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**Press release for immediate distribution**

## **Strategic alliance between Schuler AG and AZL (Aachen Center for integrative lightweight production)**

*Göppingen/Aachen, March 7, 2014* – The Aachen Center for Integrative Lightweight Production (AZL) plans to begin manufacturing on a new composite press from Schuler by the end of the year. The upstroke press with a force of 1,800 metric tons will serve as a joint research and development platform for the large-scale testing of new dies, lines, components or automation technologies, for example. The tests will be conducted under production conditions and ensure that equipment is ready for start-up. Schuler has forged a strategic alliance with AZL especially for this purpose.

“Our collaboration in the field of lightweight production will help us enhance our press technology and production processes for modern lightweight materials,” explains Joachim Beyer, Schuler’s Chief Technology Officer. “The tremendous expertise of AZL in production technology and materials science will take us a major step forward.”

“We are very much looking forward to a long-term cooperation with Schuler and are very grateful for their collaboration and support,” adds AZL’s CEO Dr. Michael Emonts. “As a premium partner, Schuler will be able to use our holistic expertise and complete portfolio of services, as well as our international partner network which we are constantly expanding.”

For the further development of its press equipment, Schuler is focusing in particular on the areas of high-speed RTM (Resin Transfer Molding), wet pressing and the processing of thermoplastics. Academic and practical feedback from the AZL network is expected to help Schuler optimize its customer solutions.

For the mass production of lightweight components, such as in the automotive and aerospace sectors, the main focus is on increasing productivity: cycle times of two to three minutes for the RTM process, or even less than a minute for thermoplastic processing, help meet the requirements of OEMs – especially with regard to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improving their ecological footprint.

## **Manufacturing processes to produce real parts**

With a bed size of 2,800 by 1,800 millimeters, the press will enable AZL to research and develop manufacturing processes for the production of real parts with industry-typical dimensions. “For example, we can produce large car body panels fully automatically,” continues Dr. Michael Emonts. “Schuler’s composite press gives us the capability to link individual processes into complete process chains and then enhance the part systems correspondingly.”

AZL offers a unique combination of machine tool construction, automation technology and composites technology within walking distance on a single campus. The Center gives its partners access to over 750 scientists and a full range of competencies along the entire value chain of lightweight production: from fiber, semi-finished and component production to machining, quality assurance and production planning.

*At the “JEC europe” trade show in Paris from March 11 to 13, Schuler will present its solutions for mass manufacturing of carbon parts (pavilion 7.2, stand M 82).*

## **Captions**

Bild1.jpg: The Aachen Center for Integrative Lightweight Production (AZL) has ordered a similar upstroke press from Schuler.

*Please name Schuler as the photo source.*

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**About the Schuler Group – [www.schulergroup.com](http://www.schulergroup.com)**

*As the technological and global market leader in metal and plastic forming equipment, Schuler offers cutting edge presses, automation, dies, process know-how and services for the entire metal forming industry and lightweight vehicle construction. Its clients include car manufacturers and their suppliers, as well as companies in the forging, household equipment, packaging, energy and electrical industries. Schuler is the market leader in coin minting technology and supplies systems solutions for the aerospace, railway and large pipes industries. The company can trace its roots back to a locksmith shop founded by Louis Schuler in 1839 and celebrates its 175th anniversary in 2014. In fiscal year 2012/13 (ending Sep. 30), Schuler posted sales of € 1,185.9 million. With 5,600 employees, Schuler is represented in 40 nations around the world. The Austrian ANDRITZ Group holds a majority share in Schuler.*

**Contact for the media:**

Simon Scherrenbacher  
Corporate Communications  
Tel.: +49 7161 66-7789  
Fax: +49 7161 66-907  
Simon.Scherrenbacher@  
schulergroup.com  
[www.schulergroup.com/pr](http://www.schulergroup.com/pr)

**About the AZL – [www.azl.rwth-aachen.de](http://www.azl.rwth-aachen.de)**

*“Aachen Center for Integrative Lightweight Construction” (AZL) of RWTH Aachen demonstrates lightweight expertise in research and development. The aim of AZL is to develop automated production of load- and cost-optimized lightweight components, suitable for mass production and versatile process chains in composite and multi-material design. This will be done in close interdisciplinary cooperation between material science and manufacturing technology. The AZL of RWTH takes on both R&D work and teaching activities. AZL Aachen GmbH is responsible coordinating the AZL Partnership Network.*

**Contact for the media:**

Mona Bielmeier  
Manager Marketing and Communications  
Tel. (Germany): + 49 (0) 151 651 79 021  
Tel. (France): + 33 (0) 6 52 31 31 30  
Email: [mona.bielmeier@azl-aachen-gmbh.de](mailto:mona.bielmeier@azl-aachen-gmbh.de)