

Rail systems manufacturer undertakes founding role in European initiative

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Knorr-Bremse has announced it is a founding member of Europe's new joint undertaking in rail.

The systems manufacturing business is one of 25 companies coming together as part of Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking technology initiative (ERJU).

The roster of founders includes 10 major network and rail operators, 13 manufacturers and two research firms – as well as the EU. Launched yesterday, it is receiving funding to the tune of over one billion euros.

The ERJU is taking up the mantle from Shift2Rail – a public/private rail initiative that was launched ten years ago. Shift2Rail concentrated on delivering collaborative solutions to boost rail usage, creating more efficient services using automation, digitalization and artificial intelligence.

Whereas Shift2Rail looked closely at vehicle systems and infrastructure, Knorr-Bremse says the new initiative expands its developmental initiative to all areas of the industry.

Under the new ERJU initiative, Knorr-Bremse will help drive next-generation rail transport technology using

autonomous train operation, digital freight transportation, sustainable green solutions, digitalization, and life-cycle management.

The new ERJU initiative will form part of the EU's Horizon Europe research program for 2021–2027.

Dr Jürgen Wilder, member of the executive board of Knorr-Bremse AG and responsible for the Rail vehicle systems division, discusses ERJU's relevance: "Tomorrow's eco-friendly mobility must give greater weight to passenger and freight transportation.

"To achieve this, we need innovations – both to boost transportation capacity, and to create an even more environmentally compatible, efficient and economical rail network. So the fact that major players in the European rail industry – including Knorr-Bremse – are now pooling their expertise in Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking is an enormously important step.

"Together, we can lay the foundations for a new generation of rail technologies and redefine the whole concept of rail travel and transportation within Europe's future mobility landscape."

Dr Nicolas Lange, chairman of the management board of Knorr-Bremse rail vehicle systems and responsible for the company's R&D activities, said: "Based on our many years of active membership in ERJU's predecessor, Shift2Rail, and the key role we continue to play in many ongoing Shift2Rail projects, we at Knorr-Bremse believe we're in an excellent position to exert a decisive influence on the technology roadmap for the European rail sector over the next ten years."