

News Release

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Akebono Extend Technical Partnership with Vodafone McLaren Mercedes

Tokyo/Working – (October 4, 2012) – Akebono Brake Industry Co., Ltd. (Akebono) and Vodafone McLaren Mercedes are pleased to announce the extension of their successful long-term technical partnership.

Akebono began its collaboration with Vodafone McLaren Mercedes in 2007, developing and refining its braking technologies at the sharp end of global motorsport competition.

In addition to supplying racing brake calipers for Formula 1, Akebono's collaboration with Vodafone McLaren has helped intensify the company's research into high-end braking materials, structural design and surface processing.

These processes have produced an ultra-reliable brake system that boasts significantly reduced weight and exceptional cooling capacity while also being able to withstand high temperatures and maintain structural rigidity.

The statistics speak for themselves: since the start of the Vodafone McLaren Mercedes partnership in 2007, Akebono's technology and expertise have helped deliver 32 grand prix wins, 28 pole positions and 154 point-winning finishes. Akebono also helped Lewis Hamilton to his World Championship crown in 2008.

Akebono have also developed a bespoke racing caliper and brake pads for McLaren's successful MP4-12C GT3 race car.

Announcing the partnership this morning to employees and selected media at Akebono's Tokyo headquarters, president and CEO Hisataka Nobumoto said:

"This is a proud moment in Akebono's history as we embark upon the next chapter in our quest to be the best brake manufacturer in the world. Prior to our partnership with Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, an oriental brake system had never once been on a Formula 1 podium, yet today we are proud to have 32 wins under our belt. Our appetite for continued development and new technology is considerable.

"Furthermore, to have been selected by McLaren to supply calipers and brake pads to the MP4-12C GT cars is a great honor."

Martin Whitmarsh, team principal, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, added:

“The engineers at Akebono have not only met the challenge of succeeding at the very highest level of world motorsport – they have far exceeded it, helping us to more than 30 grand prix victories since the start of our partnership in 2007.

“Their ongoing programme to refine and improve braking technology means we have witnessed genuine lap time performance from the braking systems we now employ in grand prix racing. That’s a considerable testimony to their application, attitude and effort.

“They are great people to work with: their attitude and belief in our partnership also left us in no doubt that they should be appointed as the exclusive brake supplier to our GT programme.”

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About Akebono Brake Industry Co., Ltd.

Akebono Brake Industry Co., Ltd. (TSE:7238), founded in 1929, is a world leader in advanced brake and friction material development and production. The Akebono Group operates R&D centers in Japan, the United States and France, and has wholly owned or affiliated manufacturing facilities worldwide. Akebono recorded net sales of 209.6 billion yen in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2012, and employs over 9,000 people worldwide on a consolidated basis. As an official supplier of the Formula 1 Vodafone McLaren Mercedes team, Akebono has been supplying and jointly developing brake systems since 2007.

For more information, visit www.akebono-brake.com/english/index.html.