
Siemens builds eHighway in Germany

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Siemens has been commissioned by the German state of Hesse to build an overhead contact line for electrified freight transport on a ten-kilometer stretch of autobahn.

The line will supply electricity for the electric drive of a hybrid truck.

Siemens originally presented its innovative “eHighway” concept **in 2012.**

The system will be installed on the A5 federal autobahn between the Zeppelinheim/Cargo City Süd interchange at the Frankfurt Airport and the Darmstadt/Weiterstadt interchange.

With this field trial, the eHighway will be tested on a public highway in Germany for the first time. Siemens will be responsible for the planning, construction and, as an option, maintenance of the system. The system is being built as part of the joint project “Electrified, innovative heavy freight transport on autobahns” (ELISA) of Germany’s Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). Hessen Mobil, responsible for road and transport management in Hesse, is managing the project.

“Construction of the system will demonstrate the feasibility of integrating overhead contact systems with a public highway. The system will be used for real transport networks, and prove the practicality of climate-neutral freight transport in the urban region of Frankfurt,” said Gerd Riegelhuth, Head of Transport of Hessen Mobil.

“With the eHighway, we’ve created an **economically viable solution for climate-neutral freight transport by road.** Our technology is an already existing and feasible alternative to trucks operating with internal combustion engines,” says Roland Edel, Chief Technology Officer of the Mobility Division.

The eHighway is twice as efficient compared to internal combustion engines. That not only means cutting energy consumption in half, but also significantly reducing local air pollution. The core element of the system is an intelligent pantograph on the trucks combined with a hybrid drive system. Trucks equipped with the system operate locally emission-free with electricity from the overhead line and automatically switch to a hybrid engine on roads without overhead lines.