



Light Rail (UK) Group

Auchenshuggle Junction, 8 Beechmore,
Moore, Warrington, Cheshire,
England, United Kingdom.

WA4 6UE

Tel (+44) (0)1925 740675 (0) 07721378223

www.lightrailuk.co.uk email JimH@jimmyharkins.com



Due to big success: Besançon is expanding its tramways



The three-section CAF Urbos built in 2014 will be enlarged | © UTM

In 2014, a new low-floor Ultra Light Tramway system started its operations in France – in the city of Besançon. It differs from other new systems in the country, mainly because of its lower cost approach: the usually very complex design of the infrastructure as well as the redesign of the street environment were kept simple by French standards.

In addition, the procurement of low-cost vehicles was also part of this initiative. For the very first time, Spanish manufacturer CAF delivered 19 vehicles of its “Urbos” model to a French city, a 24 meter short version composed of three sections.

Light Rail (UK) Group



Two of the short Urbos near Révolution stop | © UTM

Although the total cost model convinced the relevant authorities to approve the project, its limitations became evident quickly: the tramways were very popular right from the beginning, and this soon led to overcrowding. With currently more than 40,000 passengers per working day, the new tram has been simply “too successful”.

For this reason, an expansion of the capacity of the short tramway sets has been under discussion for quite some time – it should now become reality: Additional central sections will be ordered to initially extend six tramways from 24 metres to 37 metres in length, thus increasing the passenger capacity from 150 to 220 passengers.

Furthermore, two completely new 37 metres long tramways will be ordered, and their delivery is expected to occur in 2022 at the latest. Only minor adjustments to the existing infrastructure are necessary as the platforms already allow for the use of longer vehicles.

The depot facilities at Hauts-du-Chazal will be adapted to accommodate the longer tramways.

Light Rail (UK) Group



Approaching the Hauts-du-Chazal terminus in the background with the depot facilities | © UTM

The extension of the tramway system with another line, which would cross the historic city centre, is currently not on the agenda. Instead, articulated buses are being used on several routes today, which can use the small streets in the old town centre without any problems – the low floor tramways would fit here as well.

Courtesy: [Urban Transport Magazine](#)
by [Jens Bernhardt](#)