

## **Future of Transport: The benefits of an automatic coupler for railway vehicles**

Dear Sir or Madam,

you asked interested parties to submit their own views on the future of transport'. As an interested individual with a background in the railway business, I would like to recommend to investigate the economic benefits of an automatic coupler for railway vehicles, especially for freight wagons. The current screw-type coupling was developed in the 1860s and is technical outdated since many years. The result is a very inefficient handling of freight wagons, unnecessary limitations of train lengths and also a higher risk of derailment.

Furthermore the introduction of an automatic coupler would allow, to introduce an electrical power supply for freight wagons without additional operational expenses, because today's couplers connect electrical and pneumatic connections automatically. An electrical power supply in freight wagons would allow a multitude of new applications from refrigerated wagons to self-propelled shunting operation of freight wagons.

What is necessary to introduce such an automatic coupler in the EU? That's the good thing, nearly everything is developed already and furthermore every European freight wagon is prepared for the installation of an automatic coupler since the late 1960s (have a look at [http://www.ba-bautzen.de/wirtschaftssenioren/amk/amkenglish/geschichteamk\\_e.htm](http://www.ba-bautzen.de/wirtschaftssenioren/amk/amkenglish/geschichteamk_e.htm) ). But at that time, the technology had an economical problem: It was necessary to convert all European railway vehicles at the same time, because the automatic coupler was not interoperable with traditional screw type coupler. But this problem is solved now, by the Transpact C -AKv (see <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-AKv-Kupplung> (in German language only) ) coupler which has all operational and economical benefits of modern automatic coupler and is compatible to the European screw type coupler and the Russian SA -3 automatic coupler. So the only missing link now is, to standardize the future European railway coupler in a EU regulation or TSI (Technical Specifications for Interoperability). Then the European railway companies would have the security that they can invest in the new coupling technology with all its economical benefits and stay interoperable with other railway. >

I hope this helps the EU commission to develop the future of rail transport. >

Best Regards,  
Jörg Wartenberg