

Press release

RCH's electric hybrid shunting locomotives receive type approval and approval for placing in service

Budapest, 17 October 2024 – The two electric hybrid shunting locomotives, whose development and production was ordered by Rail Cargo Hungaria (RCH) from the Chinese railway vehicle manufacturer, CRRC Zhuzhou Locomotive Co. Ltd. (CRRC ZELC), have received their Hungarian type approval and approval for placing in service. The two locomotives, with a unique capability in Europe, are servicing the Székesfehérvár and the Soroksár marshalling yards.

RCH commissioned the development of the new technology locomotives in 2019 in order to reduce operating costs. The capabilities of the locomotives allow them to offer services even in places where no overhead contact lines are available, either temporarily or permanently. For example, there is usually no power source on sidings, therefore, railway undertakings typically use less environment-friendly diesel locomotives there. RCH has acquired the locomotives primarily to meet the shunting needs of single wagonload service, being the only provider in Hungary with nationwide coverage.

Upon successfully completing the authorisation procedure, Dr. Kovács Imre, the CEO of Rail Cargo Hungaria pointed out that the company further improves its competitiveness by applying this state-of-the-art technology. CRRC developed the electric hybrid shunting locomotives - that operate in a cost-efficient and environmentally friendly manner - specifically for RCH, the market-leading Hungarian rail freight company.

Li Sheng Chen, Managing Director of CRRC ZELC Verkehrstechnik GmbH, stated: "We are grateful for the trust and recognition from the client. CRRC's mission is „Connecting the World through Better Mobility”. We look forward to taking the delivery of these two shunting locomotives to RCH as an opportunity to foster more and better cooperation between China and Hungary in the field of rail transit equipment, and we are full of confidence in this."



Management of Rail Cargo Hungaria and CRRC ZELC Europe at the handover event of the locomotive

During the development, the manufacturer designed the technical and functional features of the locomotives in view of RCH's modification requests and has also taken into account the ergonomic requirements set by the Hungarian party.

The completed locomotives ran a total of 40 thousand kilometres during testing on both Hungarian and foreign railway infrastructure.

The locomotive maintenance staff were trained by CRRC. During the test runs, the professionals working on the new engines had positive experiences of the locomotives, which they found easy and safe to drive, and ergonomically comfortable.

The weight of the locomotive manufactured in South-East China's Hunan province is 72 tons and its technology is catenary + battery hybrid. The vehicle is powered by a lithium-titanate battery to assist in shunting operations. Owing to its high-capacity energy storage technology, it recharges the battery installed in the locomotive on sections with overhead contact line. On a track without overhead contact lines, the shunting locomotive is able to haul an 800-tonne-train for 85 minutes at a speed of 20 km/h.



Electric hybrid shunting locomotives of Rail Cargo Hungaria

Rail Cargo Hungaria has started the negotiations for commissioning further shunting locomotives, which is possible under the contract concluded with CRRC. Currently, the details are being worked out.

The Chinese manufacturer has also delivered the two-line electric hybrid locomotives developed for RCH. The authorization process for these locomotives to be equipped with the European Train Control System (ETCS) has started so that they can also perform shunting operations in the countries of South-Eastern Europe (Serbia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia).

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