

**PRESS RELEASE – English Translation**

## **Integration of HKX with DB Tickets**

### **HKX and Deutsche Bahn are partners now: cooperation on the recognition of DB fares for regional trains**

**(Cologne, January 28, 2015)** Effective February 1<sup>st</sup>, Hamburg-Köln-Express (HKX) will not only accept HKX tickets on its trains, but also tickets following the conditions of carriage of Deutsche Bahn (DB). The cooperation between HKX and DB has made this possible. Cooperation between local rail transport companies are the rule in Germany, i.e. “metronom,” “transregio,” “Nord/WestBahn” or “Westfalenbahn.” Cooperation guarantees a uniform fare structure. HKX and DB have signed an outline agreement concerning the provisional recognition of fare structures. “The integration into the short-distance fare structure is a milestone for us,” says Hans Leister, RDC’s General Director Passenger Services-Europe. “HKX and DB are now partners. In this way, HKX as a railroad company working on its own account is being integrated into the existing cooperation mechanisms of regional transport services, thus making it part of the German railroad system.”

“The outline agreement just signed expands the railroad customers’ travel options in a simple way, thus increasing the attractiveness of rail transport services,” commented Dr. Thomas Schaffer, Head of Marketing DB Regio.

This results in advantages for all passengers: for instance, with only one ticket passengers can travel from Kiel to Koblenz including an HKX train between Hamburg and Cologne. And since -distance fares for regional trains are now accepted by HKX, they can do this with a particularly inexpensive ticket.

In addition to DB tickets for regional trains, HKX also accepts more expensive DB tickets including ICEs, ECs or ICs as well as tickets for the first and last legs of a long-distance DB train, and also the BahnCard 100. This is especially appealing for travelers seeking an alternative because their train is cancelled or delayed. “Up to now, such travelers had to buy an HKX ticket in addition to their DB ticket,” stated Carsten Carstensen, HKX chief executive. “Now they can simply get on our trains and travel with us.”

In parallel to DB tickets, HKX tickets can of course be used on HKX trains. Travelers can continue purchasing tickets through HKX.de and all other HKX distribution channels. “This is especially important for passengers who would like to use HKX trains within transport associations like VRS, VRR, VGM and HVV or within the borders of a federal state in which a ‘Länder-Ticket’ is to be used,” added Mr. Carstensen. “The reason is that for the time being association tickets and ‘Länder-Tickets’ are not accepted by HKX. Passengers traveling within the areas of these associations and a federal state can do this only by using an HKX ticket.”

The recognition of association and “Länder-Tickets” will only become possible when HKX is also integrated into these tariffs; it will take some time to reach tariffs agreements on the recognition and allocation of receipts.

“Negotiations have already begun,” commented Mr. Leister. “For HKX, the integration into the regional fare structure is a first and a particularly important step. At present we are negotiating with the federal states and the associations. We are quite confident that after that the recognition of tickets issued by the associations, NRW tickets and Niedersachsen tickets will gradually become possible.”

“The integration into the regional fare structure will also facilitate the purchase of tickets by our customers,” added Mr. Carstensen. “The reason is that tickets for regional trains can be bought at DB outlets, at vending machines and on the internet at bahn.de.” However, since the outline agreement between DB and HKX was only signed recently, for technical reasons, ticket sales based on the current timetable will not be possible on February 1, 2015. Customers will not be able to purchase route-related tickets for HKX trains at bahn.de, DB navigator or DB vending machines, nor will they be able to be explicitly informed of the recognition of DB tickets until approximately April 1, 2015. However, these tickets will be available in DB travel centers and DB agencies as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, and will be accepted on HKX trains.

In addition, effective February 1, 2015 HKX will also accept the “Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket” (Happy-Weekend-Ticket) and the “Quer-durchs-Land-Ticket” (Across-the-Country-Ticket); these tickets are also part of the regional fare structure. For travelers using these tickets between Hamburg and Cologne, they have an additional advantage of choosing from a wider selection of trains than so far.

#### **An overview of the tickets now accepted by HKX:**

- HKX tickets
- Standard-fare tickets for trains of product range C (short-distance trains)
- DB’s ICE/IC/EC tickets
- Season tickets (weekly & monthly tickets) for trains of product ranges A (ICE), B (IC/EC) and C (short-distance)
- “Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket” and “Quer-durchs-Land-Ticket”
- Rail&Fly
- Interrail, RIT, Europa-Sparpeise (Europe budget fares), RailPlus, etc.

#### **The following tickets are NOT yet recognized :**

- Tickets of the transport associations VRS, VRR, VGM and HVV such as day tickets, weekly and monthly tickets; job tickets; university-term tickets; season tickets for school children and students; senior citizen tickets; flash tickets; “SchokoTicket” (for young people in clearly designated areas)
- Tickets of the NRW-Tarif (to be used in North-Rhine-Westphalia) such as “SchöneReise Ticket NRW” (Nice Journey Ticket NRW); “SchöneFahrtTicket NRW” (Nice Trip Ticket); “SchöneWoche Ticket NRW” (Happy Week Ticket)
- Tickets of the Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) fare structure

#### **Facts about HXX:**

HXX trains operate between Cologne and Hamburg with stops at the main stations of Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Münster and Osnabrück, at Hamburg- Harburg, Hamburg main station and Hamburg-Altona. The journey takes a little more than four hours. The majority shareholder of HXX GmbH is Railroad Development Corporation-Deutschland (RDC-D).

Hamburg-Köln-Express was shortlisted for the “European Rails Awards 2014” in the categories of “Intercity Operator of the Year” and “Customer Service Excellence”.

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