

Press release

RAlpin reports record results for 2013

By running 5,500 trains, RAlpin's rolling highway service has transferred more heavy goods vehicles from road to rail in 2013 than at any time in its history. For infrastructure reasons the trains are limited in length to a maximum of 21 low-floor wagons, yet operational improvements have enabled them to run at almost 100% capacity.

From the very beginning of 2013 RAlpin experienced consignment volumes that were considerably above expectations. 109,000 heavy goods vehicles made use of the rolling highways through Switzerland in 2013 (+9% vis-à-vis 2011¹). This has helped us prevent around 30,000 tonnes of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere. Moreover, taking the year as a whole, the capacity utilisation of the trains was an encouraging 87%. Despite the challenging economic conditions – particularly acute in Italy – demand for the rolling highway remained buoyant. This was helped by the fact that we experienced no significant infrastructure issues such as closures of lines or other restrictions in 2013 – in stark contrast to the previous year.

Although the number of heavy goods vehicles transported on the Lötschberg axis was only just short of the 100,000 mark, RAlpin sees this figure as confirmation of its confidence in the future of the rolling highway. Thanks to the company's wheelset maintenance workshop launched in 2012, rolling highway compositions are now able to offer the maximum allowed number of 21 low-floor wagons. As a consequence, customers benefit from consistently higher capacity – an advantage that has been viewed positively by the market. Past experience has shown that enhanced availability leads to increased demand.

Even greater potential

Although Switzerland is well ahead of Europe when it comes to transferring freight traffic from road to rail, the potential is far from exhausted. "We are convinced that it is possible to transfer increasing volumes of freight traffic from road to rail and that investments made in both infrastructure and rolling stock pay off in the long term," says RAlpin CEO René Dancet. 2013 has shown that the market is prepared to consider the modal shift to rail. However, current circumstances are such that no significant further growth in the rolling highway service can be expected in the next few years.

The opening in December 2016 of the Gotthard basis rail tunnel, the subsequent opening of the Ceneri tunnel and the implementation of the 4-metre corridor in the ensuing years signal the emergence of new opportunities for RAlpin. The presence of trains weighing a total of 2,000 tonnes with a length of 750 metres and a corner height of four metres creates conditions for a substantial expansion in rolling highway capacity in the long term. The creation of 4-metre corridors along the Lötschberg-Simplon and Gotthard axes will allow these routes to be used interchangeably in the event of disruptions caused by rock falls and so forth. That is why it is

¹ The natural phenomena and infrastructure-related restrictions of 2012 were such that they fail to provide a meaningful reference point, which is why comparisons are made with 2011.

crucial that voters approve the FABI proposals for the financing and development of the railway infrastructure in the national referendum scheduled for 9 February 2014.

Standardisation and new developments

In its role as wagon keeper, RAlpin is required to demonstrate that it is fully up to the task of maintaining its rolling stock and thus capable of assuming ultimate responsibility for the safety of its consignments. RAlpin is one of Europe's first wagon keepers to be certified according to EU Directive 445 for the maintenance of rolling stock. This provides evidence that RAlpin is fully compliant with its role as Entity in Charge of Maintenance (ECM), both as wagon keeper and as operator of a workshop.

In terms of corporate communications, 2013 saw RAlpin further develop its corporate identity. This included launching a short informative film on the rolling highway and redesigning the company website: www.ralpin.com.

Olten, 3 January 2014

RAlpin AG at a glance

Headquartered in Olten, RAlpin AG operates the rolling highway between Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, and Novara, Italy, and between Basel and Lugano. Every year, the company transfers more than 100,000 heavy goods vehicles from road to rail. Under the rolling highway system, drivers drive their vehicles onto low-floor wagons at the terminals and accompany their loads in a passenger coach. This service finds RAlpin making a significant contribution to the transfer of traffic from road to rail and safeguarding the sensitive Alpine region.

The shareholders of RAlpin are BLS AG, Hupac SA, SBB Cargo AG and Trenitalia SpA.

www.ralpin.com

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