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## **QUADRANT PLASTIC COMPOSITES EXPANDS ITS GMT/GMTex PORTFOLIO**

### **New steel cord-reinforced composite with extremely high energy absorption receives AVK Innovations Award**

**LENZBURG, SWITZERLAND – October, 2008** – Quadrant Plastic Composites, voestalpine Polynorm and Bekaert are recipients of the AVK (German Federation of Reinforced Plastics) Innovation Award 2008 in the Industrial Category, for their development of steel cord-reinforced EASI GMT\* material. The winners of the AVK Innovation Awards, which recognise excellence in the development of reinforced plastics, were announced on the opening evening (22nd September) of the 11th AVK International Conference in Essen, Germany. The jury was particularly impressed by the ability of the new EASI material to meet crash impact requirements for speeds up to 80km/h (50mph).

The new material represents an important addition to the Quadrant product portfolio. Its designation EASI (Energy, Absorption, Safety, Integrity) describes the principal functions of the new material system. The first EASI applications, which will go into serial production in 2009, have been successfully developed by Quadrant Plastic Composites in cooperation with its partners: voestalpine Polynorm Plastics (Roosendaal, Netherlands) and Bekaert (Courtrai, Belgium).

The new composite not only opens up new types of applications in the automotive sector, hitherto reserved for metals, but also permits a higher level of functional integration and freedom of design than steel. Through the targeted use of steel cord-reinforced GMT/GMTex, weight reductions of up to 30% can be achieved when compared with conventional solutions.

EASI is a panel-shaped hybrid semi-finished material, made of steel and glass fibre in a polypropylene matrix, whereby the directional steel cord is further reinforced with additional layers of glass fibre fabrics. Depending on the application demands, the properties of the steel cord-reinforced GMT/GMTex can be varied. Impact resistance, strength or stiffness can be adjusted and combined according to customer specifications, enabling the economic production of high performance components.

“As the supply of raw materials tightens, and environmental regulations are stepped up, the automotive industry is seeking ever more lightweight and high-performance material alternatives,” says Karl-Heinz Kalmbach, leader business line exterior and structures, Quadrant Plastic Composites. “As with all materials, composite and hybrid materials are also required to deliver a competitive price performance ratio. Thanks to weight reduction and optimal performance in combination with functional integration, composite materials are gaining greater recognition in an increasing number of applications.”

Steel cord-reinforced GMT/GMTex has been developed in order to comply with specific requirements for weight reduction and optimised crash performance. Therefore steel cord-reinforced GMT/GMTex materials can also be used in highly-exposed and crash-relevant structural components. Other possible applications include the underbodies of off-road vehicles as well as bumpers and lateral collision elements in doors. Outside of the automotive industry, applications such as protective enclosures and fall protection mechanisms are conceivable.

\* GMT = Glass Mat reinforced Thermoplastic

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**About voestalpine Polynorm Plastics**

*A leading manufacturer of plastics and hybrid applications for the automotive industry, Polynorm Plastics designs, develops and manufactures car components such as seat parts and bases, exterior body panels, dashboard carriers, under body systems and bumper beams. The company is a major manufacturer of automotive applications made of Glass-Mat Reinforced Thermoplastics (GMT), Sheet Moulding Compound (SMC) and Long Fibre reinforced Thermoplastics (LFT) materials. Its hydraulic portal presses range between 200 and 2,500 tons and further processes include milling, lasering, drilling and bonding. Further information can be found at <http://www.voestalpine.com>.*

### **About Bekaert**

Bekaert ([www.bekaert.com](http://www.bekaert.com)) seeks sustainable profitable growth based on its two core competences: advanced metal transformation and advanced materials and coatings. Bekaert aims to consolidate its position as both market and technological leader around the world. With its broad range of high technological products, systems and services, Bekaert offers high added value for its customers. Bekaert (Euronext Brussels: BEKB) is a European based company, headquartered in Belgium, employing over 22 000 people. Bekaert, present in 120 countries, generates annual combined sales of more than € 3.4 billion.

### **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, for the automotive building & construction, defence and other industries, 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](http://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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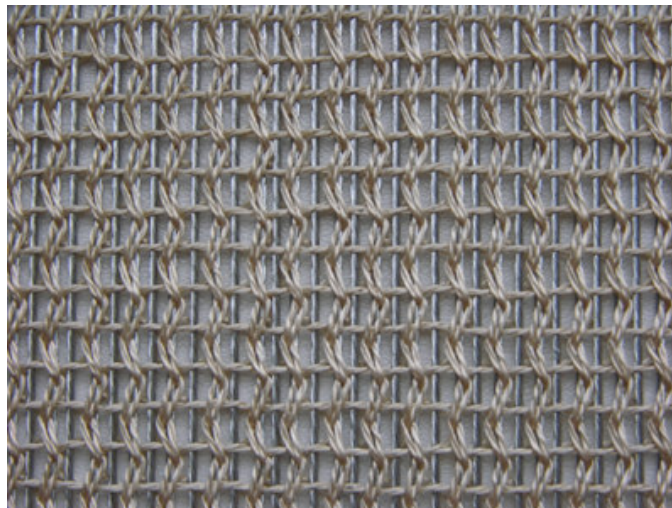
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**Photo caption:**

The AVK Award Ceremony (from left to right): Jürgen H. Aurer, AVK Chairman, Karl-Heinz Kalmbach, Business Line Leader Exterior & Structures Quadrant Plastic Composites, Kees van Kort, Manager Product Development Voestalpine Polynorm, Paul Knaapen, Managing Director Voestalpine Polynorm und Dr. Rudolf Kleinholz, Chairman of the Innovation Award Jury.

(Photo Quadrant, QPCPR008)



**Photo caption:**

The steel cord matrix in Quadrant Plastic Composites' new EASI material.

(Photo Quadrant, QPCPR008)