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IMPROVED AERODYNAMICS AND WEIGHT-SAVING FOR BMW M3 WITH SymaLITE® UNDERBODY SHIELDS FROM QUADRANT PLASTIC COMPOSITES

LENZBURG, SWITZERLAND – February, 2008 – Recently upgraded to deliver improved mechanical and acoustical properties, SymaLITE® from Quadrant Plastic Composites has been specified by Tier One supplier Takeo GmbH Automotive Systems, Dietfurt, Germany, for underbody shields for the new BMW. These lightweight panels cover almost the entire underside of the car, offering optimised aerodynamics for improved vehicle handling and fuel efficiency.

SymaLITE® is an intelligent light weight composite material based on polypropylene (PP) and specially orientated glass fibres, which set new standards for the weight, rigidity and shape. Uniquely the pre-orientated fibres of SymaLITE® allow good loft behaviour during the heating and moulding process, giving expansion of up to six times its original thickness and achieving densities of only 0.3g/cm³, while increasing bending stiffness in the Z-direction.

According to Karl-Heinz Kalmbach, Leader Business Line Exterior and Structures, Quadrant Plastic Composites: “SymaLITE® technology allows for physical and mechanical properties to match the demands of the part by varying the mix of PP and glass fibres. This offers a new level of design and processing flexibility. For example, it accommodates flat part design without the corrugations usual to parts moulded in GMT and LFT, thereby giving better aerodynamics and acoustics damping characteristics.”

The new BMW application for which SymaLITE® is specified includes engine shield, gear box shield, under body shields to which it brings significant weight savings, improved acoustical performance, better aerodynamics, corrosion resistance and safety due to the material's high resistance to crack propagation and deformation.

In supporting these applications, Quadrant Plastic Composites works in close co-operation with the German Tier One supplier, Takeo, providing design support, material recommendations, tool development, processing line lay-out, developing new material grades based on the specifications of the OEM.

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About Quadrant Plastic Composites

Quadrant Plastic Composites is the world's leading manufacturer of glass mat thermoplastic (GMT) composites. The semi-finished sheet form is processed into sophisticated components, primarily for the automotive industry, using large-volume pressing processes; these components satisfy the highest safety standards, as well as featuring low weight compared to materials such as metal.

Learn more about Quadrant Plastic Composites at www.quadrantcomposites.com

About the Quadrant group

Quadrant, a global leader in high-performance polymer materials in the form of semi-finished and finished products with locations in 18 countries, generates annual sales of over CHF 800 million. The specialty engineering thermoplastics and composites manufactured and marketed by more than 2'400 employees worldwide are superior in performance to metals and other materials and are used in a growing number of applications, primarily in the capital goods industry. Together with leaders in a wide range of customer markets, Quadrant is continuously developing new areas of application. Thanks to its clear strategic orientation and focus, Quadrant has generated substantial added value for customers and shareholders since it was established in 1996 and is well prepared to continue expanding its market leadership in future.

Learn more about Quadrant at <http://www.quadrantplastics.com>

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Photo caption:

Recently upgraded to deliver improved mechanical and acoustical properties, SymaLITE® from Quadrant Plastic Composites has been specified by Tier One supplier Takeo GmbH Automotive Systems, Dietfurt, Germany, for underbody shields for the new BMW.

(Photo Quadrant, QPCPR006)