

Solid-state batteries canada

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Quebec-based battery maker Blue Solutions just struck a co-development deal with the world's largest electronics manufacturer and is looking to build out an entire solid-state battery ecosystem, potentially in Canada

Blue Solutions's Boucherville, Que., plant has quietly been producing long-range, solid-state batteries since 2007. Earlier this year Hon Hai signed a memorandum of understanding with Blue Solutions to develop solid-state batteries to power e-bikes. Photo: Blue Solutions

The Blue Solutions plant just outside Montreal is one of two manufacturing facilities operated by the company that produce a slightly mystical technology in the electric vehicle world: solid-state batteries.

France-based Bolloré Group owns Blue Solutions. Its batteries are in over 1,000 transit buses in France and Australia as well as automated guided vehicles (AGVs) that move containers at shipping ports.

The Boucherville, Que., plant has quietly been producing long-range, solid-state batteries since 2007. But now it appears there is growing interest in centring the technology in Canada from Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. (also known as Foxconn), a Taiwan-based electronics manufacturing giant.

Earlier this year Hon Hai signed a memorandum of understanding with Blue Solutions to develop solid-state batteries to power e-bikes. It's a signal that, in addition to the government's ambitions to turn Canada into the "global supplier of choice" for lithium-ion batteries, the market views Canada's solid-state players as equally important.

"Canada has the resources, the energy, the labour, the engineers... We have all of the ecosystem to build the battery of the future in Canada, through the whole chain from the mine to the vehicle. You cannot find any country like that on the Earth that does everything like that," says Richard Bouveret, CEO of solid-state batteries for e-mobility at Bolloré Group.

Bolloré began its research into solid-state batteries in 1980. Bouveret says that some Blue Solutions batteries have been in use since 2011.

The Blue Solutions batteries currently found in transit buses are the company's third-generation model. (The company is targeting 2028 for production of its fourth-generation battery.)

Some of the buses are Bolloré's own product, designed and manufactured under its Bluebus brand. But Blue



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Solutions also has contracts to supply Daimler with batteries for its eCitaro buses and an arrangement to provide batteries for Dennings-branded buses.

According to Bourveret, buses with Blue Solutions" solid-state batteries have travelled approximately 500 million kilometres and have a minimum of 3,000 charge cycles.

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Email: [energystorage2000@gmail.com](mailto:energystorage2000@gmail.com)

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