

Media Information

6 October 2026

A pioneer in automotive logistics: BMW Group deploys truck with hydrogen combustion engine in logistics

- Field testing of truck with hydrogen engine at Plant Leipzig
- BMW Group Logistics head: "For the first time in German car production, we are using a truck with a hydrogen combustion engine."
- Trucks with hydrogen combustion engines are a robust and scalable complement to electric trucks in just-in-time logistics
- The short refuelling times and high versatility of H₂ trucks offer potential for long-haul routes and multi-shift operations

Leipzig. At BMW Group Plant Leipzig, testing of an 18-tonne truck with a hydrogen combustion engine in real-world plant operations is now underway. The truck uses a piston engine based on diesel technology, in which hydrogen is burned to produce water vapour and virtually no CO₂. For this project, an H₂ combustion-engine truck will supply the Technology Exterior Components (TEK) division at Plant Leipzig with parts for the production of plastic components such as bumpers and spoilers. In a second phase, the hydrogen combustion-engine truck will supply the vehicle assembly with exterior components from TEK on a just-in-time basis. In this way, the BMW Group is testing a further technology to reduce the CO₂ emissions of its global transport activities.

"Logistics is the backbone of our production. That is why we are adopting a technology-open, data-based approach to identify suitable alternative truck drive trains for each specific application. For the first time in German car production, we are using a truck with a hydrogen combustion engine in regular operations. This project will give us valuable practical experience in real-world logistics operations and make an important contribution to further developing this technology", explains Dirk Wiedmann, head of Production Network and Logistics at the BMW Group.

Field testing of hydrogen combustion engines

Testing will take place both on longer transport routes and in three-shift operation in the vicinity of the plant. The insights gained through this project

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will help identify suitable logistics applications for vehicles with hydrogen combustion engines.

Battery-electric and hydrogen trucks complement each other

Hydrogen trucks are particularly well-suited to demanding transport applications, especially those involving high daily mileage, multi-shift operations or specific infrastructure requirements. Short refuelling times reduce downtime. A hydrogen truck can also be deployed in regions without adequate charging infrastructure or a high-capacity grid connection. This is particularly relevant for long-haul routes and heavily used vehicles. However, an appropriate and reliable hydrogen filling infrastructure is still required.

Hydrogen engine builds on proven diesel technology

The hydrogen combustion engine is based on diesel technology and therefore easy to integrate into existing vehicle and maintenance structures, facilitating the ramp-up of H₂ combustion-engine technology. The hydrogen combustion engine also delivers comparable performance and robustness to a diesel engine under high loads and in situations involving dynamic driving profiles. Compared to the hydrogen fuel cell, in particular, the hydrogen engine is significantly less sensitive to variations in hydrogen quality and can therefore guarantee higher availability.

Funded by Federal Ministry of Transport

Testing of the hydrogen combustion engine truck at BMW Group Plant Leipzig is part of the HyCET (Hydrogen Combustion Engine Truck) research and development project. The project, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Transport, develops and tests trucks with hydrogen combustion engines under real-world conditions. Headed by the BMW Group, the project partners are pooling their expertise in vehicle development, installation of the necessary hydrogen infrastructure and practical logistics operations. The hydrogen engine was developed by DEUTZ; the Rudolph Logistics Group operates the hydrogen combustion truck; and TEAL MOBILITY installed the necessary hydrogen filling stations. The aim is to generate reliable data for the technical, operational, environmental and economic assessment and to identify suitable applications for hydrogen trucks.

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BMW Group Strategy for Reduced Logistics Emissions

HyCET forms part of the BMW Group Strategy for Reduced Logistics Emissions. As part of this strategy, the BMW Group is developing logistics concepts to reduce CO₂ emissions from its global transport activities and assess the suitability of alternative drive technologies for different use cases. In evaluating alternative drive solutions on a technology-neutral basis, the decisive factor is how well a technology suits the specific transport task. A particular focus is on technical maturity and reliability, operating performance, CO₂ emissions, economic feasibility and availability of the essential energy and refuelling infrastructure.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Corporate Communications

Moritz Schmerbeck
Press spokesperson, Production Network BMW Group
Mobile: +49-151-601-43233
Email: Moritz.Schmerbeck@bmwgroup.com

Bernd Eckstein
Head of Communications Production Network, Plant Munich
Mobile: +49-151-601-59490
Email: Bernd.Eckstein@bmwgroup.com

Media website: www.press.bmwgroup.com/
Email: presse@bmw.de

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The BMW Group

With its four brands, BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2025, the BMW Group sold 2.46 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,500 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2025 was € 10.2 billion on revenues amounting to € 133.5 billion. As of 31 December 2025, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,540 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products – from the supply chain through production to the end of their useful life.

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