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([PRWEB](#)) November 28, 2002 -- For Immediate Release

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“The potential impact of hybrid hydraulic systems on the economy in general and on commercial vehicle owners in particular could be significant,” said Paul Chandler, Permo-Drive’s vice president for North American Operations. “Trucks account for nearly 81 percent of the nation’s freight business and last year alone consumed more than 42 billion gallons of fuel.”

Speaking at an SAE Truck and Bus Meeting and Exposition earlier this month, Chandler said that Permo-Drive’s Regenerative Drive System (RDS) can be applied to new or existing trucks. The RDS captures energy generated by a vehicle’s braking process, then releases the energy back into the driveline as power is needed. Key design features include an innovative inline driveshaft, energy storage devices that utilize special composite materials, ultra-light-weight metals, and advanced hydraulic and electronic engineering.

The Permo-Drive RDS technology integrates vehicle dynamics, hydraulics, mechanical engineering, accumulator technology, material science, computer telemetry, and electronics. “The resulting system,” said Chandler, “can save fleet owners billions of dollars in fuel and maintenance costs, while reducing emissions.”

Permo-Drive will begin testing the system in major North American vehicle fleets in 2003 and plans to make the technology available commercially by 2005.

In October, Permo-Drive signed a cooperative research and development agreement with the U. S. Army’s National Automotive Center to evaluate hybrid hydraulic driveline systems for both military and commercial applications.

A medium tactical military vehicle equipped with the new hybrid hydraulic system was shown for the first time by Permo-Drive and the U. S. Army at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) 2002 Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in October.



In addition to improved fuel economy, Chandler noted that Permo-Drive's regenerative braking and propulsion system has shown an ability to significantly increase brake life and reduce hydrocarbon-and-particulate emissions for all classes of commercial vehicles.

Permo-Drive Technologies Ltd. is an Australian-based company focused on the development of regenerative energy management systems for the automotive industry. More information about the company is available on the Internet at <http://www.permo-drive.com>.

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