



A Customer Magazine from Volvo Bus Corporation #2 2008

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**The Volvo 7700 Hybrid
- Bus of the future**



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4. Volvo 7700 Hybrid

The future of the hybrid: Volvo 7700 Hybrid can give you fuel savings of up to 30 per cent.



8. Hybrid history

Canadian company STM has a positive experience from hybrid buses in their fleet.



13. On The Road

Swedish company Sjöbussarna has 7 Volvo 9700, "Coach of the Year 2008".



15. Workshop on top

The Volvo Truck Centre in Madrid is a popular oasis for Volvo coach and bus drivers.



17. Extreme sailing

Volvo Ocean Race is one of the toughest races around the world.

The city bus of the future is here

As fuel prices rise and ambitious environmental goals are being set all over the world, the world about us is changing rapidly. This is forcing us to develop alternative powertrains and opportunities for using alternative fuels.

Here at Volvo Bus, we are prioritising the development of fuel-efficient powertrains, which is resulting in some of the lowest fuel consumption on the market with our new Euro 4/EEV powertrains. Now we are taking the next major step towards drastically reducing fuel consumption by introducing a hybrid bus which we have developed ourselves.

Our hybrid project has prioritised high reliability, maximum fuel reduction in combination with good driveability and comfort in town and intercity traffic. To be able to offer a competitive payback time for our customers, we have developed a collective hybrid solution for the entire Volvo group using standard components as a basis, thereby ensuring high quality and volume benefits.

I am quite sure that with our new hybrid bus, we will radically change people's views of city travel by bus and meet the stringent requirements for environmental emission reductions while maintaining good profitability. For the first time, there is now a commercially practicable hybrid solution on the market; and with this, hybrid technology will experience a real breakthrough.

Developing and industrialising new hybrid technology requires major investments. For us here at the Volvo group, there has never been any doubt that this is the route we should take. Together with our customers, we hold joint responsibility for ensuring that the transport sector contributes towards efficient, environmentally friendly solutions in order to create a sustainable society.

Our new hybrid bus is a major step forward.



Håkan Karlsson
President & CEO
Volvo Bus Corporation

Today's solution for future demands - Volvo 7700 Hybrid

The Volvo 7700 model range is now an extended family, and its newest member is the Volvo 7700 Hybrid. This parallel hybrid city bus significantly reduces fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions compared to conventional diesel buses.

Text Håkan Hellström Photo Arne Edström



A hybrid bus utilizes two power sources: the Volvo hybrid features a smaller than normal diesel engine and an electric motor, both of which are operated in their most efficient ranges. For example, when the vehicle starts or accelerates from a stop, it is the electric motor that accelerates the bus to a speed of 15-20 km/h. When the bus is underway, the parallel hybrid system combines diesel engine and electric motor power to maintain speed. The electric motor can provide extra boost in torque. At higher speeds, the bus is powered by the diesel engine.

The regenerative braking energy charges the battery via the generator, energy that is normally lost as heat. These measures all contribute to fuel-savings on routes with frequent braking and accelerations, like city bus traffic.

Superior fuel economy

The Volvo 7700 Hybrid gives fuel savings of up to 30 percent. Fuel consumption improvement is realised both in city stop-and-go traffic but also when the route goes to the suburbs. Given that fuel is a major part for the total vehicle fleet costs, there are big savings up for grabs!

A hybrid bus can also give lower operating costs due to reduced stress and maintenance on components such as brake linings and the transmission system is simpler so less maintenance is required.

All these savings help provide a shorter payback time for the Volvo 7700

Hybrid, where the break-even point is estimated at around 5-7 years, depending on current and future oil costs.

As with all its products, Volvo Bus can offer leasing and maintenance packages, enabling the customer to have the most up to date vehicles on the road at minimum capital cost.

Lower emissions and less noise

A hybrid powered city bus produces lower exhaust emissions and operates more quietly than the diesel equivalent. The Volvo 7700 Hybrid can reduce CO₂ emissions up to 30 percent, while the Euro 5 engine with SCR (selective catalytic reduction) in the hybrid configuration reduces particulate matter emissions by up to 50 percent.

At idling speed when the bus is powered by the electric motor the bus produces no exhaust gases at all. In a bus garage, this results in a big improvement in working conditions.

The noise level of the Volvo 7700 Hybrid is substantially lower than on a diesel bus in normal traffic. When the electric motor is engaged, for instance when accelerating from a bus stop, external noise is almost non-existent.

Same weight and unchanged passenger capacity

The Volvo Hybrid uses a battery to store electrical energy: the parallel system means that this battery can be smaller than in other hybrid concepts – reducing the weight addition by some

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130 kg. The smaller 4 cylinder, 5 litre, engine also helps with weight distribution. The result is that the Volvo 7700 Hybrid weighs no more than the conventional Volvo 7700 model but the passenger capacity is actually increased – by up to 5 more passengers.

The engine is installed in the far-left rear corner, as in other Volvo 7700 models, so the interior layout of the Volvo 7700 Hybrid guarantees a high passenger through-flow.

The location of the battery has allowed a minor restyling of the front end of the bus, but otherwise the exterior is very similar to other Volvo 7700 models.

Easily incorporated

Diesel hybrids are easily incorporated into fleets that are already using diesel

buses. Maintenance is as straightforward on the hybrid as on any other diesel bus, allowing for some additional training for maintenance personnel. The hybrid high voltage battery is simple and secure to handle. The purchase of a Volvo 7700 Hybrid includes replacement of the high voltage battery after approximately six years.

Training also helps drivers to get the best possible results from the Volvo 7700 Hybrid and this training is included in the contract for supply of the vehicle.

New driver aids have been included: for example, as the brakes are applied the retardation energy is transmitted to charge the batteries up to a certain point. After that point, the energy no longer charges the batteries,

being transformed into energy losses like heat and friction. To avoid this, Volvo Bus has implemented a special feature: a warning click sound that indicates to the driver when this point has been reached.



Specifications Volvo 7700 Hybrid

Length: 12.0 m

Height: 3.4 m

Width: 2.55 m

Wheelbase: 5.95 m

Gross vehicle weight: 18,000 kg

Suspension: Air suspension, electronic control with kneeling

Brakes: EBS electronically controlled disc brakes

Number of doors: 3

Boarding height: 25, 27, 27 cm

Maximum number of passengers: 95

Hybrid system: Parallel hybrid Volvo I-SAM

Diesel engine: Volvo D5, 5 litre 4 cylinder to Euro V emissions level

Power output/Torque: 210 hp, 800 Nm

Electric motor: Power output/Torque: 160 hp, 800 Nm

Transmission: I-Shift, automatic gearshifting system, 12-speed splitter/range gearbox

As project manager, Per Fejde has been responsible for bringing together all the different parts of the extensive Volvo 7700 Hybrid project.

“It included some real technical challenges for our team and it was obvious from the start that without the full collaboration of the entire Volvo Group, this would be a difficult task,” he says. “But the result makes it all worthwhile.”

Text Håkan Hellström Photo Johanna Asplund & Volvo



Per Fejde, project manager.

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES in extensive project

Per Fejde calls this the beginning of a new era.

“As an engineer, the hybrid bus project is very satisfying on a personal level both for me and the rest of the Volvo bus project team,” he says. “Finally we have the technology to match our ambition to provide new environmentally friendly solutions. And this is only the first step towards future technical breakthroughs.”

“The Volvo 7700 Hybrid shows the full commitment and know-how of the Volvo group,” he says. “The complete hybrid bus has been developed within the Volvo group, which made it possible to optimise fuel consumption and performance of the bus. The Volvo bus project team have also put a lot of effort into safety, comfort, product design and bus layout with the customer in focus.”

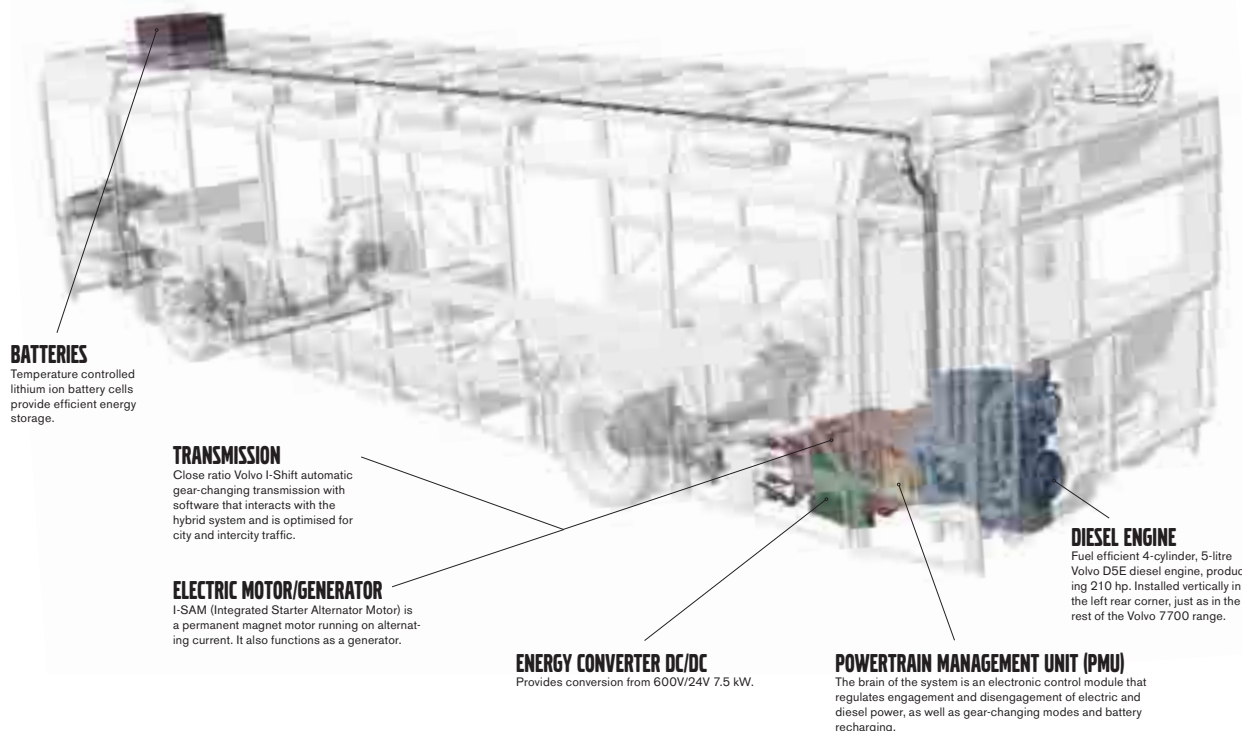
Technical ingenuity

“When this project started it became clear that we needed to find new solutions to several technical issues. By using the hybrid technology it has been possible to downsize the engine to a 5-litre turbo diesel engine, with special start and stop features. The latest battery technology is used for the hybrid bus with good energy and power density. This is the key factor for keeping good passenger capacity and layout. Several of the Volvo 7700 Hybrid’s auxiliary systems are powered by independent electric motors, including air conditioning, air compressor, power steering pump and door opening system,” he says.

Volvo Buses has chosen parallel hybrid technique for its hybrid buses. The hybrid bus relies mainly on rege-

nerative braking to keep the batteries recharged. However, when power demands are low, the Volvo parallel hybrid can also utilize the integrated drive motor and generator for supplemental recharging. Since the engine is mechanically connected to the drive axle in this setup, the system reduces the inefficiency of converting mechanical power to electricity and back, which makes these hybrids also efficient in inter city operation, with fewer stops.

The electric motor has excellent starting characteristics and driveability, as it can produce maximum torque right from low rev. When the bus stops the diesel engine switches off automatically and the first part of the take off is fully electric, which result in no exhaust gases and quiet operation at the bus stop.



Growing demand for hybrid solutions

A sky-high oil price. Environmental concerns. New regulatory requirements. The list of things impacting on the transport sector as well as the automotive industry is constantly growing.

“There is great demand for environmentally friendly solutions that also lower fuel consumption,” says Edward Jobson, Environmental Manager at Volvo Buses. “Hybrid technology is a perfect answer to this.”

Text Håkan Hellström Photo Volvo

To say that fuel savings is a buzzword in today's transport sector is perhaps the understatement of the year, especially as the oil price has reached record levels during 2008.

Edward Jobson mentions the concept of “peak oil” as something that could further raise oil prices. Peak oil is the point in time where global petroleum extraction reaches its maximum rate, after which the rate starts to decline.

“In order to get less dependent of petroleum it is essential to develop and offers in new technologies and transport solutions,” he says. “Volvo has offers in several different areas, such as alternative fuels, engine technology, BRT and vehic-

le management. But one of the most exciting today is hybrid technology.”

Growing interest

“The interest and demand for hybrid buses is already high on the world market and will continue to rise,” says Edward Jobson. “Environmental concerns about global warming and high levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere put additional focus on hybrid technology as it not only lowers fuel consumption by up to 30 per cent, but also considerably lowers exhaust emissions by as much as 50 per cent.”

The European emissions standard Euro V, in effect from October 2009, is only one of many regulatory requirements put on diesel engines.

“Several proposed directives and legislation will further emphasise the need for further improvements in technology,” he says. “The European Commission has proposed a new Renewable Energy Directive for 2012, where the suggested target is that 20 per cent of all energy production in Europe will have renewable sources by the year 2020.”



Edward Jobson, Environmental Manager.

FOCUS ON ALTERNATIVE FUELS

The Volvo group studies and evaluates many fuels that have the potential to power its products. Biodiesel, synthetic diesel and biogas have already made a big market impact. Volvo is one of the leading manufacturers of biogas buses in the world.

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"I prefer to drive a hybrid," says Ronnie Gervais of STM.

HYBRID BUS TECHNOLOGY

– lessons from life in real

STM in Canada is one of the first operators of hybrid buses from Nova Bus in real traffic and gaining vital experience. Ronnie Gervais is a bus driver with experience from driving these buses in regular traffic and Manuel Dubuc is the manager of the workshop in Montreal that maintains the eight hybrid buses. They both say: "It is business as usual – just much better."

Text Michael Borg
Photo Sylvain Fortier

North America is today well advanced with the use of hybrid bus technology due to political initiatives. Montreal was recently awarded Forbes recognition as one of the world's top ten cleanest cities. STM, Société de transport de Montréal, was happy to share with us some of their every day experience from the life of hybrid buses in Montreal.

A Hybrid pioneer

"I am very pleased to work for the city of Montreal as well as for STM since they do their share to protect the envi-

ronment. "I also get a lot of positive comments from my passengers." These are the words of Ronnie Gervais – an experienced driver, who is 47 years old, has 19 years behind the wheel and two months of driving the hybrid buses. Enthusiastically he explains how he likes the smooth way these new buses run. This is not just because these buses are new: "No, it is because they are different and much smoother to drive – it feels almost like riding a luxury car with soft but powerful acceleration from zero up to 30-40 Km/h." When we ask Mr. Gervais if

he would prefer different routes or different buses – he does not hesitate for a second: "I prefer to drive a hybrid."

Evaluating the hybrid experience

Today STM operates a fleet of about 1600 buses from 7 different garages in Montreal. They purchased eight low floor hybrid buses from the Volvo Buses owned company Nova Bus in March 2008. These buses, Nova LFS (HEV), entered service on regular city and suburban operations, on April 21st 2008.

All the drivers at the LaSalle depot have been provided 3 hours of training of the hybrids because any driver may be scheduled to drive one.

Ronnie Gervais has driven the hybrids in dense city traffic as well as on suburban routes. He is also involved in tests where STM will perform an extended comparison of the hybrids with regular buses – results are due next summer. This comparison, based

Greyhound orders 50 Prevost buses

Greyhound in the US has purchased buses from Volvo-owned Prevost for the first time. Most of the order for 50 Prevost X3-45 buses will be used on Greyhound's new BoltBus express service.

Greyhound is the largest provider of intercity bus transportation in North America, serving more than 3,100 destinations, with a fleet of 1,250 buses. In the order for 50 buses, 33 will be used in the BoltBus operations and 17 in normal intercity traffic.

"We are proud that the BoltBus fleet consists of Prevost X3-45 vehicles," says David Leach, President and Chief Executive Officer of Greyhound



Lines, Inc. "The X3-45 is a terrifically well-designed coach with numerous features that will help us safely transport our passengers in comfort and style."

The new BoltBus coaches are equipped with a Wi-Fi router, video entertainment systems, 110-volt power sockets and luxuriously comfortable seats with extra legroom. Boltbus travellers can enjoy

free access to Wi-Fi and power outlets for recharging laptops and mobiles.

Greyhound launched BoltBus service in affiliation with Peter Pan Bus Lines on March 27, 2008. The BoltBus mission consists of providing travellers with fast, frequent, and safe transportation, including unmatched amenities, for the lowest fares.



Manager Manuel Dubuc says that all concerns about the hybrid buses disappeared.

on more than 50 measured indicators, will provide important evidence for STM on how they will develop their fleet for the future.

"The key to our success is training"

This is Manuel Dubuc's rule of thumb. He is the Manager at STM's LaSalle garage – where all eight hybrids are maintained. Mr. Dubuc, 39 years old, with 13 years of garage experience,

continues, "We gave twelve mechanics special training, since we would have to work with high voltage on these vehicles". He is quick to add that all of his 55 mechanics are able to work on the hybrids on the standard parts of these buses. Before the training some mechanics were concerned over the new technology including reliability, different weather conditions, complexity, electric motors and possible fumes from the

batteries. Mr. Dubuc observes: "Today my mechanics say that these buses are very reliable and they are no longer concerned about any issue at all."

He adds that all concerns among his employees regarding the batteries and other issues related to the hybrids disappeared, thanks to the training.

"The implementation of this new technology has been much easier than I expected" He continues: "We do not have any new on-the-job routines due to the hybrids. Neither is there any extra work for me or the mechanics at the garage, besides", he notes with a smile, "attention from the media." Lessons learned so far are mainly related to the training of the mechanics. These 12 mechanics trained gained a new status at the workshop and today the rest of Mr. Dubuc's 55 mechanics are motivated to go through the same training. He ends our conversation saying: "I am very glad to work with these hybrid buses – this will provide us with a better environment."

It certainly sounds like STM have some good ideas on how to advance Montreal further up that on Forbes list of the world's top ten cleanest cities.

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Now that the city of Guadalajara in Mexico is starting its first BRT line, the operator has chosen Volvo as its bus supplier. The first order is for 41 Volvo 7300 articulated buses.



Volvo buses for new BRT system in Mexico

Guadalajara is Mexico's second largest city with slightly more than four million inhabitants and the financial centre for the country's western region. As many big cities, Guadalajara suffers from increasing road congestion, air pollution, and an obsolete transit system

But, as is the case with several cities, Guadalajara has chosen to invest in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The first bus corridor will connect the northern part of the

city to the southern part and will be served by 41 articulated buses from Volvo Buses. The bus is an 18-meter articulated Volvo 7300, built on the Volvo B12M chassis. The buses will be manufactured at Volvo Buses' plant outside Mexico City.

The system will be planned and controlled by the State transportation authority, while private operators will purchase, maintain and operate the buses. The choice for Volvo by the

operator was due to the product's high quality and experience in the Mexican market. A decisive factor was Volvo's early action in offering the articulated bus with the Euro IV standard.

With more efficient bus traffic and new Euro IV buses, there will be a strong positive effect on the environment. And when many inhabitants leave their cars for the more efficient public transport, the effect is even stronger.

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On the road from Gothenburg on the Swedish west coast to the Danish capital Copenhagen.

“Volvo is the boss of the buses! I can say that and I really mean it.”

Namko Kovacevic knows what he’s talking about. He’s been driving coaches for more than a decade and if he could choose he would choose Volvo and their new model 9700 any time.

Text Monica Nilsson
Photo Johanna Asplund

“Boss of the buses”



Traffic controller and driver Namko Kovacevic of Säftebussen.

Namko Kovacevic is working as traffic controller at Säftebussen AB in Gothenburg where the company has its depot. In the city centre, close to the city’s commercial traffic point, Säftebussen has its reserve coaches and here they change drivers.

Säftebussen’s traffic controller had his own bus company more than ten years ago. When Säftebussen was planning to start the route Oslo – Copenhagen he was asked to join the company, and so he did. And Ever since Namko has been loyal to Säftebussen.

Volvo’s coaches have always been the heart of the Swedish company. Today Säftebussen has 7 Volvo 9700, “Coach of the Year 2008”.

“Volvo is Volvo and will always be Volvo... It is not the most flexible coach, but the safest and the most reliable. It’s dependable and it very seldom breaks down. Volvo does what the name means: it keeps rolling,” Namko declares.

More fuel-efficient

Namko says that Volvo plays in its own division. No other types of coaches come even close.



"Volvo does what the name means: it keeps rolling"

Volvo 9700 is more fuel-efficient than other coaches and also more eco-friendly, thanks to the use of Adblue.

Säfflebussen has four express routes: Oslo – Copenhagen via Gothenburg and Malmö, Oslo – Stockholm via Karlstad, Gothenburg – Karlstad and finally Stockholm – Ludvika. The coaches are often full and that means they are carrying between 53 and 65 passengers, depending on if the Volvo coach is 13,7 metre or 15 metres.

Namko Kovacevic doesn't like sitting in his office all day. As often as he can he takes his place behind the big wheel and does what he likes the most: drives a Volvo.

On the next page you can read what managing director Stefan Carlén thinks of the market for bus companies.



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Stefan Carlén, MD Säftebussen.



“We want to show that we are an important part of the public transport sector”

“A huge market potential”

The market potential for bus companies in Sweden is huge. Less than 5 percent of travellers choose to book a coach ticket. This is something that managing director Stefan Carlén wants to change. It’s a hard job, but someone has to do it...

Text Monica Nilsson
Photo Johanna Asplund & Lasse Storheil

Stefan Carlén is in fact managing director of two companies, Säftebussen AB and Bus4you, with their head office in the old textile city Borås.

Deluxe travelling

Säftebussen AB is an old bus company, founded in the city of Säfte more than 50 years ago. In 2006 the company was sold to the Norwegian company Nettbuss.

Meanwhile in Borås the three owners of the company “Resefixarna” had ambitions to build their own travelling company. After much thought, they came up with the idea of introducing a new way of coach travelling, a kind of deluxe trips.

“This became Bus4you. We started to operate between Stockholm and Gothenburg in October 2007. Bus4you focuses on comfort and design. The coaches have wireless Internet and all seats are equipped with power points,” Stefan Carlén says.

Resefixarna offered a part of the business to Nettbuss, which bought 49 percent, allowing the original owners to retain management control.

The managing director sees Bus4you as the “spearhead” of the two transport companies, even if Säftebussen’s express routes are very important. Together the companies have 24 coaches, the newest in the fleet of coaches being the Volvo 9700 operated by Säftebussen and used for express services. Säftebussen is the second largest express operator in Sweden, carrying 500 000 passengers every year.

“The 9700 is economical and very competitive when it comes to fuel consumption. The repair costs are low and its reliability is very important. You can’t afford to have a lot of back-up coaches today, Stefan Carlén says.

Säftebussen AB and Bus4you have 50 employees, and about as many again part-timers. But Stefan Carlén hopes to be able to employ more people.

Huge market potential

“Our main competitor is of course the train. The coach companies have less than 5 percent of the market and the train has about 20 percent. So we do have a huge market potential. I want to crush the myth that says that coaches are a kind of second-class travelling,” Stefan Carlén says boldly.

Stefan Carlén thinks that the Swedish government totally neglects the coach market. Today you get a discount

if you buy a car that runs on an alternative fuel, and the government is also proposing to lower the traffic tax for those types of cars. But what do they do about the buses and coaches? Nothing, according to Stefan Carlén and this makes him very upset, to put it mildly.

“The government pays millions for cars that not are any cleaner than our coaches. We make efforts to be eco-friendly, but we are not encouraged at all by the government to do this. We are seen as “dirty”. There is no incentive for us to use alternative fuels. We don’t get any subsidies. “

The coach market in Sweden has a 5-600 million SEK turnover and the operation is very manpower demanding. And still the government doesn’t take any notice.

“We’re are looked on as if we were a coal power station...”

But even without incentives Bus4you and Säftebussen are using Adblue and they are training all their drivers in eco-driving. Stefan Carlén has recently employed Ronald Motten from Volvo Bus and one of his tasks at his new job is to lower the fuel consumption even further.

“We want to show that we are an important part of the public transport sector. We also save money for society. I only wish that the government would recognize us.”



"...another reason is the good reputation of Volvo, being a Volvo bus mechanic is worth a lot"

Popular workshop for popular buses

Volvo buses... In Madrid you can see them everywhere. Volvo buses are truly popular in the Spanish capital and in order to maintain their Volvo fleets, many of the owners choose to send their buses to the Volvo Truck Centre situated in the southern parts of the city.

Text & Photo Ulrika Hallin



Some of the best mechanics work at the Volvo Truck Centre just outside Madrid. They work three-shift to give the best service possible and they are updated with every bus model. Mechanics David de Pablo and Marcos Encinas to the left and mechanic Marcos Encinas to the right.

Mechanics Louis Carcadillo, Antonio Ayoso and Alberto Ruiz.

It's one of the top workshops for buses, coaches and trucks in Spain. Here you not only get the best mechanics to attend to your Volvo bus or coach, the bus driver is also well attended to; while waiting for their bus to get ready for the road again, they are offered breakfast or lunch in the cantina and they can relax in a room designed especially for them.

Essential reliability

"It's essential that our costumers can rely on the work we do on their buses. The maintenance work and the repairs are as important as the actual purchase of the vehicle." The words come from Ivo Portillo the manager of the centre. "For us, each customer is equally important, no matter big or small, bus owner or truck owner."

As bus fleets are now optimized for size it's expensive for a bus owner to have broken down vehicles. Volvo Truck Centre offers the immediate

repair needed, with the mechanic working a three-shift pattern, from 6.30 in the morning to 10.00 at night.

"We aim to help our costumers when it's best for them," Ivo Portillo continues, "So we attend the buses and coaches when there is less demand for operation."

It's hard to get the best bus- and truck mechanics, but here you find them. One reason for this is the extensive training programme; another reason is the good reputation of Volvo, being a Volvo bus mechanic is worth a lot. At the training centre attached to the workshop the mechanics have the opportunity to learn about each model and when a new bus model is introduced, a chassis of the bus is placed in the education workshop. Training is also provided on the bodywork and its systems, including air conditioning, audio-visual/radio equipment and the toilet compartment.

A similar training programme is also offered to the mechanics of the customer.

Growing popularity

The popularity and good reputation of the Volvo Truck Centre among the



Chief mechanic Juan Carlos Navarro, one of the most experienced mechanics at the centre.

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A keystone is the maintenance of the buses, three times a year the buses comes to the centre for overhaul. This is a good way to keep the contact with the costumers. Some 40 per cent of the vehicles attended are buses and coaches. Supervisor Edison Pilatuña in the picture.



"It's essential to have close contact with the costumers", manager Ivo Portillo emphasises during a meeting with Juan Antonio Montoya at Interbuses, one of the major bus companies in Madrid.

From left: Juan Antonio Montoya of Interbuses, Ivo Portillo and Juan Carlos Navarro of Volvo Truck Centre.

bus and coach owners in Spain is growing. The workshop help desk is also of great interest; the mechanics of the customers, or in some cases the driver, can phone directly to chief mechanic Juan Carlos Navarro, one of the most experienced mechanics at the centre.

"Many of the problems we solve together" he says, "every customer is unique and in order to do the best service I analyse their specific needs and I always study the terrain where the vehicle operates."

Steep hills mean one kind of wear, curving roads another and so on.

"Juan Carlos is a key person in our company," Ivo Portillo says, "His knowledge and skills are of great importance."

Understanding the needs

At Interbuses, a major bus company that has public transport convesions for both long distance coach routes and local bus transport in the northern parts of Madrid, Boss Juan Antonio Montoya is pleased with the cooperation with the Volvo Truck Centre.

"They understand our needs and we have useful and creative dialogue," he says, "We feel secure with the service that the Centre offers, and it helps us to optimize our fleet and to cut costs."

"We aim not only to speak to the owners, but also to other key persons in the costumers companies," Ivo Portillo continues, "for example it's important to listen to the traffic super-

visors in order to understand the unique conditions of each customer. I do believe in the dialogue between us."

In addition, someone from the Volvo Truck Centre will always phone the costumers to get feed back and to maintain a good working relationship.

This summer the centre also invited the costumers to an open house for the first time, not only the owners and managers, but also the mechanics the drivers and their families. The occasion was a great success and they will do it again next year.

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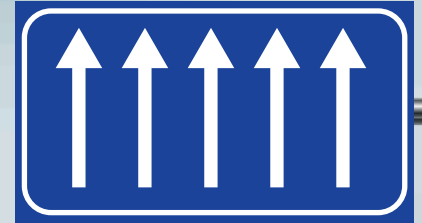
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Telematics system for Brazil

Volvo Buses has secured its largest order to date for the ITS4mobility telematics system. The system is to be installed on 1,400 buses in the city of Goiânia in Brazil and will enhance the efficiency of bus operations.

ITS4mobility is Volvo Buses advanced technological platform that supports the bus operators' control of bus operations and provides passengers with information at bus stops and on the buses.

The system gives traffic controllers the ability to monitor all of the buses in real time, see where they are

and their progress in relation to the timetables. Traffic controllers can also maintain constant contact with the drivers using text messages. Using this system, it is easier to maintain timetables and react rapidly to disruptions to bus traffic.

For passengers, ITS4mobility features electronic boards at bus stops that

show when the next bus will depart, while on board, there are electronic boards and automatic loudspeaker announcements of the next stop.

A major advantage of ITS4mobility is that the system can be used for all types of buses regardless of manufacturer. In Goiânia, Volvo Buses secured the order although none of the 1,400 buses is a Volvo bus.

"This is clear evidence that today's Volvo is no longer just a vehicle manufacturer, but a supplier of transport solutions," says Per Gabell, Head of Volvo Buses in Latin America.

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Photo: Oskar Kihlberg/Ericsson Racing Team

Life at the extreme

One of the toughest sailing competitions in the world starts in early October. The crews of the seven boats taking part in the Volvo Ocean Race will be sailing around the world, and they have to be able to handle storms, freezing conditions and icebergs as well as moments of feeling down.

The Volvo Ocean Race is one of the three biggest competitions in sailing, alongside the Olympics and the Americas Cup. This competition will be held every three years as of this year. This round-the-world sailing competition has been running since 1973, initially under the name of the Whitbread Round the World Race. Volvo took over as the main sponsor in 2001.

Initially sailors competed in ordinary family boats, but the boats used nowadays are some of the most advanced, the most high-tech boats imaginable. This boat class is called the Volvo Open 70 and is 70 feet long. These are the fastest single-hull, ocean-going sailing boats, travelling at top speeds of almost 40 knots.

The job of the boat designers has been to create fast, safe boats. The comfort of the crew is a secondary consideration, and that is why this

competition is an extremely tough challenge. Crew members are forced to live in cramped, uncomfortable conditions, drenched by water on deck. There are in fact times when their clothes are never dry. The cold and the motion of the boat make it difficult to get enough sleep, crew members have to live on freeze-dried food - and despite all this, they still have to sail as fast as they possibly can. The longest stage is more than 30 days long.

This year's competition will be starting in Alicante, Spain on 4 October, finishing in St. Petersburg, Russia in June 2009. There will be seven boats lining up at the start; Puma Ocean

Racing from the USA, Ericsson Racing Team 1 & 2 from Sweden, Green Dragon from Ireland, Team Russia from Russia, and Telefonica Blue and Black, two Spanish teams.

Ocean sailing is not normally a sport for the public, but the Volvo Ocean Race is an exception. Every boat carries on board cameras, radio equipment, computers and mobile phones. You will be able to keep track of most of the things happening on the boats through your computer. All you have to do is go to <http://www.volvooceanrace.org> to experience all the excitement of the Volvo Ocean Race.





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