

Press Release

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European Digital Automatic Coupler: first step towards one type selection

Today, the Supervisory Board of the European DAC Delivery Programme, on a proposal of the Programme Board, has adopted a decision on the selection of the future Europe-wide Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) standard coupler head design for European rail freight transport. This decision is a milestone in the process that, during the next phases, will lead to the final design of the selected coupler head, ensuring interoperability and operational performance free of royalties/licenses.

This decision is the result of a transparent process started early this year with the definition of the criteria for the selection process and a series test campaigns conducted on a series of couplers' heads, and will feed into the proposals for the Technical Specifications for Interoperability revision in 2022.

The results of the test campaigns were examined in different specialized workshops, where the criteria were assessed. Consensus was reached on the assessment and at its meeting on 14 September the **EDDP Programme Board confirmed the consensus reached at working level on a latch type design (Scharfenberg) as the European DAC coupler head type.**

The testing campaigns concerned the prototypes for two **Scharfenberg** type designs and one **Schwab** type design presented by the participating manufacturers Dellner Couplers AB, J.M. Voith SE & Co. KG and Wabtec Corporation. One **SA 3** design was withdrawn earlier from the process. Around 100 EDDP experts from 36 companies assessed the results of two test consortia (DAC4EU funded by BMVI and Trafikverket/Swedish Winter Tests funded by S2R) and of previous Shift2Rail works in dedicated workshops for each coupler end of July 2021.

In the next phase, **specific solutions** will be presented by the manufacturers to cover the remaining other DAC requirements and **DAC Life Cycle costs** will be determined. Through this, the EDDP will develop further the **DAC specification and compatibility/safety interfaces**, later resulting in product pilots and TSI requirements (the EU's Technical Specifications for Interoperability), and follow-up open points relevant for serial production.

All three manufacturers participating in the current test programme are competent in latch type couplers and can boost further development. More manufacturers will join the process in the upcoming stages, all aiming at **establishing the Europe-wide DAC standard and enabling the introduction of DAC in Europe.**

About the European DAC Delivery Programme

The European DAC Delivery Programme (EDDP), enabled by Shift2Rail, is a unique platform dedicated to the successful implementation of Digital Automatic Coupling (DAC) as a means to revolutionise rail freight systems in Europe. Founded on an open cooperation concept, the project gathers a wide range of entities from railway undertakings, infrastructure managers and wagon keepers, as well as the rail supply industry, entities in charge of maintenance, concerned sector organisations, rail research centres and national and European political institutions. The aim is to deliver a European DAC solution through an integrated shared programme, building upon R&I results and pilots, and ensuring the necessary actions for a fast, technically and economically feasible European-wide roll-out.

About the Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking

Shift2Rail is the first European rail public private partnership tasked with developing strategically focused research and innovation (R&I) and market-driven solutions, integrating these to create the railway systems of the future. With a total value of €920 million for the period 2014-2021, funded through the Horizon 2020 programme of the European Union, Shift2Rail is promoting the competitiveness of the European rail industry, ensuring the attractiveness of rail as a safe and sustainable low carbon transport mode. This way, Shift2Rail aims to meet the changing transport/mobility needs of EU citizens and the economy.



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