PRESS RELEASE

29 June 2026

SNCF Réseau accelerates network renewal: the COLAS RAIL and TSO CATENAIRES High Output Catenary Train reaches 25,000 cantilever assemblies replaced and secures three new contracts

25,000 cantilever assemblies replaced
More than 1,000 kilometres modernised since 2019
Three new renewal contracts awarded

To modernise one of Europe's densest rail networks, SNCF Réseau is accelerating infrastructure renewal through innovative industrial solutions. A flagship example of this ambition, the 25 kV High Output Catenary Train developed with COLAS RAIL and TSO CATENAIRES has now replaced its 25,000th cantilever assembly on the French national rail network. The milestone coincides with the award of three new contracts, confirming the ability of this world-first factory train to meet the challenges of large-scale network modernisation.

With almost 30,000 kilometres of railway, much of it electrified, the French rail network depends on essential but ageing overhead line equipment. To address this challenge, SNCF Réseau has launched a major modernisation programme based on solutions that can intervene quickly and efficiently while minimising disruption to rail operations.

A world-first industrial innovation

The 25 kV High Output Catenary Train was developed for this purpose and entered service in 2019 under a strategic partnership between SNCF Réseau, COLAS RAIL and TSO CATENAIRES. A genuine factory train, it can continuously replace cantilever assemblies and droppers, key components in the electrical supply system for trains.

- Continuous replacement of cantilever assemblies and droppers, which are essential components of the traction power system.
- A production rate up to four times higher than conventional methods.
- Day and night working on operational lines, even where access windows are short.

The 25,000th cantilever assembly was replaced on the Lille-Hirson line. This marks a major milestone in the deployment of this unique industrial solution, which has met its productivity targets since 2019 and has modernised up to 200 kilometres of railway in a single year.

The 25 kV High Output Catenary Train forms part of a wider range of innovations designed for different types of railway. The 1.5 kV High Output Catenary Train, introduced for conventional DC-powered lines, industrialises major renewal operations by combining mast replacement and civil engineering works, also delivering productivity up to four times higher than conventional methods. Together, the two factory trains demonstrate the ability of the partners to develop complete industrial solutions for rail network renewal.





“SNCF Réseau is delivering an unprecedented renewal programme to modernise French railway infrastructure. To meet this industrial challenge, we need solutions that can deliver more, faster and with effective integration into the timetable. The High Output Catenary Train fully meets this ambition. Reaching 25,000 cantilever assemblies replaced shows that this innovation is now a major driver of network modernisation, serving passengers and the railway of tomorrow.”

Estelle Masclet, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Operations and Industrial Programmes, SNCF Réseau



“Seeing the 25 kV High Output Catenary Train pass the milestone of 25,000 cantilever assemblies installed is a tremendous source of pride for COLAS RAIL. Together with TSO CATENAIRES and SNCF Réseau, we are showing that innovation, industrialisation and ESG commitments can transform rail network modernisation without disrupting operations and within record timescales. This milestone recognises the commitment of our teams and our determination to achieve continuous improvement in support of safer, more efficient and more sustainable infrastructure. It also demonstrates our ability to meet the most ambitious technical challenges. We will continue to build on this momentum to provide passengers with a modernised, reliable network suited to the mobility needs of tomorrow.”

Hervé Le Joliff, President of COLAS RAIL



“Replacing the 25,000th cantilever assembly with the 25 kV High Output Catenary Train is first and foremost a collective achievement, underpinned by demanding industrial organisation and close cooperation between SNCF Réseau, our teams and all our partners. Together, we have designed and deployed an innovative solution that combines quality, performance and respect for the network's operational constraints. Reaching this major milestone, together with renewed confidence for the next two years, confirms that this industrial and collaborative model is now a benchmark for modernising the French rail network. We are proud to make a lasting contribution.”

Romuald Hugues, President of TSO

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Renewed confidence for the next two years

The consortium has secured three new contracts covering the 2026-2027 period across three strategic parts of the network: Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, North-East Normandy and Centre. The awards confirm the performance of the High Output Catenary model, the long-standing confidence between SNCF Réseau and the consortium members, and the teams' ability to deliver large-scale modernisation programmes. The works will directly improve service reliability and support the development of low-carbon rail transport.



ABOUT SNCF RÉSEAU

To meet growing mobility needs and promote rail as a key driver of the ecological transition, SNCF Réseau is developing services for freight and passenger markets across the 28,000 kilometres of railway for which it is responsible for maintenance, modernisation and safety. As infrastructure manager, it markets and guarantees neutral and fair access to the network. Working alongside public authorities, local communities and railway undertakings, customer satisfaction is its highest priority. SNCF Réseau is a public limited company within the SNCF Group, employing more than 50,000 people and generating revenue of nearly EUR 8.4 billion in 2025.

Further information: www.sncf-reseau.com

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ABOUT COLAS RAIL

Through its projects and specialist business units, COLAS RAIL, the rail subsidiary of the COLAS Group, provides design, financing and management services for major railway infrastructure projects, including track works, signalling, ventilation, smoke extraction, command and control systems and freight, in France and internationally. COLAS RAIL employs 6,000 people across twelve business lines and operates in 20 countries. In 2025, the company generated revenue of EUR 1.5 billion, more than 73% of which came from international activities.

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ABOUT NGE

NGE - New Generations of Entrepreneurs - is France's fourth-largest construction group. It delivers major infrastructure schemes as well as urban and local projects. With expertise in financing, design, construction and maintenance, the Group is a leading partner in delivering infrastructure that addresses the economic and environmental challenges facing local areas. Its entrepreneurial model is underpinned by strong employee ownership: the founders, management and employees hold 72% of the Group's share capital, alongside French investment firm Montefiore (28%). With revenue of EUR 5 billion, NGE operates in around 20 countries and supports public- and private-sector clients in financing, designing and delivering transition projects in water, mobility, urban regeneration, energy and telecommunications. NGE's 25,000 employees are proud to help build infrastructure that changes the world.

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ABOUT TSO

Drawing on more than 99 years' experience in France and internationally, TSO provides expertise across the full range of railway works and systems, including track construction, renewal and maintenance; electrification and overhead line modification; surveying and rail software development; and railway safety. With a strong focus on innovation, TSO seeks improvements that combine quality, operational efficiency and workforce safety. The synergies between TSO's rail capabilities and NGE's complementary businesses enable the Group to provide an integrated service.

Further information: https://tso.fr

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