

High demand for component maintenance



EMUs undergoing scheduled inspection and maintenance in the Langweid maintenance depot.

EuCo Rail opened a component maintenance centre at Gersthofen in mid-October and **Jörg Ernst**, President & CEO, explains to **Benjámín Zelki** how the site will help the business target what it sees as a gap in the market.

Maintenance specialist EuCo Rail opened a dedicated centre for the heavy maintenance of bogies, wheelsets and other rolling stock components at Gersthofen near Augsburg in Germany in mid-October.

With a workshop area of around 4500 m², an array of machinery has been installed that includes six 10 tonne cranes, a fully automated spring test system, ultrasonic and magnetic particle measurements, a 360° bogie rotator and visual test benches. The centre is expected to repair 750 to 800 bogies a year.

The site has been developed under a long term lease agreement, and it forms part of a double-digit million euro investment including the fit-out.

‘We started with some processes in the end of 2024 including the completion of track installations and the wheel press as those need longer time to go through the training and certification process’, explains Jörg Ernst, President & CEO of EuCo Rail. The facility was due to become fully operational at the end of 2025.

Overhauled bogies lined up in the Gersthofen workshop, ready for reinstallation or testing as part of the maintenance process.



High demand

‘We see a high demand for the overhaul of components’, Ernst says. ‘the amount of rolling stock on the market is growing: new trains are constantly arriving, and the existing trains are also running longer as they are getting overhauled, and there are also new technologies like battery trains. But over time, these fleets all need to get a service. That’s why we decided to invest in a new facility.’

‘Not all of the operators have their own workshops, especially not for the maintenance of bogies and wheelsets; these are often serviced in specialised centres, and there are not enough of these in the market.’

Advantage of synergies

EuCo Rail opened its ‘smart maintenance’ depot at Langweid in November 2021 to maintain two EMU fleets for the local operator Go-Ahead Bayern (RG 11.21 p36); this is located just 7 km from the Gersthofen facility. ‘I think it’s a wise decision to make the facilities very close to each other to utilities synergies’, Ernst says.

‘The new component centre works closely with the Langweid site. There, the vehicles receive light and heavy maintenance before the bogies and wheelsets are transported to Gersthofen. Thanks to the short distance and optimised processes, vehicles can be removed and reinstalled in an exceptionally short time.’

‘There is the lift and drop equipment that speeds up our processes, and that can be borrowed very quickly. For example, a bogie overhaul job can be completed within two days, and the train can move out with the new bogies’, Ernst says.

‘This is another aspect of being ahead of others: quick turnaround time. Because the customers want the vehicles to be able to return to service as quickly as possible.’

Trust, reliability, experience

Answering the question of whether EuCo Rail is now established in the market, Ernst admits that ‘getting into the railway market is taking a while. But we believe if you don’t compromise

Three years in the market

Headquartered at Baar in Switzerland, EuCo Rail AG is an independent provider of maintenance and repair services for rail vehicles of all manufacturers which was established in 2022.

The company took over Transmashholding's 12-year contract to maintain 78 Stadler and Siemens trains for Go-Ahead Bayern. It acquired TMH International's German assets, including the management company and the then-unfinished depot in Langweid-am-Lech, at the end of 2022. A handful of staff from the previous business are still at EuCo Rail.

The company has also been operating a rolling stock maintenance depot at Essingen in Baden-Württemberg since January 2023. 



on reliability and on the quality of work, you can establish your name and grow. Trust comes with time. I believe in doing a good job and listening to your customer.

'Another benefit is that we are familiar with many different fleets, built by Siemens, Alstom, Stadler and others.' He feels that the EuCo Rail team has enough experience to solidify its presence. 'As important as the brand is the people you work with. Our company is only three years old, but there are people we work with, including myself, with 25 years' experience in different kinds of mobility services,' Ernst insists.

A 360° bogie rotator (top left), a wheelset machining and pressing facility (above) and the entrance (top) at Gersthofen.

The Gersthofen facility was built only 7 km from EuCo Rail's Langweid site.

'Another market advantage is that we have our own mobile teams — they have a radius of 300 km in total, so 150 km each way, where they can travel in one night. So, for example, they are based near Augsburg, and if a train has some technical issues at a terminus in München, the mobile team can fix the train at the station overnight, and it can run again next morning.'

Location is key

'We have been working with fleets in Bayern and Baden-Württemberg for several years now. We started with servicing 78 trains for Go-Ahead Bayern,' he says. This business was

purchased by Austrian Federal Railways and rebranded Arverio in 2024 (RG 9.24 p51). 'Our customers now have nearly 170 trains in daily operation. We are mostly working on the existing EMU fleets of our large customers, but we are open for new customers around us. And we see a potential in it, as we are located in the southern part of Germany, in the middle of Bayern, which is one of the fastest growing regions in terms of the amount of rolling stock. But we are also just 3 to 4 h away on tracks from central Germany, which still enables a service turnaround in one day. We are 1 h 30 min to 2 h from the border with Austria, and 6 to 7 h from the northern cities of Germany,' he adds.

'We are also located near the crossroads of Scandinavian – Mediterranean and Rhine – Danube TEN-T corridors, so we are looking to maintain freight wagons and locos serving international destinations, this is definitely a target market for us to grow in.'

Step by step growth

'We are not the goliaths in the market, so first we need to finance our operations, and when it comes to our aspirations, we can think about growth in a step-by-step approach,' Ernst emphasises.

'The next step for us is to grow within the German market, but also potentially elsewhere in Europe, where it makes sense to expand as an independent service provider. Because this is our area of expertise, this is where we would like to develop.' 

