

# SNCF's High-Speed Air-Rail Link

Paris Charles de Gaulle airport (CDG) is linked with major French cities by two air-rail links—with central Paris by Line B of the *Réseau Express Régional* (RER or Regional Express Network) run by French National Railways (SNCF) and *Régie autonome des transports parisiens* (RATP) (Fig. 1), and with other major cities by SNCF's high-speed TGV lines (Fig 2). The airport station was built in a cutting adjacent to the air terminals, and the TGV line runs under the runways in two tunnels. It was opened in 1994 and named *Interconnection Ile de France*. It forms a high-speed bypass, connecting TGV Nord-Europe (for Brussels, London and northern France) and TGV Sud-Est (for Lyon, Grenoble and the Alps, Avignon, Marseille, Montpellier, etc.) without calling at the busy Paris terminal stations. The line is also connected to the TGV Atlantique (for Tours, Rennes, Nantes, and Bordeaux, passing through part of the conventional *Grande Ceinture* railway line around Paris mainly

used by freight trains. Lyon's Satolas Airport also has a TGV station on the extension of the TGV Sud-Est to Valence. Connections between airports and intercity trains can be seen at some other European airports such as Frankfurt, Zurich, and Geneva, but CDG and Satolas are unique because they are linked to dedicated high-speed lines. Particularly in the case of CDG, the TGV link has greatly enhanced the airport's role as a major hub by cutting journey times to other cities. TGV services from CDG cover Lille (50 minutes by 20 trains), London (3 h 15 min by six trains, transfer at Lille-Europe) and Brussels (1 h 40 min by seven trains) via TGV Nord-Europe, Lyon (2 h 5 min by eight trains), Avignon (3 h 25 min by six trains) and Marseille (4 h 30 min by five trains) via TGV Sud-Est. TGV trains also serve Tours (1 h 40 min by five trains), Le Mans (1 h 30 min by five trains), Rennes (2 h 45 min by four trains), Nantes (2 h 45 min by three trains), and Bordeaux (3 h 55

min by four trains) via TGV Atlantique. The number of TGV passengers to and from CDG increased from 400,000 in 1995 to 1.3 million in 1998 and is expected to grow to 1.7 million by 2000. Sixty percent of TGV passengers transferred to airlines at CDG.

In travel agencies and airline offices of the world, passengers can now purchase tickets combining Air France, United Airlines and Lufthansa flights with SNCF routes such as:

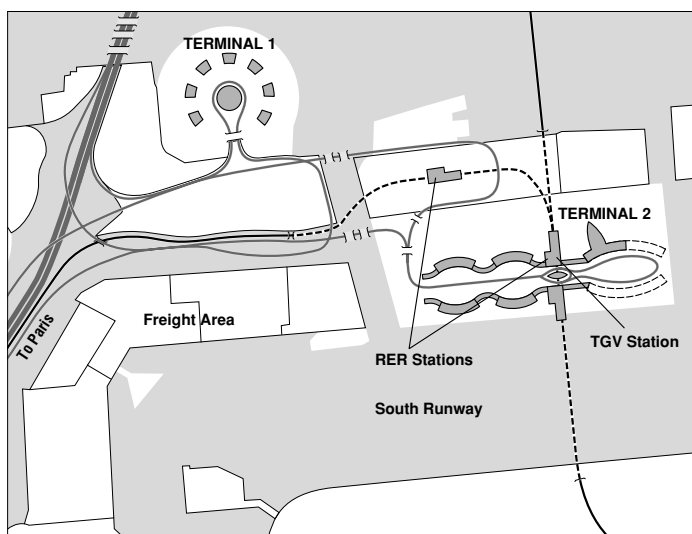
- Lille-Europe-CDG airport TGV station,
- Lyon Part-Dieu-CDG airport TGV station,
- Nantes-CDG airport TGV station,
- St Pierre des Corps (Tours)-CDG airport TGV station

An extension of these routes is foreseen in the near future. ■

### Acknowledgement

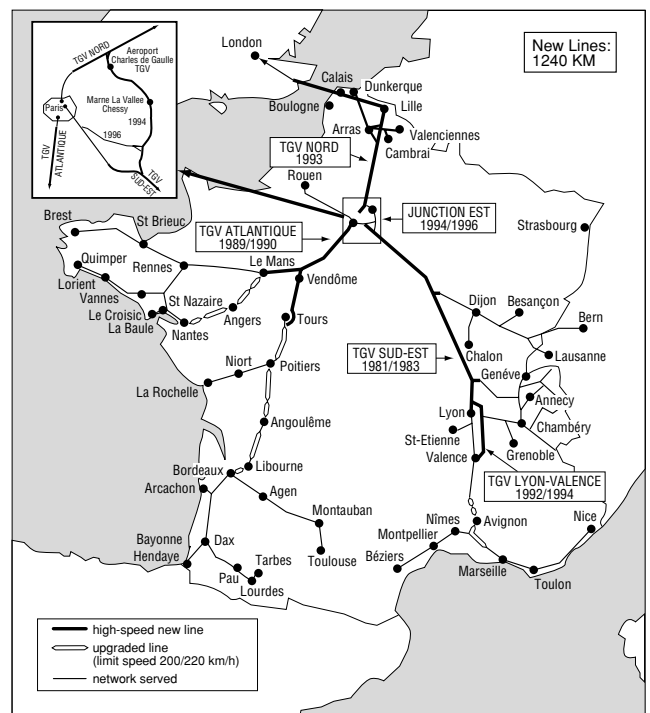
This article is based on information received by JRTR from SNCF.

Figure 1 Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport and Transport Links



(EJR/CF)

Figure 2 TGV Network



(SNCF)