**Press Release**

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Schmitz Cargobull AG

**Schmitz Cargobull welcomes EcoDuo pilot project in Germany**

**September 2024** – **In early September, a project group made up of German and Spanish companies and led by the German Automobile Industry Association (VDA) launched a one-year pilot project using the EcoDuo vehicle combination to optimise pre-carriage and on-carriage in combined transport. After a positive experience with similar projects in Spain and Scandinavia, the long truck concept is now due to be trialled in Germany with several goals, including reducing the carbon footprint in the transport chain.**

The EcoDuo is a vehicle combination where two standard semi-trailers are pulled with just one truck. Connected by a dolly, the EcoDuo reaches a total length of 31.70 metres. The standard semi-trailers can be easily loaded onto trains unlike long trucks, whose semi-trailer dimensions deviate from the standard size.

Andreas Schmitz, CEO of Schmitz Cargobull: “Unlike previous long-truck concepts, existing semi-trailers can continue to be used without any expensive investments. When modern semi-trailers equipped with the latest axle and brake technology are used, the EcoDuo complies with all safety standards. The EcoDuo combination is ideally suited to combined transport and directly reduces the carbon emissions per transported tonne in road traffic.”

During the one-year pilot phase in Germany, the EcoDuo will travel between the Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg and the MegaHub, located 70 kilometres away in Lehrte near Hannover.

The Volkswagen Group is providing the fixed transport route; prior to the project, the route was served exclusively by HGVs taking production containers between Wolfsburg and Spain. Now, the global logistics provider Sesé will be driving the EcoDuo from the VW plant to the terminal in Lehrte, which is run by two German transshipment companies Deutsche Umschlaggesellschaft Schiene-Straße and Kombiverkehr.

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From there, the semi-trailers will be transported 1,700 kilometres by rail to Spain using Kombiverkehr KG’s network for environmentally friendly transport. At a transshipment station in Barcelona, the individual semi-trailers will be connected to an EcoDuo combination again and then transported on the road by Sesé until they reach their destination. TÜV-Rheinland is supervising the pilot project with regard to road traffic regulations and academic aspects.

Using real-life operations as its basis, the one-year pilot project aims to assess the opportunities and risks of the EcoDuo vehicle combination and calculate the potential savings on the road and at terminals. The results of the pilot project will be summarised in a final report.

Andreas Schmitz: “With the cooperation of all the partners involved, we have built a broad foundation for this pilot project. It is a great starting point for achieving a high level of general acceptance. With the EcoDuo, we are underlining our European outlook as the vehicle meets most common standard dimensions and can be easily used for intermodal transport, including on trains. That is why we regard the EcoDuo as an environmentally and economically efficient transport solution for use across Europe.”

When compared to a conventional truck and one trailer with a 40 tonnes total articulated vehicle weight, the EcoDuo concept offers the following advantages:

* Reduced fuel consumption and, as a result, lower carbon emissions per transported tonne
* Lower single axle loads
* Increased road capacity or reduction of traffic due to the use of fewer vehicles with more capacity
* Less strain on roads and bridges due to lower axle loads and fewer articulated vehicles
* Solution to the driver shortages – One driver, two semi-trailers for long-haul journeys.

The EcoDuo from the pilot project will be on show at the IAA TRANSPORTATION at booth T81 outdoors. Find out about the EcoDuo and the pilot project:

<https://schmitz.cargobull.com/ecoduo-en>

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**About Schmitz Cargobull**

Schmitz Cargobull is the leading manufacturer of semi-trailers for temperature-controlled freight, general cargo and bulk goods in Europe, and a pioneer in digital solutions for trailer services and improved connectivity. The company also manufactures transport cooling units for refrigerated box body semi-trailers for temperature-controlled freight transport. With a comprehensive range of services from financing, spare parts supply, service contracts and telematics solutions to used vehicle trading, Schmitz Cargobull supports its customers in optimising their total cost of ownership (TCO) and digital transformation.

Schmitz Cargobull was founded in 1892 in Münsterland, Germany. The family-run company produces around 60,000 vehicles per year with over 6,000 employees, and generated a turnover of around €2.6 billion in the 2022/23 financial year. The international production network currently comprises ten plants in Germany, Lithuania, Spain, England, Turkey, Slovakia and Australia.

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