Chrysler Expanding Search To Improve Fuel Economy

Chrysler has joined a three-year, $3.9 million project supported by the Canadian government to explore ways to leverage the weight-saving properties of aluminum and magnesium alloys for vehicle production.

The project was announced in late October by the Honorable Greg Rickford, Canada's Minister of State for Science and Technology.

Chrysler is one of four industrial partners making in-kind contributions totaling $1.4 million.

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the lead agency within Automotive Partnership Canada (APC), will invest $2 million, said Chrysler spokesman Eric Mayne.

APC is an initiative that supports industry research at Canadian universities and government laboratories.

The remaining funds will come from CANMET, an agency of Natural Resources Canada that works with the energy industry, academia and environmental stakeholders on clean energy research and advanced technology development, Mayne said.

"There is no silver bullet to improve vehicle fuel economy, so Chrysler Group is actively exploring every technology that shows promise," said Tony Mancina, head of Chrysler's Automotive Research Development Centre in Canada.

"Proliferating the use of strong, lightweight materials such as aluminum and magnesium is among the most promising avenues to reduce the energy demand on vehicle powertrains. Reductions in energy demand are key contributors to improved fuel economy."

Work will be centered at McMaster University, whose researchers will coordinate activities with support from Ryerson University in Toronto and the University of Trento, in northwestern Italy, Mayne said. The partnership also will benefit from access to Fiat Group's Italy-based research and development arm, Centro Ricerche Fiat S.C.p.A.

The partnership will explore ways to improve the strength and corrosion resistance of aluminum and magnesium, Mayne said. Importantly, researchers will seek to align such improvements with existing casting methods, so the enhanced alloys can be integrated more readily with the vehicle production process, and with less added cost.

> **"There is no silver bullet to improve fuel economy..."**
> **– Tony Mancina**

Chrysler currently makes innovative use of both aluminum and magnesium, Mayne said. Every Ram 1500 full-size pickup, the company's top-selling vehicle, features an aluminum hood, while the SRT Viper supercar boasts a structural dashboard component that is the largest single piece of magnesium found in any production vehicle anywhere in the world.

McMaster University, one of four Canadian universities listed among the Top 100 universities in the world, is known for its innovation in both learning and discovery, Mayne said. It has a student population of 28,000, and more than 159,000 alumni in 139 countries.

APC is a partnership of five federal research and granting agencies under the Industry Canada umbrella, Mayne said. It provides research funding to support significant, collaborative R&D activities that will benefit the entire Canadian automotive industry.

Olney Named COO at TRW

Patrick Olney current president of Volvo Construction Equipment, has been named the chief operating officer for TRW Automotive, effective Jan. 1, 2014.

Olney replaces Steve Lunn, TRW's current chief operating officer, who previously announced his intention to retire effective Feb. 28, 2014. Olney will be based in Livonia.

"Steve Lunn, who has been our chief operating officer since 2003, has been instrumental in building TRW Automotive into the successful business that it is today. His leadership will be missed by all of us," said John Plant, TRW chairman and CEO.

"Pat Olney is a well-rounded, hands-on, financially astute and globally experienced senior executive with 18 years of experience in roles of increasing responsibility at Volvo Construction Equipment.

"I am pleased to have an executive with Pat's global experience and successful track record joining our team at TRW. His operating style and laser focus will complement our existing team of talented executives. The overlap between Pat and Steve will ensure a smooth transition and operational continuity."

Olney began his career with Price Waterhouse in Canada. In 1995, he joined Champion Motor Grader in Goderich, Ontario, where he held several financial roles.

He was appointed chief financial officer of the motor grader business after Champion was acquired by Volvo Construction Equipment. In 2002, Olney moved to Volvo Construction Equipment headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, to become the chief financial officer.

Patrick Olney

After serving in this role, Olney returned to Canada to become the president of the Volvo motor grader business line from 2004 to 2007.

When Volvo Construction Equipment acquired the road development business from Ingersoll Rand, he moved to Pennsylvania to lead the combined road machinery division.

In 2009, he returned to Brussels to become executive vice president, Operations, of Volvo Construction Equipment, and in 2011 he became its president and CEO.

Volvo Construction is a $10 billion unit of the Volvo Group.

Olney holds an Honors degree in business administration from the Ivey Business School at Western University in Ontario.