

replaced articulated buses for schools work and boost passenger comfort on peak services.



## Paris continues its patriotic purchasing

RATP, the Paris bus and metro undertaking poised to acquire bus operations in London and Bournemouth, has been keeping faith with French-made buses, as a breakdown of last year's intake of new vehicles shows.

Out of 395 buses for the 4,300-strong fleet, 255 were French-built Irisbus Citéelis 12m rigid and 18m articulated Citéelis. It also took 96 Scania OmniCitys, 31 MAN Lion's City A23 artics and 13 A21 rigidis.

The RATP fleet now consists of 2,400 Irisbus Agora and 1,085 Citéelis, 374 MAN A21/A23s and 221 OmniCitys. It also operates 181 French-made Heuliez GX317s and 68 Mercedes-Benz O530 Citaros.

June. The new trolleybuses are similar to 83 recently supplied to Belgrade and cost around €125,000 (£106,000) each. Total cost of the first phase of fleet and infrastructure renewal has been put at €13.7million (£11.7million)

They will replace mainly Russian standard ZIU-682s, the oldest of which date from 1983, and it is hoped to reduce overall power consumption by 45% on the 26-route system, the largest of four in Moldova. Only a handful of its 320 trolleybuses are fully accessible.

## Hong Kong trials

two in its fleet, Citybus late last year announced an order for 38 more (Global News, December).

Citybus has begun trials with its B9TL but the similar KMB bus has yet to enter service. The Volvos have 65 seats to the Enviro400s' 64 (the extra one is upstairs), but at 20, they hold four fewer standing passengers.

**Citybus 7500, the Wright-bodied two-axle Volvo B9TL now in service. DANNY CHAN**

BUILDING



## Los Angeles retires its last diesels in dash for gas

Metro, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, retired its last diesel buses in January, prompting it to claim it has become the world's first major city transport undertaking to operate only clean fuel buses, nearly all of which use compressed natural gas (CNG). Compared with diesel buses,

Metro says its fleet of over 2,200 CNG buses reduce emissions of particulate matter (PM) by over 80%. And because of the switch from diesel to CNG, it avoids emitting nearly 136tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per day.

'Metro is a true pioneer and leader in the use of low-cost,

clean-burning natural gas as a transport fuel for its bus fleet,' says SoCalGas, the Southern California Gas Company. 'Its bus fleet is having a significant impact on helping one of the smoggiest regions in the United States turn the corner in the fight against air pollution to the benefit of our children and future generations.'

## Push to reduce yellow schoolbus injury risk

A company in California is pushing United States yellow schoolbus manufacturers to fit a device it has developed to reduce the risk of children being crushed by the rear wheels of these vehicles.

Public Transportation Safety International Corporation (PTS) founder Mark Barron says 55 American children have been killed and many more injured over the past 10 years in accidents in a 'danger zone' within 10ft of the US nearside rear wheels of yellow schoolbuses.

To reduce the gap around the twin rear wheels, it has developed a polyurethane single-piece shield called MDZ Shield (for minimise danger zone) in partnership with manufacturer Pacific Metal Fab. It says this could be bolted to the body panels. To counter resistance from schoolbus



manufacturers reluctant to increase costs in a highly price

competitive market, PTS says it would bear all the tooling costs.