

Office of Rail Transport

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Trains running on hydrogen

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Recently there was a meeting held at the Office of Rail Transport (Pol. Urząd Transportu Kolejowego, UTK), which concentrated on the possibilities of using hydrogen as a fuel with regard to railway vehicles. Representatives of science, rolling stock manufacturers and railway carriers have discussed possible use of this ecological fuel in the railway system.

The meeting provided a relevant opportunity to hold an exchange of experiences in the sphere of research and introduction of solutions based on hydrogen, which are of use in other branches of transport as well as other countries. Participants of the meeting have also listed barriers, which influence the (low) level of hydrogen's popularity as a fuel type. Hydrogen is a very energy-efficient fuel, and its burning does not create any greenhouse effect, what means that it can be treated as an ecological one.

- I am of opinion that we should introduce a pilot study, which will encompass at least three subjects: a hydrogen producer, a rolling stock manufacturer as well as a railway carrier, who will in the future use a railway vehicle running on hydrogen. Such project would enable the complete testing of such a propulsion in practice and in turn cause the popularisation of modern and ecological solutions in that sphere - mentioned Mr. Ignacy Góra, Sc. D., the President of the Office of Rail Transport, at the outset of the meeting.

The meeting's participants have approved UTK's initiative, which should lead to the preparation of a strategy of introduction of hydrogen propulsion in Poland, as well as the revision of the Strategy On Sustainable Development of Transport with regard to such a solution.

- Shortly we will analyse this matter and prepare proposals to revise government acts, which will encompass hydrogen propulsion. These analyses will be sent to relevant ministries, which manage such strategies and programmes - said the President of UTK, summarizing the meeting.

Participants of the meeting were the representatives of science, coming from the Warsaw University of Technology and the Institute of Motor Transport, rolling stock manufacturers - Rolling Stock Factory H. Cegielski and Alstom Konstal, railway carrier PKP Cargo S.A., hydrogen producer JSW Innowacje S.A. as well as representatives of public administration from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Solidarity Transport Hub (new central airport in Poland).

Railway remains the most ecological means of transport in the European Union and in 2018 only 0,5% of greenhouse gas emission generated by the transport sector was the result of railway operations.

This meeting was another example of the activities of UTK, which aim at connecting academic experience with the needs of the railway market participants.