Mercedes-Benz

Electric mobility takes centre stage

Production start Mercedes-Benz A-Class E-CELL at Rastatt plant

Press information

Date:
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- **Start of A-Klasse E-CELL production at Rastatt plant**
- **Third Daimler electric passenger car built under series production conditions**
- **Integration of E-CELL production into existing A-Class series production line**
- **Staff training and qualifying to deal with high voltage technology on central training production line**

Rastatt – Following the start of production of the smart fortwo electric drive and the B-Class F-CELL by the end of 2009, the company is now gearing up the production of its third electric passenger car: the Mercedes-Benz A-Class E-CELL. With the electrified A-Class, Daimler aims to gain experience concerning the integration of battery-electric drives into four-seated vehicles and the use by customers in order to consistently apply this technology to other models in the future. A total of 500 locally emission-free vehicles based on the current A-Class will be manufactured at the Rastatt site. Thanks to its maturity in life cycle and to its conceptual construction, the current A-Class model is the ideal basis for an all-electric vehicle for the city, urban and interurban areas. The vehicles will be leased with a full-service rent model to selected customers in various European countries, including Germany, France and the Netherlands.

Based on the current A-Class, the family five-seater with battery-electric drive system is suitable for daily use and offers a spacious and flexible interior and luggage compartment. As the batteries are located extremely well-protected and in a space-saving way underneath the vehicle floor, no compromises were necessary to achieve this. Its two high-performance lithium-ion batteries give the car a range of more than 200 km (NEDC). The necessary traction is provided by a quiet-running, locally emission-free electric drive with a top performance of 70 KW (95 hp) and

an impressive 290 Nm of torque..

The production of the A-Class E-CELL will be integrated into the series

production line for the A-Class in Rastatt. For the electric A-Class, Mercedes-Benz applies all the development and production standards of series production to an electric vehicle with battery-electric drive system. All electrical components meet the high standards in terms of quality, reliability and service life that are self-evident for Mercedes-Benz.

In terms of production, only minor adjustments have been necessary in order to integrate the A-Class E-CELL: as an example, new consoles for fixing the lithium-ion batteries were provided in the floor structure of the current A-Class. No changes to the bodywork structure were necessary. Assembly, including the pre-assembly of major components and the so-called 'marriage', the fitting of the drive train into the carriage, take place within the standard production line for the A-Class. Only the assembly and commissioning of the innovative lithium-ion batteries is undertaken at a separate station. Every A-Class E-CELL is then guided back into the standard A-Class production line for chassis dynamometer testing, rain test, final inspection and finish.

Particular attention is paid at the plant to the qualification of staff. Ever since Mercedes-Benz is producing high-voltage systems for standard-production vehicles, such as those installed in the S 400 HYBRID, the B-Class F-CELL or from now on in the A-Class E-CELL, all staff members involved have undergone training programmes specifically fitted to the work with high-voltage technologies.

"We have perfectly prepared our staff for working with these new, alternative technologies. Over the course of several training modules, they have been able to gain the essential qualifications for their future tasks. We are thus able to ensure that they are absolutely ready to work with high-voltage components", underlines Uwe Reich, Project Manager for the production of the A-Class E-CELL. Step by step, employees have been able to familiarise themselves with the necessary safety measures on the vehicle, the high-voltage components and on the installation of high-voltage systems. A central training production line within the Rastatt plant allows staff to put into practice what they have learned and to prepare them for their future responsibilities on the standard production line.

Between 2009 and 2012, Daimler AG will be investing some €600 million in extending the existing facilities and in building a new bodyshell work hall at the Rastatt plant. A further €10 million will be invested into the modification and

updating of the paint shop. These investments underline once again Daimler AG's commitment to sustainability and to the significance of the Rastatt plant as a centre of competence for compact vehicles.

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