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## Three Transport Companies to Operate on the Akkunetz

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**Bids evaluated in SPNV tendering procedure - Two new and one well-known transport company to be commissioned**

**Committees approve award of contract**

**Kiel • February 11, 2021** — Surprising outcome in the award procedure for the Akkunetz: Three different rail transport companies are to be commissioned. Osthannoversche Eisenbahnen Aktiengesellschaft (OHE), RDC AUTOZUG Sylt GmbH and NBE nordbahn Eisenbahngesellschaft mbH & Co. KG have submitted the most economical bids and are to operate the accumulator trains in Schleswig-Holstein in the future. Following the Economic Committee, the Finance Committee of the state parliament today also approved the award recommendation of the Local Transport Association for Schleswig-Holstein (NAH.SH GmbH).

In May 2020, NAH.SH GmbH had launched the tender on behalf of the state and the Landesnahverkehrsgesellschaft Niedersachsen (LNVG). The battery network comprises a total of 10.4 million train kilometers and eleven rail lines in three different lots. In January, five bidders submitted a total of twelve bids for the different lots. In recent weeks, NAH.SH GmbH has examined and evaluated the bids from both a technical and an economic perspective and made its award recommendation to the state.

Transport Minister Dr. Bernd Buchholz: "We have broken new ground with this largest tender to date in local rail passenger transport in Schleswig-Holstein and the first major nationwide tender with battery-powered multiple units. I would like to thank the members of the Economics and Finance Committees for approving our award decisions. I am delighted that we can now award the contract to three good, cost-effective bids. With this award, Schleswig-Holstein will once again be a pioneer in rail transport nationwide."

### **Two new rail companies in the true north**

Osthannoversche Eisenbahnen Aktiengesellschaft (OHE) will thus take over operations in the East Lot from December 2022. It includes the RE 83/84 Kiel - Lübeck, RB 89 Lübeck - Lüneburg, RB 87 Kiel - Preetz and RB 76 Kiel - Schönberger Strand lines. OHE replaces DB Regio as the previous operator. OHE is part of the NETINERA Group, which is already a significant longstanding operator of regional rail passenger services in neighboring Lower Saxony with the companies erixx GmbH and metronom Eisenbahngesellschaft mbH. The Landesnahverkehrsgesellschaft Niedersachsen (LNVG) is involved in the procedure for the section of line between Lauenburg and Lüneburg.

RDC AUTOZUG Sylt GmbH will take over operations in the North Lot from December 2023, replacing DB Regio as the current operator there. The North Lot comprises the routes RE 72 Flensburg - Kiel, RB 73 Eckernförde - Kiel, RE 74 Husum - Kiel, RB 75 Rendsburg - Kiel and RB 64 Husum - Bad St. Peter-Ording.

In the east-west lot, the NBE nordbahn Eisenbahngesellschaft mbH & Co. KG will remain the operator of the east-west lot when the timetable changes in December 2023 and will thus continue to provide its current services unchanged. The east-west lot comprises the RB 63 Büsum - Heide - Neumünster and RB 82 Neu-münster - Bad Oldesloe lines. The new contracts with the three operators are to run until December 2035.

The timetable largely corresponds to the status quo on the existing routes, supplemented by additional early and late connections. The early connections will increase the attractiveness of commuter traffic in particular. In addition, the new transport companies will also operate the routes to Schönberger Strand and Rendsburg-Seemühlen, which are to be reactivated. This also applies to the increased frequency between Kiel and Preetz, which is planned in conjunction with the acceleration of the Kiel - Lübeck line.

### **Competition despite difficult conditions**

The award of the contract took place in a difficult environment: The transport companies are suffering massively from the effects of the Corona crisis because they are losing fare income. In addition, the number of bidders in award procedures in Schleswig-Holstein had recently declined after Nord-Ostsee-Bahn (NOB) lost its services to DB Regio AG. On average, only around three bidders take part in comparable award procedures throughout Germany. With bids from five bidders, Schleswig-Holstein was well above the average.

For the first time, the state and NAH.SH had introduced a lot limitation in the tender: This precluded the two large lots East and North from being awarded to one transport company. NAH.SH Managing Director Dr. Arne Beck: "We are pleased that our calculation worked out and that we had such a high level of competition in the award procedure. With RDC and OHE, we are gaining two new companies for local rail passenger transport in Schleswig-Holstein. I am sure that the state and also the passengers will benefit from this competition and the new diversity on the railways."

The vehicles for operation will be provided to the future transport companies. They are also not responsible for maintenance. This will be taken over by the vehicle manufacturer Stadler Pankow GmbH with a new maintenance plant being built in Rendsburg. With the conversion of the transport contracts to the gross principle, the transport companies are also handing over revenue responsibility to the state for the first time. The new operators are also contractually obligated to take over the personnel of the previous operators at the previous conditions.

### **The background to the award procedure:**

Three and a half years ago, the state of Schleswig-Holstein launched the "SH-XMU" award procedure with the aim of procuring vehicles for rail transport that are as emission-free as possible and at the same time improving the competitive situation in terms of vehicles and transport services. The procedure is divided into four awards.

In the SH-XMU I award, Stadler Pankow GmbH was selected as the developer, manufacturer and supplier of the 55 trains on July 1, 2019. Stadler will also be responsible for the maintenance of the trains for 30 years. Following a successful second invitation to tender (award SH-XMU II), the state has commissioned Paribus Holding GmbH & Co KG to purchase the trains and then lease them for 30 years to the rail transport companies to be selected by the state. The Hamburg-based company will thus finance the first major procurement of battery-powered multiple units in Germany and probably also in Europe in more than 50 years. To this end, Paribus is taking advantage of a capital service guarantee granted by the state and can thus secure favorable financing. Paribus will also provide technical support during the construction phase.

In order to counter any initial difficulties with the new drive technology and to facilitate the smooth introduction of the new battery-powered multiple units, the vehicle manufacturer Stadler is initially to deliver a pilot series of five multiple units from November 2022. The remaining multiple units are then to be successively put into service from May 2023 to mid-2024.

For the transitional period from December 2022 to December 2024, the state has commissioned DB Regio to provide a transfer fleet following a further partial tender (award SH-XMU III). This comprises 22 Alstom Coradia Lint 41 diesel multiple units for operation and up to four more as a workshop reserve. The vehicles, which are already in service on the Eastern and Northern networks, will be maintained in Kiel.

For more on mass transit, visit: [www.nah.sh](http://www.nah.sh)

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