
Non-Technical Summary

SOFIA ELECTRIC BUS PROJECT, BULGARIA

September 2018

Table of Contents

1. Project Description.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Who are SETC and what do they do?	1
What is current status of the project.....	2
2. What are the project benefits and potential impacts?	2
What are the project benefits?.....	2
3. Engagement with stakeholders	3
What will be the procedure for grievances?	4
How do I find out more information?.....	4

1. Project Description

Introduction

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has been requested by the City of Sofia and Sofia Electrical Transport JSC to provide a loan financing of up to EUR 14.7 million to the SETC, a public transport company incorporated in Bulgaria, wholly owned by the City. The proceeds of the loan will be used to finance the enhancement of the electric bus fleet through the purchase of up to 30 fast charging standard low floor electric buses and 12 charging stations, as well as the related spare parts and services.

Who are SETC and what do they do?

Sofia Electric Transport Company (SETC) is a key structural unit and forms an integral part of the overall public transport system of the capital City of Sofia. The Company is 100% owned by Sofia Municipality, as are the other three structural units; Sofia Bus Transport Company (SBTC), Sofia Metropolitan (i.e. the metro company) and Sofia Urban Mobility Centre (SUMC).

SETC's list of activities include:

- The transportation of passengers by trolleybuses and trams;
- Routine maintenance and repair of the trolleybus and tram fleet , including all on- and off-board equipment;
- Routine maintenance of tram tracks, collection and control of revenues from SETC ticketing system;
- Maintenance and repair of the electric energy supply infrastructure for the traction power needs of trolleybuses and trams; these include the maintenance, repair, overhaul, reconstruction, modernisation and new construction of trolley and tram overhead lines, power substations/transformers.

At present, SETC's remit includes the operation of all trolleybuses and trams in the city. Specifically, it is the designated operator of 14 tram lines and 9 trolleybus lines in total. Assuming that this project is implemented, an additional six routes will be taken over that are currently operated by their counterparts, bus operators, using diesel buses.

What is the project?

The new proposed electric bus fleet will be deployed in two batches of 15, with the second batch dependent on the success of the first batch of 15. These will occupy six existing diesel bus routes, replacing the old diesel models with the new electric models. Initially, the first 15 electric buses would be operated on line no. 84 and 30, and after the first year of their operation, SETC plans to purchase a second batch of 15 electric buses and it is expected that these will be used to operate lines no.14, 42, 47 and 48. End-to-end route lengths range from 12.0 to 24.1 km.

The new electric bus fleet must meet the technical specifications required to carry out the proposed bus routes, with the SETC opting for fast charging technology at the first and last stops along the chosen route. The charging stations (fast charging points) will be at the first and last stops along each route, and the buses must be able to charge within 5-6 minutes at each stop.

The electric buses are to be low-floor, and must also have mobility-impaired passenger access facilities in accordance with EU Directive 2001/85/CE.

Although the SETC operate and maintain electric-based public transport vehicles (trolleybuses and trams) with the related existing infrastructure, the electric buses will be deployed in six routes served by diesel/CHG buses which means that electric infrastructure is not currently present at the first and last stops of the assigned routes. Hence construction works for the installation of charging stations and grid connection is foreseen. Land acquisition or economic displacement will not be required.

Two existing trolleybuses depots are being considered for parking and maintenance of new electric buses:

- Depot Nadezhda located at ulitsa "Podpolkovnik Kalitin" 28, and
- Depot Iskar located at 7, Bezimenna Street

The nearest water body to the depot Nadezhda (Suhodolska River) is situated at approximately 500 meters to the North. There are no sensitive or protected areas in close proximity to the depot. However the two multi-stored residential buildings are situated 50 meters to the South of the depot.

The closest water body to the depot Iskar is Iskar River which is situated approximately 500 meters to the East. There are no other sensitive areas nearby.

What is current status of the project

The investment program of SETC for the period 2017 to 2020 has been approved and adopted with Decision 313 dated August 7, 2017 of the Sofia City Council. According to this decision, the SETC management team is entitled to negotiate with EBRD specific financial parameters for a long-term loan agreement to finance the procurement of electric buses. The loan is expected to be signed in 2018.

It is expected that first 15 buses will start operation in 2019.

2. What are the project benefits and potential impacts?

An assessment of Environmental, Health and Safety, and Social (EHSS) performance of SETC was undertaken in October 2017 in order to determine the current levels of performance, ahead of the potential loan from the EBRD.

SETC demonstrated good organisational capacity in relation to environmental, health and safety management, and operates in line with Bulgarian legislation.

The Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Waters (RIEW) – Sofia, once notified in writing by SETC about the proposed investments, will determine the need for the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment), and associated public consultation. Optionally RIEW could identify conditions which have to be met by SETC during the construction works.

What are the project benefits?

The City of Sofia is continuing to invest in its transport infrastructure and services in order to incentivise the use of public transport as a sustainable, safer and more environmentally friendly means of meeting mobility demand in the conurbation.

The main objectives established by SETC and the City of Sofia for this project, are to improve the energy efficiency of the city's electric transport and to reduce harmful emissions and contaminants generated by its public transport vehicles. It is expected that the implementation of the project will provide savings of around 2/3 of the CO₂ emissions from the diesel buses currently in operation.

Apart from the zero exhaust pipe emissions from the electric buses, SETC also recognises that the e-buses offer greater operational flexibility than trolleybuses and trams as they will not be restricted to corridors with overhead line equipment (OLE).

Overall the planned purchase of 30 new fast charging electric buses will improve the reliability and quality of public transport services for users and the Company, by reducing fuel costs, reducing noise levels and improving air quality through reduced emissions, in compliance with Regulation (EC) No 595/2009 of the European Parliament.

What are the potential impacts?

As part of the EHSS assessment a review of the potential impact areas was undertaken. It is not expected that the investment will bring additional EHSS risks that are not already present as the activities of SETC are not expected to change considerably.

EHSS impacts associated with SETC activities were observed and assessed during the assessment; these include, but are not limited to:

- Driver health impacts;
- Impact related to waste generation, and storage
- Potential impact of contamination related to hazardous materials and waste storage
- Potential injuries that could be prevented by the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Risks associated with emergency situations.
- Injury caused by improper use maintenance equipment.

What are the key action areas?

An Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) was developed in order to align the project with the EBRD performance requirements. The proposed action areas will result in improved EHSS performance and risk management and benefit enhancement across SETC operations, as well as Contractors' operations. Recommendations in the ESAP include:

- Develop a schedule for internal inspections to be carried out, to ensure the existing health and safety management system is effectively implemented
- Improve storage of hazardous materials and provide secondary containment for potentially hazardous or non-hazardous materials stored at the depots (e.g. for the used oil containers).
- Review safety signage in the depots, including PPE signage
- Identify EHS risks relating to operation of electric buses. Develop appropriate new risk assessments and work instructions and communicate them to employees.

3. Engagement with stakeholders

SETC has established channels of communication with stakeholders in place, and information on SETC activities can be found:

- On their website (www.elektrotransportsf.com)
- On Sofia Municipality website (www.sofia.bg)
- On Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/sofiaelectrotransport/>

The city (Sofia Municipality) effectively supports SCTP in communications with the public, by disclosing information on their website, which has a dedicated section on transport. It provides information on routes, schedules, tariffs, publishes news and enables the users to submit a comment or complaint.

Information about the Investment Programme is available on the company website:

http://www.elektrotransportsf.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=56&Itemid=88&lang=bg

http://www.elektrotransportsf.com/images/obshtestveni/2017/reshenie_sos_313_investi_programa_se_080617.pdf

Additionally a stakeholder engagement plan has been developed for the project with the objective of identifying key stakeholders and ensuring that, where relevant, they are informed in a timely manner of the project development, and impact.

The plan also identifies a formal grievance mechanism to be used by stakeholders for dealing with complaints, concerns, queries, suggestions etc. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. If

activities change or new activities relating to stakeholder engagement commence, the SEP will be brought up to date. The SEP will also be reviewed periodically during project implementation and updated as necessary.

Stakeholders could be individuals and organisations that may be directly or indirectly affected by the project either in a positive or negative way, who wish to express their views. The definition applied to identify key stakeholders is:

‘any stakeholders with significant influence on or significantly impacted by, the work and where these interests and influence must be recognised if the work is to be successful’.

Key stakeholders have been identified from the following categories: international; governmental (state / regional and local); advisory non-government; services / suppliers; clients; institutions (universities, think tanks, etc.); the industrial sector (vehicle suppliers, electricity suppliers), internal stakeholders (employees); general communities (locally affected people); public groups (female and disabled users of the service, local residents); and the media.

If there are questions, queries, complaints or grievances regarding the project, a grievance mechanism has been developed to address these issues and a grievance form will be used to record this information. How to use this grievance form is provided below.

What will be the procedure for grievances?

For the project will be used existing formal grievance mechanism for public communications of SETC and Sofia Municipality. A grievance mechanism will be used as required to handle grievances from employees, contractors and external stakeholders. The assessment of grievances will be carried out in accordance with Bulgarian Law and responses will be provided within one month of the grievance being lodged.

The grievance mechanism will be according the common grievance politic of SECT and Sofia Municipality, as follows:

- Grievance received;
- Grievance recorded in a register (record keeping) system of SETC;
- For an immediate action to satisfy the complaint, the complainant will be informed of corrective action;
- Implement corrective action, record the date and close case;
- For a long corrective action, the complainant will be informed of proposed action within 30 days of receiving the grievance; and
- Implement corrective action, record the date and close case.
- In all cases, the grievance will be acknowledged within 14 days, and either the corrective action taken, or the plan for corrective action provided, within 30 days.

A grievance should be recorded by the complainant using the existing grievance systems of Sofia Municipality (online contact center or on shelter) or record keeping system of SETC.

How do I find out more information?

The contact details for the relevant person at SETC for this project are:

Name of the person and title	Contact Information
Orlin Prandjev Head of Innovative Projects Department Stolichen Electrotransport EAD	30 "Podpolkovnik Kalitin" Str. 1233 Sofia, Bulgaria Tel. 00 359 92 36 219 e-mail: orlin.prandjev@gmail.com