

Media release

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The Hydrogen Consultants

First refueling stations for fuel cell powered buses opened

In Brugg, in Canton Aargau, post buses powered by fuel cells have been in operation since 2011. Empa staff researching in the fields of hydrogen and energy are involved in the project, acting as consultants during the initial five-year trial phase.

The Postauto Schweiz AG is the first Swiss company to begin operating buses powered by fuel cells for public transport. The transport division of the Swiss Post has been testing five buses fuelled by hydrogen since the end of 2011. The gas is converted by the fuel cells into electric power.

In the course of the project the first hydrogen refueling station for buses in Switzerland was inaugurated at the end of May in Brugg. The station contains a system which allows the fuel for the buses to be produced directly on site using water and regenerative electric power. During operation the exhaust gas of the fuel cell powered buses only contains water vapor, and their noise emissions are extremely low too. In addition when the post buses brake, energy is recovered and stored for later use, either to power the vehicle again or to supply the heating and air conditioning units. This process as is expected to lead to total savings of in excess of 2000 tons of CO₂ over the five-year trial period.

Two research institutes – the Paul-Scherrer-Institute (PSI) and Empa – take part in the project. Empa's primary task during the test phase is to assume the role of consultant. Scientists from the institution have investigated the efficiency of hydrogen production, integration into the electric power market and consolidated the experience and know-how gained during the construction of the hydrogen refueling station to make them available for future products.

Further information

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<http://www.postauto.ch/pag-startseite/pag-ueberuns/pag-medien/post-archive/2012/post-mm12-tankstelle-fuer-brennstoffzellenpostautos/pag-medienmitteilungen.htm>

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Recently the opportunity presented itself to inspect a fuel cell powered post bus.



At the moment the five post buses undergoing field trials “tank up” at the newly inaugurated hydrogen refueling station in Brugg, Canton Aargau (Photo: Postbus)



The fuel cell powered post buses are currently operating on various routes in the Brugg-Windisch region.