

with France, Georgia and Tunisia being where new offices had been opened in the past year.

Busworld Turkey scene of innovation and first time display of Euro 6 products

Turkey – With the introduction of Euro 6 emissions standards on January 1, 2016, many of Turkey's manufacturers used Busworld Turkey, held in Istanbul last month, to display for the first time in Turkey their portfolio of products meeting the new emissions standards. The highlight of the show was a new double articulated low floor pusher city bus, 25 metres in length, from Turkey's newest bus builder, Akia Hess. Other important developments included the show presence of BMC – under new ownership and ready again to supply a full range of buses – and Tamsa, which announced that it would launch no fewer than eight new products in 2016 with advanced technologies that have been developed and supplied in house. Highlights of the key developments from the show follow:

Akia launches 25m low floor BRT bus

Iran / Bursa - Akia Hess Otomotiv Karoser Imalat San ve Tic Ltd' (Akia) of Bursa used the show to unveil a new 25m long bi-articulated BRT prototype model called Metrobüs.

According to Iraj Rahimi, commercial deputy of Akia Duich, speaking with Truck & Bus Builder at the show, Metrobüs is 25m long, 3.4m high and 2.55m long offering a capacity of 200 passengers including 60 seated passengers and 140 standees. The show vehicle offered a boarding height of 340mm and low floor throughout. It had four sets of passenger doors on both sides to maximise passenger flow on either side.

Rahimi said that it was starting trials of a diesel engine version using a rear mounted Euro 6 Daimler OM470 unit and matched with the TR2525 Allison gearbox. ZF axles (two portal and two portal steer) are used for four of five axles, including the rear steer axle; the exception being the drive axle, which, according to Rahimi, was being sourced from the USA. (Another drive configuration option includes a double drive of the two rear axles, but still with a rear steer). All the axles are multiplexed to control the alignment of the axle. Another drive option, said Rahimi, was a trolleybus variant with two wheel hub motors of 160kW output each.

The vehicle has a separate driver's area, accessed by the driver from the passenger area through a centre glass door in the tinted glazed partition. The driver is seated to the left of the vehicle with multiple screens displaying images from CCTV cameras of passenger movements in and outside the bus.

Rahimi said the discontinuation of the Phileas 25m BRT hybrid bus as supplied previously by VDL had provided Akia with a niche opportunity in Turkey. He stated that its first customer, an order for 100 units, would be delivered to the city of Tehran, Iran, but this would now follow with an order for 100 units for the city of Istanbul, Turkey.

Rahimi pointed out that the chassis and body design of the vehicle at the show was that of Akia and did not involve its license agreement with Swiss body supply partner, Carrosserie HESS AG of Bellach, Switzerland. Hess supplies kits of its Co-Bolt aluminium structures for the Akia 24m Train buses and Hybrid Bus 25m in Iran; also on the stand at Busworld Turkey there was the Akia 9.45m Ultra LF9 and the Akia 12m Ultra LF1 buses.

Rahimi said that he expected high demand for city buses in Iran within a short while as the government had announced a plan for some 17,000 new CNG buses, mainly as replacement vehicles for many old and heavily worn, decrepit vehicles still in operation today. This plan was being subsidized partially (EUR50,000) by oil producers, he stated, to encourage demand for its natural gas.

'Akia Hess Otomotiv Karoser Imalat San ve Tic Ltd of Bursa is a joint venture of Akia Duich of Tehran, Iran and Istanbul-based vehicle maintenance company, Istanbul Ulasim A.S.. It was set up in 2013

Strong year for Guleruz with exports now including Germany

Gemlik-Bursa – Turkey's only double deck bus builder, Güleruz Karoseri ve Otomotiv Sanayi Ticaret AS reported a record year in 2015 building and selling some 550 buses, a 22% increase on the previous year according to Hakkı Keskin, CEO.

Keskin said that the some 60% of its sales were in fact of its 12m low floor bus model and that its focus was on the private city bus market. Keskin said that its exports were growing and that it already exported to more than 25 countries including countries like Sweden, Greece, Jordan and Qatar. The number of export countries, Keskin said would increase in 2016 and this would include Germany, where it is to supply 12, low floor 12m city buses fitted with a Mercedes-Benz engine and ZF transmission and axles to the city of Dusseldorf.

Keskin said that approximately 100 of the 550 buses sold in 2015 were of its Güleruz Cobra 11.0m integral double deck city bus and some 80% of its export sales were double deck buses. It now sells open-top double deck buses to many countries, having first started export sales in 2006 to the Balkan States of Romania and the Czech Republic.

Currently for the European markets the Güleruz Cobra 11.0m is powered by a Daimler OM936LA 220hp Euro 6 engine with ZF EcoLife transmission and ZF axles, whereas for other markets as well as Europe, a selection of MAN engines ranging from Euro 3 to Euro 6 are offered. Keskin said that it was now working on a double deck fitted with a Cummins Euro 6 engine. The company also offers buses powered with CNG and mid-bus options including an 11m intercity called the GL9L.

Otokar unveils Euro 6 models including new articulated Kent city bus

Istanbul - Otokar Otomotiv ve Savunma Sanayi AS (Otokar) of Istanbul, Turkey, used the show to unveil versions of its Euro 6 line up for the Turkish market including the new 18.75m long Kent articulated low floor bus – Turkey moved to Euro 6 emissions standards on January 1, this year. (Otokar had in fact, however, used the European bus and coach show, Busworld in Kortrijk, Belgium last October to unveil the full Euro 6 range of products that it was offering in Europe). Otokar claimed at the show that it was the first Turkish manufacturer to offer a bus of 18.75m in length, and that it now planned to ramp up production at its 552,000 sq m facility in Sakarya to meet its first order of 100 units from ESHOT, the principal operator in the metropolitan municipality of Izmir, for delivery this year.

The Kent C articulated city bus at 18.75m long, 2.54m wide and with an overall height of 3.215m, is fitted with the Paccar DAF MX 11 intercooler turbodiesel Euro 6, 6-cylinder 10.8-litre engine fitted in the rear, which has a power output of 369hp and torque of 1600Nm at 1000-1650 rev/min. This is matched with the ZF EcoLife automatic transmission (six forward and one reverse gear). All three axles are also supplied by ZF including the ZF front independent steer axle (ZF IFS RL 82EC), the ZF centre axle (ZF AV132/800) and the drive axle (ZF AV132 lag axle).

The vehicle is fitted with a full air braking system, including ABS, ASR and EBS as standard with full air suspension in the front (2-bellow) centre (4-bellow) and rear (4-bellow). The vehicle is offered with four double doors to the nearside for optimum passenger flow and is offered with 36 seats and 128 standees or 36 seats and 124 standees plus a wheelchair.

Continued on p6.

as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Akia, before quickly transitioning to become a joint venture company with Ulasim in 2014.

'Akia Duich was formed in 2006 and is headquartered in Tehran. Its factory is in Tabriz with a capacity for 2,500 buses. Chassis for its 9m, 12m and articulated 18m models with diesel and or CNG Cummins engines made in China are shipped in from Higer Bus of Suzhou, China (Source: Rahimi). Initially, the chassis were bodied using SKD kits from Hess but gradually this became SKD kits to CKDs with reduced parts, said Rahimi.

'It is worth pointing out that, according to Allison Transmission, AKIA becomes first European bus manufacturer to offer the new T 3375 xFE fully automatic transmission in AKIA Ultra LF 12m model, which is matched with a Mercedes-Benz Euro 6 engine that delivers 1200Nm of torque and 220kW (300hp) of output. Allison says the three new xFE models (T 3280 xFE, T 3325 xFE and T 3375 xFE) transmissions have demonstrated up to seven per cent fuel economy improvements in bus applications, in addition to FuelSense software gains.

BMC back in business

Izmir - BMC Otomotiv Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S. (BMC), Turkey's former largest commercial vehicle manufacturers was at the show to announce that it was back in the market building buses as well as trucks and military vehicles after a period of administration. BMC, which was founded in 1964 in partnership with the UK's British Motor Corporation and taken over by the Çukurova Holding in 1989, was seized by the Turkish government's Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey (TMSF) in 2013.

According to people at the show BMC was acquired by ES Mali Yatirim ve Danismanlik, a holding of one of Turkey's wealthiest men, Elhem Sancak for approximately TRY751m in August 2014. It is understood that the ownership is now partly shared and that the other major shareholders are the relatively new trailer builder, Öztreyler of Adapazar and the Qatar (49%) government.

BMC displayed a number of the ProCity 12m city bus models, all with Euro 6 engines from Cummins, including diesel and CNG versions; the CNG option had a Cummins ISL-G 8.9-litre engine matched with the ZF EcoLife transmission. The diesel versions were fitted with Cummins' smaller ISB6.7 Euro 6 diesel engine.

Anadolu Isuzu opens new test centre

Sekerpinar - Anadolu Isuzu Otomotiv Sanayi ve Ticaret AS of Sekerpinar, Turkey announced at the show it had recently opened a new 6,500 sq m R&D centre in which TYL20m (USD7.1m) had been invested. Facilities include a test centre, prototype workshop and design centre.

The focus of the new test centre is to build vehicles for export markets: 32 markets are already served