

Who Builds the Cars



The Illinois Central Gulf Railroad has bought thirty-six of these cars from Bombardier.

Canada has three major rapid transit car manufacturers, one in Quebec and two in Ontario. All three have been remarkably active.

Bombardier, of La Pocatière, Quebec, a branch of the Montreal company that originated the snowmobile, began building subway cars with an order from the Montreal Métro. It delivered 423 heavy cars costing \$100 million in 1978. It has also sold thirty-six self-propelled gallery commuter cars (with seating on two levels) to the Illinois Central Gulf Lines in Chicago, leased two locomotives and ten LRC (Light, Rapid, Comfortable) cars to Amtrak and sold twenty-two locomotives and fifty cars to VIA Rail Canada. The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon has ordered twenty-six articulated light rail vehicles to connect Portland with its suburbs.

Bombardier's biggest order will be 825 subway cars for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of New York City. Bombardier won the contract by outbidding Francorail of France and the Budd Company of Troy, Michigan, a subsidiary of Thyssen A.G. of West Germany.

Richard Ravitch, MTA chairman, said the decision was based on the degree to which each bid met four goals: "First, to get the highest quality car in the fastest possible time; second, to

pay the lowest possible price; third, to attract the best possible financing terms; and fourth, to ensure the greatest amount of New York State-manufactured content in the order. Bombardier won on all counts."

The Bombardier bid set a price of \$798,770 for each car and the Canadian government offered to finance 85 per cent of the entire contract at 9.7 per cent interest. Bombardier committed itself to the purchase of \$104 million worth of components in New York State.

Mr. Ravitch said the choice of Bombardier meant a saving of at least \$100 million in capital costs and \$90 million in financing.

Hawker Siddeley's Canadian Car Division, of Thunder Bay, Ontario, is the Toronto Transit Commission's basic manufacturer. It built 190 light rail vehicles (designed by the Urban Transportation Development Corporation and costing \$40 million) for the city in 1980. Since then it has sold subway cars to the TTC and eighty bi-level commuter coaches to GO-Transit. It does a brisk business abroad, and has recently sold 190 subway cars to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, 44 rapid transit cars for New York's PATH system and 200 passenger cars (60 first class and 140 second class) to the Mexican National Railways.