



## ZF and DB Regio agree on strategic partnership for autonomous transport systems

- **Partnership to accelerate realization of autonomous bus shuttles**
- **First projects are identified and can start soon**
- **Nationwide demand expected to exceed 30,000 autonomous shuttle buses by 2035**

**Frankfurt am Main/Friedrichshafen, Germany. DB Regio AG and ZF Friedrichshafen AG have agreed on a strategic partnership to bring highly automated and autonomous bus shuttles onto the roads in Germany more quickly. Both companies see great opportunities in using driverless shuttle systems to relieve traffic in the future and offer safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly mobility.**

According to estimates by DB Regio – the market leader in Germany's public transport sector – more than 30,000 highly automated or autonomous shuttle buses will be needed in Germany by 2035 to strengthen local public transport (ÖPNV) for the future. Therefore, DB Regio AG and ZF Friedrichshafen AG signed a cooperation agreement at the beginning of October 2021 to develop regular service of highly automated and autonomously driving shuttles in Germany. The focus is on regions and cities that already rely on the services of DB Regio and do not operate their own public transport – but also on cooperations with large cities and districts as well as new areas of application such as airports or amusement parks.

"With its many years of expertise in local-specific issues of urban, municipal and inter-municipal passenger transport, DB Regio is the ideal partner for us to offer our autonomous shuttle systems to regions, cities and municipalities as a tailor-made service in each case," says Torsten Gollewski, Executive Vice President Autonomous Mobility Systems at ZF.



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**ZF subsidiary 2getthere with many years of experience in shuttle operation**

In all likelihood, highly automated and autonomous systems will first become established in public transport and commercial vehicles. The ZF subsidiary 2getthere, which develops and produces the ZF shuttles, has been operating such shuttle systems for over 20 years. They have now covered more than 100 million kilometers autonomously and transported more than 14 million people with more than 99 percent system availability. "Not least on the basis of these performance data and our high quality standards in the automotive mass market, DB Regio has chosen us as a strategic partner for the development and commissioning of autonomous mobility solutions," says Gollewski. "The trust spurs us on to expand our track record."

"We are already integrating autonomous vehicles into local public transport and are thus actively promoting the mobility revolution and climate protection. With ZF, DB Regio Bus has a strong technology partner at its side to strengthen public transport with electric, autonomous and flexible shuttle buses. We are thus pursuing a common goal: to relieve the roads in conurbations, cities and communities and to make local public transport emission-free," says Frank Klingenhöfer, Member of the Board of Management of DB Regio Bus. "Autonomous vehicles must be as reliable and safe as possible in order to be used in regular service. The autonomous buses and the technologies used in them by ZF are trend-setting in this respect. In the coming years, the aim is to bring shuttles onto the market that can already travel at up to 40 km/h today – and at higher speeds in intercity traffic in the future."

In autumn 2017, DB implemented autonomous driving in local public transport and on public roads in Bad Birnbach for the first time in Germany. Since then, the shuttles have brought more than 60,000 passengers to their destinations in regular service with fixed schedules. In particular, the connection to the train station has improved the connection to climate-friendly rail. As a technology driver for new



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mobility, Deutsche Bahn has been involved in autonomous buses in various cities and regions in Germany for several years.

ZF is contributing its entire expertise as a system supplier for highly automated and autonomous shuttle solutions as well as its comprehensive service network to the cooperation. In close cooperation with DB Regio, this includes project planning, routing, commissioning, and maintenance of the shuttles as well as a wide range of services for them. DB Regio takes over the complete operation of the mobility solution.

The first series projects, all of which are based on concrete requests from cities or municipalities, have already been identified. With RABus, a funding project of the state of Baden-Württemberg that is scheduled to run until 2024, the two partners in Mannheim and Friedrichshafen are already on their way to implementing the shuttle applications in a residential area or in inner-city, suburban and intercity transport.

After more than 20 years of experience with shuttles from 2getthere in and outside Europe, ZF is now addressing the domestic market of Germany on a larger scale with its strategic partner DB Regio.

Caption:

Frank Klingenhöfer, Member of the Board of Management of DB Regio Bus, and Torsten Gollewski, Head of Autonomous Mobility Systems at ZF, signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

Photo: ZF

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**About ZF**

ZF is a global technology company supplying systems for passenger cars, commercial vehicles and industrial technology, enabling the next generation of mobility. ZF allows vehicles to see, think and act. In the four technology domains of Vehicle Motion Control, Integrated Safety, Automated Driving, and Electric Mobility, ZF offers comprehensive product and software solutions for established vehicle manufacturers and newly emerging transport and mobility service providers. ZF electrifies a wide range of vehicle types. With its products, the company contributes to reducing emissions, protecting the climate and enhancing safe mobility.

In fiscal year 2020 ZF reported sales of €32.6 billion. The company employs more than 150,000 associates at approximately 270 locations in 42 countries.

For further press information and photos please visit: [www.zf.com](http://www.zf.com)

**About DB Regio Bus**

With around 365 million passengers in 2020, Deutsche Bahn is the largest provider of bus transport in Germany. DB Regio operates more than 9,300 buses in over 400 districts and independent cities, providing local public transport, climate-friendly rail connections and mobility in large parts of Germany. More than 9,000 employees serve passengers every day.