



MAN: First autonomous truck on the motorway

- **German Federal Transport Minister Dr Volker Wissing and MAN CEO Alexander Vlaskamp accompany the first drive of an autonomous truck in Germany**
- **MAN Truck & Bus is the first commercial vehicle manufacturer to receive a Level 4 motorway test permit**
- **Autobahn GmbH grants approval for test drives of the autonomous MAN test truck on the A9 motorway**
- **Around 500 engineers at MAN and the TRATON GROUP are driving autonomous driving forward, and over 133 patents have already been registered**
- **Driverless driving has the potential to prevent fatigue accidents, optimize transport processes and counteract the current shortage of around 100,000 truck drivers**

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MAN Truck & Bus
Dachauer Straße 667
80995 München

**Should any questions arise,
please contact:**
Gregor Jentzsch
Phone: +49 89 1580-2001
Presse-man@man.eu
<https://press.mantruckandbus.com/>

MAN has become the first commercial vehicle manufacturer to send an autonomous truck onto the German motorway. On board of the test truck, which drove around ten kilometres on the A9 between the Allershausen and Fürholzen junctions, were Federal Transport Minister Dr Volker Wissing and MAN CEO Alexander Vlaskamp.

MAN has been intensively driving forward the development of autonomous trucks for use in logistics hubs and for hub-to-hub traffic on motorways for some time and recently became the first commercial vehicle manufacturer to receive a Level 4 test permit based on the law on autonomous driving on German motorways.

Freight volumes and, in particular, transport between logistics hubs – such as the warehouses of large online department stores – are growing steadily. The use of autonomous trucks in this so-called hub-to-hub transport is particularly suitable for this. The trucks are always on the road, extremely efficient in terms of consumption and safe to drive. There are no driving time breaks, so the vehicles can be perfectly integrated into tightly synchronised logistics processes. In the long term, the efficient use of autonomous trucks can reduce overall operating costs by ten to 15 per cent. The new technology can also alleviate the driver shortage. There is already a shortage of up to 100,000 truck drivers in Germany alone.

MAN Truck & Bus is one of Europe's leading commercial vehicle manufacturers and providers of transport solutions with an annual turnover of around 14.8 billion euros (2023). The product portfolio includes vans, trucks, buses, diesel and gas engines as well as passenger and freight transport services. MAN Truck & Bus is a TRATON GROUP company and employs around 33,000 people worldwide



"The first Level 4 test drive of an autonomous truck on a German motorway proves that Germany has taken a leading position in Europe with the law on autonomous driving. Our goal is to become the leading market for automated and connected driving. Today is a milestone for logistics in Germany. The ever-increasing volume of transport, coupled with the worsening shortage of drivers, is a challenge for society as a whole. Autonomous trucks can help to alleviate the situation. In addition, the intelligent networking of freight transport offers the opportunity to make transshipment from road to rail more efficient and thus strengthen climate-friendly combined transport", says Dr Volker Wissing, Federal Minister for Digital Affairs and Transport.

"Today we are taking another big step towards autonomous commercial vehicles, the second major future field alongside the switch to CO₂-free drives. This year, we are initially running tests with prototypes on the motorway. Further hub-to-hub projects will follow from 2025, but then in typical customer applications. We are thus taking the next development step towards series production of autonomous trucks towards the end of the decade. The law on autonomous driving gives our industry the necessary planning security. To realise autonomous driving, however, we also need to work closely with infrastructure operators such as Autobahn GmbH. Only together can we put autonomous driving on the road," says Alexander Vlaskamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of MAN Truck & Bus SE.

"Autobahn GmbH des Bundes plays a central role in autonomous driving on German motorways," explains Dirk Brandenburger, Technical Managing Director of Autobahn GmbH des Bundes. "We not only approve autonomous driving on certain motorway sections, but also actively promote networking and communication between motorway infrastructure and vehicles with so-called cooperative intelligent transport systems. This is of crucial importance for the authorisation and therefore the safety of autonomous vehicles on the road."

For the test drive of the first autonomous truck, Autobahn GmbH examined MAN's concept as part of the application for a test licence before the Federal Motor Transport Authority officially granted MAN approval at the beginning of April. In future, Autobahn GmbH will also be responsible for approving operating areas on motorways for the series approval of autonomous vehicles. The vehicle operator specifies the routes on which its vehicles with autonomous driving functions are to drive, and Autobahn GmbH then checks whether these routes are suitable for the operation of these vehicles with autonomous driving functions.



MAN with many years of development expertise in autonomous driving

MAN has been driving autonomous driving forward for many years with various research and development projects. From 2017 to 2019, MAN developed and tested electronically coupled trucks in a joint research and development project with DB Schenker. These particularly safe and fuel-efficient platoons were used for more than six months in regular general cargo transport on the A9 motorway between Neufahrn and Nuremberg. From 2019 to 2023, the ANITA project with partners Deutsche Bahn, Fresenius University of Applied Sciences and Götting KG focused on the complete digital integration of an autonomous truck into the logistics process of container handling from road to rail. And since 2022, MAN has been working together with Autobahn GmbH and other partners from industry, science and technical testing in the ATLAS-L4 project to develop an autonomous truck for use in motorway transport between logistics hubs. The project is thus specifically implementing the law on autonomous driving passed in Germany in 2021, which already allows driverless driving on clearly defined routes and with technical supervision. Practical test drives of the prototype with a safety driver on the motorway are planned at the end of the project. To date, MAN has filed 133 patent applications in the field of autonomous driving, 33 of which have already been granted. By participating in the @CITY, Belntelli and MINGA projects, MAN is also involved in the development of automated driving for city buses.