
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Transportation
BC Transit

HYDROGEN HIGHWAY MOVES FORWARD WITH NEW CONTRACT

VICTORIA – BC Transit has finalized a six-year, \$20-million contract with Air Liquide Canada Inc. of Montreal to supply hydrogen for the Province’s 20 new fuel cell buses to arrive beginning next summer, Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon and BC Transit chair Kevin Mahoney announced today.

“When these buses are up and running, BC Transit will have the largest hydrogen fuel cell bus fleet worldwide,” said Falcon. “The development of this fleet is a major step in our commitment to hydrogen and fuel cells as a zero-emission transportation solution.”

Air Liquide, together with Canadian companies Sacre-Davey Group, Hydrogen Technology and Energy Corporation and Hydrogenics Corporation, will design, supply, operate and maintain two hydrogen fuelling stations. The first fuelling station will be located in Victoria at BC Transit’s Langford Transit Centre, to be completed by mid-2008. The other station will be located in Whistler at a new BC Transit facility that is currently being planned. The fuelling station is scheduled for completion by mid-2009.

“Record growth in ridership in British Columbia continues to surpass the national average,” said Mahoney. “With the increasing focus on climate change, the switch to transit by BC residents significantly contributes to improving the environment and our overall air quality.”

The first of BC Transit’s fleet of fuel cell buses will undergo testing and evaluation in Victoria in the summer of 2008. When fully operational in late 2009, the new fleet will be based in Whistler as part of public transportation for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The low-floor buses will have a range of 500 km, a top speed of 90 km/h and a life expectancy of 20 years.

The development of a hydrogen bus fleet is part of B.C.’s commitment to fuel cell technologies and the Hydrogen Highway as part of the overall plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. The Hydrogen Highway is a government-industry initiative seeking to accelerate the demonstration and commercialization of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. Hydrogen fuel cell-powered vehicles produce no smog-creating or greenhouse gas emissions, and they can be twice as efficient as internal combustion engines. The total cost for the hydrogen bus fleet will be \$89 million, with \$45 million coming from the federal Public Transit Capital Trust fund and the remaining \$44 million being provided by the Province and BC Transit.

Air Liquide is a world leader in industrial, specialty, and medical gases and related services. They offer innovative solutions based on constantly evolving technologies to manufacture many indispensable, everyday products. Founded in 1902, Air Liquide has more than 37,000 employees worldwide.

For more information on BC Transit's Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses, visit www.bctransit.com/fuelcell.

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