

Vancouver trolley buses head to Argentina

Eighty Vancouver trolley buses are sailing south to San Antonio, Chile's busiest port, and will then be trucked via the Trans-Andean Highway to a new home in Mendoza, Argentina.

Rich Peters, of Vancouver shipbroker CTL Westrans, said his company has worked with an Argentinean freight forwarder to arrange the delivery.

"We had the Antiguan-flag freighter Wisdom coming to Fraser Surrey Docks in Port Metro Vancouver with project cargo from Thailand," he said. "Sending it to South America with the trolleys was attractive to the vessel operator because of cargo prospects there. So we made a proposal and it was accepted."

The trolleys, which have each averaged 1.2 million kilometres of service on Vancouver streets, were the best in an aging fleet that TransLink (the Greater Vancouver Transit Authority) has replaced with 228 new low-floor trolleys.

The new vehicles include 40 18-metre articulated trolleys – a first for



Photo: Fraser Surrey Docks



Trolley buses loaded aboard the Wisdom.



Photos: CTL Westrans

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Vancouver, which has operated electric buses since 1948. Vancouver and Edmonton are the only cities in Canada that still have trolley buses.

Mendoza's transit service, which has 45 existing trolleys, has paid TransLink \$2,300 for each Flyer-built vehicle, which is \$700 more than scrap value.

Brady Erno, marketing co-ordinator with Fraser Surrey Docks on the Fraser River, said loading of the Wisdom was completed in six days. The voyage south to San Antonio was expected to take 22 days.

Mr. Erno said loading, using a spreader and pairs of bars under each set of wheels, was ticklish. Once aboard, vehicle axles were lashed down.

Fraser Surrey Docks handles project cargoes as well as containers and breakbulk.

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