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Underground railways in New York and London rely on Schunk third-rail shoe gears

Schunk has been on the market with the new development of a third-rail shoe gear for a longer time. Its special features include the fully insulated mounting plate, maintenance-free bearings and maintenance-free pneumatic cylinders.

These systems have already proved their mettle under difficult conditions of use for the railways in Nuremberg, Hamburg and Berlin.

From 2009 Schunk Bahn- und Industrietechnik GmbH (SBI) will deliver third-rail shoe gears for two of the biggest operators of underground rail systems worldwide in New York (Metro North) and London (Metronet).

These customers have entrusted Schunk with the task of the further technological development.

With regard to Metro North, this step aimed at converting the pneumatically operated drive package to an exclusively mechanically driven unit. Essential features of the technology for which a patent has been applied include its low maintenance and low vulnerability to failures. This gives the customer additional safety.

The technologically sophisticated "Double Mode" system, which has been developed specifically for the New York Metro system, ensures

the smooth transition to the different route systems of the New York Metro and Long Island Railroad.

This enables the customer to harmonise various route profiles without having to make high investments. First tests will take place by early 2009.

For the London underground railways Schunk developed a pantograph with automatic level control. The component which has especially been designed for the specific needs of the London route system will be first applied by early 2009.

Third-rail shoe gears are used for the power supply of underground and urban railways. Depending on the customer's requirements, the contact with the corresponding contact rail is established by means of simple gravity system or by remotely operated pneumatic systems.

Schunk shoe gears (STR) brush over the third rail (contact rail) with a collector shoe from above, below or laterally. Schunk constructs third-rail systems designed lastingly for the constant change between the contact rail and the rail gap. This is achieved by means of a motion link optionally aligned to the respective fitting position – in a right-sided or left-sided version.

At Innotrans 2008 the IRIS-certified company presents its current product range consisting of pantographs, third-rail shoe gears, grounding contacts, carbon brushes, collector shoes, brush holders and conductor lines.

Schunk Bahn- und Industrietechnik specialises in individual customer requests and is able to implement mini-series as well as large-scale productions on a high level of design technology. With a global network

of marketing and distribution companies Schunk has ideal preconditions for fulfilling the international market requirements.

Moreover, Schunk has its own production facilities for shoe gears in Austria, Sweden, Spain, the USA, India, China and Australia.

SBI is part of Schunk Group, a corporate group operating internationally with a product and service range in the corporate divisions of materials (carbon technology and ceramics), Weiss Technik (environmental simulation and air-conditioning technology), sintered metal technology and sonosystems (ultrasonic welding technology). In the year 2007, the company, which was established in 1913, generated sales totalling EUR 780 million. The group comprises 60 operative subsidiaries. Schunk is represented in 26 countries and employs a staff of approx. 7,900 worldwide.

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