



P r e s s R e l e a s e

European automotive manufacturers highlight the importance of R&D investments to secure competitiveness

Brussels, 10 November 2009 – The European Council for Automotive R&D (EUCAR), assembled in Brussels for its annual conference, emphasised the need for accelerating R&D investments to secure the industry’s competitiveness and, in addition, discussed the potential for the electrification of the vehicle.

EUCAR chairman professor Jürgen Lehold, Executive Director Group Research Volkswagen, presented the new “EUCAR FOCUS” brochure to Anne Houtman from the European Commission Directorate General for Transport and Energy. The EUCAR FOCUS specifies the major strategic research topics and activities for the coming years: urban mobility and transport, alternative fuels, electrification of the vehicle, safety applications in cooperative systems, innovative materials and environmentally friendly manufacturing.

In his opening speech, Professor Lehold stated: “Through intensive research and close cooperation with the European Commission and other main stakeholders, these research topics can be decisively advanced. Especially in the current financial situation, innovation must be accelerated, in order to secure the long term competitiveness of the European automobile industry.”

A panel including automotive manufacturers, suppliers, the electricity industry and the European Commission debated the potential for electrification of the vehicle. They shared the conclusion that the potential of electric vehicles is great, but the challenges to implementation remain significant. Mrs Houtman, while recognising the electrification of the vehicle as an important contributor to improving air quality, reducing CO2 emissions and fuel consumption as well as future mobility in general, addressed the challenges as well: "I would like to encourage all stakeholders - electricity providers, automotive industry and operators - to join their forces to establish common standards for the charging systems", she said.

Further panels on urban mobility, safety applications and materials and manufacturing brought together the members of the EUCAR Council as well as other experts from the automobile industry and the research community to discuss the automotive research needs for the future and the status of current collaborative research projects.

About EUCAR

EUCAR is the European Council for Automotive R&D from the major European passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturers. EUCAR facilitates and coordinates pre-competitive research and development projects and participates in a wide range of collaborative European R&D programmes. The European automobile manufacturers are the largest private investors in R&D in Europe with around EUR 20 billion investments per annum, or 4% of turnover. EUCAR members are BMW, DAF, Daimler, Fiat, Ford Europe, GME/Opel, Porsche, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Scania, Volkswagen Group and Volvo. EUCAR is closely connected to ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association.

The EUCAR FOCUS is available at www.eucar.be

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