

Press Release

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The fully electric XC40 SUV – Volvo's first electric car and one of the safest on the road

The advance of electric cars constitutes the biggest change in the history of the automobile. For the first time in over a century, cars move without a petrol or diesel engine in the engine bay and have a battery in the floor, changing the car at its core.

With the introduction of the forthcoming fully electric Volvo XC40 SUV next month, Volvo Cars is not just launching its first fully electric car – in true Volvo tradition, it is also introducing one of the safest cars on the road, despite a fresh set of challenges presented by the absence of an internal combustion engine.

“Regardless of what drives a car forward, be it an electric machine or combustion engine, a Volvo must be safe,” says Malin Ekholm, head of safety at Volvo Cars. “The fully electric XC40 will be one of the safest cars we have ever built.”

While building on the excellent safety standards of the original XC40, Volvo Cars safety engineers had to completely redesign and reinforce the frontal structure to deal with the absence of an engine, meet Volvo Cars' high safety requirements and help keep occupants as safe as in any other Volvo.

“The fundamentals around safety are the same for this car as for any other Volvo. People are inside, and the car needs to be designed to be safe for them,” says Malin Ekholm.

To help keep passengers safe and the battery intact in the event of a collision, Volvo Cars also developed a new and unique safety structure for passengers and battery alike in the XC40. The battery is protected by a safety cage which consists of a frame of extruded aluminum and has been embedded in the middle of the car's body structure, creating a built-in crumple zone around the battery.

The battery's placement in the floor of the car also has the benefit of lowering the center of gravity of the car, for better protection against roll-overs.

Meanwhile, the car's body structure has not just been reinforced in the front, but also at the rear. Here, the electric powertrain has been integrated in the body structure to realise a better distribution of collision forces away from the cabin and reduce the strain on people inside the car.

In terms of active safety systems, the battery-powered XC40 also introduces new technology. It is the first Volvo model equipped with a new Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) sensor platform with software developed by Zenuity, the joint venture company owned by Volvo Cars and Veoneer.

The new ADAS platform is a modern, scalable active safety system that consists of an array of radars, cameras and ultrasonic sensors. Because of its scalable nature it can easily be developed further and lays the foundation for the future introduction of autonomous drive technology.

Volvo Cars will reveal more details about the fully electric XC40 in the coming weeks, before it will be first shown to the public on October 16.

Volvo Car Group in 2018

For the 2018 financial year, Volvo Car Group recorded an operating profit of 14,185 MSEK (14,061 MSEK in 2017). Revenue over the period amounted to 252,653 MSEK (208,646 MSEK). For the full year 2018, global sales reached a record 642,253 (571,577) cars, an increase of 12.4 per cent versus 2017. The results underline the comprehensive transformation of Volvo Cars' finances and operations in recent years, positioning the company for its next growth phase.

About Volvo Car Group

Volvo Cars was founded in 1927. Today, it is one of the most well-known and respected premium car brands in the world with sales of 642,253 cars in 2018 in about 100 countries. Volvo Cars has been under the ownership of the Zhejiang Geely Holding of China since 2010.

In 2018, Volvo Cars employed on average approximately 43,000 (39,500) full-time employees. Volvo Cars head office, product development, marketing and administration functions are mainly located in Gothenburg, Sweden. Volvo Cars head office for China is located in Shanghai. The company's main car production plants are located in Gothenburg (Sweden), Ghent (Belgium), South Carolina (US), Chengdu and Daqing (China), while engines are manufactured in Skövde (Sweden) and Zhangjiakou (China) and body components in Olofström (Sweden).

Under its new company purpose, Volvo Cars aims to provide customers with the Freedom to Move in a personal, sustainable and safe way. This purpose is reflected into a number of business ambitions: by the middle of next decade it aims for half of its global sales to be fully electric cars and to offer half of all cars to customers via its subscription service. By then, it also expects one-third of its cars sold to be autonomous.

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