



Australian automotive manufacturing industry collaborates on electric vehicles

Melbourne, Australia, 18th February 2011 – Industry leaders in the Australian automotive manufacturing industry came together today to announce the launch of EV Engineering Limited.

EV Engineering Limited will design and engineer seven ‘proof of concept’ fully-electric versions of Australia’s number one selling passenger vehicle, the Holden Commodore. This project will take place over a 15 month period.

The ‘proof of concept’ vehicles will be powered by renewable energy using standard electric vehicle plug-in and battery switching infrastructure. They will be used to investigate technical viability and attractiveness to customers so that consideration for mass production can be undertaken.

Consistent with the direction of the Automotive Australia 2020 roadmap, EV Engineering Limited represents the first industry collaboration on large, powerful, zero-emissions vehicles. EV Engineering Limited brings together major automotive components suppliers Air International, Bosch, Continental and Futuris, electric vehicle infrastructure and services provider Better Place, with the support of Holden and the CSIRO.

According to the chairman of EV Engineering Limited and former President and CEO of Mitsubishi Australia, Robert McEniry, electric vehicles represent an exciting opportunity and important part of the future of the Australian car manufacturing industry.

“This collaboration is evidence that the local manufacturing and automotive industries have recognised the important role these vehicles will play in their future,” Mr McEniry said.

“EV Engineering Limited builds on the existing strengths of the industry in large sized passenger vehicles for both domestic and export markets. This initiative will strengthen the local capabilities and give Australia the opportunity to lead the world in the development of large, powerful, zero-emissions vehicles, and ensure we remain globally competitive in this sustainable, high growth market.”

Members of EV Engineering Limited are backing the project with financial and in-kind contributions and substantial access to IP, and engineering support. Funding of \$3.5M to be allocated to engineering costs, will be provided from the Australian Government’s Green Car Innovation Fund (GCIF).



Gavin Smith, Regional President of Powertrain and Chassis Systems Control at Bosch Australia said of the partnership, "This project will help develop electric vehicle engineering skills, capabilities and components within the Australian supplier industry."

"By their involvement, each of the partners makes a clear statement. They believe there is a place for the Australian industry to participate in the exciting new developments surrounding the electrification of the motor vehicle. By developing the skills and capability here, the partners will be in a good position to exploit opportunities as vehicle manufacturers further extend their portfolio of electric vehicles."

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Additional quotes for media

"The world is on the cusp of a new sustainable future and Australia will need to move quickly to capitalise on innovative technology. Australia is very vulnerable to oil price increases. To prepare for the transition away from the age of oil, Australia must find alternative energy sources for transport. Australia must also find answers to the rising rates of greenhouse pollution from the transport sector. Australia must make the transition to a more sustainable transport future as quickly as possible."

- Don Henry, CEO, Australian Conservation Foundation

"The global automotive industry is looking at a fundamental change – the transition from internal combustion engines to electric power trains. CSIRO is supportive of company initiatives in this 'green car' direction, including the EV Engineering Limited project and its goal to engage key players in Australia's industry to take advantage of the evolving transition and the opportunity it promises."

- Dr Calum Drummond, CSIRO Group Executive, Manufacturing, Materials and Minerals

"We certainly expect to see interest from Australian fleet operators. Most large businesses are adopting sustainability goals and their motor vehicle fleet operations have the ability to contribute significantly in this area."

- Jim Cock, Managing Director, Fleet and Equipment Finance, GE



“There is overwhelming evidence that electric vehicles are part of the future. Without plans to develop them here – an important milestone for the Australian automotive industry - we fear local vehicle producers could lose the opportunity to keep pace with the rest of the world.”

- Zoran Angelkovski, CEO of Continental Australia and President of the Federation of Automotive Parts Manufacturers (FAPM)

“Over the decades ahead, there will continue to be a mix of powertrain technologies deployed by vehicle manufacturers. The Automotive industry, however, is clearly expecting a rise in the appeal of Electric Vehicles and sees potential for their mass adoption. The implications of this need to be recognised by the Australian industry and strategies put in place to capitalise on opportunities and mitigate the risks that this will present.”

- Bruce Griffiths, Executive Chairman of Futuris and Chairman of the international business development working group of the Auto Manufacturing Council.

“Electric vehicles present a huge opportunity for Australia, and drivers of large passenger vehicles will experience significant financial benefits by going electric. Momentum towards electric vehicles continues to grow worldwide, and Australia must seize the opportunity to be a world leader in the development of cars that will dramatically reduce our dependence on oil and lead to a more sustainable future.”

- Evan Thornley, CEO, Better Place

About EV Engineering Limited:

EV Engineering Limited brings together the leaders in Australia’s automotive industry. The group is comprised of major automotive components suppliers Air International, Bosch, Continental and Futuris, electric vehicle infrastructure and services provider Better Place, with the support of Holden and the CSIRO. For further information visit www.evenengineering.com.au