



Press release

BELGORAIL ACQUIRES THE DUTCH HHC/DRS AND OPENS UP NORTHERN EUROPE TO THE CERTIFER GROUP

2021 marks a milestone year for the Dutch leader in On Track Vehicle and Lifting equipment's. HHC/DRS, established in the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia, has been acquired by BELGORAIL, and becomes member of the CERTIFER Group, a key player in the domain.

The CERTIFER group therefore enters the Scandinavian market and strengthens its position in the Dutch and German markets, following the acquisition of the company HHC/DRS finalised in February 2021.

Noord-Scharwoude and Brussels, 25 February 2021 – Since its foundation in October 1999 HHC/DRS enterprise has witnessed rapid development, becoming a significant player in the railway sector for On Track Machines and lifting and hoisting machines, both in the Netherlands and internationally.

"Our experts' outstanding technical abilities, a local as well as an international presence, a close relationship with our customers, a good quality/price ratio and effective communication have been the key elements of our development", emphasise Huib Oostdijk and René Bak, Managing Directors of the HHC/DRS companies.

It is with the aim of finding a strategy to ensure the company's sustainability in the face of changes in the sector that the Management Board and the founders of HHC/DRS have been reflecting in 2020. The outcome of these analyses led the historical founders to look for a solid partner, perfectly familiar with the activities of HHC/DRS and capable of supporting the company in its future local and international development.

BELGORAIL, a Notified body in the railway industry since 2004, is the market leader in Belgium and Luxembourg. Specialising in the organisation and implementation of testing activities (rolling stock and ERTMS), the company is headquartered in Brussels, with a sub-office in Spain. BELGORAIL has joined the CERTIFER GROUP in 2017 and since then continues to grow and to extend its ranges of services.

As a result of these steps, HHC/DRS is now part of the BELGORAIL & CERTIFER group, experts in the evaluation of urban and rail transportation systems. Based in Valenciennes in France since 1997, with subsidiaries or branches in 14 countries, the CERTIFER group carries out inspection and certification missions in more than 50 countries in the infrastructure, control and command and rolling stock sectors.

"This acquisition offers interesting prospects for development, particularly through the strengthening of inspection activities for On Track Machines and Rail/Road Machines at European level, and the development of certification activities for new trains, signalling systems and railway infrastructure in the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries, the complementary nature of the teams of experts and the use of HHC/DRS's specific expertise in terms of lifting equipment and certification of safety management systems such as VA or VCA at group level", emphasise Jean-Marc Dupas and Huib Oostdijk, representatives of BELGORAIL and HHC/DRS.

With the integration of the Dutch specialist in OTM rail vehicles, the group is making progress in its strategy to become the leader in rail certification and to develop more widely in the field of mobility. Excellent news for both HHC/DRS 's and CERTIFER group's clients, as well as for the entire guided transportation sector.

About HHC/DRS

Based in Noord-Scharwoude, HHC/DRS was founded by René Bak in 1999 and specialises in the inspection, certification and testing of On Track Machines used in the railway sector, as well as lifting and hoisting equipment, at local and European level. With a team of 36 people, HHC/DRS has in-depth expertise in the field of railway rolling stock, rail/road vehicles and associated equipment. HHC/DRS is also a notified body for lifting equipment and is active in several EU countries for the assessment of RTNN (national rules) for railway vehicles. In addition to its activities within the EU, HHC/DRS also has a significant market share in the Netherlands in the field of inspection of work equipment and management system certification.

About BELGORAIL & CERTIFER

BELGORAIL is a Belgian inspection and certification body created in June 2004 by Vincotte, Agoria and Transurb to cover certification needs in the railway sector. BELGORAIL joined the CERTIFER group in 2017. The company is active in the field of testing, inspection and certification of rail transport equipment and systems, and also provides ISO 9001 and ECM certification services for maintenance facilities.

Headquartered in Valenciennes, CERTIFER is a world leader in the field of mobility, particularly in rail and urban transport. Founded in 1997 in France, CERTIFER has developed its expertise by providing inspection, certification and test organisation services in more than 50 countries around the world. In addition to the head office, Certifer Group is made up of CERTIFER subsidiaries in Italy, Algeria, Turkey, China, Dubai, Brazil, Australia, BELGORAIL in Belgium and Spain, AEBT in Germany, Switzerland and ERC in Austria. The CERTIFER Group benefits from several accreditations in accordance with ISO 17020 Type A and 17065 standards and has DeBo national recognitions in France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Algeria and Turkey, AEO in Australia, ISA in Dubai, India, ... Within the group, CERTIFER SA, CERTIFER ITALIA, BELGORAIL, HHC/DRS and ERC are Notified Bodies (NoBo).

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