

Volkswagen AG

Kassel Plant



Volkswagen



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Area: 3,400,000 m²

Production: About 3.6 million gearboxes, about 2.9 million exhaust systems per year

Models: The Kassel plant supplies components to 7 brands in 35 countries: VW, VW Commercial Vehicles, Seat Audi, Lamborghini, Skoda

Components: Gearboxes, exhaust systems and other components from Europe's largest light alloy foundry, press shop, hot stamping unit, transmission unit and body shop

Employees: 16,500

Plant

The site of the Volkswagen plant in Kassel has a total area of 3.04 square kilometers, about half of which is covered by buildings, corresponding to the area of about 450 soccer pitches. The individual sections of the plant include the foundry and machining, gearbox manufacturing, engine reconditioning, forming, press shop, and exhaust system production units as well as the Group After-Sales Service Center. Kassel is also the Volkswagen brand's competence center for electric drive systems. With its considerable competence in the development, design and series production of electric motors and hybrid transmissions, the plant is playing a key role in the future-oriented projects of the Volkswagen brand. Kassel is the lead plant for electric drive systems and is therefore responsible for the design and development of the Modular Electrification Toolkit (MEB). Products from Kassel are used for all electric models and for the Audi A3 e-tron¹⁾.

Production

As the main manufacturer of gearboxes, the Kassel plant is one of the key component suppliers for the vehicle assembly plants. In addition to manual and dual clutch (DSG) gearboxes, the plant produces electric motors, as well as exhaust systems and hot-stamped body parts. More than 127 million gearboxes have left the production facilities since the foundation of the plant in 1958. In 2016, the plant produced about 3.6 million gearboxes and over 2.9 million exhaust systems. 43 percent of the exhaust systems for Volkswagen in Europe were produced at the Kassel plant. In addition, the plant processes about 600 tonnes of steel sheet per day, producing 50,000 transmission and drive system parts as well as 135,000 body parts. Europe's largest foundry for die-cast parts produces about 13 million castings per year.

¹⁾Audi A3 e-tron - fuel consumption in l/100km: combined 1.8 - 1.6; power consumption in kWh/100km: combined 12.0 - 11.4; CO₂emissions combined in g/km: 40 - 36; efficiency class: A+.

Management

Thorsten Jablonski has been manager of the Kassel plant since 11 January 2016. The 47-year-old mechanical engineer had been manager of the Volkswagen components plant in Brunswick since mid-2012. Thorsten Jablonski joined Volkswagen in 1994. He was instrumental in building up the newly established development department at Brunswick from 1996. From 1998 to 2001, he was an adviser to the Works Council on technical and economic matters. He then focused on the development and production of steering systems, laying the strategic foundations for the production of innovative, future-oriented steering systems at the plant from 2001 onwards. Before becoming manager of the Brunswick plant in 2012, he also held overall responsibility for all component development for two and a half years.

Group After-Sales

The Kassel plant is also the headquarters of Group After-Sales. Five Genuine Parts Centers, the Intelligent Vehicle Components Center and the world-wide warehouse network accommodate 1.65 million different genuine parts for 12 Group brands. Every year, more than 21.3 million items are shipped from Kassel to some 184 customers in more than 90 countries. Worldwide, 23,500 dealers and workshops are supplied with genuine parts. Group After-Sales in Kassel employs a workforce of about 2,500 people.

From Baunatal, Volkswagen Original Teile Logistik GmbH (OTLG) also supplies genuine parts to 7 sales centers in Germany which deliver genuine parts to about 3,600 workshops in Germany twice per day. Since 2016, this unit has been managed by Imelda Labbé (50).

Environment

With its "Think Blue. Factory." initiative, the Volkswagen brand has set itself clear targets for the environmentally sustainable positioning of all its plants. By 2018, the aim is to reduce the environmental impact of all Volkswagen plants by 25 percent. Specifically, this means 25 percent lower energy and water consumption, waste volumes and emissions at all plants. Environmental protection and sustainable production are key elements in the strategic decisions of Volkswagen at its Kassel plant. Power plant modernization has reduced emissions at the same time as enhancing efficiency. The town of Baunatal also benefits from district heat supplied from the power plant. In addition, photovoltaic systems with a peak power output of two megawatts are installed on the roofs of the buildings.

History

In the late 1950s, in the post-WWII economic boom, all available space at the Wolfsburg plant was needed for the production of the Beetle. For this reason, a new engine reconditioning plant was constructed at Baunatal in 1957. The factory is situated 10 kilometers south of Kassel. Engine reconditioning operations at the plant started in July 1958. One and a half years later, operations were expanded to include gearbox manufacturing and the production of other engines.

Many new buildings were constructed in the 1960s. Hall 1, which now houses the gearbox production unit and the hardening shop, was built in 1960. This building was followed by the construction of Hall 4 in 1961 (for engine reconditioning) and Hall 2 in 1964 (to accommodate the press shop and body-in-white production). In 1969, Kassel assumed responsibility for the central warehousing of spare parts. Hall 3 was built for this purpose and completed in 1971. The five halls of the Genuine Parts Center of the Genuine Parts sales department started operations in the mid-1990s. In 2012, the new logistics center opened at the Kassel site. Dual-clutch gearboxes (DSG) have been produced at Kassel since June 2003. In fall 2013, the first all-electric Volkswagen, the e-up!²⁾, entered the automobile market. The key component of the e-up!, the electric drive system, has been produced in Kassel since 2014. At the beginning of 2014, series production of the electric drive system for the Golf³⁾ and the hybrid model GTE⁴⁾ started. Kassel has been the Volkswagen brand's competence center for electric drive systems since 2016.

²⁾e-up! - Electrical consumption in kWh/100km: combined 11.7; CO2 emissions combined in g/km: 0, efficiency class: A+

³⁾e-Golf - Electrical consumption in kWh/100 km: combined 12.7, CO2 emissions combined in g/km: 0, efficiency class: A+

⁴⁾Golf GTE - fuel consumption in l/100km: combined 1.8 - 1.6; power consumption in kWh/100km: combined 12.0 - 11.4; CO2 emissions combined in g/km: 40 - 36; efficiency class: A+.