

New Aston Martin engine plant in Cologne

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Classic Driver



COLOGNE, GERMANY: 28 October 2004 - Aston Martin officially opened its dedicated engine plant in Cologne at a ceremony today attended by local dignitaries. All engines for the Aston Martin range - Vanquish S, DB9 and V8 Vantage (due for launch in mid-2005) - will now be produced at this new plant.

The opening of this new facility underlines Aston Martin's serious intentions for growth as the company plans to make around 5000 cars a year by the end of 2005. It is also the first time that Aston Martin has had a purpose-built engine production facility.

Located in a separate building at Ford's Niehl Engine Plant, the Aston Martin Engine Plant (AMEP) is equipped to work solely on Aston Martin engines and the building carries the Corporate Identity of the marque.

It is staffed by a total of 100 specially trained Aston Martin personnel who have been undertaking a six-month training course since the initial plans to open the building were finalised.

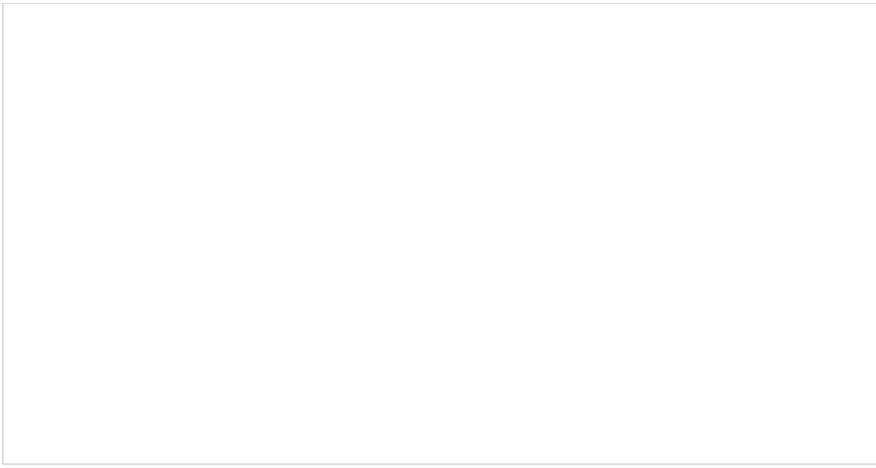
Dr Ulrich Bez, Aston Martin's Chief Executive, said: "The new Aston Martin Engine Plant will allow us to have greater flexibility than ever before. One of the virtues of our company is being able to react quickly to what our customers want. We now have control of the production of our engines, so can consider doing smaller runs of special high performance versions.

"We have just successfully launched two models this year - the DB9 and last month at the Paris Motor Show, a more powerful version of the Vanquish - the Vanquish S. With the V8 Vantage due next year the time is absolutely right to bring our engine production back in-house."

The layout of AMEP consists of a 12,500 square metre production hall, which has sufficient capacity to support Aston Martin's requirements today and in the future. The facility broadly comprises four distinct areas; one to machine engine cylinder blocks, one to machine cylinder heads, one to assemble all engine components and one area for goods receiving and engine shipment. All engine testing is completed within the assembly process and unlike normal engine production, both cold and hot tests are completed concurrently on all engines.

The facility is capable of machining and assembling V8 and V12 engines simultaneously. Each technician will build a complete engine from start to finish - at full production more than 30 technicians will be building engines.

Built in compliance to ISO 14001 environmental regulations, the facility also benefits from state-of-the-art features including an adaptive lighting system that automatically adjusts according to the level of available daylight. Additionally all of the equipment used within the facility has been specifically chosen not to exceed a noise level of 77 db(A), aiding a pleasant working environment.



Text/Photos; Aston Martin

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