ROLLS-ROYCE | MEDIA INFORMATION

ROLLS-ROYCE BUILDS ON FOUNDATION OF ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE: TWO NEW SENIOR LEADERS TO JOIN THE COMPANY

Thursday 14 December 2023, Goodwood, West Sussex

* Rolls-Royce Motor Cars announces the retirement of its Director of Manufacturing, Johann (‘Hans’) Wolf, concluding his highly distinguished 46-year career with BMW Group
* Director of Engineering, Dr Mihiar Ayoubi, is promoted to Senior Vice President role within BMW Group following successful introduction of Spectre, with pathway set for future electrification
* Both leave an enduring legacy of innovation, progress and achievement, culminating in the development and launch of Spectre
* Engineering teams for upcoming and future products will be led from 1 January 2024 by new Director of Engineering Dr Bernhard Dressler, who previously led the Ghost project team
* New Director of Manufacturing will be Gunther Böhner, who will lead the marque’s extension plans and new manufacturing capabilities from 1 January 2024

“In their respective time at Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, both Hans and Mihiar have had a substantial impact on our business. As our Director of Engineering, Mihiar has driven pivotal advances in our powertrain, suspension and software technologies, harmonising physical engineering practices with advanced digital systems. He developed solutions to the increasingly complex challenges presented by Bespoke and Coachbuild commissions and oversaw the development of Spectre – a towering technical achievement that spearheads a bold electric future for Rolls-Royce. As the marque’s Director of Manufacturing, Hans led Rolls-Royce manufacturing through landmark launches including Ghost and Cullinan, the marque’s most highly sought-after models. With the introduction of Spectre, Hans embraced and mastered the challenge of manufacturing the first-ever all‑electric Rolls-Royce. Both Hans and Mihiar will be greatly missed by all at Goodwood and the global Rolls-Royce team, but I know that their carefully chosen successors will bring their own immense wealth of expertise to these crucial and prestigious senior leadership roles, as the marque embarks on the next chapter of its storied history.”  
**Chris Brownridge, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars has today announced two changes to its senior leadership team.

Hans Wolf will retire from his role of Director of Manufacturing, concluding a remarkable 46‑year career with BMW Group.

Director of Engineering, Dr Mihiar Ayoubi, has been promoted to a Senior Vice President role within BMW Group after six years at the Home of Rolls-Royce.

Both will formally hand over to their respective successors on 1 January 2024, with Gunther Böhner taking over from Hans and Dr Bernhard Dressler succeeding Mihiar.

**ENGINEERING: PART OF THE BRAND’S DNA**

Rolls-Royce’s co-founders, The Hon. Charles Stewart Rolls and Sir Henry Royce, had very different characters and backgrounds, but were both highly skilled, fastidious and innovative engineers. Almost 120 years later, engineering remains one of the three foundational pillars – together with design and craftsmanship – of the Rolls-Royce philosophy and brand.

During his six years at Rolls-Royce, Dr Mihiar Ayoubi led the engineering teams responsible for Ghost, Cullinan and Spectre; he also oversaw the specialist teams developing complex, innovative and highly Bespoke technologies for the Boat Tail and Droptail Coachbuild projects.

Under Mihiar’s leadership, the engineering department at Rolls-Royce Motor Cars laid the foundations for the marque’s all-electric future, developing the drivetrain, battery, chassis and ‘Decentralised Intelligence’ control systems for Spectre. Engineering has also reasserted its central importance in delivering future Coachbuild commissions through the ground-breaking technical work undertaken on both Boat Tail and Droptail.

With Mihiar’s promotion, overall responsibility for continuing that vital and prestigious work now passes to Dr Bernhard Dressler, who is currently Head of Product Concept at BMW Group. Bernhard is already well-known to many at Rolls-Royce, as he previously led the project team for Ghost. Bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience of the marque’s culture and business model to his new position, Bernhard is ideally placed to build on the firm foundations laid by his predecessor.

Mihiar’s promotion, to Senior Vice President Driving Experience for BMW Group, is the latest step in a distinguished engineering career with the company that began in 1997, after gaining a Degree and Doctorate in Control Systems Engineering and Applied Artificial Intelligence from the Technical University of Darmstadt in Germany.

At BMW Group, Mihiar headed departments in acoustics and vibration, dynamics development, chassis control systems, drivetrain development, all-wheel drive and driver assistance systems, before taking on the senior role of Head of Concepts, Architectures and Integration. He was promoted to Rolls-Royce Motor Cars in 2018, having already been involved with the engineering concept for Phantom 8.

**MANUFACTURING: TURNING VISIONS IN REALITY**

The Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood is the only place in the world where Rolls-Royce motor cars are designed and hand-built, all of them to order and all incorporating Bespoke elements.

Hans joined Rolls-Royce Motor Cars in November 2018. During his five-year tenure as Director of Manufacturing, he oversaw the launch of Ghost and Cullinan, respectively the most technologically advanced Rolls-Royce ever made and the most in-demand model in the marque’s contemporary product portfolio. Hans also took on the challenge of manufacturing Spectre, the first all-electric Rolls-Royce ever created – a challenge he and his team have mastered, with the first series production Spectres being handed over to their new owners in just the last few weeks.

Hans’ tenure as Director of Manufacturing included the highest-ever output in the marque’s history, with over 6,000 hand-built, bespoke motor cars produced in a single year. In 2020, he led the team that made Rolls‑Royce the first UK manufacturer to restart motor car production after the lifting of coronavirus restrictions.

His retirement marks the end of a career with BMW Group that spans more than four decades. Starting out in 1977 as an apprentice, he went on to hold a number of senior production roles: prior to joining Rolls-Royce Motor Cars in 2018, he was responsible for integrating all new products into BMW Group’s largest European manufacturing plant at Dingolfing, in Bavaria.

In late summer 2023, Rolls-Royce submitted plans to extend the Goodwood plant. The principal aim is to add enhanced capabilities to deliver clients’ increasingly ambitious Bespoke and Coachbuild commissions. Hans played a key role in developing the plans, applying his long experience gained on projects including the radical reconfiguration of the Goodwood plant in readiness for Spectre and future models.

Taking those new expansion plans forward will be his successor, Gunther Böhner, who has held a variety of senior manufacturing roles within BMW Group in a career spanning more than 25 years. From 1998 to 2013, he worked across planning, assembly, logistics and quality management in Germany, then transferred to the MINI plant in Oxford – first as General Manager, then Director of Assembly. Gunther is well-known to many at Rolls-Royce, having worked on a number of joint projects between Goodwood and the BMW plant at Dingolfing, where he is currently Director of Assembly. Gunther’s experience both with Rolls-Royce and of working in the UK equip him perfectly to build on the outstanding results Hans and his team have delivered.

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find all our press releases and press kits, as well as a wide selection of high resolution, downloadable photographs and video footage at our media website, [PressClub](https://www.press.rolls-roycemotorcars.com/rolls-royce-motor-cars-pressclub).

You can also follow marque on social media: [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rolls-royce-motor-cars/); [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/RollsRoyceMotorCars);[X (Twitter](https://twitter.com/rollsroycecars)); [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/rollsroycecars/); and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/rollsroycemotorcars).

## EDITORS’ NOTES

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a true luxury house, creating the world’s most recognised, revered and desirable handcrafted Bespoke products for its international clientele.

The company employs more than 2,500 people at the Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood, West Sussex. This comprises both its global headquarters and Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence – the only place in the world where Rolls-Royce motor cars are designed, engineered and meticulously built by hand. Its continuous investment in its facilities, products and people has resulted in a series of ‘record years’ for global sales, peaking in 2022 with over 6,000 motor cars sold worldwide.

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a wholly owned subsidiary of the BMW Group and is a completely separate, unrelated company from Rolls-Royce plc, the manufacturer of aircraft engines and propulsion systems.

CONTACTS | GOODWOOD

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| --- | --- |
| Director of Global Communications  Emma Begley +44 (0) 1243 384060 / [Email](mailto:emma.begley@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) | Head of Global Product CommunicationsGeorgina Cox +44 (0) 7815 370878 /[**Email**](mailto:Georgina.Cox@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |
| Head of Corporate RelationsAndrew Ball +44 (0) 7815 244064 / [Email](mailto:andrew.ball@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) | Global Product PR Manager Katie Sherman +44 (0) 7815 244896 / [Email](mailto:Katie.Sherman@rolls-roycemotorcars.com)  Global Lifestyle Communications  Malika Abdullaeva +44 (0) 7815 244874 / [Email](mailto:Malika.Abdullaeva@partner.rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |
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CONTACTS | GLOBAL

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| --- | --- |
| The Americas Gerry Spahn +1 201 930 8308 / [Email](mailto:gerry.spahn@rolls-roycemotorcarsna.com) | Asia Pacific Hal Serudin +65 8161 2843 / [Email](mailto:hal.serudin@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |
| Central/Eastern Europe and Central Asia Frank Tiemann +49 160 9697 5807 / [Email](mailto:frank.tiemann@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) | Central and Western Europe  Ruth Hilse +49 89 382 60064 / [Email](mailto:ruth.hilse@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |
| China  Ou Sun  +86 186 0059 0675 / [**Email**](mailto:Ou.Sun@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) | Japan and Korea  Yuki Imamura  +81 90 5216 1957 / [Email](mailto:Yuki.Imamura@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |
| Middle East and Africa  Rami Joudi +971 56 171 7883 / [Email](mailto:rami.joudi@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) | United Kingdom and Ireland Isabel Matthews +44 (0) 7815 245127 / [Email](mailto:isabel.matthews@rolls-roycemotorcars.com) |