



Above: The depot near Sidi Moumen includes a control centre and administrative offices.

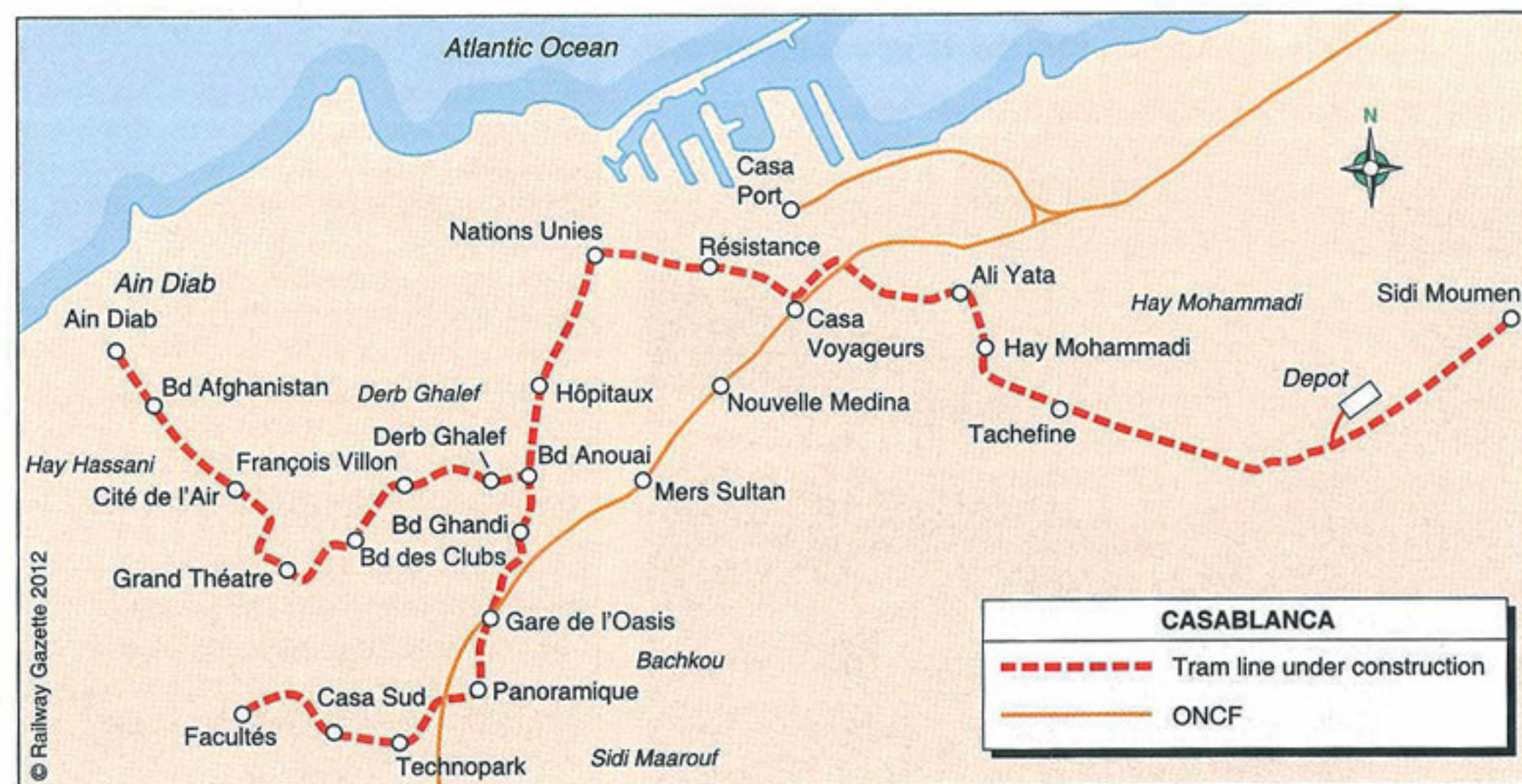
Below: Casablanca has the world's largest concentration of Art Deco buildings.



# Test running foreshadows December launch

Test running in progress on a completed section of track near Sidi Moumen.

**PREPARATIONS:** With some of the world's longest trams and an unusually swift planning and construction process, the cosmopolitan city of Casablanca is already breaking records on the urban rail scene. Running trials began in January on a section of completed track near the depot, and the aim is to run a shadow service in October, three



months ahead of the public launch in December.

Casablanca Transport en Site Aménagé SA was set up in March 2009 to develop and manage construction of the first tram line in Morocco's commercial capital, with December 2012 set as the target opening date.

As the contracting authority, CTSA is a limited company whose management board includes representatives from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Finance, the local authorities (the Region, Prefecture and Urban Community of Casablanca), and from various other organisations including the King Hassan II Fund, Caisse de Dépôt et de Gestion, Banque Centrale

The line has 48 stations including interchanges to ONCF's main line services at Casa Voyageurs and l'Oasis.

Populaire and national rail operator ONCF.

In 2009, following an international call for tenders, a group of engineering consultants was appointed as maître d'oeuvre: Systra (leader), Systra Maroc and CID. The group carried out detailed studies and drew up tender documents, assisting CTSA with the evaluation and award of more than 50 contracts. Since the end of 2010 the maître d'oeuvre has been supervising construction along the whole line and at the maintenance depot near the eastern terminus at Sidi Moumen, taking the work up to the point where installations and equipment are ready for handover to the client.

Forming the initial part of a public transport network with segregated rights of way, the first tram line is part of a development plan for the city and its surrounding area. In the long term this provides for construction of four more tram routes, a metro line, plus an express metro link in tunnel between the city's main station at Casa Port and the future TGV station which will be known as Casa Sud.

## High capacity

The first line has been designed to carry up to 250 000 passengers/day. Complementing the heavily-used bus network, it will introduce a quiet mode of transport with zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at point of use. Stretching to the outer parts of the city, it is destined to play an important social role, providing good access to the city from densely-populated areas.

The opportunity is being taken to remodel the streets along the line of route as this contributes to regeneration. On some parts of the route, this entails complete rebuilding of the public space between street facades, with the two tracks on a central reservation flanked by two traffic lanes on each side and wider pavements. Around 2 000 palm trees will be planted alongside the tracks on parts of the route. The stops with 75 m long platforms and shelters will be accessible

to passengers with impaired mobility.

The 30 km line with 48 stations forms a Y shape with termini at Sidi Moumen in the southeast, at Facultés on the El Jadida road in the southwest and at Ain Diab near the seafront in the west. Interchange to main line rail services is planned at Casa Voyageurs and l'Oasis. The average distance between stops is 600 m.

## Rolling stock

The stock selected for Casablanca is designed to cope with heavy loads and consists of 37 permanently coupled pairs of five-section Alstom Citadis cars with an overall length of 63 m; width is 2 650 mm.

The maintenance depot and workshop near Sidi Moumen occupies 7 ha and has been designed to accommodate 55 pairs of trams. It also houses staff facilities and office accommodation. Seven maintenance tracks are provided, and staff will be supported by equipment that will alert them if components need replacing because of fatigue, wear or age.

Average speed will be 20 km/h, with services operating from 05.30 to 22.00 on weekdays and until 23.30 at weekends; a 4 min peak-hour headway is planned. Operations will be in the hands of RATP Dev (MR 3.12 p14).