PRESS info

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Scania collaborating in research on the biofuel-based engine technology of the future

Scania has been granted SEK 30 million − about EUR 3.3 million − by Sweden's Strategic Vehicle Research and Innovation Initiative (FFI) to develop a biofuel engine intended for heavy commercial vehicles. This research will show how the best characteristics of the diesel and the Otto principle can be combined in an engine that can operate on both alcohol- and gaseous methane-based fuels.

Scania will focus on developing an engine using sustainable biofuels that will combine the high energy efficiency of diesel (compression ignition) technology with the more efficient exhaust aftertreatment system of Otto (spark ignition) technology.

"Such an engine will be optimal in responding to the challenge of achieving low emissions of greenhouse gases, combined with reduced emissions of harmful nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons and particulates," says Jonas Hofstedt, Senior Vice President, Powertrain Development.

Vehicles and industrial equipment that operate on renewable fuels provide very good results from a life cycle perspective (well-to-wheel). In Brazil, for example, there is major potential for efficient utilisation of renewable energy since that country is a large producer of biofuels.

Scania has been granted FFI funding for the phase of its research project that involves the development of innovative technology for both alcohol- and methane gas-based fuels. This research includes systems for premixed combustion and ignition of fuel, gas exchange systems, optimised valve performance, exhaust gas recirculation and the use of advanced catalyst technology for efficient exhaust aftertreatment.

"Public sector co-financing of our climate and environmental investments makes a good contribution to research that will lead to commercially viable engines with substantially higher efficiency and lower environmental impact than is possible with today's technology," Mr Hofstedt says.

In its project, Scania is working together with cutting-edge experts in combustion and emission technology at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, Lund University and Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden.

"My hope is that our in-depth collaboration with three of our country's leading institutions of engineering education will lead to a greater interest in studying combustion and emission reduction technology. Preserving and developing advanced expertise in these fields is crucial to the future competitiveness of the Swedish vehicle industry," Mr Hofstedt concludes.

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The project is part of a bilateral arrangement between Sweden and Brazil in which Scania has been engaged for some time in environmental collaboration with Vale Soluções em Energia S.A. (VSE) on the further development of ethanol- and gas-fuelled industrial engines.

The Strategic Vehicle Research and Innovation Initiative (FFI) is a partnership between the public sector (the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems, VINNOVA; the Swedish Transport Administration; and the Swedish Energy Agency) and the vehicle industry (Scania, AB Volvo; Volvo Car Corporation; Saab; and FKG, a trade association representing Scandinavian suppliers to the automotive industry). Its purpose is to jointly finance research, innovation and development activities, with a focus on the fields of climate and environment as well as on safety. Initially set to run from 2009-2012 with no definite ending year. FFI has R&D activities worth approx. SEK 1 billion per year, of which half is governmental funding. More information about FFI is available on www.vinnova.se/en/ffi/

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Scania is one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks and buses for heavy transport applications, and of industrial and marine engines. A growing proportion of the company's operations consists of products and services in the financial and service sectors, assuring Scania customers of cost-effective transport solutions and maximum uptime. Employing some 32,000 people, Scania operates in about 100 countries. Research and development activities are concentrated in Sweden, while production takes place in Europe and South America, with facilities for global interchange of both components and complete vehicles. In 2009, net sales totalled SEK 62 billion and net income amounted to SEK 1.1 billion.

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