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Fuel Cells Boarding Buses Around World

(Washington, DC – July 13, 2009) With much of the focus on light-duty vehicles as a means for carbon and oil reduction, zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell buses have been quietly servicing passengers all around the world for years, with a recent surge of interest and many new orders on the way.

In addition to the great reduction in greenhouse gases that fuel cells provide, other benefits of fuel cell buses include a smooth, quiet ride and centralized fueling. There are at least ten bus manufacturers working with fuel cell developers and transit agencies to put these vehicles in service.

Recent fuel cell bus developments include:

- 20 new fuel cell buses will be provided by New Flyer Industries to BC Transit for demanding routes at the 2010 Winter Olympics in British Columbia and will remain in revenue service after the Olympics. These buses have demonstrated full freeway speed capability and fully loaded climb of a 20% grade starting from a stop.

- Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) in California has 12 Van Hool buses with UTC Power fuel cell systems on order. This is in addition to the three fuel cell buses already in its fleet that have travelled more than 165,000 miles with an overall fuel economy 70 percent better than a control fleet of like diesel buses.

- UTC Power PureMotion® 120 fuel cell systems are also powering buses at SunLine Transit in California, CT Transit in Connecticut, and at DeLijn in Belgium; CT Transit will add four more fuel cell buses later this year.

- Latin America´s first hydrogen-powered public transport bus began a two-month test in São Paulo, Brazil on July 1st. After the trial, the bus will be incorporated into the regular fleet, with the goal of 4 hydrogen buses by June 2010.

- Daimler recently unveiled its new Mercedes-Benz Citaro FuelCELL Hybrid bus in Vienna and starting in 2010, will deploy ten of these buses for operation in Hamburg. Shell is adding hydrogen pumps to four public filling stations to support the vehicles.

- Daimler's bus program already has deployed 36 Mercedes-Benz Citaro buses in

12 cities in Europe, Australia and China, logging more than 1.3 million miles and 139,000 hours, and serving more than 8 million passengers. Since 2000, the company has invested approximately US$111 million in their fuel cell bus program.

- A 40-passenger Hydrogenics fuel cell bus will be commissioned this month in Gladbeck, Germany as part of the Rampini Fuel Cell bus project. Additional models are expected to be ready for procurement after testing is complete. Ten Hydrogenics fuel cell powered hybrid MidiBuses are already in operation in Germany.

- Hydogenics also has contracts to provide fuel cell power modules to bus manufacturers Proterra for hydrogen hybrid transit bus deployments in California, South Carolina, Texas and Washington, and EVAmerica for a hydrogen transit bus for Birmingham, Alabama.

- NASA's Glenn Research Center is working on a prototype of a commercial renewable hydrogen fueling station to fuel a fuel cell transit bus for the Cleveland area.

- ISE Corporation currently has commitments for delivery of 28 fuel cell buses, with a production line in place at its Poway, California facility. ISE can deliver a fuel cell bus in just a few months.

- The Hydrogen Bus Alliance, which includes Canada, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Columbia, Cologne, Hamburg, London, Madrid, South Tyrol, and Western Australia, is aggregating orders and projecting price reductions to the $1M level in the next six years (by 2015), with expectations of 50 buses per city.

To see how transit agencies and their riders feel about the fuel cell and hydrogen bus demonstrations, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) sponsored “A Report on Worldwide Hydrogen Bus Demonstrations, 2002-2007.” The study surveyed participants in California and Connecticut, Spain, Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, Iceland, China, Japan and Australia. Reliability and performance were better than expected. A number of other demonstrations are in the planning stage.
See http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/ReportOnWorldwideHydrogenBusDemonstrations_2002to2007.pdf.

For more information on the projects listed above or fuel cells in general, please visit www.fuelcells.org or contact Jennifer Gangi at jennifer@fuelcells.org.