



A Customer Magazine from Volvo Bus Corporation #1 2008

ON THE MOVE



Comfort in the Andes

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Volvo Buses - one of few global bus manufacturers

Volvo Buses is one of a few bus manufacturers that are present largely worldwide. In this issue of *On the Move* you can read for example about some of our customers in Australia, Argentina and the US. We also present the technology for our new hybrid bus that we are rolling out in Europe this autumn.

Although all business is local based on local conditions, there is strength in being active on many markets around the world. Although much is the same in the bus industry regardless of where you are, there are continual development strides that carry the industry forward. With our presence in most markets, we can learn from developments and carry the news on to other markets.

We are also seeing a trend in which the really large bus operators are becoming more global. It is an advantage for them to be able to work with one or two bus manufacturers that they know well, wherever in the world they receive a contract to provide bus traffic. For example, Volvo Buses' subsidiary in North America, Prevost, received its first order in the spring with Greyhound Bus in the US.

One of the conditions for our global presence is that we are part of the Volvo Group, one of the world's largest vehicle enterprises. Combined, we have a tightly meshed network of service centers and spare parts warehouses in the Group. Wherever you are in the world, it is not far to a Volvo workshop.

Within the Volvo Group, Volvo Buses has the position to lead the development of environmentally friendly solutions.



Håkan Karlsson
President & CEO
Volvo Bus Corporation

Andesmar is the Argentinian bus company that runs buses between the Andes and the Atlantic Ocean, and it is having a very busy time of it. The Argentine economy is revving up and the constant stream of travellers is rising all the time.

“Competition for passengers is tough, but thanks to our safe and comfortable buses we can have prices that are 10-15 per cent higher and still fill our tours,” says the company’s marketing director, Mauricio Badaloni.

Text Margareta Jonilson
Photo Bobo Jonilson



Comfortable buses for Andean travel

It is Saturday morning and the mist in the vineyards has just lifted. The snow-capped peak of Aconcagua, South America’s highest mountain, looms from several kilometres away – or is it miles?

One packed bus after another disappears along the serpentine roads of the Andes and we now understand where all those people in hiking clothes were heading for when we crowded in with them in the hotel’s dining hall for breakfast yesterday morning. The Andes are one of Mendoza’s biggest tourist magnets, the other, of course, being the wine and the vineyards.

Tourist magnet

Tourism, agriculture, industry, and shipping – everything is revving up in Argentina right now. And when a country’s economy is booming, there is always a speeding-up in communications.

“There is a big demand on all our destinations now, not least for those

buses, which are equipped for business travellers,” says Mauricio Badaloni, marketing director and third generation co-owner of Andesmar.

The most comfortable buses have twenty-six seats that are all leather-trimmed. With two simple adjustments the seat becomes a bed. Aboard these buses food is served, there are personal DVD players with a rich and varied selection of music on offer, and there is everything else one could wish to have during a trip that can last up to three days and nights.

Distance – over 4,000 kilometres

“The longest distance that we cover is on the journey from Pocitos to Rio Gallegos which totals a distance of 4,000 kilometres and takes three days and nights to cover. We have a daily departure in each direction and only stop at a couple of places during the trip,” says Mauricio Badaloni.

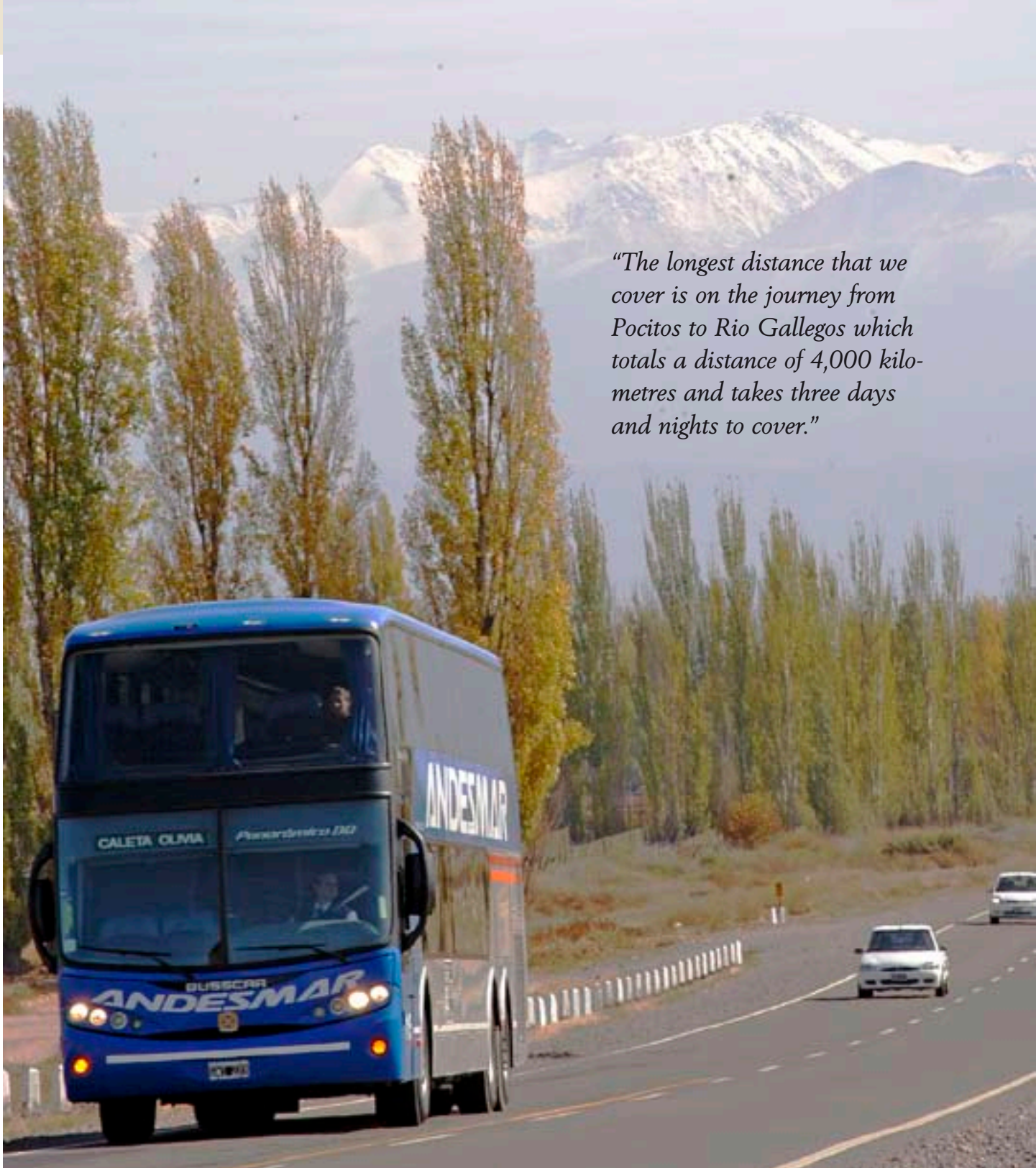
Andesmar has been on the road since the 1940s and was set up by

Mauricio’s grandfather, Guido Badaloni, on a modest scale, with the first fleet comprising just two buses. Today Andesmar has 1,400 employees and 220 buses. Moreover, the company is part of a large group, Grupo A, which operates international bus traffic, goods transport, and express deliveries.

Was Volvo’s reseller once

“If there is one key thing to which we have contributed, it is that we have created a reasonable level of communications between the north and the south of our oblong country,” says Mauricio Badaloni.

Andesmar has built up a strong brand over the years. The company is famous for its comfortable buses, high safety levels, and its ability to successfully operate its services to schedule. As part of the brand building, almost the entire fleet, at least ninety percent of it, is comprised of Volvo buses, all of which are B12s that were manufactured at Volvo’s plant in Curitiba in Brazil.



“The longest distance that we cover is on the journey from Pocitos to Rio Gallegos which totals a distance of 4,000 kilometres and takes three days and nights to cover.”

“In the beginning we bought from Volvo because the brand was grandpa’s big love,” jokes Mauricio Badaloni. “He was even Volvo’s reseller once.”

“But nowadays buying vehicles just with your heart does not work. These days the brain and forward planning must also take a share in making the calculations. Even so, the result is still Volvo,” says Mauricio Badaloni.

“The fuel saving from their vehicles is superb, the entertainment program-

me good, and our customers know that this is a safe bus.”

Mauricio Badaloni states that the purchase price of a Volvo bus is not the lowest, but it pays off with correct consumption and technological reliable, he says.

“The only disadvantage with Volvo is that the brand is not that strong in Argentina and therefore the stock of spare parts is poor. Actually we maintain a warehouse for Volvo.

Andesmar has fourteen service facilities in the country, the biggest of which is in Mendoza. Buses are serviced, washed and repaired here under a strict and efficient programme.”

“We have recently purchased more land for this facility and have been able to increase the garage space to five hectares,” says Mauricio Badaloni. “We are growing all the time. It feels good.”

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Wollongong in Australia is a place where passengers sometimes prefer to wait for the right bus driver to turn up.

Located just south of Sydney and home to one of Volvo Buses' wcustomers, the city is an idyllic place.

Meet Les Dion, proprietor of Dion's Bus Services, which has a fleet of 13.

Text & Photo Margareta Jonilson



Volvo buses are pride of the fleet

With a population of 220,000, Wollongong borders the Pacific Ocean. Just a few hundred metres from the buildings and stacks of the steelworks in the south of the city, surfers and bathers throng the beaches to the north.

Wollongong is one of Australia's many popular surfing and water sports resorts, and is also a thriving residential area for people who prefer to commute to Sydney, an hour away by road.

Dion's Bus Services has been operating in Wollongong since 1923. The company was founded by MD Les Dion's grandfather, who retired only a couple of years ago over 80 years old. The company now employs 24 people, including 17 drivers.

Temporary employee

Les Dion joined the family company in 1988:

"I came in as a 'temporary' employee," he laughs. "But it was so enjoyable that I'm still here."

Dion's route serves the northern suburbs of Wollongong in the north-

south direction, running from the city centre to Austinmere.

School bus services complement Dion's Bus Services scheduled services:

"Our aim is to keep our buses on the road as much as possible. They represent a major investment that must be recouped."

Bus routes in Wollongong are awarded by public competition. The municipality pays a fixed sum per year and contracts are for seven years.

"But they also pay a small bonus based on passenger numbers. And we can also improve our profitability by managing the maintenance and service of our fleet in a judicious and economic manner."

These two profitability factors form the basis of Les Dion's choice of Volvo buses:

"Our four Volvos are our flagships! We would happily operate them around the clock since our drivers love them, and our customers find them bright and pleasant to travel in."

As this suggests, Wollongong's bus commuters are a discerning group:

When and where determines

"In most cases, the timetable and location of the bus stop are what determine whether and when people take the bus. But some of our experienced travellers know when their favourite driver is on the route," smiles Les Dion. "And travelling in a pleasant bus makes them even happier."

Wollongong's buses are used mainly by senior citizens and students.

"All four of our Volvos are B12Bs with a low floor. And that's a much appreciated feature."

Appreciate the service

Dion's itself undertakes the routine maintenance of its buses – with the ready support of the Volvo dealership:

"We have excellent access to the Volvo workshop's valuable information resources, which enables us to limit our repair costs. All major services are carried out by trained Volvo personnel."

Les Dion also appreciates the fact that he and his employees are invited to courses and update meetings held by Volvo Buses for its customers:

"Our previous supplier also provided us with service, but not at all in the same way. Although we are small customers, we feel like important partners to Volvo Buses."



Les Dion, Dion's Bus Services



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It is 5.30 A.M. and the driver Mr. Virgil Winters unlocks the new Prevost coach. A few minutes later he revs up the Volvo engine and soon he and the coach head down the Hayden loop just outside Phoenix, Arizona. They are on their way to pick up this weeks group of enthusiastic tourists. Their trip will guide them through Sedona, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks in Southwestern USA – a week later the trip reaches its grand finale – Las Vegas, Nevada.

Text Michael Borg
Photo Darius Kuzmickas

Opportunities in Southwestern USA

This tour is only an example from one of the branches within the operations of VIA Trailways. It all started in 1982 as Owner and President Curtis Riggs decided to expand on a school bus business. He started with one new coach that he drove from the factory himself. Mr. Riggs, 59 is born and raised in Merced, California – a city with 80.000 inhabitants in mid California. Merced is known as “The Gateway to Yosemite”. Today Mr. Riggs’s endeavour has grown into a mid-size family-owned business that employs 75; it operates 35 motor coaches and a variety of other vehicles. VIA Trailways is primarily a charter company. They also do extensive work for tour operators and operate public and school transit systems. One example of a transit route operated is the well-known line that five times a day picks up passengers at the train station in

Merced and travel all the way up to Yosemite National Park, a trip that last for almost three hours - one direction.

Good Business

Recently the company celebrated their 25th anniversary and in 2006 VIA Trailways was named “mid-size business of the year” by the Merced Chamber of Commerce. Mr Riggs explains this award by a commitment to always serve the community as well as their own team members. Over the years VIA Trailways have actively supported schools, churches, civic causes and clubs like Rotary and the Soroptimists. Mr. Riggs states that the company philosophy is always to act with integrity and high standards, in serving both customers and employees. The obvious return from this has been substantial repeat business over the years.





“Challenge provides Opportunity”

As we ask Mr Riggs about the future of his business he becomes optimistic and says; “Look at our freeways here in California – the amount of congestion.” He continues, “transportation issues are consistently named as one of the state’s top problems. I believe different challenges provide us with new opportunities, and that motor coaches and buses are a vital part of the solution to some of our problems. The rising cost of fuel naturally increases our expenses, but it also gets people to think about fuel efficiency. We can achieve almost 385 passenger miles per gallon (0.610 litre per 100 passenger Km) from a new motor coach. Not even a Toyota Prius can do that!”

Mr Riggs also mentions current challenges in a slowing American economy. The opportunity with these challenges might be that many Americans may re-discover a domestic coach vacation instead of going on a cruise or over-seas.

“America is addicted to oil,” says President Bush

The low tax level on fuel in the USA has led to a cost increase paradox, where the increase in the price has

“We can achieve almost 385 passenger miles per gallon (0.610 litre per 100 passenger Km) from a new motor coach. Not even a Toyota Prius can do that.”



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been relatively higher in USA compared to economies with higher fuel taxes. The cost of a barrel of oil was \$10 in 1998 (source EIA) and has now passed \$120. Today the weaker dollar multiplies the effect and this has moved the issue of fuel costs right up the priority list. In any case, California generally has the highest fuel prices within the continental USA.

Prevost – in spirit of Volvo

One of Via Trailways latest additions to their fleet is a Prevost H series coach equipped with the newest 13 litre fuel-efficient Volvo engine. Mr. Riggs claims four main reasons behind this purchase. First the coach is equipped with a modern low-emission engine, something he finds very important since this coach travels extensively inside several National Parks. Second, “- out in the Utah desert you want to have a vehicle you truly can rely upon” and further this coach is equipped with a wheelchair lift. The versatility of this Prevost is the fourth important matter since the plan is to employ this coach in almost all different types of traffic operated by VIA Trailways, even in transit traffic.

One could say that this Prevost will be rolling in a true Volvo spirit.

Prevost with operations in North America is a subsidiary of Volvo Bus Corporation.



New body plant in India

A new body plant in Bangalore, India, will provide Volvo Buses a stronger base for production of complete buses for India and other growing markets in Asia.

Volvo Buses has manufactured chassis together with Volvo Trucks in its own plant in Bangalore since 2001. An external body builder, Jaico Automobiles, produced the bodies. The new Volvo Buses body plant, adjacent to the chassis plant, will increase flexibility with regard to production capacity and to further improve quality. It has a capacity of

1,000 buses annually and is expected to have about 600 employees at the end of 2008.

The plant will primarily build Volvo Buses for the Indian market, but also for other markets in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Volvo Buses is the market leader in India with regard to luxury, air-conditioned coaches. In conjunction with the inauguration of the plant, Volvo Buses launched an updated version of the Volvo 9400 coach. The Volvo B7RLE city bus is also sold in India, and in March, Volvo Buses received an order for an additional 240 city buses to Bangalore.



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Environmental focus promotes BRT in China

Volvo Buses is launching the BRT bus Volvo 7800 in China, an emerging market for BRT systems.

Prior to the Olympic Games in Beijing, and later the World Expo in Shanghai, there is currently a strong environmental focus in China, with more and more Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems being built.

The Volvo 7800 is an articulated 18-metre-long bus with a 9-litre engine mounted on the front wheelbase. It can carry 160 passengers, has four wide entries and low floor through the entire bus to facilitate boarding and alighting.

BRT is a solution to traffic, and environmental, problems in many of the world's cities. It involves creating bus-based transport systems using buses with high passenger capacity, bus models and stations adapted for rapid on and off loading and a traffic solution in which buses have priority.

In addition, Volvo's Chinese company Sunwin Bus has received an order for 395 city buses for the city of Qingdao, home to the Olympic sailing competition. Volvo jointly owns the city bus company Sunwin Bus with the Chinese partner SAIC. The buses, 10.5 and 12 metres in length, are built in Sunwin's plants in Qingdao and Shanghai.



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"The customer only has to make one phone call, but tricky cases could involve 20-30 calls on our part, to warehouses, workshops and others," says Peter Thys

Help is only one phone call away

A coach breakdown on the highway could be a costly incident for a bus operator, creating great inconvenience for passengers as well as bad will for the company. Luckily for owners of Volvo buses, help is only a phone call away.

Text & Photo Håkan Hellström

Every owner of a Volvo bus or truck can rely on the Breakdown Assistance as a lifesaver in the event of a breakdown. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The driver only needs to make a single phone call, and help is on the way from the nearest Volvo workshop.

"Our breakdown assistance Volvo Action Service is only one part of our services, but is probably the most appreciated among our customers," says Peter Devos, General Manager of Volvo Parts Customer Solutions, Ghent, Belgium.

Volvo Parts Customer Solutions offer: Breakdown Assistance and Uptime Assurance to owners of Volvo trucks, Volvo buses, Volvo Penta boats; Technical & Logistical support to the Volvo dealer network.

16 languages spoken

"At our call centre, customers will be able to communicate to one of our

breakdown coordinators in their own language," says Peter Devos. "Our coordinators are specially trained to obtain all the information needed to get the right assistance from the Volvo Service network as quickly as possible to the customer."

16 European languages are spoken at the call centre in Ghent, and language skills are one of the most sought after abilities of the breakdown coordinators.

Pan-European safety net

Peter Thys is one of about 40 breakdown coordinators in Ghent. After four years at the Volvo parts Customer Solutions, he still thinks the job is challenging and fun.

"When I studied languages I didn't really picture myself working at a place like this," he says laughing. "But it's a place where I really get to use my language skills."

Social skills are just as important, the driver making the call is probably under a lot of pressure from both employer and passengers, so it is essential that he can get back on the road as soon as possible again. Information about each vehicle is recorded on Volvo Action Service's purpose-built database, where the coordinator easily can look up the vehicle's technical specification. The location of the vehicle is identified and marked on a mapping system. The coordinator then contacts the most convenient Volvo workshop with a spe-

cification of what needs to be done and a list of the parts needed for the job. A technician collects the necessary parts from a Volvo warehouse and travels to the stranded bus or truck.

High customer satisfaction

The 24-hour Volvo Action Service access costs nothing, and the cost for the parts and labor involved are paid by the customer on one single invoice, at the same rate as in their home market.

The contact centre in Ghent is one out of three in Europe, the others in Lyon (France) and Rugby (UK). Contact centers are also located in USA, Brazil, China, Australia and South Africa. In total, about 400 people are helping out dealers and customers.



Peter Devos, General Manager of Volvo Parts Customer Solutions, Ghent, Belgium.

New hybrid bus launch at IAA show

This autumn, Volvo Buses is launching its new hybrid bus in Europe, the Volvo 7700 Hybrid. It is being unveiled for the first time at the major IAA bus and truck show in Germany in September.



The environment, particularly climate change, is currently one of the world's most important issues. We all have a responsibility to contribute to a solution of today's and tomorrow's problem. This is particularly so for those working in the transport industry.

Hybrid drivelines on our buses are an important step to reduce fuel consumption and, consequently, the emission of carbon dioxide. Hybrid technology has existed for a long time, but has not previously been commercially viable.

When Volvo Buses launches its hybrid bus this autumn, it signals a generation shift. With a hybrid solution that is largely based on standard products and with fuel savings of 20-30%, customer will relatively quickly earn payback on the extra cost for the bus.

The Volvo 7700 is the first hybrid model to roll out. It is a 12-meter

low-floor city bus. Volvo has chosen to develop a parallel hybrid with a smaller, 5-liter diesel engine. As a result, the entire driveline fits in the same space as in a diesel-powered Volvo 7700. The hybrid bus weights nearly the same as the diesel-powered version and as a result can carry exactly the same number of passengers.

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The parallel hybrid provides reliability and flexibility

Hybrid vehicle technology has a history of more than a century, emerging in the current decade as one of the most interesting power sources for the automotive industry.

Volvo Buses has chosen a different path for its hybrid buses from its competitors, committing itself to a more reliable technical solution: the parallel hybrid.

Text Håkan Hellström
Photo Volvo



As early as 1901, Ferdinand Porsche designed a series hybrid vehicle that used a gasoline engine powering a generator, which in turn powered electric hub motors. Hybrid buses have been manufactured commercially since the late 1990's, commonly using the same series hybrid technology – until now.

In September, Volvo Buses launches its hybrid city bus, the Volvo 7700 Hybrid.

The bus is a parallel hybrid for diesel and electric power, which means that both power plants can operate independently of one another, securing a high level of reliability as well as flexibility.

Lower emissions and less noise

Compared to diesel, hybrid power brings fuel savings of 20–30 percent. In particular the fuel consumption improvement is realised both in city stop-and-go traffic and when the route goes to the suburbs. A hybrid powered city bus produces lower exhaust emissions and operates quieter than the diesel equivalent.

“At idling speed the bus produces no exhaust gases at all,” says Edward Jobson, Environmental Manager at Volvo Buses. “It also produces less than half the noise of a regular diesel bus.”

Unlike many of the competitors on the bus market, Volvo Buses uses a parallel hybrid drive train for its hybrid buses. The main difference between series and parallel hybrids is that a series hybrid runs solely by electricity from batteries charged by a generator that is powered by a diesel combustion engine. The diesel engine thus drives the electric generator instead of directly driving the wheels, meaning that there is no mechanical connection between the diesel engine and the drive system. One weakness of this system is that power from the diesel engine has to go through both the generator and electric motor, making it more vulnerable to possible breakdowns.

Reduced fuel consumption

“The parallel drive train, on the other hand, is less vulnerable than the series drive train, as the two power plants

can operate independently of one another or operate together,” says Edward Jobson.

Parallel hybrids rely mainly on regenerative braking to keep the batteries recharged. However, when power demands are low, parallel hybrids also utilize the drive motor as a generator for supplemental recharging. Since the engine is connected directly to the wheels in this setup, it eliminates the inefficiency of converting mechanical power to electricity and back, which makes these hybrids quite efficient on the highway, with fewer stops.

“The parallel hybrid technology can lower fuel consumption twice as much as the series hybrid technology, and in different types of traffic,” says Edward Jobson. “Parallel hybrids can use smaller battery packs, lowering the weight of the bus up to 130 kilos, further reducing fuel consumption. The parallel hybrid bus still manages to carry the same number of passengers as before, where as the series hybrid bus so far have had to lower the number of passengers due to larger battery packs.”



More performance with more economy – the new automatic transmission EcoLife by ZF Friedrichshafen AG has so far very successfully mastered its series use in Volvo double-decker buses. So successfully that Volvo is also relying on the ZF transmission for its latest major order from First UK Bus.

Further Series Use for the ZF EcoLife in B9TLs

The new automatic transmission ZF-EcoLife is particularly suited for use in city and scheduled buses, as well as in rail and special vehicles. With it, ZF contributes to completely meeting current and future exhaust requirements, as well as fulfilling demands for additional CO₂ and fuel savings. The 6-speed automatic transmission EcoLife, which was brought to market in 2007, has already proven its advantages in practice: Approximately 600 double-decker buses of the type B9TL have been running since early 2007 using ZF-EcoLife. "Volvo was the first customer to order the new 6-speed automatic transmission for serial application," says Wolfgang Schilha, Senior Vice President of the Bus Driveline Technology business unit at ZF. "As a result, Volvo is also our main customer for EcoLife." Volvo's evaluation so far is so positive that chassis supplier Volvo and bus manufacturer Wrightbus again bank on ZF-EcoLife for the latest large order from First UK Bus. The order, includes the fitting of double-decker buses of the type B9TL with ZF-EcoLife and the shipment of ZF portal axles AV132 for low-floor buses, which

allow for sufficient passenger cabin height especially in double-deckers.

Economical and Resource-Friendly

Customer benefit and economy were at the heart of developing the 6-speed automatic transmission ZF-EcoLife: Compared to traditional powershift transmissions, EcoLife transmits 25 percent more torque and has a significantly longer service life. Depending on use, up to 5 percent fuel are saved – this also reduces CO₂ emissions. In addition, the newly developed and highly efficient cooling system can handle up to 15 percent higher operating temperatures of modern diesel engines built to Euro 5 specification without problems. ZF also developed the appropriate oil, which must be changed less frequently than it is otherwise the case. A torsional vibration damper ensures quiet running and additional savings during start-up procedures with high energy consumption. The integrated, performance-enhanced city bus retarder provides additional support during braking maneuvers.



ZF Products are Ideal for Bus Rapid Transit

Because of EcoLife's reliability, safety, and high economy, the 6-speed automatic transmission is particularly well suited for use in city buses as part of the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT) – a concept for public transport which allows for fast passenger changes and short dwell times at bus stops. BRT can be ideally implemented and combined with ZF's low-floor technology, such as the portal axle AV 132, which due to its special construction enables level access for getting on and off the bus, also known as "one-level boarding" and a central aisle which is also free from platforms and steps. Special bus lanes complement the traffic concept, which, compared to systems with platform stations, is more flexible and more cost-effective.



Volvo Buses has always been committed to investing in research and development. As a result the company has been consistently successful in developing innovative and environmentally friendly products, systems and solutions. An important part of this success is the cooperation between the different companies of Volvo Group.

One of the best examples of how these group-wide resources are utilized is the Key Technology Committees (KTC).

Text Håkan Hellström
Photo Lars-Eric Ericsson



Hanna Larsson, Manager of Electrics and Electronics at Volvo Buses, and Gustaf Görlin, Technical Manager of Electronics- and Software Development. Gustaf Görlin is also active in the AUTOSAR project.

The Key Technology Committee - A forum for technical progress

“The Key Technology Committee is a forum for discussing and developing new ideas benefiting the entire Volvo Group, as each committee includes members from different parts of Volvo,” says Hanna Larsson, Manager of Electrics and Electronics at Volvo Buses.

She is one of the members of the Key Technology Committee for Electronics, one of several different committees, each covering a different area of expertise. The other committee members come from more than ten different companies within the Volvo Group, including Volvo Trucks, Volvo Penta, Volvo Aero and Volvo Construction Equipment.

Synergy effects

“The committee usually meets about four times a year, and holds telephone conferences at least every month,” says Hanna Larsson. “I’m responsible for collecting all of the great ideas created inside Volvo Buses. At the committee

meetings, the ideas from each member are discussed and the best ones chosen to be evaluated, then perhaps to be further developed and turned into research projects. It is important that these projects meet the requirements and needs of Volvo Buses, so that we, as well as other parts of Volvo Group, benefit from them.”

“The committees are one of many ways of communication. One of the main goals of the KTC is to exploit the possible synergy effects; the shared benefits from each project, as well as accelerate the pace of the Volvo group process of change,” she says. “This means that customers will benefit from every piece of progress anywhere in the Volvo Group, whether the customers are ours, Volvo Truck’s or any other Volvo company’s.”

Project portfolio

Many of the ideas first discussed in the KTC:s have resulted in technology solutions, integrated into several pro-

ducts from the Volvo Group. A number of research projects are run by the KTC-Electronics each year. The project portfolio for 2008 includes, among others, AUTOSAR (AUTomotive Open System Architecture). It is a new software standard, that Volvo Group is the first commercial vehicle manufacturer to introduce.

“AUTOSAR gives the automotive industry the possibility to combine software applications from one supplier with hardware from another supplier. This is to be compared to how different programs can be installed in desktop PC,” says Anders Ydergård, Senior Vice President Vehicle Research and Development, Volvo Group.

AUTOSAR opens up for new software suppliers, as independent and innovative software developers could become part of Volvo Group’s supplier base. All embedded software development for vehicles developed by the Volvo group will conform to the AUTOSAR standard.



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The Budapest-Bamako desert rally is a gruelling 9,000-kilometre long run; a major part of it through mountain and desert landscapes in northern Africa. As the only bus participating in the 2008 race, a Volvo B7R bus completed the journey, finishing in 19th place. All this, and the 9,000-kilometre trip back to Budapest, without needing a single repair.

Text Håkan Hellström
Photo AlfaBusz



Volvo bus excels in desert rally

The Budapest-Bamako rally was inaugurated in 2005 as an alternative to the more famous Dakar rally. The race starts in the Hungarian capital of Budapest and ends in Bamako, the capital of Mali. The rally of 2008 included about 150 cars, jeeps, trucks, motorcycles – and the 12-metre Volvo intercity B7R bus, basically the same bus as the ones that operate the streets of Budapest. The bus features a 290-hp Euro IV engine. The Hungarian company AlfaBusz manufactured the bus body.

“Of course, the bus went through some changes,” says Tibor Mogyorossy from AlfaBusz. “Variable 4-wheel-drive, special tires, raised chassis clearance height and reinforced chassis, to mention a few things.”

The bus had a crew of 18, ranging from two former French Foreign

Legionnaires to the current Miss Hungary. The age span was from 19 to 62 years of age.

“Eight of the crew were able to sleep inside the bus when we spent the night in the desert. The rest slept in a tent outside,” says Tibor Mogyorossy.

The bus not only carried people; the cargo included 1,000 litres of diesel, 1,000 litres of fresh water, 500 litres of bottled water, 1 ton of food, a complete bus workshop, navigation and radio communications equipment, medical gear – and 2,5 tons of humanitarian aid.

“The workshop was very handy, not for us but to assist other vehicles in the race,” he says. “The bus had a completely trouble free race,” says Tibor Mogyorossy. “But it was obvious that we were overstocked with water and food as well as carried a lot of unne-



cessary communications equipment. In next years race we are going to carry a lot more humanitarian aid, now that we have considerably better understanding of the needs we encounter. Water purification tablets and malaria medicine are far more valuable than t-shirts and caps.”

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