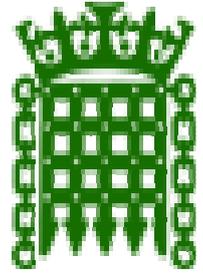


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Canberra looks to European design and technology for tram rolling stock



Photo: Glenn Hunt

5th October 2015

A Bombardier Flexity 2 tram operating on the Gold Coast light rail line.

Rolling stock companies bidding to be part of Canberra's tram network are planning state-of-the-art technology and European design, with similar models to the Gold Coast and Sydney networks.

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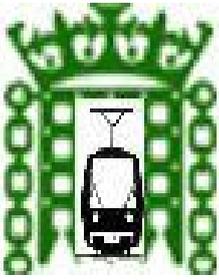
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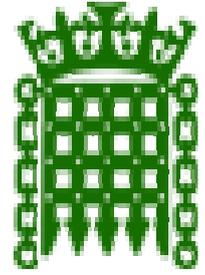
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Bids from the two consortiums are being considered by the ACT government now, with Spanish company Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles part of the Canberra Metro bid and Bombardier Transportation Australia part of the Activate bid.

The ACT plans to spend \$65 million on a fleet of 14 trams, each 33 metres long and with capacity to carry about 200 people. Canberra's trams will include space for four bikes inside each vehicle, and passengers will buy tickets or activate their smartcard from readers at tram stops, not on board.

The trams will be 100 per cent powered by renewable energy.

CAF's trams promise "avant-garde design and flexibility" to give city networks their own unique identity. The company offers rapid-charge accumulator technology which allows for wire-free services, as required if the line is extended to the Russell precinct.

On-board energy storage captures braking energy, allowing trams to run without wires between stops and helping energy efficiency.

In 2013, the NSW government announced it would buy six more CAF trams for Sydney's light rail.

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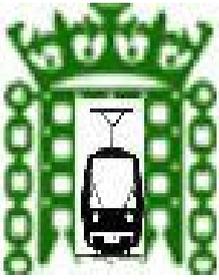
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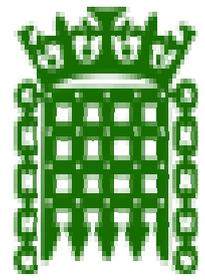


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A Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles tram operating in the Serbian city of Belgrade.

Bombardier has joined with Melbourne tram network operator Keolis Downer for its bid, and last month won a Henry Van de Velde Label design award for its Flexity 2 trams in the Belgian cities of Ghent and Antwerp.

A spokeswoman said a similar model was proposed for Canberra. Flexity trams operate on the Gold Coast light rail line.

The model has spacious seating arrangements and gangways designed to enhance passenger flow, comfort and safety. The model accommodates wheelchairs, bicycles and prams and has heating, cooling and ventilation points. Design features reduce vibrations and wear and tear on wheels and tracks.

The 31-metre five-module Flexity accommodates 266 passengers.

Last week tenders opened for the Gold Coast network's extension from Griffith University to Helensvale.

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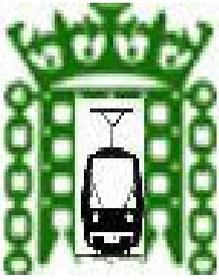
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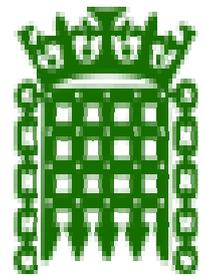


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Inside Bombardier Australia's Flexity model tram running on the Gold Coast.

Capital Metro Agency project director Emma Thomas said the business case had included a "base design" for Canberra trams but the successful bid could see changes. Canberrans should expect to trams similar to those running on modern systems operating in Australia and overseas.

"The people who are bidding may come back with something different, and that's on the basis of how they are configuring their rolling stock, how they're configuring the layouts and the headway, which is how often the vehicles show up.

"Ticketing is moving very quickly across the world... and we are planning for a system that is going to be in for 20 years so we have to be flexible with our ticketing methodology."

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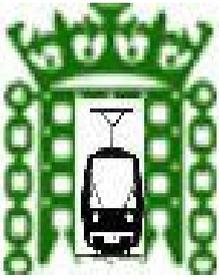
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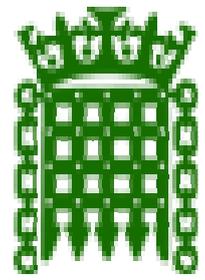


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Inside a Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles tram operating in Europe.

The two consortiums have used creative approaches to include bikes on trams chosen for Canberra, with the ACT government requiring provision for four on each vehicle.

"Even though there are in other cities of the world some provisions for bike carriage, it's not very common on light rail," Ms Thomas said.

"You can't just have a bike sitting there next to its owner untethered. We've specified a maximum of four bikes...so that gives us good capacity, much bigger than ACTION buses that can carry two bikes."

The request for proposal process for the 12-kilometre Gungahlin to the city line will continue until the end of the year, with contract negotiations in the first half of 2016. Construction is expected to begin before next year's ACT elections, on October 15.

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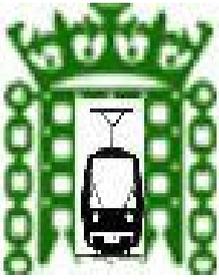
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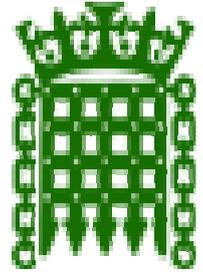


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Additional bid information about the possible 3.2 kilometre Russell extension is due this month.

Courtesy:



[Tom McIlroy](#)

Legislative Assembly reporter at The Canberra Times

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