

Press Release

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Production of Volvo XC60 and DRIVe range are kicked off

With the Volvo XC60 Volvo Car Corporation is stepping boldly into the growing crossover segment. At the other end of the range it is offering the C30, S40 and V50 1.6D DRIVe with best in class consumption and lowest CO₂ emission levels.

Both the XC60 and the DRIVe cars have successfully entered the mass production stage in Volvo Cars' Ghent plant during the last weeks.

Busy times

These are busy times for Volvo Cars Ghent plant. Early August saw the four millionth car rolling off the assembly line in Ghent, Belgium.

Late August the first XC60 rolled off the assembly line, and the production volumes were increased gradually during the last weeks.

And on top of that Volvo Cars Gent is currently launching the DRIVe range of the Volvo C30, S40 and V50, which made their debut at the Paris Motor Show early October.

Volvo XC60

The Volvo XC60 is Volvo Car's entry in the growing medium crossover segment. This year some 12,000 cars will be produced and the aim is to reach a yearly level of over 50,000 cars.

The new XC60 had its premiere showing at the international car show in Geneva in March. Since then, Volvo Cars has been working hard to prepare the car for serial production.

After having built the first series in the pilot plant in Gothenburg, the first pre try out cars were put on the assembly line in the Ghent plant at the end of 2007. The plant got an extensive makeover during the summer holidays, installing for instance the robots to mount the panoramic sunroof, extending the laser welding capacity and preparing the plant for the XC60.

The production ramp up is unusually steep - launched only early September, the Volvo XC60 now accounts for one third of the volume in the Ghent plant. This means that the maximum capacity has been reached in ten weeks' time. Volvo Cars Gent currently assembles 1,500 XC60s per week as sales in Europe are taking off. Sales in the US are due to start in early 2009.

For Volvo Cars Gent, this is the first car to use the same technologies as in the Volvo S80, V70 and XC70 which are assembled in Gothenburg.

The sales target for the new XC60 is 50,000 cars per year. Distribution between Europe and North America is unusually uniform: about 40 percent each. The remaining 20 percent is destined for the rest of the world.

The five largest markets during peak year 2010 will be the USA, Germany, Great Britain, Russia and China.

Volvo C30, S40 and V50 1.6D DRIVe

At Paris Motor Show in early October, Volvo Cars presented economical new diesel variants of the C30, S40 and V50 models with fuel consumption of just 4.4 litres/100 km (C30) or 4.5 litres/100 km (S40 and V50). On Thursday November 13th these cars were taken in production.

The corresponding CO₂ figures of 115 and 118 g/km mean that the C30 and V50 have best-in-class CO₂ emissions in their segments. All three models - the C30, S40 and V50 - are equipped

with a special set of efficiency-enhancing features and marked with the DRIVe emblem to signal their up rated environmental properties.

Volvo Cars expects to sell over 20,000 1.6D DRIVe cars next year in Europe. Sales are expected to spread fairly uniformly throughout the region, with France, Sweden and Spain accounting for the main part. The reason for this is the particularly favourable terms offered to buyers in these countries.

Comments

"We are all very excited about these new cars," says Magnus Hellsten, SVP Manufacturing, Volvo Cars. "Due to the current economic downturn, we are now adapting our manufacturing base to projected market demand. The ongoing work to improve our manufacturing base, with assembly plants in Gothenburg in Ghent and component plants in Skövde and Olofström, is ongoing; and the progress we have made when it comes to quality and efficiency is really impressive. Our managers and employees have made fantastic contributions to improve our performance. We now aim to become one of the best car manufacturers in Europe, and the performance in our plants show that our ambition is well founded."

For Ghent's plant manager Derek Jessiman, the launch of the Volvo XC60 and the DRIVe range is extremely important for both Volvo Cars as a whole as for Volvo Cars Gent. "We are working hard to assure a flawless launch,' he says, "delivering cars on time with the right quality to the various markets. Volvo Cars Gent has invested over 120 million Euros to make sure that we can build the XC60 car and the DRIVe models efficiently, using the latest technologies."

He continues; "We have also trained the workforce extensively - partly in Sweden - to guarantee a high quality level as from the start. The ramp up curve in assembly has been very steep, reaching maximum capacity in less than ten weeks, and all colleagues in the plant have worked extremely hard to pull this off. The complexity of the introduction of the DRIVe range is not of the same magnitude as that of the XC60, but still this is an important new model launch with mainly consequences in the field of logistics. Both new models will support Volvo at a time when the market situation is extremely tough."

Volvo built its first major plant outside Sweden in 1965, just one year after the construction of the present plant in Torslanda (Gothenburg). The first model to be produced in Ghent was the Volvo 120, a.k.a. the Amazon.

Volvo Cars Gent currently employs 4,000 employees, building the Volvo C30, S40, V50, S60 and XC60. Production consists of welding, painting and final assembly. The paint shops of the Volvo Cars plants are among the cleanest in the world. Last year Volvo Cars Gent switched over, like the other Volvo facilities, to green electricity.

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Descriptions and facts in this press material relate to Volvo Cars' international car range. Described features might be optional. Vehicle specifications may vary from one country to another and may be altered without prior notification.

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