



Tokyo Motor Show 2004 for commercial vehicles

Text & Photo: Sven-Erik Lindstrand

The Japanese economy has been idling in the past ten years. Consumer and business spending have been low, but today an increased optimism is apparent, which may result in a higher need for transports and shipping capacity.

This trend was reflected during the 38th Tokyo Motor Show for commercial vehicles in November. Over five days this barrier free vehicle exhibition attracted 248,600 visitors, 13,000 more than the most recent Tokyo Motor Show held two years ago.

Apart from pure commercial vehicle exhibitors, manufacturers like Toyota, Honda, Mazda and Daihatsu showed many solutions of adapted vehicles for the disabled, partly to increase the visitor base but also since an increasing part of Japan's 128 million inhabitants is getting older and less mobile.

SWEDISH SYMPOSIUM

During the opening day, a high profile symposium on the topic "Future Environmental Challenges for the Automotive Industry" assembled 150 participants. The initiative was jointly taken by the Swedish Trade

Council, the Japan Automobile Manufacturers' Association (JAMA) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

"While vehicles are recognized as indispensable to our society, people are concerned about their negative influence on our health and the environment. The efforts and measures to reduce emissions of diesel engines should mitigate especially the burden to the environment," the Swedish Ambassador to Japan, Mikael Lindström wrote in the invitation.

With this symposium, the Swedish embassy's Commercial Office introduced the cutting edge of leading Swedish technology, research and development in the area of automotive environment, and its commercial applications.

Speakers from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Scania R&D, Chalmers University of Technology

in Gothenburg and Honeywell Turbocharging Technologies as well as a concluding panel discussion session, explored future solutions.

On the panel were Mr. Hideaki Suzuki, Director of Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Mr. Hasse Johanson, Vice President Scania, the professors Ingemar Denbratt and Erik Fridell, Mr. Carl Kiser and as moderators Mr. Kunio Sumiyoshi, Executive Vice President, JETRO, and Mr. Toshihiro Iwatake, Senior Director General, JAMA.

ROAD TRANSPORT NEEDS

In his presentation, Hasse Johanson of Scania underlined that efficiency and productivity must be top priorities for a sustainable road transport system.

Scania is convinced this makes the diesel engine unbeatable for heavy trucks. "So far, we have managed to lower emissions without a

fuel penalty", he said. "We will continue to improve injection and combustion technology to attack emissions at the source, and we believe that this is the best basis for further emissions reductions in the future."

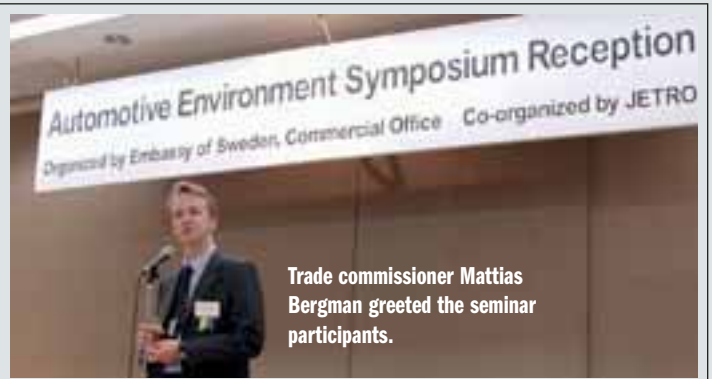
Scania is the most recent European newcomer on the Japanese heavy truck scene. The company has teamed up with Toyota subsidiary Hino, which handles sales, marketing and service in Japan for Scania Trucks. This strategic alliance was initiated in 2002 and also calls for other longer-term projects. The two companies are exchanging know-how in emissions control, for instance. Presently well over 100 Scania units have been sold or are in the loop for delivery in Japan.

FRONT RUNNER IN SAFETY

Volvo was the very first European OEM, already 15 years ago, to land on the Japanese islands. Volvo has long run aspirations for this market, although volumes are still moderate. To date, well over 2,000 Volvo trucks have found loyal domestic owners.



Hasse Johansson, Vice President Scania R&D, a key note speaker during the emission seminar.



Trade commissioner Mattias Bergman greeted the seminar participants.



A reception followed "Future Environmental Challenges", a seminar that had gathered 150 participants.



Leif Johansson, AB Volvo CEO, during a press conference. He also attended the 2nd Global Commercial Vehicle Summit.



Made in Lindesberg, Sweden by ArvinMeritor.



Scania is the most recent OEM on the Japanese heavy truck scene, working close with Hino.

pany sells 400 to 500 Actros a year in the country.

DOMESTICS CATCHING UP

Although Japanese manufacturers are world class leaders in passenger cars and motorcycles, the country has so far failed in achieving global leadership in heavy trucks. The distance to European standards is however shrinking, particularly when it comes to new technology.

Nissan Diesel UD, Hino, Mitsubishi Fuso and Isuzu all presented various new truck models at the show. All of the show trucks were fitted with new engine solutions to meet the 2005 emissions regulations, which the Japanese say are the most stringent in the world. Urea SCR - selective catalytic reduction aftertreatment - is strong in Japan in that respect.

COMPONENT COMPANIES

A large group of vehicle component makers were also on hand at Tokyo Motor Show, including many names well recognized in the heavy commercial vehicle world such as

Bosch, ArvinMeritor, Jacobs Vehicle Systems and Mahle, to name a few.

Among the Nordics, CuproBraze, an Outokumpu subsidiary, announced a joint project with two Japanese companies - Yamazaki Kinzoku Sangyo and Tokyo Braze Co. - to promote a cutting-edge solution for copper heat exchangers.

2ND GLOBAL CV SUMMIT

In conjunction with the Tokyo Motor Show, in nearby Makuhari Prince Hotel, top officials from the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA), the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) as well as the Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) and Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) of the United States participated in a second summit on harmonized emissions regulations.

In attendance, among others, were Leif Johansson and Jorma Halonen from Volvo, Kaj Lindgren and Hasse Johansson from Scania, Håkan Samuelsson, MAN, Andreas Renschler, DaimlerChrysler, José Maria Alapont, IVECO, Bernd Wie-

derman, Volkswagen, and Aad Goudriaan of DAF Trucks.

Participants at the summit emphasized the need for government authorities to recognize the importance of internationally harmonized regulations and test procedures. This was universally viewed as a means to promote the rapid introduction and deployment of cost-effective new technologies to reduce emissions, increase energy efficiency and promote safer vehicles in the future.

The present separate standards with one for the USA, another for Europe and a third for Japan is simply getting too costly for the end user to absorb.

NEW TOKYO SHOW FORMAT

In 2005, the Tokyo Motor Show will include automobiles and motorcycles, but in 2006 there will be no show. In 2007, a new integrated exhibition will include passenger cars, motorcycles, commercial vehicles and auto components. Beginning that year, the show will be held once every two years.