



## AKKA PROVIDES ITS CROSS-SECTORAL EXPERTISE TO THE GEARBODIES PROJECT

PRESS RELEASE

**Brussels, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021** – AKKA reinforces its long-term contribution to improve trains' sustainability and performance by participating in a series of rail projects, including the GEARBODIES project. AKKA's contribution to these projects illustrates the Group's ambition to reduce the ecological footprint of existing infrastructures and vehicles through innovation with longer-lasting technologies.

### The GEARBODIES project

GEARBODIES is an EU funded research project launched by the Shift2Rail programme<sup>1</sup> – in collaboration with AKKA and 12 other partners<sup>2</sup> such as EURNEX (European Rail Research Network of Excellence), UNIFE (European Rail Industry Association) and CERTH (Centre for Research & Technology Hellas) – which aims to pave the way to a new efficient and reliable generation of trains without sacrificing capacity or speed.

### AKKA's role in the GEARBODIES project

AKKA's main role in the GEARBODIES project is to focus on improving the maintenance processes, developing innovative non-destructive technologies, and to optimize inspection systems for lightweight train body shells<sup>3</sup>.

AKKA leads the development and design of an innovative robotic inspection platform that will incorporate tailored thermography and ultrasonic inspection systems. This platform will optimize the automated detection and assessment of defects throughout the thickness of the shell by using a customized software module powered by a data fusion algorithm developed by AKKA.

*“The Group is proud to provide its cross-sectoral expertise to railway undertakings by inspecting lightweight materials, as it did in 2016 with the AirCobot project in partnership with Airbus dedicated to pre-flight aircraft inspections. With our participation in the GEARBODIES project, we aim to shape the trains of the future by making them even more reliable and efficient. To do so, we will draw on our know-how in materials and mechanical design through robotics and computer vision. This approach is a strong demonstration of AKKA's capability to combine digital expertise and legacy knowledge”, mentioned Pierre Lion, Group Director of AKKA Research.*

<sup>1</sup> Shift2Rail is the first European rail initiative to seek focused research and innovation (R&I) and market-driven solutions by accelerating the integration of new and advanced technologies into innovative rail product solutions. Shift2Rail promotes the competitiveness of the European rail industry and meets changing EU transport needs. R&I carried out under the Horizon 2020 initiative develops the necessary technology to complete the Single European Railway Area (SERA). <https://shift2rail.org/>

<sup>2</sup> EURNEX, UNIFE, CERTH, SACATEC, SCHAEFFLER TECHNOLOGIES, NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY, DASEL SL, VILNIUS TECH, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS, RWTH AACHEN UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI ROMA and AIMEN.

<sup>3</sup> The train body shell is the body of a rail vehicle excluding seats, doors and all mechanical components. It can be made of metal or lightweight composite materials.

## **ABOUT AKKA**

AKKA is a European leader in engineering consulting and R&D services. Our comprehensive portfolio of digital solutions combined with our expertise in engineering, uniquely positions us to support our clients by leveraging the power of connected data to accelerate innovation and drive the future of smart industry. AKKA accompanies leading industry players across a wide range of sectors throughout the life cycle of their products with cutting edge digital technologies (AI, ADAS, IoT, Big Data, robotics, embedded computing, machine learning, etc.) to help them rethink their products and business processes. Founded in 1984, AKKA has a strong entrepreneurial culture and a wide global footprint. Our 20,000 employees around the world are all passionate about technology and share the AKKA values of respect, courage and ambition. The Group recorded revenues of €1.5 billion in 2020. AKKA Technologies (AKA) is listed on Euronext Paris and Brussels – segment B – ISIN code: FR0004180537.

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