BMW GROUP

Corporate Communications

Media Information
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Green light for Wackersdorf battery testing centre – first phase goes live

+++ Investment of over € 100 million in BMW Group Plant Wackersdorf – site in Upper Palatinate becomes key enabler for electromobility +++

Wackersdorf. One year ago, the BMW Group announced plans to build a new battery testing centre at the Wackersdorf location. Now, the initial phase has come on-stream as planned. Scheduled for completion in late 2025, the site, which spans over 8,000 square metres, will rigorously test individual battery cells, complete high-voltage batteries and other electric powertrain components for future BMW Group models early in development, well before they go into production.

The investment of around 100 million euros has primarily focused on complex test-bench technology and the upgrades to the building's existing infrastructure required for operation. Hall 80, located on the grounds of the Wackersdorf plant, has been remodelled for this purpose: Originally constructed in the 1980s for a planned reprocessing facility, the building has quite a history.

In recent months, structural work for the new battery testing centre has been in progress, including installation of a new floor slab. A total of 2,200 tonnes of structural steel and 10,000 cubic metres of concrete were used in the expansion.

The commissioning of the initial section means that the so-called "battery testers" will be operating around the clock to test battery cells during the early phase of development. Essentially, the electrical performance of

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individual battery cells is determined during charging and discharging under different conditions. This allows use cases that will be relevant for customers later to be simulated, long before a vehicle under development drives on the road.

“Parallel testing of several hundred battery cells will initially be possible. Once the ramp-up is complete, testing capacity will reach several thousand battery cells,” explains Project Manager Dr Felix Schmidt-Stein. In the final phase from 2025 onwards, the testing centre will also be used to validate the BMW Group’s battery-electric vehicles prior to the official launch of series production and ensure the required premium quality. “For example, this includes subjecting the batteries to vibration and shock tests,” adds Schmidt-Stein. “We can also simulate complex driving patterns in endurance tests, including charging and discharging cycles. Tests like these are essential for type approval of electric vehicles.”

“Commissioning of the first phase of the new battery testing centre means that the BMW Group's Wackersdorf location is poised to become a major facilitator in the transformation towards electromobility,” confirms Site Manager Christoph Peters. “The new battery testing centre gives our site a broader foundation. We are now adding a fourth pillar in Wackersdorf – in addition to supplying our overseas plants, cockpit production and door production for Rolls-Royce models. This represents a strong commitment to the future of the site.”

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BMW Group Plants Regensburg and Wackersdorf

The BMW Group has viewed itself for decades as the benchmark for production technology and operational excellence in vehicle construction – including at its locations in Regensburg and Wackersdorf. The BMW Group vehicle plant in Regensburg has been in operation since 1986 and is one of more than 30 BMW Group production locations worldwide. A total of up to 1,400 vehicles of the BMW X1 and BMW X2 models come off the production line at Plant Regensburg every workday – destined for customers all over the world. Different types of drive trains are flexibly manufactured on a single production line – from vehicles with internal combustion engines to plug-in hybrids, to fully-electric models.

High-voltage batteries for the electric models built in Regensburg are also produced locally, in direct proximity to the vehicle plant. They are assembled at the electric component production facility, which opened in 2021 at the Leibnizstrasse location.

BMW Innovation Park Wackersdorf also belongs to the Regensburg site. The 55-hectare campus built in the 1980s was originally intended as a nuclear reprocessing facility. The BMW Group has located its cockpit production there, as well as its parts supply for overseas plants. In addition to BMW as the largest employer, several other companies are also based at Innovation Park Wackersdorf. A total of around 2,500 employees work there.
The BMW Group core staff at the Regensburg and Wackersdorf locations in eastern Bavaria is made up of around 9,250 employees, including more than 300 apprentices.

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