

The Exporail international trade exhibition is, perhaps, the most significant platform in Russia for showcasing the latest in railway technology. This year marks the 5th anniversary of the event.

But that is not the only feature of Exporail 2011 – this is the year of innovation and nano-development, not only for the country as a whole, but also in railway technology. Here is a stand which demonstrates how modern technologies are used in the construction of infrastructure components for rail transport. Similar material will be used in the reconstruction of Ladoga railway station in St. Petersburg. Exhibitor Vladimir Khlebnikov said: "We are now working on a proposal based on the use of carbon fibre and external systems reinforcement which will enable repairs to be carried out without increasing the size of foundations and without creating additional weight, so that reinforcement is not visible to the naked eye."

The exhibition provides an opportunity for mutually beneficial international cooperation in the railway industry. Each year not only does the interaction between market players change, but new materials and technologies are also presented. This year the exhibition is characterised by its own trends. "These definitely include energy-saving technologies associated with reducing costs of both construction and after-care maintenance", said the Vice-President of JSC RZD Oleg Tony. "Sometimes we are preoccupied with low manufacturing costs but think very little about the whole life cycle costs."

Energy saving technology is one of the most pressing issues for today's manufacturers and the exhibition features several stands dedicated to developments in this field. One belongs to a French company, which is already involved in manufacturing one of the most advanced diesel locomotive types, the 2ES10. The company is also presenting technologies which are not yet being used on railways in Russia.

The exhibition programme includes the 4th Transport Congress. Among key issues to be discussed are Innovations in the Industry of Transport Construction and Safety of Transport Infrastructure Facilities. However, a different pressing problem was on the agenda on the first day of Exporail 2011. "Today, Transport Congress was dedicated to the question of improving the legal and regulatory framework. Our approach to creating high-speed lines and applying new technological solutions is generating a need to revise federal laws and industry regulations which quite simply do not cover these developments," said Sergei Yepifantsev, Vice-President of JSC RZD.

The exhibition takes place at the Expocentr and will last three days. The programme of events will include round table discussions and debates on current topics such as the prospects for the development of innovations and their introduction in Russia, presentations on new projects and showcasing the latest technology developments. Exporail 2011 ends on March 18th.