

## Press Release

September 10, 2007

### **Akebono Brake announced as Official Supplier to Vodafone McLaren Mercedes**

Woking, Great Britain: Akebono Brake Industry Co., Ltd. (Akebono) and Vodafone McLaren Mercedes are pleased to announce Akebono as an Official Supplier of brake calipers and master cylinders.

To support Vodafone McLaren Mercedes as an Official Supplier, Akebono established Akebono Advanced Engineering (UK) Ltd. (AAE) in London in March 2007. AAE and McLaren Racing are jointly developing and testing brake calipers and master cylinders with the aim of raising technical capabilities in braking.

Hisataka Nobumoto, President & CEO of Akebono commented: “When brakes are mentioned, people generally tend to think of ‘stopping’ and ‘deceleration,’ while in fact brake systems are one of the most essential components in vehicles, as they enable them to drive quickly and handle smoothly in a safe manner.”

“To achieve our long-standing goal of being brake experts, we have challenged ourselves in various categories of motor racing, as it is the optimal arena to develop superior brake systems.”

“The first automobile with a gasoline engine is said to have been developed by Karl Benz in 1886. The first automobile race called a Grand Prix took place in 1894 on a 130 kilometer course between Paris and Rouen. But in the automotive industry’s approximate 120-year-history, a race car equipped with a Japanese brake system has never stood once on the Grand Prix victory podium.”

“At Akebono, we felt that to develop the ultimate brake system, our only choice was to enter Formula 1 with the world’s most prestigious and illustrious team, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes. This desire led to the joint development and supply of brake systems starting from the 2007 season.”

“We previously believed it would take three years to develop products that could stand on the victory podium. But since we have been fortunate enough to work with the best team and the best drivers in the world, not only have our products stood on the podium, they have already claimed victories. These Grand Prix wins with Japanese brake systems represent a first in the 120-year history of the automotive industry. There can indeed be no greater honour for us.”

Martin Whitmarsh, CEO Formula 1, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes added: “We are immensely proud of this partnership with Akebono, who join our World Class group of partners and suppliers. Vodafone McLaren Mercedes prides itself on forging technical collaborations with the best organisations in the World by integrating leading-edge technology into our race cars. Akebono has proven its capability to deliver increased performance and has contributed greatly to Vodafone McLaren Mercedes’ seven Grand Prix wins this season so far. We are looking forward to further developing technologies with a long-term relationship with Akebono.”

#### **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. Akebono’s portfolio includes brake products for automobiles, motorbikes, rolling stock, industrial machinery, and sensor products for automobiles. For automotive OEM disc brake pads, Akebono has the top share in Japan at approximately 40% and a global market share of approximately 20%. The Akebono Group operates R&D centers in Japan, the United States and France, and has wholly owned or affiliated manufacturing facilities in Japan, the United States, France, China, Thailand and Indonesia. Akebono recorded net sales of 173.2 billion yen in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2007, and employs nearly 7,000 people worldwide on a consolidated basis.

For more information, visit [www.akebono-brake.com](http://www.akebono-brake.com)

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