

# STUTTGART S-BAHN RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

By tendering out the contract for operating the Stuttgart S-Bahn and making plans to expand its route network, Verband Region Stuttgart is on the road to delivering regional rail transport that is affordable, sustainable and high-quality.



**M**obility plays a key role in the region of Stuttgart. With 730 inhabitants per square kilometre, it is one of the most densely populated areas in the whole of Germany. A total of 124,000 inhabitants work in the automotive industry. Every day, some 775,000 people commute from their homes to work, and 170,000 of them use buses and local trains. Local entrepreneurs see traffic congestion and the lack of mobility as the region's biggest drawback as a business location. It is even considered a greater problem than the high cost of labour or the scarcity of skilled workers, which rank second and third respectively. Consequently, Verband Region Stuttgart (Association for the Stuttgart region), as the body in charge of the S-Bahn, is tackling the task of keeping the region mobile. Its main focus is the S-Bahn, the backbone of local public transport used by 330,000 passengers every day. Along its six routes, the S-Bahn offers a comfortable, reliable and greener alternative to car transport.

## Improvements since 1996

The 180 kilometre S-Bahn rail track provides access to what is called the "Verkehrs- und Tarifverbund Stuttgart", or region of Stuttgart, a 3,000 square kilometre area that excludes Göppingen. Some 2.4 million people live in the area served by the S-Bahn. With a single ticket, commuters can use all the buses and trains in the region's entire

transport system. Since 1996, when public rail transport was regionalised, Verband Region Stuttgart has managed the S-Bahn and smaller local train services in the region. During this time, it has boosted the frequency of services, expanded the route network and secured funding for transport. In addition, it has also invested in 54, new S-Bahn coaches. Each year, Verband Region Stuttgart pays Deutsche Bahn AG €50 million to operate the S-Bahn. This money comes from so-called "regionalisation funds", awarded by the federal government to individual federal states to finance regional rail transport.

## Making S-Bahn competitive

Verband Region Stuttgart is serious about making regional rail transport competitive. With a total volume of about 9.8 million rail kilometres a year and a gross contract volume of 2.5 billion, the Association is putting the largest single contract for rail services in German history out to tender. In November 2006, the bidding process was published in the European Official Journal. Four renowned transport contractors - Arriva, Deutsche Bahn AG, Keolis and Veolia - submitted bids. The second phase of the competition was held in May 2007. Based on an initial proposal, negotiations will be held to fully explain the services required. These talks will deal with every aspect of operating the S-Bahn. Particular attention will be paid not only to coach specifications and their financing, but

also to the challenges of meeting exceptional operating needs - anticipated in conjunction with Stuttgart 21, a major local and long-distance transport project that will relocate the main train station to a lower level, as well as establishing a fast train route. Other issues, such as quality and emergency management, concepts for maintenance and dealing with employees, will also be discussed. Once they are all clarified, a third and final phase will begin, with each transport company submitting their final written bid.

The Regional Assembly, the directly elected political body of the Association, will have until the middle of 2008 to choose which of the four bidders will operate the S-Bahn. The organisation chosen will then have four years to prepare to operate. The contract will last 15 years. The current S-Bahn contract was awarded to DB Regio AG in July 2003. It will run until July 2011, but not beyond December 2013.

## The region decided to put the S-Bahn operation out to tender for various reasons:

- To ensure S-Bahn delivers cost-effective and high quality transport services, which in turn
- Should lead to quality rail transport services for the region in the long-term
- To keep all information about subsidies granted for operating the S-Bahn in the public eye



**“ DESPITE REDUCED SUBSIDIES AND TIGHTER GOVERNMENT SPENDING, VERBAND REGION STUTTGART STILL SEES THIS PROJECT AS AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE, AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR BOOSTING THE REGION'S APPEAL AS A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS HUB ”**

By offering all competing parties a fair chance, the Association is acting in accordance with all procurement and subsidy-related regulations.

### The S-Bahn of the future

Verband Region Stuttgart anticipates that by expanding its route network, the S-Bahn's appeal as mode of transport will be strengthened. In addition to its role in "Stuttgart 21", part of the new "Magistrale for Europe" (cross-border public transport network) project linking Paris to Budapest/Bratislava, the region will complete four S-Bahn expansion projects by 2010, costing a total of €200 million. One of these projects, the new S-Bahn Tangential S60 (Renningen-Böblingen), will create

40,000 jobs at the DaimlerChrysler plant in Sindelfingen. The region's major workplaces must be provided with access to public transport. Only a good combination of motor traffic and public transport will keep traffic flowing on the region's streets and highways in the long run.

Despite reduced subsidies and tighter government spending, Verband Region Stuttgart still sees this project as an important investment in the future, an important tool for boosting the region's appeal as a competitive business hub. In years to come, in response to expected demographic fluctuations, Verband Region Stuttgart will focus on concentrating residential areas near the S-Bahn routes. This should

play a key role in growing mobility across the region, helping tilt the balance in favour of regional public transport and attracting new passengers to the S-Bahn ●

*by Dorothee Lang,  
Verband Region Stuttgart*

### S-BAHN FACTS AND FIGURES

Number of routes: 6  
Total track network: 177km  
Number of stations: 71  
Passengers per day: 330,000  
Daily operating performance: 23,000 rail km  
Per year: 8.5 million rail km  
Number of S-Bahn coaches: approximately 140

