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Electrifying bus companies: LBO and VDE Renewables develop guide for small and medium-sized enterprises

- **Joint study on the challenges faced by private bus companies away from metropolitan areas when introducing e-mobility**
- **Checklists to help with the changeover**
- **Project supported by the German Federal Ministry of Transport**

(Munich/Frankfurt a. M., 19.04.2023) So far, attempts have been made to make bus transport emission-free, especially in urban areas. In cities, pollution levels are particularly high and the pressure to adapt is therefore much greater. But if the traffic turnaround is to succeed, local public transport must also be converted to alternative drives in all other areas. This includes school bus services, long-distance buses and tourist trips by bus. A central component of this development will be the energy-efficient e-bus, whether in the form of a battery-electric vehicle or a fuel cell vehicle.

Aiming for environmentally friendly and sustainable bus transport

The Landesverband Bayerischer Omnibusunternehmen e.V. (LBO) and VDE Renewables have now produced a guide to help small and medium-sized businesses decarbonize their fleets. "Small and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of public transport in Bavaria, as they are nationwide. We must therefore not only not lose them on the road to climate-neutral transport, but also provide them with technical and organizational support in this historic transformation," says LBO Managing Director Stephan Rabl. The guide is the result of a study funded by the German Federal Ministry of Transport. VDE Renewables Managing Director Burkhard Holder: "The mobility concepts of the future must be environmentally friendly, sustainable and free of fossil fuels. Transportation companies that adapt early can position themselves as innovative companies. But switching to electric drive systems requires a radical rethinking of familiar patterns that touches all areas of the company."

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Focus is on battery-electric drives

For the study, VDE Renewables selected representative member companies of the LBO and identified and evaluated conditions and needs through interviews and site visits. The LBO and VDE Renewables guide contains checklists to help companies make the switch: For example, on what to consider when applying for subsidies or how to proceed when connecting to the grid. The focus is on purely battery-electric drives and their different versions. Fuel cells and hydrogen-powered vehicles are also considered. However, based on the feedback from the interviews, not to the same degree of detail.

"Bavarian bus companies are facing major challenges. Battery electric vehicles are significantly more expensive to purchase and have a shorter range than diesel buses. The change in energy supply also requires a rethinking of familiar patterns," says Rabl of the LBO. Therefore, the introduction of electric drive systems is not limited to expected changes in the infrastructure. Dispatching, personnel management and the workshop are also affected. There is no one-fits-all solution, says Holder of VDE Renewables: "The implementation of electric mobility at depots is as individual as each company. Overall, it's a matter of reconciling regulatory and manufacturer-specific requirements with local conditions."

About VDE Renewables

VDE Renewables, a subsidiary of the VDE Group, offers quality assurance services for the global renewable energy sector. Based in Alzenau, Germany, the company’s services include quality testing and certification according to the highest safety, reliability, and performance standards, as well as independent engineering and technical due diligence. VDE Renewables works closely with all structures of the VDE Group and its internationally renowned network, which include the leading research and development bodies such as the Fraunhofer Institutes and insurance firms such as Allianz and Munich Re. Together with its partners, VDE Renewables supports its customers with their specific requirements, such as gaining access to new markets, differentiating themselves from their competitors or enabling them to receive more attractive insurance or financing conditions.

For more information, visit www.vde.com/renewables

About VDE

VDE, one of the largest technology organizations in Europe, has been regarded as a synonym for innovation and technological progress for more than 130 years. VDE is the only organization in the world that combines science, standardization, testing, certification, and application consulting under one umbrella. The VDE mark has been synonymous with the highest safety standards and consumer protection for more than 100 years.

Our passion is the advancement of technology, the next generation of engineers and technologists, and lifelong learning and career development “on the job”. Within the VDE network more than 2,000 employees at over 60 locations worldwide, more than 100,000 honorary experts, and around 1,500 companies are dedicated to ensuring a future worth living: networked, digital, electrical. Shaping the e-dialistic future.

The VDE (VDE Association for Electrical, Electronic & Information Technologies) is headquartered in Frankfurt am Main. For more information, visit www.vde.com

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