



Press release  
16 January 2013

## **Mission title defence: MINI Countryman in the 2013 Dakar Rally.**

The first all-wheel-drive MINI rises to the challenge of the world's most gruelling rally – close-to-production support vehicles assist the Monster Energy X-raid Team, headed by last year's winner Stéphane Peterhansel, in the MINI ALL4 Racing as they clock up 8,600 kilometres en route to a second consecutive title.

**Munich/Lima/Santiago.** The route to defending the crown runs across gravel tracks, sand dunes, rocks and ice, through drought, heat, rarefied mountain air and frost. The 2013 Dakar Rally is the ultimate endurance test for the best vehicles and teams in the international rally scene. And it isn't just the six MINI ALL4 Racing cars of the German Monster Energy X-raid Team who are facing up to the toughest challenge rally racing can throw at them on the South American continent: a raft of technicians and support personnel in the service vehicles are on the front line of battle as well. The Monster Energy X-raid Team, headed by last year's winner Stéphane Peterhansel, is also placing its faith in the all-round talents of the MINI Countryman. This year the compact five-door model marks its debut in the fleet piloted by the copious helpers on "mission title defence" whose task it is to ensure the drivers and their sports machines are in peak condition at all times.

Tighter regulations and a route that outstrips last year's in the punishment stakes earns the 2013 Dakar Rally the respect of even the most experienced of participants. Ahead of the start, title defender Stéphane Peterhansel – the most successful driver in the field with 10 overall victories under his seatbelt – talked in the Peruvian capital, Lima, about the toughest Dakar Rally ever launched in South America. It didn't stop the Frenchman gunning his MINI ALL4 Racing to the top of the overall rankings by the end of the second stage.

Over a period of two weeks, rally contestants log around 8,600 kilometres (5,300 miles) along a route that takes them through Peru, Argentina and Chile.

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Individual stages are up to 593 kilometres (368 miles) long, with the rally agenda allowing just one day's rest up until the finish in Santiago de Chile on 20 January 2013. For the crew in the support vehicles, the daily quota is often far higher since they use the existing road network – where available – yet have to keep up as closely as possible with the race vehicles. With the given route occasionally running out of tarmac, keen navigation skills are as crucial as a hefty and sustained dose of forward momentum.

For the Monster Energy X-raid Team, the MINI Countryman is the ideal back-up vehicle in the campaign to repeat last year's overall victory. The first all-wheel-drive model to join the MINI fold was selected for deployment in the Dakar event primarily on account of its agile handling, but also – and not least of all – for its reliability. The experienced Dakar specialists, riding on their 2012 success, put the MINI Countryman through some serious paces during preparations for the event. Not only were the production cars embellished with colourful rally trim, they also underwent targeted modifications that included off-road design elements from the Original MINI Accessories range. These striking retrofit components provide a clear visual cue to the MINI Countryman's rugged and versatile attributes, accentuating above all the generous ground clearance for which it is known.

Alongside its powerful engines, it is mainly the ALL4 all-wheel-drive system that imbues the MINI Countryman with its thrilling agility, directional stability and traction on any terrain. The system is based on an electromagnetic centre differential that distributes drive seamlessly between the front and rear axles. In normal driving situations up to 50 per cent of drive is channelled to the rear axle, rising to 100 per cent in extreme conditions such as ice or snow. The control electronics of the ALL4 system are integrated into the DSC (Dynamic Stability Control) management unit to ensure rapid and precise distribution of drive power. Driver preferences and the road situation are permanently monitored and compared, with adjustments to shifting conditions being carried out in milliseconds.



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This ensures that engine power is always directed to where it can be most effectively translated into traction and driving fun while conveying the MINI Countryman to its destination as quickly and safely as possible.

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In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last seven years.

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