bus Inspectors](#)

MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Jody White



The winter break is over and museums are now opening their doors to visitors. Below we give details of events that we know of so far.

The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft Full Accreditation Awarded

As an Accredited Museum, the Trolleybus Museum benefits from access to professional support and advice from Arts Council England (ACE). Gaining accreditation shows that an organisation is professionally run, sustainable and trustworthy and this is a great help when applying for funding.

Museums have to renew their accreditation every five years, but the Covid-19 pandemic delayed the scheme considerably and the Trolleybus Museum had not been through the accreditation process since 2016.

Following a lot of hard work by the Museum's Board and many other volunteers, reviewing the work being carried out and the way it is done and making sure that all standards are being followed correctly, the Museum's Board has been advised by ACE that the Accreditation Panel has awarded the Museum the status of Full Accreditation.

The Panel acknowledged that the Museum's application was particularly strong and commended the Museum's close alignment with ACE's 'Let's Create' strategy, their ambitious vision for the future of creativity and culture in England. ACE made no recommendations for improvement. ACE's expectation is that museums maintain standards continuously and so maintaining Accredited status is an ongoing process.

As one of the Museum's three Contributing Societies the BTS congratulates the Sandtoft Board on this important achievement.

SDR Gains an Ampersand!

Following a suggestion reported in News & Events, the Museum's Board has agreed

that the railway will be renamed as the Sandtoft & District Railway. This year is the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) and the S&DR (Sandtoft & District Railway) publicity will make reference to the fact. Before the railway can open there is some outstanding work and safety validation to complete.

Events

- **Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 April Open Days**
The Museum will reopen, so take the opportunity to come and ride on a trolleybus and see all the other attractions.
- **Monday 7 to Friday 11 April Weekday opening.** On weekdays we make no charge for entry but we request a donation if possible.
- **Saturday 19 – Monday 21 April 1940s Weekend.** This very popular occasion returns as a three-day event.
- **Saturday 3 – Monday 5 May 1960s Weekend.** Another weekend held in conjunction with Bainbridge Events.

[Open Days – The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft](#)

Long Shop Museum

15 Main St, Leiston IP16 4ES Suffolk

Upcoming 2025 Events:

- **Steam Up - Sun 4th May**
- **Model Engineering - Sun 8th June**
- **Suffolk Day - Sat 21st June**

Keep checking the Long Shop Museum website for more detailed information, closer to the dates.

www.longshopmuseum.co.uk/

Ipswich Transport Museum

The Old Trolleybus Depot, Cobham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9JD

Tel. 01473 715666

enquiries@ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk

Upcoming Events:

- **Bank Holiday Monday 21 April Easter Egg Trail 11am-4pm**

- Sunday 4 May 53rd Ipswich to Felixstowe Historic Vehicle Run. Vehicles gather in Christchurch Park and depart at 11.00 for display on Felixstowe Promenade from noon. Note the Museum will be closed that day.
- Saturday 21 June Ipswich Transport & Model Festival 10am-4pm. The Transport Museum, The Ipswich Railway Modellers Association HQ & the Ipswich Model Engineering Society. A free bus service links the sites and the Ipswich Model Railway Centre using historic vehicles.
- Sunday 6 July Ransome's Steam Up 11am-4pm

ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk/

East Anglia Transport Museum
Chapel Road, Carlton Colville,
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 8BL

Upcoming events:

- Easter Treasure Hunt 18-20 April 11am to 4:30pm
- 1960s Weekend 17 & 18 May 11am to 5 pm
- Seaside Special 12 & 13 July
 Saturday 11am – 7pm
 Sunday 11am – 5 pm

CANADA

Lakehead Transportation Museum
1100 Memorial Avenue Thunder Bay,
Ontario, P7B 4A3,

From May 2023, the museum is now called the 'Transportation Museum of Thunder Bay'. This has included a new logo 'that reflects all the major elements of the city's transport history and establishing a dockside market for local vendors to sell their products whenever cruise ships dock at the Pool 6 site' (TB Newswatch). Thunder Bay is a city on Lake Superior in north-western Ontario, Canada, and the museum (under both names, old and new) is dedicated to the collecting, preservation and display of transport artefacts and history relevant to the transport history of the city.

Charlie Brown - once president of the Lakehead Transportation Museum – resigned a few months beforehand, but remains president of the Buddies of the Brill, which had acquired and restored two Brill trolleybuses from British Columbia, which had been built in Thunder Bay. The

trolleybuses had operated in Port Arthur and Fort William from 15 December 1947 until 16 July 1972. The cities had been separate until 1970, when the two united and became the city of Thunder Bay.

The Brill trolleybuses had originally operated in Saskatoon, then later in Vancouver. Ex-Vancouver 2355 was restored as Port Arthur 204, while 2357 became Fort William 45. After Charlie Brown's resignation from the Lakehead Transportation Museum, he arranged to move the buses to the Oliver Paipoonge Heritage Park. More information to follow in the future. However, the location and contact information are as follows:

3190 Highway 61 South

Tel: (807) 475-7424

Cell: (807) 632-4628

Email: opmuse2@tbbaytel.net

USA

Illinois Railway Museum

7000 Olson Road, Union, ILLINOIS 60180

Upcoming events:

- Bunny Trolley Hop 12, 13 and 19 April at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, IL 9:15 AM to 5:00 PM

Young visitors can meet and be photographed with the Easter Bunny in his carrot coach and many other attractions to enjoy.

Other attractions:

- Live animals at the small animal zoo.
- Easter egg hunt to help the Bunny find his missing treasure.
- Games and regular playground activities.
- Colouring activities at the diner annex.
- Large model railroad displays.
- Electric main line trains to operate from the depot.
- IRM's collection of historical railroad equipment.
- 25 preserved trolleybuses from the USA and Canada are also housed there

Tickets are available for purchase on the Museum website at \$20 each and are required for those aged two and over. On these days the Museum is open only for holders of event tickets.

Website www.irm.org



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's annual overhead line inspection is seen in progress on 15 March. As usual it was conducted by Andy Feather and Norman Hinchliffe and this year they were also instructing new trainees. The MEWP was on hire pending delivery of the machine that STCL has purchased. The overhead line was passed as fit for use, ready for the new season. [DG Chick]



World News.

Above: New Yutong trolleybuses for Quito in the port of Manta in February.

[Empresa de Transporte de Pasajeros de Quito]



World News.

Above: CTP Naples Solaris Trollino 127 is seen operating using auxiliary power on 27 October 2005.
[DG Chick]



Above: Following CTP's bankruptcy, six of the Trollinos have been adapted for possible use in Budapest. The vehicle on the left has been painted in Budapest colours

World News

Edited by Colin Page



Numbers in parentheses indicate the previous edition of Trolleybus containing news of that operator

BELARUS Minsk

On 9 December 2024, the first of 50 MAZ 303T20 trolleybuses arrived at depot no. 5. It is equipped with a battery pack and, with no engine compartment, it has a capacity of 82 with 30 seated. Service with the new vehicles started on 10 February 2025.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA Sarajevo (752)

An order has been placed with Solaris for the supply of ten Trollino 18 articulated trolleybuses, with delivery scheduled for late 2025. It replaces an option of an order placed with Belkommunmash, Belarus, in 2021 but which was cancelled as a result of Russia's war with Ukraine and possible problems of getting spares. These new vehicles are intended to enable the expansion of the network which involves the renewal of the 8.6km long trolleybus line to the neighbouring town of Vogošća. The service was stopped in 1992 due to severe damage incurred during the Yugoslav war. Following a tender in November 2023 construction of the overhead has been supplied by the Turkish company Yapi Merkezi Insaat in Sanayi A.S., with the first test run being undertaken on 4 March 2025. It is expected to be opened to traffic in March or April and until the new vehicles are delivered older Hess SwissTrolley 2 and NAW BGT 5-25 trolleybuses will be used, in addition to some of the 25 Belkommunmash BKM 43300D hybrid trolleybuses which formed the original (main) order in 2021.

CANADA Vancouver (756)

On 3 March 2025 Translink announced it had placed an order with Solaris for the supply of 107 two-axle Trollino 12 trolleybuses for delivery in 2026. There are agreed options for a further 201 12-metre and up to 204 18-metre articulated vehicles, a total of 512. The present fleet comprises 262 New Flyer/Vossler-Kiepe

trolleybuses of two and three-axle configurations. To enable this to be replaced it is envisaged therefore that an additional 155 vehicles will be ordered which include 74 articulated. The remaining options are for proposed extensions to the network which, because of the 20 km off-wire capability, will not need additional wiring.

The order is the first large order for Solaris in the Americas. It is based on a modified Trollino model and is fitted with traction batteries. The electrical equipment is provided by Medcom s.p.o.o. For Solaris the rigids are unusually specified with just two doors. They provided a demonstration 12m trolleybus in 2023 and the first trolleybus of this order will be extensively tested before main deliveries start.

CZECH REPUBLIC Ostrava (762)

The first of the six Škoda 27 Tr articulated trolleybuses (3813 and 3817) were delivered on 12 December 2024. They entered regular service on 6 January 2025. 3815 and 3818 followed on 29 and 30 January. 3814 and 3816 were transported to Ostrava on about 15 February. They replace the four Solaris Trollino 15AC /Cegelec 15m trolleybuses (3601 to 3604). 3604, delivered in 2007, is to be transferred to the collection of museum trolleybuses. The last use of a 15AC trolleybus was 3602 on 17 February on lines 101 and 104.

SOLARIS TROLLINO 15AC

NAPOSLEDY

17. 2. 2025

Poslední vypravení vozu 3602
proběhne na linkách 101 a 104

101	ODJEZDY Z OBRATIŠŤ:	104
Hlavní nádraží		Náměstí Republiky
14:50 15:50		17:00 18:06*
Hráncův		Michálkovice
14:20 15:20 16:20		17:36

Publicity for the last day of Solaris Trollino 15AC operation in Ostrava. [DPO]

ECUADOR Quito (763)

The 60 Yutong trolleybuses arrived at the docks on 13 February 2025. Within a couple of days, they were off-loaded and taken by low loaders to the depot where they were manoeuvred using their batteries as motive power. Allocated fleet numbers are ET01 to ET60.

ESTONIA Tallinn (763)

On 10 March 2025 the first batch of six Solaris T12s (333, 335, 336, 338, 344 and 346) left the Tallinn depot on a convoy of low loaders bound for their new home in Moldova.

FRANCE St Etienne (750)

The first of the new Solaris 18/Medcom articulated trolleybuses about to be delivered will supplant the motorbuses on line M6 which connects the Métare campus with the city centre (Rue Violette). It is a short line (5 km) and has recently seen a decline in passenger numbers. Consequently, the new Mobility Plan for the period 2025 to 2035 will see an extension of this line in two stages. The first in 2026 will move the terminus to Châteaureux station. Then in 2028, the line will continue via Boulevard Janin, Rue Annino and Rue Dali to the Cité du Design. As line M6 is linked to line M4 the introduction of trolleybuses is now expected here as well.

GERMANY Solingen (763)

Following recent assessments of future subsidies which indicated that these would probably be an increase from €4.5 million to €10.6 million in 2028/29, Stadtwerke Solingen GmbH – Verkehrsbetrieb was asked for proposals for savings. The city council announced on 20 February 2025 that, with a majority vote, the decision had been made to approve the proposed adjustments to the budget. The outcome is that the replacement of motorbuses (dating from 2011 and 2013) will now no longer be carried out by nine solo BOB trolleybuses in the 2026/27 financial year and ten solo and four BOB articulated trolleybuses in the 2027/28 financial year. The procurement of 24 articulated BOB vehicles was already awarded at the end of 2024 but the order against the tender for 16 articulated diesel vehicles published on 8 May 2024 has still not been awarded. The mathematics say that while electricity costs are cheaper than other fuels the cost of a new trolleybus is over twice that of an equivalent motorbus. These are seen as the reason for the change in direction of propulsion type for the future.

The Solingen Trolleybus Museum has announced its programme for 2025 of four special public trips, one each with several timetabled journeys running from Graf-Wilhelm Platz. Named "Electrically on-line 3", a historic trolleybus will run to the famous turntable at Burg on Sundays 13 April and 12 October. On Sunday 15 June and titled "70 years of trolleybuses to Höhscheid", special trips will be offered using the three-axle trolleybus 42 from 1986. "70 years of trolleybuses to Hästen" will be commemorated on Sunday 10 August, when the historic trailer combination will be used on the E1 line. Tickets can only be purchased on boarding the trolleybus

HUNGARY Budapest [incl ref to CTP NAPLES – Italy] (763)

BKV, the city's local transport operator, will apparently soon expand its trolleybus fleet with six used Solaris Trollino 12 vehicles with GANZ electrical equipment, which started life in Naples, Italy with the operator CTP.

The original fleet of 10 trolleybuses (fleet nos 121 to 130) entered service in Naples in 2005. However, CTP struggled to maintain the whole operation and was declared insolvent in 2022. These trolleybuses had remained inactive since 2015 when it is believed the last one ran. By 2022 eight were deemed suitable for sale and were transported to Hungary by a private company. Two were found to be in unredeemable condition (for example the diesel generators weren't working). Work then took place on the remaining six to modify them for use in Budapest. This included a complete interior replacement and repair of electrical and air systems. They were repainted in BKV livery. A tender was issued by the company on 18 December 2024 for their sale and the outcome of the one bid (as expected from BKV) is awaited.

KYRGYZSTAN Naryn [incl ref to OSH]

The last-but-one trolleybus system in Kyrgyzstan has been officially declared as closed, although the exact date this occurred is not known and has only recently been announced. Three Russian Ziu trolleybuses, delivered at the turn of this century, constituted the fleet at the end, although six newer vehicles from the closed system in Bishkek arrived in 2024 were stored in the depot.

It is likely that the last run was made in May 2024, when normal operations were usually stopped for the school holidays. However, services were not resumed in September when this would normally happen and five Yutong E10 electric buses took over instead. The timetable operated on weekdays from 7am to 7pm.

Trolleybus operation started in 1994. The single line ran for 6.7 km, at an altitude of about 2000m. The overhead is scheduled to be taken down in 2025. This leaves Osh as having the last trolleybus system in the country.

MEXICO Mexico City (752, 757)

The Chalco-Santa Marta trolleybus line is expected to be put into operation in April 2025. The construction of the facilities and high bridges was largely complete by the end of 2024, but 3 of the planned stops will not be put into operation until later.

It is 18.5 km long, largely on its own segregated route and built to BRT standards, with 13 stations and two terminals for the time being. Travel times will be reduced from the current two hours to 45 minutes in normal operation and 33 minutes in express operation.

Simultaneously, the existing line 10 of the "trolebús elevado" is also being extended eastwards by one stop to Santa Marta, where construction work is now well advanced. At the western end of the line the catenary is being installed on parts of the planned extension from Constitución de 1917 to Mixcoac interchange.

SWITZERLAND Fribourg

Five new Hess lighTrams are currently being delivered. The first trolleybus (fleet no 6611) entered regular service at the end of December 2024. They are for the conversion of the four duties on line 6 to electric operation and as a replacement for car 6610, which burned out on 13 December 2021. With the existing fleet of 26 buses, the 25 duties on lines 1, 2, 3 and 6 can be operated by trolleybuses.

However, other city lines and the numerous intercity lines are to be converted to electric operation using battery-powered electric buses with fast charging. A

corresponding order for the delivery of up to 183 electric buses has been concluded with the Winterthur-based company Daimler Buses Suisse SA, a local subsidiary of Daimler Buses. 24 Mercedes eCitaro electric buses will be delivered by December 2026, and eleven more have already been firmly ordered from the five-year framework agreement.

SWITZERLAND Zurich

By the end of 2024, VBZ started to take delivery of the 13 HESS lighTram 19 DC battery-powered trolleybuses ordered as part of the framework agreement in 2022. Ten had arrived in December and seven (210-213, 215, 217 and 218) had been put into service by the end of January 2025. A further two (223 and 224) will follow from the options. Delivery of double articulated trolleybuses is anticipated in 2025.

As a result, withdrawal has started of the batch of Swisstrolleys Nos. 144 – 161. Decommissioned at the end of 2024 were 148, 154 and 155.

TURKEY Izmir

A preliminary protocol was signed in Izmir on 27 December 2024 between the mayor of the Metropolitan Area City Hall and the French bank Société Générale for a proposed loan agreement of up to €80 million. This is to enable trolleybuses to be reintroduced to the seaside resort after more than 30 years since closure of the earlier system. The mayor said "they are environmentally friendly. If we achieve the success we hope for, we will expand it to many parts of Izmir." Both the actual route and timetable for implementation were not indicated but at the end of January 2025 he indicated that trolleybuses would first be introduced in the Karşıyaka district, which is where a tram extension had previously been planned but which now looks to have been abandoned.

With thanks to: Československý Dopravák, Plzenské trolejbusy, Škoda Group, Sustainable Bus Trolley:motion KPMHD Ostrava

Rear cover: Recently it was announced that trolleybuses will disappear from the streets of Serbia's capital, Belgrade. Beograd BKM trolleybus 2037 shows the advantage of trolleybus operation on 18 October 2013.

[DG Chick]

