

PRESS RELEASE – English Translation

HKX successfully launches on-line extension to Frankfurt am Main

HKX now regularly runs to Frankfurt via Bonn, Koblenz and Bingen / Expansion of Cologne-Bonn line necessary

(Cologne, 14 December 2015) On Sunday, 13 December, Hamburg-Köln-Express (HKX) successfully started its route extension to Frankfurt am Main. For the first time the train ran along its old route Hamburg - Cologne on schedule and continued on to Frankfurt/Main station. HKX 1807 served the new stops Bonn, Koblenz and Bingen (Rhein) and was on time. "From now on runs along the left bank of the river Rhine from and to Frankfurt/Main are the norm," says Carsten Carstensen, Managing Director of Hamburg-Köln-Express GmbH. The new offer was well received by the customers. Many passengers got onboard at the newly added stops and got off in Frankfurt/Main. The train started in Hamburg with every seat taken, and on the first day of operation, more than 100 passengers were still onboard south of Cologne.



"We are delighted that the route extension has been so well received – even though Sunday was the first day of operation," says Carsten Carstensen. "For the fact that the first service could be carried out so smoothly, I thank all those who were involved in preparing the timetable change: the colleagues at HKX and the team of BahnTouristikExpress whose coaches we use, and who since yesterday are also responsible for all operational tasks."



"For us the operation of HKX is a fitting complement to our existing charter business," says Matthias Wolf, managing partner and responsible for sales at BahnTouristikExpress (BTE). Tobias Schiedermeier, who as managing partner of BTE is responsible for operations, adds: "That we now can see our cars run services every week between Hamburg, Cologne and Frankfurt/Main for us is an acknowledgement of nearly 20 years of activity in the passenger transport business."



Following the successful first run on Sunday, the official opening with invited guests from political and rail associations, as well as representatives of the press will take place on Tuesday, 15 December. A special train will leave at 12:30 PM from the main station of Frankfurt/Main towards Cologne. On Thursday, 17 December, the first scheduled train from Frankfurt/Main to Hamburg will start in Frankfurt/Main main station at 08:30 AM. The train will consist of 10 classic, comfortable coaches. Since passenger demand will be higher during the holiday season, the train will be longer on peak travel days.



Due to limited route capacities between Cologne and Frankfurt/Main, when planning the extension, HKX had to carefully search for time slots to be able to operate the new line extension at all. Nonetheless, effects on regional transport could not be avoided completely, but could be reduced to a minimum.

"HKX has long supported the demands of economy and politics, PTAs as the NVR, and of local residents, to expand capacities on the Rhine route and to provide valuable relief for the Cologne corridor. We, as well as other train companies, would like to offer more options for rail travel there," says Carsten Carstensen. "Passenger numbers in that area have been rising for years. Especially during rush hour, many trains are overcrowded. But due to a lack of track capacity in the main station of Cologne and the route between Cologne and Bonn, it is hardly possible to offer more train services."

In order to change this, smaller building measures between Cologne and Mehlem would be necessary, or at least an expansion of the Cologne central station and of the route up to Hürth-Kalscheuren. "Then we could offer more stops for which there surely would be demand," says Carsten Carstensen. A highlight for the native Rhinelander is that the train stops in his hometown Andernach, at least during the opening service on Tuesday. "Unfortunately this stop is still not possible as a regular part of the timetable," Carsten added.

About HXX:

HKX runs services from Frankfurt/Main main station to Hamburg with stops in the main stations of Bonn, Koblenz, Bingen (Rhein), Cologne, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Münster, Osnabrück and in Hamburg: Hamburg-Harburg, Hamburg main station and Hamburg-Altona.

HKX tickets are available from 18 euros for the whole route from Hamburg to Frankfurt/Main. They can be bought via the Internet at www.HKX.de, in the outlets of the Cologne Transport Authority (KVB), the Rheinbahn, Stadtwerke Bonn, the metronome and Nordwestbahn and a growing number of travel agencies along the route. Moreover, HKX tickets are available by telephone from the HKX Service Centre [Tel: 0180-6459459 from 06:00 until 22:00 (0.20 € / call from a German landline; max € 0.60 /call from German mobile networks)] or onboard the HKX trains from the service staff.

In addition, HKX accepts ticket of Deutsche Bahn, in particular those of regional transport (but no country or composite tickets). This makes HKX interesting for passengers who are traveling further, for example, from Flensburg to Bonn or Trier or from Frankfurt/Main to Sylt or Kiel. Only one ticket is needed and can be purchased quickly and economically at any retail outlet of Deutsche Bahn.

Principal shareholder of HKX is Railroad Development Corp. (RDC) Germany.

In 2015, HKX won the Railway Prize 2015 of the German Railway Customers Association in the category "Rail" for being particularly customer-friendly.

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