MERSEN

Local Presence, Global Expertise – Mersen in North America

From flagship projects in New York to long-term support in Chicago and Toronto, Mersen provides rail operators with proven components, digital innovation and the assurance of local manufacturing capacity.

Mersen has long been recognised for its expertise in electrical protection and power management solutions for the railway sector, and in particular the third-rail current collector market. Known for its wide range of components, which fall under four product families – on-board disconnector switches, fuse boxes, third rail current collectors and earth return current units – the company has been developing and delivering custom solutions for over 100 years.

Among Mersen's four product families, the current collector device (CCD) is one of its flagship products. With multiple CCDs needed per train, demand is high for both new projects and spares.

"Our offering operates reliably in challenging operational conditions for decades. Very few companies can deliver this combination of durability and engineering knowledge," says Florent Canolle, Business Operations Manager for Mersen's Power Transfer for Rail Vehicle (PTRV) division.

Combining Global Engineering with Local Responsiveness

With its group headquarters in Paris, France, and the PTRV division headquartered in St Bonnet de Mure near Lyon, Mersen today operates more than 50 industrial sites and 21 R&D centres across 33 countries worldwide. In North America it's had a regional base in Vaudreuil-Dorion, near Montreal, Canada since the 1970s, which is also home to a full-service factory certified IRIS ISO 22163. Regional hubs such as this enable the company to offer global expertise hand-in-hand with local service.

"All design is centralised in France, where our engineers draw on lessons from projects worldwide," explains Canolle. *"At the same time, our local sales, project management, quality and customer service teams ensure that we're close to our customers: in the same time zone, speaking their language, so we can offer premium support."*

Mersen in North America

Mersen's presence is deeply embedded in Canada's three largest transit systems: Montreal Metro, Toronto and Vancouver, where its CCDs have been in use for many years. In the US, the company's flagship project is the New York R211 programme, supplying disconnector switches and having a recognised place on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) qualified manufacturers list.

"We have a large install base in America: our solutions are part of rail networks in Chicago, Las Vegas, Atlanta, New Jersey and Honolulu, but New York is especially important, as being qualified there is a benchmark credential that can open doors worldwide."

Replacing Obsolete Components

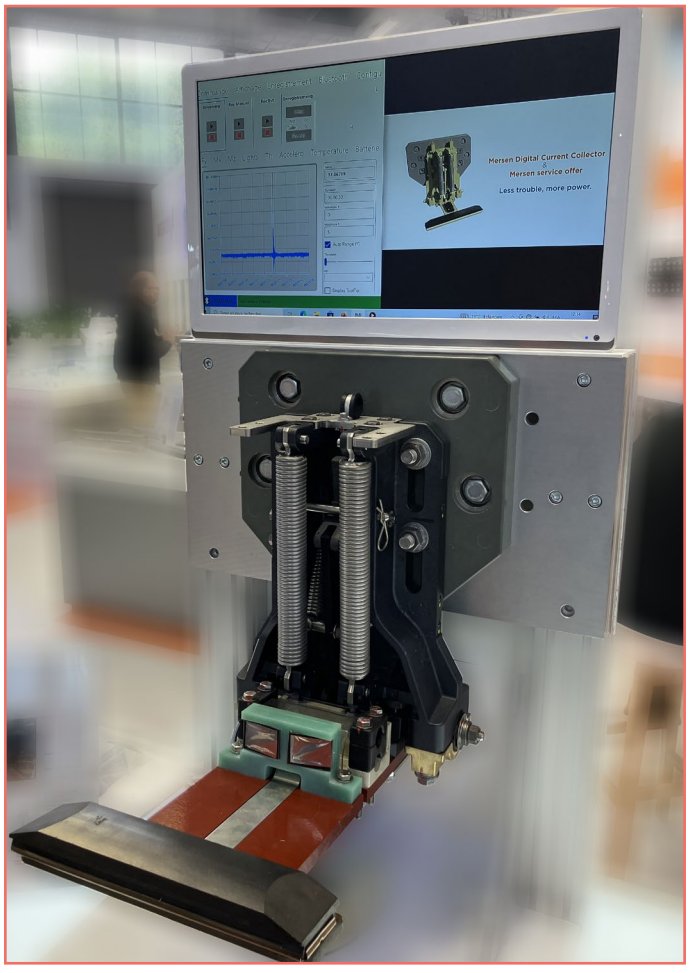
Mersen understands that many of its North American customers are having to manage ageing fleets, and therefore offers robust aftermarket and obsolescence solutions to support retrofits and mid-life overhauls. This includes ensuring transit authorities have the spare parts they need to keep their reliability performance at an optimal level, as well as providing replacements for obsolescent components as they arise, to help extend fleet lifetimes.

For example, the company redesigned and requalified fuse boxes for a major transit authority in the US after the original manufacturer ceased operating, while in another case it was called in to redesign disconnector switches to extend the life of two ageing metro fleets.

"Our approach to the aftermarket is another key differentiator," notes Canolle. *"We work closely with major OEMs around the globe, which operate with very strict requirements. That experience means we bring the same level of rigour to supporting operators in the field. For example, when a customer needs to extend the life of an aging train fleet while incorporating new functionalities, we can redesign an obsolete device (disconnector switch, CCD etc...) to integrate seamlessly into the existing systems. It's a perfect example of how we apply OEM-level expertise to deliver concrete, tailored solutions for our customers."*

Real-time Monitoring

While balancing customers' appetites for new solutions with their understandable reticence to change proven components, Mersen engineers continue to innovate.



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Digitalisation is one area of focus – enabling data to be gathered that can support predictive, or condition-based maintenance for example.

One of the company's latest solutions is the Digital CCD (D-CCD), a device for real-time monitoring of the contact force between the shoe and the power rail, enabling operators to quickly detect any changes to force, as well as arcing or sag.

Buy America

Mersen plans to expand its US footprint with a new production line in New Jersey. This enabled the company to meet the requirements of the Buy America Act (BAA), which requires all manufactured products used in federally-funded infrastructure projects to be produced within the US.

The company has already positioned itself to answer its first BAA-compliant contract to manufacture for a new project in the northeast of America at the New Jersey production site.

The US market presents major growth potential, notes Canolle, particularly in New York, where the MTA recently approved procurement of new M-9A commuter cars, and the new R262 subway car is on the horizon. Mersen is positioning itself as a trusted partner for future projects, bringing Buy America capability and IRIS – ISO 22163 certification to support transit authorities and OEMs in meeting their evolving needs.

From its Canadian base and new US facility to come, Mersen is committed to supporting North America's metro and transit operators. With a balance of engineering expertise, local service and a proven install base, the company is well placed to play a growing role in the region's rail future.

"We have the expertise and capacity to support North American OEM and transit authorities' emerging growth opportunities. Our team is ready to help, and we welcome conversations with any organisation looking to address challenges or explore new possibilities," Canolle concludes.

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