Busworld Turkey moves to Izmir

The seventh edition of Busworld Turkey will be held in pavilions A and B of the Izmir Fair centre from 19 to 21 April, following on from previous editions that were held in Istanbul. It is jointly organised by Busworld and its Turkish partner, HKF Trade Fairs.

Izmir is the third largest city in Turkey, after Istanbul and Ankara, and is located on the western coast of Turkey. It has invested heavily in public transport and is a very attractive location.

Turkey is a major manufacturer of buses and coaches and many of their components. The industry is almost self-sufficient although there are some important Western European suppliers.

In 2017, Turkey exported 45,794 minibuses, 710 midibuses and 7,028 large buses and coaches, making a total of 53,532. These figures were boosted by Ford with 45,663 transit based units following the decision to move their production to very modern facilities in Turkey.

Turkey measures the value of its export in USD. The total revenue from these sales in 2017 came to a very impressive USD1,528,803,235. If that is put into simple terms, one and a half billion dollars is a very impressive performance and ranks Turkey as one of the leading bus and coach producers and exporters in the world.

The domestic Turkish market is also important although it has been under pressure in the last year or two. There is still demand for new city buses, including quite a number fuelled by CNG. The long distance express coach market is large and important. The tourist industry has been hit by troubles in neighbouring countries but there are strong indications that it is recovering in 2018 because travel companies are satisfied with security and safety.
All these factors make Busworld Turkey a very important event. The sixth edition in Istanbul two years ago attracted more than 11,000 professional visitors including 1,519 from outside Turkey. The country has invested heavily in new highways and a long new bridge over the Sea of Marmara that cuts the journey time between Istanbul and Izmir.

Izmir has a modern airport, excellent hotels and a range of restaurants. The location on the Aegean Sea is most attractive and there are other fascinating places to visit, including the major indoor market. If you enjoy haggling for a bargain, this is the place for you.

During Busworld Turkey, on 19 and 20 April, Busworld Academy will be holding a congress with an impressive selection of Turkish and international speakers. Topics to be discussed include market trends, electric buses, safety and technology in public transport. Participation in the congress is free of charge but pre-registration is required. This can be done online at www.busworldacademy.org

Busworld and HKF Trade Fairs look forward to welcoming exhibitors and visitors from Turkey and other countries for this very important event.

Busworld Russia recording strong bookings

Busworld reports strong interest from exhibitors at Busworld Russia which will be held in the Crocus Expo Centre on 23 to 25 October. Already the exhibition area will exceed the previous edition of Busworld Russia in 2016.

Participation has already been confirmed by the main Russian manufacturers including the GAZ Group, KamAZ and NeFAZ. The Minsk Automobile Plant, MAZ, will be present. MAN, Iveco, Volkswagen and Anadolu Isuzu of Turkey have signed up. There will be a strong Chinese presence with Yutong, Higer and Ankai. Many international component suppliers have also committed to stand space. Other major global manufacturers and suppliers have also announced their intention to participate.

Last year, Russian factories shipped a total of 43,057 buses of all sizes from just under 3.0 tonnes gross upwards. While there is a large market for minibuses, dominated by the GAZ Group, cities have been investing in new full size low floor buses, some of them with CNG engines. Gas is readily available and very competitively priced in Russia. The LiAZ subsidiary of the GAZ Group has also built prototype full size all-electric buses.

Last autumn, Sergei Sobyanin, the Mayor of Moscow, announced plans to procure 300 electric buses per annum by the end of 2022.

There is limited demand for luxury coaches in Russia because there is no long distance express network. Small numbers are imported each year from the likes of Setra and Neoplan. Scania works with the GAZ Group and there are also some imports of used coaches from Western Europe.

There is also an important component supply industry in Russia and there are opportunities for foreign companies to supply up to date technology. We will carry more information about Busworld Russia in future editions of the Busworld Times.
more electric buses in 2017

Data on registrations of new buses and coaches in most European countries for 2017 has now become available. Looking at vehicles over 8.0 tonnes gross, ie, excluding minibuses and panel van conversions, there has been a slight overall increase in registrations, with most markets up, but a few significant shortfalls.

One of the most interesting trends is a rise in the number of registrations of all-electric buses, and a consequent decline in hybrid vehicles. The main markets for the latter were France and the United Kingdom.

For the purpose of this article, the definition of electric buses includes those that rely on batteries, plug-in hybrids, fuel cell buses and trolleybuses with batteries for extended range off-wire. It excludes trolleybuses that rely wholly on overhead electric power, with no extended off-wire capability.

We might well be entering a period of change, where hybrid registrations decline further, but it will take time before all-electric registrations replace them. Demand is growing, but most orders are small, because the majority of operators want to place pilot projects so that they can understand the new technology and its associated challenges, especially recharging infrastructure and maintenance facilities. It is all very different from buying a standard diesel bus and putting it straight into service.

While the Chinese have made the greatest progress in moving over to all-electric traction – and that is partly to combat very heavy pollution in city centres – the most interesting European case is that of Volvo. It is ten years since the company first introduced hybrid buses and now has nearly 4,000 in service or on order around the world.

This has been a progressive development, from straight hybrid, saving around 30% fuel consumption in typical urban conditions to Electric-Hybrid, with savings up to 60%, and, from the launch at Busworld Europe in Kortrijk last October the all-electric version. Volvo has learned the importance of working not only with existing and potential customers, but also property developers, town and city planners, electricity utilities, and companies that can supply vital recharging infrastructure.

Manufacturing plants and maintenance facilities have also been on steep learning curves. As the Chief Executive of one European manufacturer has said: “It sharpens the mind of the men on the line when they have to deal with 750V”.

So where is the electric bus market going? Hartmut Schick, shortly to leave his post as Head of Daimler Buses to become Head of Daimler Trucks Asia, said at Busworld Europe: “We are working actively on an electric bus platform, and we will be ready for the major tenders which we think will come around 2020”.

Looking at progress to date, Stefan Baguette, Project Manager of Alexander Dennis, recently produced a short but incisive paper on the European market for electric buses in 2017. He and his company have kindly agreed for Busworld to quote from it.

Stefan said that in 2017, a total of 1,246 electric buses of the four technology types described above, were ordered in Europe. Of these, 1,050 were battery buses plus 96 plug-in hybrid buses, 21 fuel cell buses, and 79 trolleybuses with batteries for off-wire operation of at least 1km with full traction and auxiliary performance.

His research revealed that the total for 2017 was not only more than twice that of the year before, when 530 electric buses had been ordered, but was equivalent to a round 10% of the total European city bus market. “Electric buses are no longer just a small niche!”

He said that 60% of battery and plug-in hybrid buses ordered in 2017 will be charged by pantograph, with roof-mounted solutions dominat-
The other 40% will only be charged by plug and cable, although this may in some cases include opportunity charging at route termini. Only one bus was specified with a contact arm mounted under the vehicle, and no new buses were ordered with induction charging.

At the end of 2017 the largest number of electric buses in service or on order were in the United Kingdom. The Netherlands came second, with France and Poland very closely in third place. Germany came fifth, but earlier this year some federal funding has been allocated for hybrid and electric buses.

The largest fleet in service with a single operator in a single location was Go-Ahead London with 65 BYD chassis bodied by Alexander Dennis and two irizar i2e buses running on services for Transport for London. The entry into service of 100 VDL battery buses in the Netherlands was held up by delays in completing the charging infrastructure.

Looking at electric buses in service or on order in Europe at the end of 2017, Stefan said that BYD led with 386 units, of which 171 were built in co-operation with Alexander Dennis, Solaris, VDL and Volvo had all passed the 200-vehicle mark.

Looking at electric drive system suppliers, Siemens was used by several manufacturers and dominated deliveries. Medcom of Poland had a substantial presence thanks to its close co-operation with Solaris.

Turning to 2018, Stefan predicted that the growth of the European market for electric buses showed no signs of abating and could well be a break-through year. For instance, in Poland, the National Centre for Research & Development is working with a consortium of 26 cities and is inviting tenders for the supply of up to 1,082 electric buses.

Isuzu offers wide range

Anadolu Isuzu is one of the main bus and coach manufacturers in Turkey. For many years, the main products were midibuses and midicoaches seating around 30 passengers. The factory in Kocaeli has capacity for more than 4,000 vehicles per annum.

The company has been trading since 1984 as a licensee of Isuzu of Japan which owns 20% of the capital. The largest shareholder is the Adanal Group with 51%. The vehicles have used Isuzu engines mounted either over the front axle, behind the front entrance, or mounted in line at the rear. Various versions have been offered, including rural bus, school bus and luxury midicoach.

In 2009, Isuzu built its first mid-size vehicle aimed at the urban bus market and called Citimark. The low entry Citibus was launched in 2011 with an overall length of 9.5 metres and a rear mounted Isuzu Euro 5 engine.

This same power unit was used in the Visigo midicoach that was launched in Busworld in October 2013. A Cummins ISB 6.7-litre engine could be offered for customers requiring Euro 6 engines and that also became an option in the Citibus.

In April 2014, at Busworld Turkey, Isuzu launched the Citiport, a 12-metre full low floor city bus with a Cummins engine mounted vertically and in line in the offside rear corner. This attractive vehicle had ZF axles and fully automatic gearbox.

More recently, the company has introduced Isuzu 5.193-litre Euro 6 engines for the Turquoise and Novo midibuses and midicoaches with Cummins remaining standard on the larger and heavier buses and coaches. Anadolu Isuzu is a significant exporter with around 680 units sold outside Turkey last year.
Otokar signs record export deal

Otokar, which describes itself as the most preferred bus brand in Turkey, and its subsidiary, Otokar Europe SAS, signed a contract recently with Bucharest Municipality to deliver 400 buses. The deal was worth EUR98.3m in total making it Turkey’s highest bus export in a single deal. Otokar currently exports buses to more than 45 countries, especially in Europe.

The contract calls for a selection of buses ranging from 10 metres to 18 metres articulated. The first 100 units will be delivered in this summer and the remaining 300 will enter the Romanian capital next year. Otokar will also provide aftersales services for eight years to the Municipality.

Serdar Görgüç, General Manager of Otokar, talked about the company’s 55-year long experience and expertise in public transport vehicles and said: “It is our great pride that our buses are preferred in a high quantity contract in Europe. With this contract we have broken our own record for bus exports. In addition to offering new generation inner city buses, we will also support them for eight years”.

Otokar continues to work on alternative-fuelled buses and has already developed the first hybrid and the first electric bus in Turkey.

Boost for Busworld India

The eighth edition of Busworld India will be held in the BIEC in Bangalore from 29 to 31 August this year. Busworld International and its Indian partner, Interads, are delighted to announce that the biennial exhibition will be fully supported by two major bus operator associations.

They are ASRTU – the Association of State Road Transport Undertakings, the official national body of public transport operators in India, and BOCI – the Bus Operator’s Confederation of India, an association representing private bus and coach operators.

Both associations will hold their annual conferences in Bangalore, coinciding with Busworld India and bringing delegates from all over India, giving them the opportunity to see the latest buses, coaches, components and services for their industry.

Didier Ramoudt, President of Busworld International, confirmed: “For a good Busworld show it is necessary to have the right balance for visitors with public transport products, more focussed on buses, and with tourism and long distance travel focussed on coaches. Having a double partnership is nothing less than fantastic because we all know that one plus one is more than two! For Busworld India this will definitely be a milestone.”

We will carry more information on Busworld India in future editions of the Busworld Times.
BMC Resurgence

One of the largest stands at Busworld Turkey has been booked by BMC which has completely refreshed its range of city buses and has also added an airport apron bus. It is most appropriate because BMC’s factory is in Pınarbaşı, close to Izmir.

The company can trace its origins to 1964 when the Austin and Morris importers in Turkey decided to establish a factory to build BMC vans and light trucks under licence from the British company.

At this time, the Turkish Government had taken the decision to encourage the manufacture of a complete range of cars, vans, trucks and buses. It laid down quite strict conditions which turned out to be extremely wise. Turkish companies that entered into agreements with foreign manufacturers could only produce the current models of those manufacturers and had to use new tooling and other equipment for production.

This meant that foreign manufacturers could not supply technology for their obsolete models or old tooling.

In 1968, BMC merged with the Leyland Motor Corporation to form British Leyland. Leyland was a major manufacturer of a complete range of commercial vehicles and already had experience of working with subsidaries and licensees in other countries. BMC in Turkey very quickly contacted Leyland and asked for help in increasing the Turkish content of their products.

A similar pattern emerged with other global manufacturers. The Government issued decrees that enabled Turkish companies to have the right to acquire the technology to increase Turkish content. In the case of BMC, during the 1970’s, with the help of Leyland, there was major investment in engine, frame and cab production.

BMC subsequently worked with other manufacturers, such as Cummins, to maintain high Turkish content and went on to develop vehicles using its own in-house technology. The company became part of a Turkish conglomerate that ran into financial problems. This had a serious impact on BMC’s production of buses and trucks, but the Government was keen to introduce new investors, mainly because BMC was and still is an important producer of military vehicles.

At Busworld Europe in Kortrijk last autumn, BMC showed a range of city buses complying with the latest Euro 6 engine emission standards. It was good to see the company back on its feet and it will be very interesting to see what they are promoting at Busworld Turkey in their home city.

Turkish Electric Car Consortium

The Busworld Times would not normally carry news about cars but this is an exception. President Erdogan has announced a project for a consortium of Turkish manufacturers to build three models of electric cars.

The project is managed by the Science, Industry, and Technology Ministry and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). Partners in the joint venture include the Anadolu Group (which builds Isuzu trucks and buses), BMC, Kırça, Turkcell and Zorlu.

A first prototype should be released by 2019 and there are plans for serial production to commence in 2021. The first market will be Turkey, but the consortium has ambitious longer term plans for export markets.