



Royal presence at official opening of new plant in Spain

Official opening of the Knorr-Bremse plant in Spain: Prince Felipe of Spain (center) and Heinz Hermann Thiele, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Knorr-Bremse AG, background left: Princess Letizia

In the presence of their Royal Highnesses Prince Felipe and Princess Letizia, Knorr-Bremse officially opened its new plant in Getafe near Madrid on June 25. Knorr-Bremse has merged the existing activities of its braking and door systems subsidiary Frenos and its air-conditioning subsidiary Merak at a site some twenty kilometers to the south of the Spanish capital. Knorr-Bremse is also celebrating an anniversary: The company has been in the Spanish market for exactly fifty years.

In addition to their Royal Highnesses, the ceremony was attended by many representatives of ministries and local authorities, together with major vehicle builders and operators. In his speech of welcome the Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Knorr-Bremse, Heinz Hermann Thiele, thanked the guests for coming and stressed the importance of the Spanish rail market

for Knorr-Bremse. "Nowadays the Spanish market is one of the most modern in the world, with several high-speed lines, modern metro systems and ongoing expansion of local and regional rail networks. Success for Knorr-Bremse therefore crucially depends on maintaining a strong local production presence."

Knorr-Bremse manufactures three different product groups under one roof in Getafe: air-conditioning, brakes and door systems. This generates important synergies and enables the company to offer attractive and competitive products. The site has 10,000 square meters of production area and an additional 2,000 square meters of office space and will employ a workforce of 500. It was designed according to Knorr-Bremse's global standards for production plants. In addition to production, the building, with its modern, transparent design,

also houses the Group's development center for air-conditioning technology. Getafe is centrally situated between Madrid and Pinto – where both companies formerly had their administrative headquarters. Frenos moved to the new site in December 2007 and Merak in January 2008. In both cases, production continued uninterrupted following relocation.

Knorr-Bremse started technical co-operation with Sociedad Española de Frenos in the field of braking systems for the Spanish rail market back in 1958, and in 2001 the company was fully integrated into the Group. It now also produces rail vehicle door systems. Since 2005, Merak Sistemas Integrados de Climatización, as a supplier of modern air-conditioning technology for rail vehicles, has also been part of the Knorr-Bremse Group. *Pablo Alvarez-Salas* ■



Heinz Hermann Thiele (left), Prince Felipe (center) and Gustavo González, Managing Director Frenos, inspect a Merak air-conditioning unit

Plant visit (l. to r.): Ignacio Fúster, General Manager Merak, Gustavo González, Managing Director Frenos, their Royal Highnesses Prince Felipe and Princess Letizia, Esperanza Aguirre, President of the Regional Government of Madrid, and Heinz Hermann Thiele