

468 gangway halves to be refurbished by 2028

Freshly overhauled: HÜBNER gangways for “LeShuttle” – the Eurotunnel train

Kassel, Germany (17 November 2023). Freshly overhauled gangway systems for “LeShuttle” – the newly renamed Eurotunnel train that provides a rail connection between France and Great Britain. Through 2028, the HÜBNER Group will be bringing these railway gangways, which are the largest in the world, into fully refurbished condition. A further eight units out of a total of 468 gangway halves have just now been delivered from Kassel, Germany to Calais, France, for installation.

HÜBNER gangways in operation for more than a quarter of a century

HÜBNER has been supporting the motorail trains used in the Eurotunnel for more than a quarter of a century. The original equipment was supplied at the beginning of the 1990s. At that time, the double-decker trains were equipped with specially developed corrugated bellows with dimensions of 4 by 5.5 meters. These gangways are now being refurbished by HÜBNER from top to bottom.

“The refurbishment of these exceedingly large gangways is a major technical and logistical challenge. For the transport of the gangways from Kassel to Calais, we’ve developed a special logistics concept,” explains **Dennis Böhm, Regional Sales Manager, After Sales & Service**. The refurbishment project had its start in 2020 and is scheduled over a period of 8 years. So far, HÜBNER has overhauled and delivered 52 of the 468 gangway halves. After refurbishment, the gangways can then be used for an additional 30 years in regular operation.

Knowledge transfer in the interests of the customer Getlink

The partners HÜBNER and Getlink are making use of a very close cooperation with comprehensive knowledge transfer for the implementation of the project. *“The Eurotunnel project is special for us,”* says **Kai Mentel, Managing Director of the HÜBNER Group**. *“In this very successful cooperation with our customer Getlink as the transit operator, we have been able to highlight our expertise as an experienced and reliable project partner, also for non-standard designs and technical specifications.”*

In 2021, HÜBNER employees installed the first refurbished gangways on site in Calais while at the same time training the technicians there so that they could take over with the installation work in the course of the project. *“Not only is our customer benefiting from this arrangement, but there is also a plus for the environment,”* explains **Dennis Böhm**. *“We’re making it possible for our*



customer to use their own technicians for the installation, which effectively saves costs. In addition, this makes it possible to simplify complex delivery routes, which in turn avoids CO₂ emissions.”

Sustainable processes for a positive partnership

In fact, not all of the components originally delivered approximately 30 years ago need to be replaced. For example, mechanical components can be re-used and be installed on site by the customer in the new gangway halves.

*“For us, this sustainability concept applies throughout the whole course of the project,” emphasizes **Managing Director Kai Mentel**. “The re-use of individual components for these highly specialized gangway systems is a critical factor that lets us save valuable resources and reduce emissions.”*

Some project participants already on hand for the original installation

The project partners can look back on more than a quarter century of successful work together. This creates a high level of identification with the overall endeavor, also for the HÜBNER workforce. *“The experience and expertise of our long-serving employees is another HÜBNER asset,” says **Kai Mentel**. “Some of the employees working on the project were already involved in the original installation and are very pleased to be able to carry on with this successful work. This type of long-term retention of employees and projects is a special factor that distinguishes us from the competition and sets us apart as a globally active company.”*

Eurotunnel background

The Eurotunnel is a 50-kilometer-long railway tunnel that connects Great Britain and France. It is used by “LeShuttle” – the mototrain that transport cars, buses and motorcycles between Coquelles near Calais, France, and Folkestone in Kent, England. The trains are run by the rail transport company Getlink, which is the operator of the Eurotunnel.

HÜBNER Group

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With its business divisions **Mobility Rail, Mobility Road, Material Solutions** and **Photonics**, the HÜBNER Group is a global system supplier for the mobility sector, for manufacturing, and for life sciences and research applications. HÜBNER is the worldwide leader in gangway systems for rail vehicles and buses as well as a supplier of chassis technology, cockpit display solutions and door sealing and safety profiles. The company is also an internationally recognized supplier of sophisticated solutions involving elastomers, insulation and composite materials. HÜBNER’s business unit for laser technology is developing successfully, featuring applications for cancer diagnostics and spectroscopy, for example.

In 2022, the HÜBNER Group generated sales of approximately €460 million, with approximately 3,500 employees worldwide. In addition to its headquarters in Kassel, Germany, HÜBNER is present with more than 30 locations around the world.

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