LEITNER combines ground and air transport in a unique e-mobility solution for urban areas

The urban mobility revolution is moving closer: ConnX, LEITNER's new intermodal mobility system, is soon to be launched on the market in 2025, after successfully passing all tests. The new electric mobility solution was presented at the international ropeway congress of the OITAF (International Organisation of Transportation by Rope) in Vancouver, Canada, and was very well received by the visitors.

Sterzing, June 20, 2024 - The extensive test phase of ConnX has been successfully completed and the revolutionary product will be ready for the market in 2025: This is the most important news from the ropeway congress in Vancouver. The ecological mobility solution for urban transport designed and patented by South Tyrolean ropeway manufacturer LEITNER will soon become reality.

The centrepiece of the new ConnX solution - derived from the English word connect - is a ropeway, whose cabin is transferred over to an autonomous electric vehicle when it enters the station, which then continues its journey at street level. The system offers two main advantages in an urban context: firstly, topographical or structural obstacles can be overcome more easily with a ropeway solution, and secondly, the intermodal "double solution" is an important alternative for all those areas where a continuous ropeway variant is not feasible for various reasons.

In just a few months, the vehicle, which combines ropeway systems and terrestrial electric mobility (trams and underground trains), will leave prototype status behind and be available to cities for their pioneering mobility decisions - as a system that offers unprecedented flexibility in the further development of public transport, thanks to a unique "hybrid solution".

Successful tests in Hungary

"Over the past few months, ConnX has successfully passed all the in-depth tests that we carried out at the ZalaZone Automotive Testing Centre in Hungary," says Klaus Erharter, Head of R&D at LEITNER. "Thanks in part to the successful collaboration with the Slovenian company Elaphe, the market leader in the field of in-wheel engines, we have managed to optimise all processes by testing all the complex functions of our technological solution," explains Günter Tschinkel, Head of Electrical Engineering at LEITNER.

From idea to reality

The first prototype, which was created in Sterzing from an innovative idea, was realized in 2021. Four years later, in 2025, the urban mobility revolution for even better connectivity and sustainability will already be a reality. Behind this is a sophisticated vision geared towards maximum flexibility: the combination of ropeway and self-driving electric vehicles enables comfortable transport without having to change cabins. In addition, the smooth interaction between the aerial and ground sections enables perfect adaptability to a wide range of urban requirements. In this way, existing infrastructure barriers such as buildings or other structures can be bypassed. ConnX is not only suitable as a "missing link" between different transport systems or between two ropeways, but also as a "last mile connection" for people and goods.

Economical, reliable and sustainable

ConnX reinforces the key advantages of ropeways and creates ecological, structural and economic added value compared to existing road and rail transport. In addition to short construction times and low investment and operating costs, regular journey times, uninterrupted service and flexible stop planning are key requirements for an efficient public transport system. What is more, at speeds of up to 12 metres per second (43 km/h), autonomous operation in dedicated lanes means that transport capacity can be maintained throughout the entire operating period, without interference or delays from other road users, on gradients of up to ten percent. ConnX is therefore a highly versatile "system mix" that makes the ropeway an even more effective means of transport in urban areas.

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