

PRESS RELEASE

10 VDL Citea Electrics in scheduled service in Groningen

VDL Bus & Coach has delivered 10 articulated VDL Citea SLFA Electrics to Qbuzz in Groningen. With the start of the new scheduled service on Sunday, 10 December, the VDL Citea Electrics are now operational on Q-link bus lines 1 (Groningen Main Station – Zuidhorn) and 2 (Europapark – Reitdiep) in Groningen. Q-link is the BRT bus network from the region to major destinations in the City of Groningen. Based on the principle of ‘opportunity charging’, the buses are charged during service, along the line. This boosts the buses’ range sufficiently to enable them to provide service on the long Q-link lines. At night the buses are fully charged at Qbuzz’s depot. VDL not only supplies the buses but is also responsible for the complete system and provides installation of the charging stations as well. The process of testing the system in full and training the drivers was completed in November and the buses have carried out successful test drives. The buses were produced at the factory in Heerenveen and a nice touch is that they will now be deployed close to home.

Sustainable bus transport

The 10 articulated VDL Citea Electrics for Groningen are an important step towards making bus transport in Groningen sustainable. The arrival of the electric buses is in line with OV-bureau Groningen Drenthe’s objective that all buses in the city will be completely electric by 2020. Fully electric bus transport will contribute to Groningen’s target of being energy-neutral by 2035. From 2030, public transport throughout the Netherlands will no longer be allowed to emit harmful substances.

Qbuzz concession director Astrid Veldhuizen regards the purchase of the 100% electric buses as a fantastic step for travellers, drivers and the environment alike. “Needless to say, we believe it is important to become more and more sustainable. So we are very happy that, in conjunction with OV-bureau, we are able to take concrete steps.” Astrid is also very pleased with the implementation of the system. “Thanks to a thorough preparation by Qbuzz and intensive collaboration with VDL Bus & Coach, the charging infrastructure has been successfully implemented and the timetable introduced without problems. We are very curious to hear travellers’ reactions. Our drivers are already very enthusiastic about the new buses. They drive really well and are very quiet.”

Ard Romers, Director of VDL Bus & Coach Nederland, told us: “At VDL Bus & Coach we are at the forefront in the transition to efficient zero emission public transport systems. Many of our customers opt for one-stop shopping. So not only the bus, but also implementation, maintenance and delivery of charging infrastructure and energy are provided by us. By doing this VDL Bus & Coach is contributing actively to a cleaner environment, lower energy consumption and a quieter and healthier living environment.”

VDL Citea SLFA Electric

The modular construction of the Citea range means that there are many electric variants with customised solutions in the fields of design, powertrains and battery packs. The VDL Citea SLFA Electrics for Qbuzz that have been supplied are 18.1 metres in length and have an updated, futuristic BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) design. This design won the 2017 Red Dot Award. The Red Dot Award is a prestigious international design prize. The VDL Citea Electric won the award in the category 'product design'.

Qbuzz

Qbuzz was established in April 2008. Qbuzz is an ambitious and innovative quality driven company in the Dutch regional mobility market. Qbuzz has recently won two concessions by offering high-quality public transport. Qbuzz transports approximately 230,000 customers daily with 2,400 employees, 650 buses and 26 trams.

VDL Bus & Coach

The core activities of VDL Bus & Coach consist of the development, manufacturing, sales and after-sales of a wide range of buses, coaches and chassis modules, the conversion or extension of mini & midi buses and the purchase and sales of second-hand buses. Manufacturing takes place in the Netherlands and Belgium. VDL Bus & Coach places high value on quality, safety, durability, the environment, low fuel consumption, comfort and low maintenance costs. Sales of VDL Bus & Coach products take place through a worldwide network consisting of corporate-owned sales offices, importers and agents in more than 30 countries. This makes it possible to offer custom-made transport solutions. For after-sales and maintenance, the client can count on rapid, hassle-free assistance from VDL Bus & Coach employees in any of the many service locations. An extensive distribution network ensures that spare parts and accessories are delivered to the requested destination as quickly as possible. VDL Bus & Coach is one of the largest bus producers in Europe.

VDL Groep

VDL Bus & Coach is part of VDL Groep. VDL Groep, with its head office in Eindhoven (The Netherlands), is an international industrial company focused on the development, production and sales of semi-finished products, buses & coaches and other finished products and the assembly of cars. Since the founding in 1953 this family-owned company has grown to include 94 operating companies, spread over 20 countries with more than 16,000 employees and an annual turnover of 3.2 billion euros in 2016. The strength of VDL Groep lies in the mutual cooperation between the companies.

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