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DACHINLB locomotives in service

Through-running to Belgium

In early November, BLS Cargo broke new ground by running services through to Belgium without a change of locomotive at the borders. A combination of BLS Cargo's new multi-system locomotives and Belgian subsidiary Crossrail Benelux NV made this possible.

Since the beginning of the month, BLS Cargo has been running freight trains for Italian operator Ambrogio Intermodal through to Belgium using the same locomotive throughout. This is the first time the company has used its new Vectron Re 475 locomotives end-to-end on the route with the service being provided almost entirely by BLS Cargo group resources. Belgian subsidiary, Crossrail Benelux, hauls the trains in Germany and Belgium, in Switzerland its BLS Cargo itself. "This brings Belgium nearer to us and means we can associate ourselves more closely with Crossrail" says Dirk Stahl, CEO BLS Cargo. There are benefits not only for the company, but also for customers, as services move more quickly and seamlessly across borders and locomotive utilisation is optimised. «As a partner of BLS Cargo since its foundation, we are proud to be a part of this breakthrough innovation allowing to connect Italy with Belgium under a single production», says Livio Ambrogio, President of Ambrogio Group.

12 months from order placement to commercial operation

In October 2019, BLS Cargo ordered 25 new 'Vectron' multi-system locomotives from Siemens, equipped with traction and train control systems required for operation in Germany (D), Austria (A), Switzerland (CH), Italy (I), the Netherlands (NL) and Belgium (B). Siemens has ensured that locomotives have been rolled out in batches as planned and has arranged for the necessary operating licences for this freight corridor to be issued in good time. A total of 10 units will be delivered by the end of 2020 with the remaining 15 due to follow in 2023.

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BLS Cargo AG

BLS Cargo provides rail freight transport services on the central north-south corridor between the North Sea and the Mediterranean. Unaccompanied combined transport services transiting Switzerland, conventional wagonload traffic as well as the rolling highway constitute our key services. In addition, we operate full trainload services within Switzerland as well as Swiss import and export traffics and other routes from Belgium. Since 2019, Belgian operator Crossrail has been part of the BLS Cargo group, hauling freight trains on our behalf in Belgium and Germany. BLS Cargo's shareholders are BLS with 52%, SNCF Logistics with 45% and Ambrogio Trasporti with 3%.

For further information go to www.blscargo.ch