



PRESS RELEASE

Ensuring safety on roads. Solaris co-operates with State Fire Service

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Nearly 800 firefighters, 20 experts and 25 inspectors of the Road Transport Inspection (ITD) have attended a training workshop on the construction of modern city buses. Run by experts of Solaris, the training programme is, among others, supposed to teach how to safely disconnect bus batteries, how to handle high voltage in an electric bus and how to safely evacuate the driver and passengers of a bus during traffic incidents involving a bus.

Solaris Bus & Coach S.A. has been putting a lot of effort into programmes to improve the safety of road users for many years. Since 2005, the company has been implementing its programme "Safe Driver" thanks to which over 1000 drivers have completed trainings on safe driving techniques on a special test track near Poznań. Trainings provided since 2013 by the Department for Technical Trainings of Solaris to employees of emergency and road services have had an equally big impact on road safety.

It was in 2013 that Solaris started cooperating with the Fire Service Warrant Officers School in Poznań (SAPSP). In the same year all pupils of that school were trained on the construction of a city bus. As part of the training curriculum firefighters were taught about vehicle construction, starting with the design and ending with the product itself. "The participants get acquainted not only with the design of the bus but they also learn about how to react in emergency situations such as fires or traffic incidents in an urban area. Strict rules apply to rescue operations; our trainings make a perfect supplement to theoretical know-how provided in school. One of the things we teach is the safe disconnecting of bus batteries and handling high voltage installations in electric vehicles. We also provide guidance on how to evacuate the driver and passengers depending on the bus configuration. We pay particular attention to emergency exits, talk about various event scenarios," explains Błażej Pacholski, Trainings Leader for Alternative Drivelines at Solaris; he and Ireneusz Pachliński, who back then held the position of Senior Specialist for Technical Trainings, started the co-operation with the State Fire Service and he has since carried on with the programme.

Trainings have been extremely popular right from the start. In light of the increasing need for these workshops, Solaris decided to launch cooperation with the Training Centre at the Regional Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Poznań and the Regional Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Katowice. The firm co-operates also closely with the fire brigade in Jaworzno, on account of the municipality owning a fleet of 23 Solaris-made electric buses that operate in this city.

"Electric buses constitute a separate aspect with regard to trainings. The first workshops for the whole Silesian fire service were held in 2015 and 2017 in connection with the delivery of Urbino electric buses to PKM Jaworzno. The delivery of buses with alternative drivelines entails trainings in the city where such vehicles will be in use. Fine examples of this rule include: Jaworzno, Chodzież, Hannover, Nuremberg, Katowice and Ostrów Wielkopolski", explains Błażej Pacholski. "Our Technical Training Department also participates in training cycles for captains of specialist technical rescue units as part of the workshops conducted for SAPSP in Poznań; together with the Regional Headquarters of the State Fire Service for the Greater Poland province we run trainings for representatives of various fire

service units of this region.

This year we will hold two more training cycles, dedicated to “Rescue operations regarding incidents involving vehicles with electric or hybrid drives” and to “Rescue operations regarding incidents involving vehicles powered with gaseous fuels”. Thanks to those trainings, employees of emergency services will gain valuable guidance on how to safely manage rescue operations in the case of road accidents which involve vehicles with alternative fuel drives which, after all, appear increasingly on roads,” Pacholski adds.

The Department for Technical Trainings shares its practical know-how with customers of the firm and representatives of rescue services. A few years ago a training covering a similar scope was held for a group of experts dealing in damages in urban transport, and recently the Department of Technical Trainings has launched co-operation with the Road Transport Inspection. The first pilot training for 25 inspectors is slated for September. “Counting also trainings conducted on site for customers and those still planned for this year, the number of persons who have completed the training since 2013 will total about 800 firefighters, 20 experts and 25 ITD inspectors. Our trainings have garnered a lot of praise and news about their usefulness and extraordinary quality have quickly spread among firefighters. Central units already factor in our workshops in their long-term training schedule, whereas trainings for SAPSP students in Poznań are mandatory in the school’s annual curriculum. What is more, an interesting article on our trainings was featured in a national specialist periodical for firefighters, called «W Akcji», after a series of trainings for units from Silesia”, remarks Błażej Pacholski.

The collaboration with the State Fire Service is beneficial to all involved parties. Thanks to the trainings firefighters may raise their competences. “After 5 years of co-operation of firefighters from all around Poland with Solaris company, we may assert that this was a good idea. Interest, in particular in modern Urbino buses, has been huge. In fact, considering the set of skills which each and every firefighter needs to have today, the trainings seem indispensable. We are all focused on ensuring the safety of passengers and we make our small contribution to that cause. Solaris, while training both drivers and security services, is a pioneer in this field. The number of trained rescuers is very high, and this is just the beginning”, says Brigadier Michał Fabiański from the Faculty of Education of the School of Aspirants of the State Fire Service in Poznań.

The producer also benefits from the co-operation, as the firefighters have given Solaris access to their school test field where, in safe conditions, the instructors carried out the controlled burning of traction batteries installed in electric Urbino buses. What is more, soon warrant officers of the SAPSP school in Poznań will carry out a series of first aid training workshops for employees of Solaris.

Additional information

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About our company

Solaris Bus & Coach sp. z o.o. is one of the leading producers of city and intercity buses in Europe. It focuses in particular on the development of zero-emission vehicles, i. e. electric and hydrogen buses as well as trolleybuses. This has resulted in the widest zero-emission product range in the European market and a leading position in this segment with a market share of 15.2%. Nearly 25,000 Solaris vehicles have been delivered so far and they ply the streets in 850 towns and cities across 33 countries located throughout Europe as well as beyond it. Solaris is part of the Spanish CAF Group (Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles) S.A. From conception, to the design and manufacturing phases, all Solaris buses are produced in Poland. Moreover, all activities undertaken by the manufacturer are in line with the brand’s mission, which is reflected in the motto “We are changing the image of public transport”. Solaris also actively partners with public transport operators and provides them with comprehensive support in their transition to zero-emission mobility.