



GKN Driveline Gets Involved in Some Sticky Business

The growing responsibility that automakers and suppliers are sharing for product development requires extensive research into some sticky business. GKN Driveline is opening a state-of-the-art tribology lab in Auburn Hills that primarily looks at the performance of various greases and lubricants used in the millions of constant velocity joints (CVJ) that it produces each year.

AUBURN HILLS, Mich ([PRWEB](#)) July 30, 2004 -- Those efforts are part of an extensive research-and-development program that involves more than 50 GKN Driveline engineers and is designed to ensure and improve product quality and performance.

The 675-square-foot laboratory facility will help the company develop smaller, lighter driveline components for increasingly more powerful engines.

A forged steel constant-velocity driveshaft transfers the power of the engine to the wheels. It must withstand the mechanical stresses of high-speed operation and the high heat that goes along with it. The same is true for the grease that keeps the moving parts in the CVJ lubricated.

Under the direction of Dr. Gareth Fish, head of global lubricant development at GKN Driveline's Research and Product Development Center in Auburn Hills, research scientists analyze friction, wear and lubrication and determine the impact on both current and future products.

The group is always looking for improvement in a lubricant that will better dissipate heat, increase durability and reduce friction and wear.

Finding the right lubricant to handle these more rigorous specs is a constant challenge for Fish and his crew. "Finding the right mix of material and grease can be tricky," Fish notes.

And researchers' concerns are not just limited to mating the CVJ with grease. A CVJ driveshaft uses a boot to cover the components to protect them from moisture and dirt and to keep the grease clean. "We also have to ensure that there's a match between the lubricant and the materials used in the boot," Fish notes. "We can't have a lubricant that could be corrosive to the boot."

The tribology group's efforts have paid off. By working with major oil companies they have been instrumental in the development of a number of improved lubricants now in production in many of the products made by GKN Driveline.

Last year Fish received a prestigious Fellows Award from the National Lubricating Grease Institute (NLGI) for research in the field of automotive lubricants, and he has authored nine technical papers on tribology, grease and lubricants.

Fish, who has led GKN Driveline's tribology research efforts for the last decade, began his career in Britain's defense industry. He is a member of the Royal Society of Chemistry in the United Kingdom and the Society of Tribologists and Lubrication Engineers, and he holds a B.S. in chemistry and a Ph.D. in tribology from the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine at the University of London.



GKN Driveline is one of the world's leading suppliers of vehicle driveline products and systems and has a commanding 42 percent share of the market for CVJ sideshafts. The company is a global enterprise, headquartered in the United Kingdom. It recorded total sales of US\$3.2 billion in 2003. GKN Driveline has grown steadily and continuously through organic growth and acquisitions throughout the world. The company currently has 21,000 people working at 49 locations in 31 countries. Additional information is available at <http://www.gkndriveline.com>.

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