

Daimler Buses teams up with FEV to launch the first hydrogen-powered Setra demonstrator vehicle

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Aachen - FEV has teamed up with Daimler Buses to create the first coach with a hydrogen fuel cell drive system. The starting point for the "H? Coach" technology demonstrator, which is intended for testing purposes, was a conventional Setra coach. This marks an important step toward locally emission-free long-distance travel: short refueling times, ranges of at least 800 kilometers per tank filling, and quiet operation underscore its practicality.

Daimler Buses and FEV jointly carried out the complete system transformation from diesel drive to fuel cell electric vehicle. After creating the overall vehicle concept, FEV took over the mechanical and E/E integration. One distinguishing feature is that the individual components deployed – including fuel cells, high-voltage components (such as batteries and electric motors), H? tank assemblies, control units including software – originate from different technology platforms from Daimler Buses and Daimler Truck. FEV integrated the systems into a functional powertrain in the overall vehicle.

An important factor in the development process was safety. Measures were developed for various crash load cases as well as for functional, high-voltage, and hydrogen safety.

"The 'H? Coach' impressively demonstrates how complex subsystems can be integrated into a testable, safe complete vehicle when vehicle, powertrain, and E/E expertise come from a single source," said Klaus Wolff, Vice President Project Management at FEV. "With our one-stop-shop approach, we quickly and efficiently delivered the desired customized solution to our customer – from concept to approval."

After successful approval by German technical inspection authority TÜV and passing electromagnetic compatibility tests, FEV handed over the vehicle to Daimler Buses in the summer of 2025 after approximately two years of joint project work.

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