



United Kingdom

Underground Postal Rail Line to Close

Mail Rail, a little known underground postal system that transports 3.5 million items of mail a week across London, is to close at the end of May after 75 years in service. The electric rail system runs for 37 km between Whitechapel and Paddington, 21 m below ground. The number of stations served by

Mail Rail has been reduced over the years from nine to three and it now costs four times as much as transporting post by road. The system was thought to be losing about £250 million a year. Royal Mail, the owner, is in talks with a number of organisations about possible alternative uses. Among the ideas suggested in a recent London Assembly report were transporting high-value items to shops in Oxford Street, same-day document delivery, precious metals to Mayfair's jewellers and wine to the capital's vintners.

World Digest of Tunnels Under Planning

Italy. A 6.5 km tunnel may be built on the 16 km section between Santo Stefano di Cadore, Italy and Linz, Austria. This is the proposal of VenetoStrade SpA and engineering consultancies Studio Zollet Ingegneria and Mainardi, who are working on a direct connection between Veneto and west Tyrol. The Italian and Austrian authorities are expected to approve the alignment within one month.

Spain. The Ministry of development is undertaking the early design to build underground the high speed track in Malaga. The Andalucia government and the city must now reach an agreement about their share in the financing. Between Arroyo de las Cañas and the station, 2.5 km would run underground.

Spain. Municipal and regional elections took place in Spain on 25th may. Alberto Ruiz Gallardón has been elected mayor of Madrid. He was so far president of Comunidad de Madrid, the Madrid region. The ruling party at Comunidad de Madrid lost majority so that the region will be ruled by a left-wing coalition. During his campaign as a candidate to mayorship, Ruiz Gallardón committed to build 14 new tunnels connecting with motorway M-30 and improve traffic in Madrid.

On the east section running from the Manoteras (N-I) to Sur (N-IV) connections, connections to Costa Rica and N-II will be upgraded with two tunnels. The O'Donnell tunnel will be lengthened to Torre de Valencia in Retiro. A connection in tunnel is also planned between O'Donnell and N-100. There will also be one tunnel at the connection with N-III and another two on a south bypass to connect M-30. These two tunnels will be 3.5 km and 3.2 km in length.

The south section will be improved sinking underground the M-30 between the former bullring in Arganzuela and Toledo bridge. The M-30 will also be linked to Sor Ángela de la Cruz with another tunnel. The Pío XII will also be dualled.

Another tunnel is proposed to decongest the northern part of the city between Avenida de la Ilustración and M-607. Two options are under study, with a tunnel of 600 m or 1.6 km in

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length.

On the west section from Segovia bridge to N-V, a west bypass is planned with a pair of 2 km-long tunnels to Casa de Campo and another two tunnels through N-V, possibly from Avenida de los Poblados to connect to this previous pair.

United Kingdom. Plans for a 2.1 km tunnel to help relieve traffic congestion in Stonehenge are to be published in June. The Highways Agency will set out its improvement scheme for the A303 on 5th June with the aim of improving safety and reducing congestion. An exhibition of the plans will be open to interested parties between 12th and 15th June in Amesbury. The publication of the plans marks the start of a statutory three-month consultation period. Visit www.tunnelbuilder.com, uk/34.

World Digest of Bids

France. Restricted procedure, deadline 25th June, 2003 for engineering regarding the extension of metro line A in Lyon, from Laurent Bonnevey to La Soie, including an 800 m-long cut-and-cover section and an underground station. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=089778-2003>, OJ S 100, or contact SYTRAL, Lyon, fax +33 478531284 or +33 472845853 (administrative info) and +33 472845838 (technical info).

France. Preinformation for equipment of Line B of the Toulouse metro. Contracts 15.1 and 15.2 are for wiring, low voltage, lighting and false ceilings, value €6.9 million. Contract 22 is for fire safety, value €500,000. Contract 26 is for ventilation and smoke removal, value €5.8 million. Contract 27 is for elevators, value €7.2 million. Contract 28 is for escalators, value €17 million. Contract 30.2 are for wiring, lighting, fiber optics, and water ducts in the tunnels, value €3.5 million. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090112-2003>, OJ S 101, or contact SMAT, Toulouse, fax +33 561144851.

France. Open call for bids, deadline 3rd July, 2003 for equipment of Line B of the Toulouse metro, contract 30.1, supply and installation in 7,440 m of tunnel of low voltage electric equipment, wiring, fire hydrants and water supply. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090155-2003>, OJ S 101, or contact SMAT, Toulouse, fax +33 561144851.

France. Restricted call for bids, deadline 27th June, 2003 for equipment of Line B of the Toulouse metro, contract 15.2, electricity, lighting and false ceilings in 10 stations. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=091057-2003>, OJ S 102, or contact SMAT, Toulouse, fax +33 561144851.

Germany. Negotiated procedure, deadline 23rd June, 2003 for work supervision and construction management of the Dillenburg bypass on road B 277, including a 782 m-long tunnel. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090540-2003> and <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090550-2003>, OJ S 101, or contact Amt für Straßen- und Verkehrswesen, Dillenburg, fax +49 2771840300. E-mail marco.graeb@hsvv.hessen.de

Germany. Open call for bids, 12th August, 2003 for supply, assembly and commissioning of a digital operating radio system for the Nuremberg/Fürth metro. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090573-2003>, OJ S 101, or contact City of Nuremberg, Nuremberg, fax +49 9112314978. E-mail tu2@t.stadt.nuernberg.de

Portugal. Open call for bids, deadline 7th July, 2003 for traction substations for medium-voltage networks, electrical traction substations and associated safety systems for sections Pontinha-Falagueira and Baixa/Chiado-Santa Apolónia on the metro blue line. Visit

<http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=089772-2003>, OJ S 100, or contact Metropolitano de Lisboa, Lisbon, fax +351 213574908.

Spain. Open call for bids, deadline 21st July, 2003 for technical assistance to work supervision for electrical and mechanical works in the Urbinaga-Sestao section of metro line 2 in Bilbao. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=090421-2003>, OJ S 101, or contact Consorcio de Transportes de Bizkaia, Bilbao, fax +34 944750021. E-mail mbodegas@contrabi.com

World Digest of Contract Awards

Spain. Necso will build a 194 m-long 1.2 m-diameter subsea tunnel at 17 metres below ground to provide a water inlet to the Aquarium in La Coruña. Visit www.necso.es

World Digest of Ongoing Tunnelling

Bhutan. Discussing the progress and plans of the ongoing Tala hydroelectric project authority (THPA), the board of directors, representatives of the government of India, and the royal government of Bhutan expressed their satisfaction over the progress that the project was making. Out of the 23 km of the headrace tunnel, 22.7 km has been completed and out of the 43 km of the excavation work, 41.7 km has been completed. The project will be completed and commissioned by June 2005.

Atlas Copco Boomer machines with computer viewer system drill the holes for explosives. Special non-electronic detonators and power gelatin that produce less fumes and are less poisonous and damaging to the environment are used. After the explosion, C-K 90 excavators take out the muck and debris and transfer them into dumper trucks which transport it outside. Then Cifa spritz machines splash shotcrete on to the walls of the tunnel. Shotcreting is followed by rock bolting. Boltec machines insert metal rods varying from four to ten metres which are held in place by a mixture of cement and resin. The rods are bolted with square-shaped plates and knots at the end. After excavation and support, the next major work is lining. It is done using a metal gantry. The gantry is 12 m-long so that 12 m of tunnel can be lined at one go. The concrete lining varies from a thickness of 30 cm to 45 cm depending on the rock structure and strength. It takes about 12-14 hours to complete one cycle of drilling, blasting, mucking, bolting and supporting. On average, about 145 m of the tunnel has been excavated in a month. In unstable geological conditions, steel support is applied according to rock classification. Rock classes 1 to 4 are considered good and not requiring steel support. From class 5 onwards, steel ribs are erected. After excavation and lining, extensometers and loadcells are placed at different points to see how the rock is behaving and to study the pressure acting on the steel ribs. India has released Nu20.2 billion for the project which has spent Nu20.4 billion. The estimated budget for this year's work is projected at Nu8.2 billion, of which the government of India has already released Nu1.55 billion. The project, with an estimated completion cost of Nu35.8 billion, is the biggest cooperative venture between Bhutan and India. All the power will be bought by the government of India. Read E-News Weekly 25/2002. Visit www.tunnelbuilder.com/facedrilling/edition2pdf/page63.pdf, www.tunnelbuilder.com, bt/11 and www.atlascopco.com

Canada. Tunnelling of the Toulousteouc hydropower scheme is making headway, north of Baie-Comeau, with 750 workers involved on it while over 1,000 are expected at the end of the summer. This C\$1 billion project includes two main underground structures – a diversion tunnel and a headrace tunnel – and secondary structures, among which a balance chimney and shafts. The 370 m-long 8 m x 6 m horse shoe-shaped diversion tunnel has been completed in January by Groupe Aecon Ltée. Concreting at the uphill portal of this tunnel ended in May. Water will flow through this tunnel to dry up the river bed where the dam



Picture 1: Tamrock Axera T12 jumbos working at Toulousteouc.

is to be built. In April, 3 km out of the 9.8 km-long 13 m x 11 m horse shoe-shaped headrace tunnel had been completed. The contractor, EBC Inc., is using three Axera T12 Data jumbo drill rigs. Visit www.hydroquebec.com/toulnustouc/index.html, www.tunnelbuilder.com, ca/16 and www.sandviktamrock.com

China. China National Petroleum Corp. is building the West East Pipeline (WEP) project. The latest progress report on the construction of the trans-Yangtze River section of the Xinjiang-to-Shanghai West East Pipeline (WEP) project indicates that 58% of the tunnel had been completed by 9th May. However, the laying of the pipes under the river might not begin until the end of July. The length of the tunnel that has already been dug is 1,160 m. The total length of the cross-Yangtze tunnel is 1,992 m. Extending 4,200 km-long, the pipeline needs to cross the Yangtze and Yellow rivers, the two longest rivers in China. No recent information has been released on the part of the pipeline project crossing the Yellow River. The cross-Yangtze point is at Sanjiangkou near Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu Province, and there are three points at which the Yellow River needs to be crossed.

Ecuador. Spanish construction group OHL has completed the construction of two new tunnels in Guayaquil financed by the Corporación Andina de Fomento and the city. The contract is worth €75 million. The two one-way tunnels, 732 m and 541 m in length, accommodate three lanes and will improve traffic within the city to cross the Carmen and Santa Ana Hills. They have been equipped with 259 lighting lamps provided by Philips. Read E-News Weekly 34/2002. Visit www.tunnelbuilder.com, ec/14 and www.ohl.es

Italy. Consorzio Cooperative Costruttori (CCC) based in Bologna, Bolzano-based Oberosler and Tortona-based Codelfa have started construction of the Moena road bypass on truck road SS 48 in Trento province. Three cut-and-cover tunnels, with a total length of 418 m, will be built together with a bored tunnel in Sameda, 1.1 km in length of which 47.5 m in cut-and-cover. The contract is worth €27.3 million.

World Digest of Tunnel Renovation & Maintenance

France. Two restricted procedures, 23rd June, 2003 have been issued for electrical and mechanical works in the 12,870 m-long Fréjus tunnel between France and Italy. First call for bids is for design, production, supply and installation of the radiotelecom systems. The second is for videomonitoring and automatic detection of incidents, requiring the removal of the existing equipment and the supply and commissioning of new equipment. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=089433-2003> and <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=089435-2003>, OJ S 100, or contact SFTRF, Paris, fax +33 147059901 or +33 479202610 (administrative info) and +33 143423945 (technical info).

France. Escota, the concessionaire of motorways A50, A51, A52, A57, A500 and A8 in southeast France, has awarded to Scetauroute and Isis a €160,000 contract for engineering as part of the equipment of the tunnels on motorway A8 in Nice. Read E-News Weekly 2/2002 & 3/2002. Visit www.escota.fr

Germany. Open call for bids, 1st July, 2003 for renovation of a 600 m single-track tunnel, requiring to lower the invert by 10 cm, drainage, shotcreting, etc. Visit <http://ted.publications.eu.int/udl?request=Seek-Deliver&language=en&docid=091375-2003>, OJ S 102, or contact DB Netz, Munich, fax +49 9112787 or 89130872858. E-mail joerg.eckert@bahn.de and uwe.u.walter@bahn.de