

TOYOTA STARTS WITH HYDROGEN

At the beginning of March, the Japanese manufacturer announced sales for its first hydrogen fuel cell bus. On the roads of Tokyo for the Olympic Games 2020

The new hydrogen bus manufactured by Toyota and called SORA (an acronym for 'Sky, Ocean, River, Air' to recall the natural water cycle) is officially on the market. The Japanese manufacturer has announced its first sales began on last March 7th. Toyota expects to introduce more than one hundred units ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (mainly within the Tokyo metropolitan area). Presented in autumn 2017 at the 45th Tokyo Motor Show, Sora is the first fuel cell bus to receive vehicle type certification in Japan.

The vehicle has an innovative design that pursues stereoscopic shaping, it is 10.5 meters long and it can accommodate up to 78 passengers, of which 22 seated.

The Toyota Fuel Cell System (Tfcs) was developed for the Mirai, the first hydrogen sedan produced in series by Toyota. The syn-

chronous motor develops a maximum power output of 113 kW for two units and the bus is equipped with a NiMH battery. If necessary, the bus can be used as an electricity generator. A socket on the rear can supply

9 kW of output for over 24 hours. In this way, points out the company, the vehicle can be used to evacuate schools and buildings or as a power pack to supply electricity for domestic use.

Among the features, there are horizontal seats with an automatic storage mechanism when they

are not used (world premiere in Japan) and the system of eight high-definition cameras fitted inside and outside the vehicle to detect pedestrians and cyclists around the bus.

The vehicle is equipped with the acceleration control function. For the safety of standing passengers, a special system suppresses sudden acceleration. Also, there is no gear shifting, resulting in minimal lurching. ●

