

Belgium authorises first locomotive with The Signalling Company's software-defined safety platform

Brussels, Belgium, September 9, 2025 – **The Signalling Company (TSC)**, a Škoda Group affiliate, has achieved another major milestone in its cooperation with Lineas, Europe's largest private rail freight operator. The Belgian authorities have granted operational authorisation for the first HLD77 locomotive equipped with TSC's modular software-defined safety platform. Initially running the national safety application, TBL1+, the platform turns the HLD77 into a software upgradeable vehicle with optimised operational and maintenance costs.

This approval represents the first homologation of a locomotive using the RailOS® operating system and safe computer iEVC® – a universal platform designed to host multiple signalling and other applications. In practice, it means that future upgrades, such as ETCS, can be installed quickly and cost-effectively, allowing the fleet to operate seamlessly not only in Belgium but also internationally, in neighbouring markets such as Germany, The Netherlands and Luxembourg.

"The authorisation of the HLD77 marks the realisation of a vision that we have shared with Lineas from day one and which was subsequently embraced by Škoda Group. Software-defined signalling can be more than a dream. It's here, it's now, it's real, and we invite everyone to come and witness it in action. It is also the first step in a sequence that will lead to equipping the HLD77 fleet with multiple signalling applications, including ETCS, enabling international mobility," noted **Alexandre Bétis, Managing Director of The Signalling Company**.

This authorisation confirms that the universal platform developed within Škoda Group meets the strictest European safety requirements. Safety is at the very core of the system. The modular, software-defined architecture ensures reliable protection of locomotives, drivers and cargo under the toughest operating conditions. At the same time, the platform is exceptionally compact, energy-efficient and easy to retrofit, making it ideal for fleet modernisation.

TSC's innovative technology supports ETCS as well as multiple national safety applications within a single system. The company's portfolio is continually expanding with ETCS certification expected soon and development of the PZB Application for Germany and other markets already well advanced.

Speaking on behalf of Lineas, **COO François Alban** stated: *"We are delighted to bring the HLD77 into service with The Signalling Company's system on board. The ability to run the fleet with multiple national safety systems and ETCS on a single platform allows us to be flexible in deploying our locomotives in different countries. TSC's platform breaks with the traditional cost-paradigm for on-board safety systems. I'm happy to see innovation at an affordable price, which is an important step for Lineas and the sector as a whole."*

Authorisation of the HLD77 is the result of a rigorous validation and verification programme managed by TSC's Brussels-based delivery team. It represents another significant step on the company's journey to bring affordable, flexible, and future-proof signalling solutions to European rail operators.

Stanislas Pinte, co-founder of The Signalling Company, expressed his pride explaining that: *"It's another fantastic step on a journey that started with an idea in 2019! We are looking forward to upgrading the system for Lineas in the coming months and liberating the HLD77 fleet to run on international lines."*

Notes for editors

The Signalling Company, a Škoda Group affiliate headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, is a specialist in safety critical real-time signalling applications for rail. Founded in 2019, and acquired by Škoda Group in 2023, the company launched its universal safety platform and first national signalling application for Belgium at InnoTrans in November 2024. Today, the company remains focused on extending its portfolio of signalling applications to include ETCS and other national safety standards such as PZB, for Germany and other countries, and KVB for France.

Škoda Group, a producer of complex transport solutions, has a portfolio of modern vehicles that meet the latest European standards. After more than 165 years of existence, Škoda, a direct successor to the mechanical engineering plants founded by Count Wallenstein in 1859, is a major European transportation engineering group. It produces a range of public transport vehicles and components, including low-floor trams, suburban train units, metro trainsets, electric buses and trolleybuses, as well as control and drive systems for transport systems. Škoda Group employs 10,000 people at several production sites in the Czech Republic, Finland and Turkey. The group also has business units in Germany, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Poland, Hungary and Ukraine. In 2023, the group achieved revenues of EUR 1.382 billion and EBITDA of EUR 21.8 million. Škoda Group is part of PPF Group.

PPF Group operates in 25 countries, investing in financial services, telecommunications, media, e-commerce and other sectors, including real estate, biotechnology and transportation. PPF Group's geographical reach spans Europe, North America, Asia and Africa. The Group owns assets to the value of EUR 44.1 billion and employs 47,000 people globally (30 June 2024).

Lineas is Europe's largest private rail freight company. Under the motto "We decarbonize your supply chain," the company helps its customers reduce their CO2 emissions and offers a sustainable solution with daily, reliable connections across the continent. In recent years, the company has developed a unique, customer-focused and uncompromising approach that is characteristic of its entrepreneurial spirit. For example, its customers can benefit from MyLineas, an exclusive tool that allows them to track their goods in real time. Lineas is headquartered in Brussels and is supported by its long-standing shareholders, Argos Wityu and SFPIM.

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