

Media Release

Voith Turbo

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Voith to supply electric drive system for converted city bus

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- TriMet will be the first operator to deploy the Voith Electrical Drive System (VEDS) in the USA.
- The VEDS enables a range that's up to 25 percent higher than other electric drive systems with the same battery pack.
- Thanks to its compact design and the integrated approach, the VEDS is ideally suited for refurbishments.

PORTLAND, OREGON. TriMet, Oregon's largest regional public transit provider, aims to make the Portland metro area more liveable by easing traffic congestion and reducing air pollution. Therefore, the agency recently received its first refurbished city bus with a Voith Electrical Drive System (VEDS). The 60-foot articulated New Flyer bus was converted from a conventional bus with an internal combustion engine to a fully electric vehicle supplied by Complete Coach Works (CCW). With the VEDS powering the bus, TriMet will be extensively evaluating system capabilities that can increase range up to 25 percent higher than other electric drive systems with similar sized battery packs in the North American market. This way, they hope to operate an articulated electric bus on longer routes throughout the entire service day. TriMet will be the first operator to deploy the system in the USA. This prototype of a converted articulated bus was delivered to TriMet end of September. The agency has begun extensive testing and evaluation of the technology on Portland metro area's terrain.

"Transit already helps reduce emissions every time a person chooses a shared ride rather than driving alone, but TriMet is committed to reducing our own carbon footprint," says Sam Desue Jr., General Manager at TriMet. "As we work to transition to a clean energy bus fleet by 2040, we are pulling out all the stops in finding and testing zero emissions technology that will allow us to continue providing reliable transit service for our community."

Young Park, Electric Bus Manager at TriMet, added: “We’re looking at innovative opportunities to convert our bus fleet away from diesel faster and for less money than the current cost of new build battery-electric buses. Technology that can stand up to the long hours and elevation changes our buses must sustain will be key.”

In this case, the Voith E-Drive was fully imported. Voith already has plans to have the VEDS “Buy America” compliant for further projects in the near future. The concept supports battery systems from a wide range of manufacturers and is also enabled for use in fuel cell electric vehicle drivetrains. Thanks to its compact design, the VEDS requires no additional installation space in chassis designed for combustion engines. It is therefore very easy to convert existing vehicle fleets with conventional diesel, hybrid or gas drives. The system is based on a powerful, water-cooled, permanent magnet motor with a high-efficiency inverter. There is no need for a separate transmission, resulting in a positive effect on power availability, energy consumption, range and noise emissions. The basis for these benefits is the integrated approach of the VEDS. All system components have been perfectly matched to one another from the beginning and work together optimally. This facilitates integration into the vehicle and ensures a high level of reliability. The VEDS can also be used flexibly in various platforms.

From November 8 – 10, 2021, Voith will be showcasing the VEDS at APTA Expo in Orlando, Florida.

About the Voith Group

The Voith Group is a global technology company. With its broad portfolio of systems, products, services and digital applications, Voith sets standards in the markets of energy, oil & gas, paper, raw materials and transport & automotive. Founded in 1867, the company today has more than 20,000 employees, sales of € 4.2 billion and locations in over 60 countries worldwide and is thus one of the larger family-owned companies in Europe.

The Group Division Voith Turbo is part of the Voith Group and a specialist for intelligent drive technology, systems as well as tailor-made services. With its innovative and smart products, Voith offers highest efficiency and reliability. Customers from highly diverse industries such as oil and gas, energy, mining and mechanical engineering, ship technology, rail and commercial vehicles rely on the advanced technologies and digital applications of Voith.

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Refurbishment is a great opportunity to revitalize an older bus at a price significantly lower than the cost of a new electric bus.

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