

Media release

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Peter Spuhler hands over position as Group CEO to Thomas Ahlburg

Peter Spuhler hands over position as Group CEO to Thomas Ahlburg and will focus on his office as Group Chairman from 1 January 2018.

As of 1 January 2018, Thomas Ahlburg will take over as new Group CEO of Stadler. After 30 years as CEO, Peter Spuhler, the majority shareholder in Stadler, will focus on the role of Group Chairman. Back in 1989, Peter Spuhler acquired the company, which at the time had only 18 employees, for a total of CHF4.5m. Today, Stadler's more than 7000 employees generate an annual revenue of over CHF2bn. In his capacity as Group Chairman, Peter Spuhler will have to fulfil his seven non-transferable legal duties under the Swiss Code of Obligations. The planned adjustment of the management structure will furthermore enable Peter Spuhler to put even more focus on managing the strategy process, M&A projects, strategic localisation tasks in the scope of joint ventures, accompanying and approving the bidding process, strategic product development and particularly on intensifying personal client relations.

Thomas Ahlburg is the current Deputy Group CEO and has been managing the largest plant of Stadler Group in Bussnang since 2012. He has an excellent track record in both positions and enjoys the full confidence of the board of directors and the workforce. After completing his engineering studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and the University of Cape Town (South Africa), Thomas Ahlburg worked for the global consultancy Booz & Company for ten years. In parallel to his work responsibilities he earned a PhD from the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen, Germany. After this, he held several executive positions at MT Aerospace, including Head of the Business Unit Ariane 5. Before joining Stadler in 2012, Thomas Ahlburg managed the Bombardier plant in Görlitz, Germany. The engineer is 47 years old, married to the harpist Nora Ahlburg and the father of a six-year-old son. The family has been living in Kreuzlingen since 2012. Thomas Ahlburg is a member of the executive board of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Swiss Canton of Thurgau.

"Over the course of his tenure in charge, Thomas Ahlburg has convinced me with his competence, his entrepreneurial and leadership skills and, above all, from a human perspective. The Bussnang plant is being expertly managed and under Thomas Ahlburg's leadership it is seen as the gold standard against which other plants within the entire group are measured. I am proud and grateful that Thomas Ahlburg will succeed me as Group CEO and I wish him every success and great joy in his new role," says Peter Spuhler.

Thomas Ahlburg's successor as head of the Bussnang plant will be Georg Kapeller. He has been the plant's Head of Production since 2012. Before that, he worked for GDELS-Mowag in Kreuzlingen for more than ten years, where he held various executive positions in the engineering department. After studying mechanical engineering in Winterthur, Georg Kapeller earned post-graduate degrees in mechatronics and business administration alongside his regular work and furthermore completed the Armed Forces General Staff course. Georg Kapeller grew up in the Swiss Canton of Thurgau and lives in Frauenfeld with his family. He is 42 years old, married, and the father of two sons.

Through this carefully planned adjustment of the management structure, Stadler will be ideally positioned to master future challenges, continuing growth and the ongoing trend towards internationalisation. With an 80 per cent stake in the company, Peter Spuhler will continue to be the principal owner of Stadler. 10 per cent of the shares are held by the RAG Foundation, another 10 per cent are owned by a total of about 160 executives

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About Stadler

Stadler has been building trains for 75 years. The system provider of rail vehicle construction solutions is headquartered in Bussnang in Eastern Switzerland, and has a workforce of over 7000 based in various locations across Switzerland, Germany, Spain, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Belarus, Algeria, UK and the United States. Stadler provides a comprehensive range of products in the heavy and urban transport segments: High-speed trains, intercity trains, regional and commuter rail trains, underground trains, tram trains and trams. Furthermore, Stadler also manufactures main-line locomotives, shunting locomotives and passenger carriages, including the most powerful diesel-electric locomotive in Europe. Stadler is the world's leading manufacturer in the rack-and-pinion rail vehicle industry.

More Stadler figures: The best-selling FLIRT (Fast Light Intercity- and Regional Train) vehicle has already sold over 1400 units in a total of 17 countries. The KISS (the name is an acronym of the German for Comfortable Innovative Speedy Suburban Train) is also very popular: It has sold 270 units in 10 countries. The most powerful diesel electric locomotive in Europe, the EURO4000, has sold 140 units in 7 countries. Additionally, Stadler Service maintains vehicle fleets comprising over 680 vehicles that cover a combined annual distance of 120 million kilometers in 16 different countries.

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