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From the inventor of TDI: The two-millionth Audi diesel - an A2 1.2 TDI / 20 years of diesel technology from Audi / 44 percent of all new Audi vehicles fitted with TDI



Ingolstadt/Neckarsulm (ots) -

- Cross-reference: photo was sent via satellite and is available at: <http://recherche.newsaktuell.de/galerie.htx?type=obs>

A second photo of the Audi A2 1.2 TDI and from the event will be available from approximately 1.00 p.m. via "obs"

The two-millionth Audi with diesel engine rolled off the production line at the Neckarsulm plant today: an A2 1.2 TDI, the world's first five-door three-litre car, in other words one that uses just three litres of fuel per 100 km.

"With this car, Audi has set yet another milestone in the history of diesel direct injection technology", declared Member of the Board for Production at Audi, Dr. Jochem Heizmann, in the presence of Baden-Württemberg's undersecretary for environment and transport Stefan Mappus, local politicians, employees and the Works Council. "This Audi A2 has a lower fuel consumption over 100 kilometres than a conventional motor scooter, but goes twice as fast and can transport twice as many people", continued Heizmann.

The success of Audi diesel innovations is reflected in the production figures. Last year, more than 260,000 vehicles were equipped with a diesel engine and thus approximately 40 percent of overall production at Audi. This figure increased to about 44 percent in the first three months of the current year. Every second Audi registered in Western Europe and Germany in 2000 had TDI.

Mappus placed a special emphasis on the importance of the Neckarsulm plant: "Today's landmark is further proof of the plant's innovative strength and of its economic importance for the region." With the production of the two-millionth Audi diesel model, the company is not only demonstrating its successes with diesel engines, it is also documenting its unique experiences and competence in the

field of aluminium construction and in the production of attractive and economical vehicles as epitomised by the A2, the first volume-production vehicle with an all-aluminium body.

The new A2 1.2 TDI unites all the characteristics of a high-quality and exceptionally functional compact vehicle, as indeed does the entire A2 family. Its spaciousness is just as convincing as its ride comfort and the feeling of luxury it conveys. The three-litre Audi will be launched on the market in June.

Audi installed the first diesel engine in the Audi 80 back in 1978. The era of revolutionary TDI technology started around twelve years ago. In 1989 the company presented an Audi 100 with the world's first diesel engine with direct injection and electronic engine management in a passenger car at the Frankfurt Motor Show. Thus Audi paved the way for a revolution on the market for passenger cars with diesel engines, and helped revamp the diesel engine's image: from being slow, noisy and uncultivated it became agile, smooth and extremely economical.

Today the Audi TDI engine, which was not taken seriously by the competition at the beginning, has become the epitome of high-torque and economical diesel technology - from three to eight cylinders.

"Technological progress at Audi is closely linked to the Neckarsulm plant. The decision to produce the economical Audi A2 at the Neckarsulm plant has made a major contribution towards safeguarding the location and jobs", said Chairman of the Works Council at Neckarsulm, Norbert Rank. With just under 14,000 employees, the workforce at the Neckarsulm plant has reached a record high.

Audi is an international developer and manufacturer of high-quality cars.

The company sold more than 650,000 cars of the Audi brand in 2000. Sales totalled DM 39 billion (including Autogerma). The Audi Group currently has around 50,000 employees.

* Pictures can be called up at <http://www.audi-press.com>; password from Tel. ++49 (0)841 89 36189.

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Vom Erfinder des TDI: Der 2-millionste Audi mit Dieselantrieb ist heute im Werk Neckarsulm von der Montagelinie gelaufen, das erste fünfstufige Drei-Liter-Fahrzeug weltweit. Mittlerweile sind 44 Prozent aller neuen Audi mit TDI ausgestattet. Im Bild: Audi A2 1.2 TDI.



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Original content of: Audi AG, transmitted by news aktuell

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