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Proxima orders high speed trains for French open access services

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FRANCE: High speed rail start-up Proxima has signed a €850m firm order for [Alstom](#) to supply 12 Avelia Horizon double-deck high-speed trains for its planned [open access](#) services between Bordeaux, Nantes, Rennes, Angers and [Paris](#).



Deliveries are scheduled from 2028. The deal announced by Alstom on October 3 includes 15 years of maintenance at a workshop to be leased from LGV Sud Europe Atlantique infrastructure concessionaire Liséa in Marcheprime, 20 km south of Bordeaux.

Avelia Horizon trainsets

Alstom said the Avelia Horizon trainsets would have two short-length power cars, combining high performance and compactness, and articulated coaches to reduce the number of bogies which account for 30% of the cost of preventive maintenance.

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They will be capable of speeds above 300 km/h, and would have the 'largest passenger capacity in the market' to lower operating costs per seat.

Alstom will produce the coaches at its La Rochelle plant and the power cars at Belfort, while Villeurbanne will provide the control and passenger information systems and on-board equipment, Ornans the motors, Le Creusot the bogies, Tarbes the traction equipment and electrical cabinets, EDC Toulouse electrical equipment, Petit-Quevilly the transformers, Saint-Ouen design and signalling and CDS Interiors in Valenciennes will supply the interiors.

Proxima

Proxima was established by former Voyages SNCF CEO Rachel Picard, who was involved with the development of the national operator's Ouigo brand, and Timothy Jackson, founder of rolling stock leasing company [Alpha Trains](#) and former RATP Dev CEO for Great Britain & Ireland.

The first phase of its plans involves an investment of around €1bn for the rolling stock, launch costs and working capital. Proxima is being fully financed by Antin Infrastructure Partners, a Paris-based energy, environment, digital, transport and social infrastructure investor, supported by a consortium of national and international banks.

Revealing its plans in June, Proxima said it aims to 'reinvent the experience' by listening to the needs of different customers and taking into account changes in consumer behaviour and ways of life, including the growth in remote working, erosion of the business/leisure divide and the demand for better onboard connectivity.

Open access

Italian state operator Trenitalia already operates open access high speed services within France and RENFE Viajeros runs open access services from Spain.

Proxima is not the only private company seeking to enter the high speed market, with [Kevin Speed](#) planning to buy 20 Alstom 300 km/h trainsets and launch services from Paris to Lille, [Strasbourg](#) and Lyon under the Ilisto brand by the end of 2028, while [Le Train](#) has selected [Talgo](#) to supply 10 Avril S106 trainsets for planned services from Bordeaux to Angoulême, Nantes, Rennes and Arcachon.

