

GM to Spend \$20B, Unveil 11 EVs Over 5 Years

General Motors Co. gathered hundreds of employees, dealers, investors, analysts, media and policymakers at the company's Tech Center in Warren last week to share details of its strategy to grow the company's electric vehicle (EV) sales quickly, efficiently and profitably.

"Our team accepted the challenge to transform product development at GM and position our company for an all-electric future," said Mary Barra, GM chairman and CEO. "What we have done is build a multi-brand, multi-segment EV strategy with economies of scale that rival our full-size truck business with much less complexity and even more flexibility."

The heart of GM's strategy is a modular propulsion system and a highly flexible, third-generation global EV platform powered by proprietary Ultium batteries, Barra said. They will allow the company to compete for nearly every customer in the market today, whether they are looking for affordable transportation, a luxury experience, work trucks or a high-performance machine.

"Thousands of GM scientists, engineers and designers are working to execute an historic reinvention of the company," said GM President Mark Reuss. "They are on the cusp of delivering a

profitable EV business that can satisfy millions of customers."

GM's new Ultium batteries are unique in the industry because the large-format, pouch-style cells can be stacked vertically or horizontally inside the battery pack, said GM spokeswoman Jordana Strosberg.

This allows engineers to optimize battery energy storage and layout for each vehicle design.

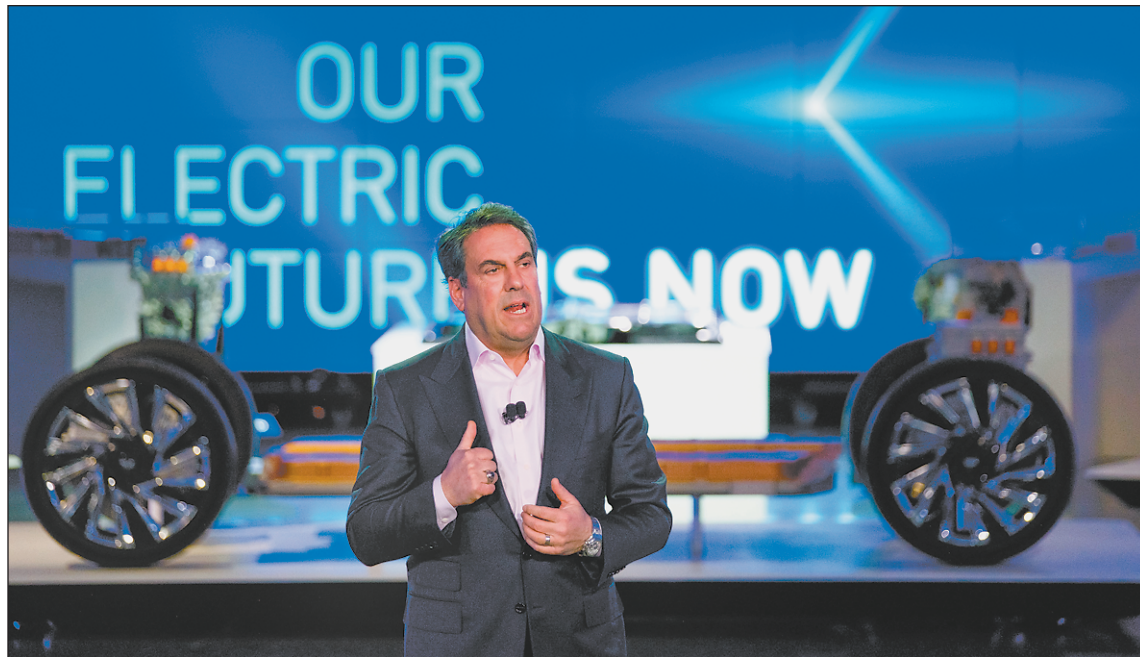
Ultium energy options range from 50 to 200 kWh, which could enable a GM-estimated range up to 400 miles or more on a full charge with 0 to 60 mph acceleration as low as 3 seconds. Motors designed in-house will support front-wheel drive, rear-wheel drive, all-wheel drive and performance all-wheel drive applications.

Ultium-powered EVs are de-

signed for Level 2 and DC fast charging. Most will have 400-volt battery packs and up to 200 kW fast-charging capability while our truck platform will have 800-volt battery packs and 350 kW fast-charging capability.

Executives told the group that the next generation of GM's electric vehicles will be profitable.

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Reuss spoke about how EVs will play an increasingly important role in GM's future product line.

Fed Investigators Charge UAW's Gary Jones

DETROIT (AP) – Prosecutors on March 5 charged the former president of the United Auto Workers with corruption, alleging he conspired with others at the union to embezzle more than \$1 million.

The federal government has been marching toward Gary Jones for months, after an embarrassing public search of his Detroit-area home and a series of guilty pleas from others in a sweeping investigation of UAW leaders living the high life.

Jones was president for about 1 1/2 years before quitting in November. He was charged with conspiracy in a document titled a criminal "information," which signals that a guilty plea is likely.

The Associated Press left a message with his attorney seeking comment. Jones wasn't arrested and did not appear in court March 5.

Nine union officials and an official's spouse have pleaded guilty since 2017. The investigation began with the discovery that Fiat Chrysler money from a Fiat Chrysler-UAW job training center was stolen. It then stretched to embezzlement of union funds.

The court filing against Jones

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

FCA's Reid Bigland Resigns, Replacements are Named

FCA is making some major changes in its leadership structure.

After 22 years of service, Reid Bigland, head of Ram Brand, U.S. Sales and FCA Canada, has announced his intention to leave the company effective April 3, 2020, to pursue interests outside of the company, said FCA spokeswoman Shawn Morgan.

Commenting on Bigland's service to the company, Mike Manley, Chief Executive Officer, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles N.V., said, "I would like to thank Reid for his years of tireless leadership and many valued contributions to the company. We all wish him every success in his future endeavors."

Adding to Manley's comments, Bigland said, "It has been a privilege to have been part of the FCA family and to have worked alongside our dealer business partners."

Replacing Bigland, the company announced the following appointments, all reporting to Mark Stewart, Chief Operating Officer, FCA North America, and effective immediately Jeff Kommor, Head of U.S. Sales, Morgan said.

Previously, Kommor was appointed Vice President – U.S. Sales Operations, Fleet and Small Business Sales, a position he was named to in October 2015. In that role, he was responsible for sales planning and incentives, retail sales promotions, dealer relations, field operations for sales, small business sales and Certified Pre-Owned Vehicle sales for all FCA US brands.

Kommor has also served as Vice President – U.S. Sales Operations since January 2014.



Reid Bigland

Prior to that position, he was Director - Northeast Business Center in Tappan, N.Y. In this role, Kommor was responsible for sales in the seven-state area covered by the Northeast Business Center.

Since first joining the company as a Service and Parts District Manager in the Syracuse Zone in 1985, Kommor has garnered extensive experience in all aspects of sales, service and parts, customer relations, and field organizations.

His work and academic background includes:

- 2020 - current, Head of U.S. Sales, FCA US LLC.
- 2015, Vice President - U.S. Sales Operations, Fleet and Small Business Sales.
- 2014, Vice President – U.S. Sales Operations.
- 2013, Director - Northeast Business Center.

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Ford Readies for an All Electric Transit Van

The drive for electric vehicles just got push, said Ford spokeswoman Elizabeth Kraft.

The best-selling cargo van in the world – Ford Transit – is going digital, with an all-electric version coming for the 2022 model year.

"Commercial vehicles are a critical component to our big bet on electrification," said Jim Farley, chief operating officer, Ford Motor Company. "As leaders in this space, we are accelerating our plans to create solutions that help businesses run better, starting with our all-electric Transit and F-150. This Ford Transit isn't just about creating an electric drivetrain, it's about designing and developing a digital product that propels fleets forward."

With the world's best-selling cargo van and as America's best-

selling commercial van brand for 41 years, Ford intends to lead the transition to zero emissions in the segment with its all-electric Transit, Farley said.

Ford's U.S. truck and van fleet sales have grown 33 percent since 2015 and the company expects continued growth of van sales in the U.S. as e-commerce and "last mile" delivery increase. Ford's overall van sales delivered their best fourth quarter results since 1978 on sales of 59,930 vans Kraft said. For the year, Ford van sales totaled 240,529 vehicles. Ford expects electric vehicles to grow to 8 percent of the industry in 2025 in the U.S.

As consumers focus on reducing their own carbon footprints, more and more businesses are setting ambitious sustainability goals. Cities, meanwhile, are

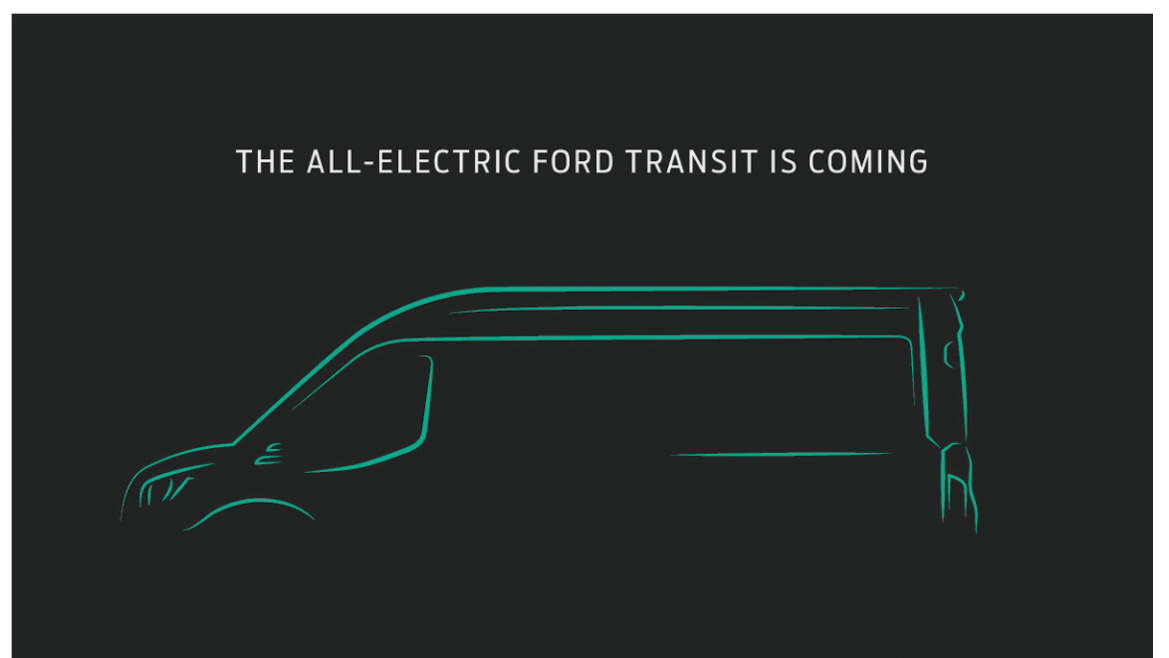
weighing increasingly stringent rules to address CO2, air quality and noise reduction goals.

The all-electric Transit, which will be American-built, is part of Ford's more than \$11.5 billion investment in electrification through 2022.

This vision includes all-electric vehicles that build on Ford's strengths and taps the company's all-electric technology to deliver even more performance, capability and productivity – including the all-electric Transit sold in Europe, Mustang Mach-E coming later this year and the previously announced all-electric F-150.

"The world is heading toward electrified products and fleet customers are asking for them

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Ford's EV future not only includes building vehicles for the public, but vans for the commercial market.

FCA Employees Hit LCA's Ice for the 'Battle of the Brands'



Dobski got to wear his Darren McCarty jersey at the Battle of Brands.

by Jim Stickford

Saturday, Feb. 29 was a special day for many FCA employees, not because it was Leap Day – an event that only happens once every four years – but because it was the eighth annual FCA Battle of the Brands Hockey Tournament.

The hockey event was once again held at Little Caesars Arena (LCA) in downtown Detroit and again featured teams representing FCA brands playing hockey and raising money for the United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

FCA spokesman Mike Harlow said that this year's tournament had the Chrysler brand playing the Alfa Romeo brand in game one. Game two featured SRT versus Jeep, while game three had Rebels playing Mopar and game four was Ram against Dodge.

There was also a public skate period between game two and three where members of the public could skate on the ice, Harlow said. The day concluded with another public skating period.

That's always a thrill for people who love hockey because they get to be on pro hockey ice, Harlow said. And participants also got to play with retired Red Wings, who donated their time to the event.

This year they included Sergei Samsonov, who played for the Boston Bruins; Fox Sports commentator Larry Murphy; and retired Red Wings John Ogradnick and Mickey Redmond.

Money for the United Way is raised a couple of ways, Harlow said. First, players pay a \$275 fee. Some of this money goes toward a jersey specific to their teams. But the rest goes to the United Way. Additionally, friends and family who come out to see the players in action buy tickets to the event.

The tournament began with Mark Champine, head of Quality for all FCA brands in North America, dropping the puck.

"This is a great combination event," Champine said. "People here love everything associated

with the Red Wings, so have the opportunity to play with retired Wings and other retired pros and be able to support the United Way while playing where the pros play is really great and really great fun."

Champine said that as a life-long fan of Detroit sports teams, being able to drop the puck at LCA was a great honor.

"I grew up in St. Clair Shores," Champine said. "If you grew up there, you played hockey and basketball at the city's Civic Arena. I have to admit that while I like hockey, I played basketball there. But that doesn't change the fact that it's really exciting to be here today."

Champine said that this was the eighth tournament, but it was the first time he participated.

"This is my first year, but it was really exciting to drop the puck in the center wheel of the Red Wings' logo at LCA," Champine said. "I have to give credit to Jeff Kalinowski of FCA's Manufacturing Engagement for his work. He's been the liaison between FCA and the United Way and has worked hard to make sure this event was successful. He asked me if I wanted to get involved and I said yes."

Among the first-time players was Adam Davis, an FCA employee who works at the company's Sterling Heights Assembly Plant (SHAP) facility in the metal finishing department.

"I've been playing hockey since I was three," Davis said. "I'm 32 now and I played for the SRT team. I played hockey as a kid in Grosse Pointe and actually played on the Grosse Pointe North hockey team."

Davis said that he actually heard about the event through Twitter and when he learned the details, he was happy to sign up.

"This is actually my first time at LCA," Davis said. "I know I should have come here sooner, but I got spoiled when I was growing up and the Red Wings were the best. I know I should support the boys, but I am glad to be here today."



Champine got to drop the puck at the center of the ice at LCA as part of this year's FCA Battle of the Brands.

Davis said it was worth every penny of the \$275 fee just to play at LCA. He normally plays in what he calls a "C class beer league" so getting out and playing at LCA is a step up for him.

Not all the people who attended the event for FCA were players, said Harlow. They also had volunteers to help put on the event and assist players as events required.

Among those was Jeff Dobski, a Central Team Pillar Lead at FCA's World Class Manufacturing facility in Warren.

"I've been working for the company since 2003, back when it was just called Chrysler," Dobski said. "My manager is Jeff Kalinowski, and he asked me to volunteer. I said yes, and my job is to help with player check-ins. I have to say coming here and seeing LCA, I have found the place gorgeous, so I have no complaints about being here today."

Like Champine and Davis, Dobski is a life-long Detroiter and he



Sterling Height Assembly Plant's Davis represented the SRT brand.

grew up rooting for the home teams, including the Red Wings.

"I didn't play hockey growing up, I played basketball," Dobski said. "I went to Brother Rice and MSU and rooted for the Wings. But now I don't play basketball, I

play golf. But being here allowed me to wear my Darren McCarty Red Wings jersey. I am also really happy to help the United Way, and it's great to see people come together and support such a worthy cause."

Ford Agrees to Pay Millions in Suit

The *Detroit Free Press* reported that a federal judge has agreed to a class-action lawsuit settlement that would have Ford Motor Co. paying millions of dollars to customers over defective Ford Focus and Fiesta vehicles.

It is estimated that Ford could be paying up to \$22,000 per vehicle. The suit claimed that model year Focus 2012-2016 and and Fiestas model year 2011-2016 had transmissions that were prone to "shuddering, slipping, bucking, jerking, hesitation while changing gears, premature internal wear, delays in downshifting and, in some cases, sudden or delayed acceleration."

Ford spokesman Said Deep, in a prepared statement to the *Free Press*, said that Ford was "pleased with the court's ruling and look forward to the final implementation of the settlement."

"You could see where this settlement could end up costing Ford hundreds of millions of dollars, potentially \$500 million," said Michael Kirkpatrick is statement to the *Free Press*. He is a lawyer at the nonprofit Public Citizen consumer advocacy group, who argued the case.

This settlement has two parts, Kirkpatrick said. People get cash for the inconvenience of having multiple repairs or they can seek to have their vehicle rebought.

A customer must show three or more repairs under most state lemon laws to get repurchase, Kirkpatrick said. Under the settlement, a class member can qualify for repurchase either under the applicable state lemon law or the settlement-created standard of four transmission repairs within five years or 60,000 miles.

Art Van to Close, Liquidation Sale Going On

Art Van Furniture announced it will be closing and liquidating all of its company-owned stores in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Ohio.

Liquidation sales began on March 6 and a final date of operations was not announced. Art Van Furniture, PureSleep and Scott Shuptrine Interiors stores owned by the company are affected.

Several franchised Art Van locations, including some in Mid-Michigan, are not closing and will not be affected by the liquidation.

Art Van spokeswoman Diane Charles said the company's brands and operations have been hit hard by a challenging retail environment.

"On behalf of the company we want to offer our sincere appreciation to our employees for their dedication, commitment and hard work," she said. "We also want to extend our gratitude to the many customers, vendors, franchisees, charities and communities who have supported these retailers."

Archie "Art" Van Elslander opened his first furniture store on Gratiot Avenue in Detroit in 1959. The company grew to nearly 200 stores and 5,000 employees around the Midwest.

He became a major Detroit-area philanthropist who is credited with saving the city's annual Thanksgiving parade. He died at age 87 in February of 2018.

Thomas H. Lee Partners in Boston purchased Art Van from the Van Elslander family in 2017.

AP reported that over its 61-year history, Art Van developed a strong reputation for philanthropy and community involvement. The company has helped raise \$25 million through its Art Van Charity Challenge, including \$10 million in direct company matches.

Art Van also collected 3 million bottles of water during the Flint water crisis in 2016 and used its fleet of delivery trucks to help deliver it.

The company also cosponsored telethons to raise money

for medical treatment for children exposed to lead.

Van Elslander, who was known as Art Van, opened his first store in 1959 in East Detroit, now called Eastpointe. There are more than 100 stores in the Midwest, with more than half of them in Michigan. The business was sold last year to Thomas H. Lee Partners, a Boston private equity firm.

After more than 60 years, the parade's finances were failing in 1990 when Van Elslander stepped forward with a \$200,000 check. He would ride down Woodward Avenue and wave to crowds from a car.

The company became a regular sponsor of the parade, which draws tens of thousands of people to downtown Detroit.

"It's probably one of the most gratifying things I've ever done," Van Elslander, the son of a Belgian tavern owner, said in 2015. "Because when you see the lives that you've been able to affect, it's pretty cool."

AAA – Study Shows Public Skeptical About New Autonomous Technology

A new AAA survey on automated vehicles reveals that only one in ten drivers (12 percent) would trust riding in a self-driving car. Even more Americans – 28 percent – don’t know how they feel about the technology, signaling consumers are stuck in neutral on the road to accepting self-driving cars.

AAA believes consumer sentiment of automated vehicles will be driven by tangible information on key issues and, equally important, quality education and experience, said Adrienne Woodland, spokesperson, AAA-The Auto Club Group.

Consumers told AAA that they have a desire to see more news stories or public information on key issues surrounding self-driving vehicles like safety and liability:

Six in ten (57 percent) Americans say they would like to have a clear understanding of who will be legally responsible in the event of a crash with a self-driving vehicle, Woodland said.

Half (51 percent) are interested about laws to make sure self-driving cars are safe.

Half (49 percent) want to know how vulnerable they will be to hackers.

“Consumers have made it clear what it will take to overcome their doubts – consistent and transparent information – which will help make them feel safer about the idea of riding in a self-driving car,” said Woodland. “AAA’s automated vehicle survey tells us when people have the opportunity to take back control or even build their understanding of how this technology works, they are much more likely to embrace it.”

Americans specifically voiced their opinion on what would make them feel safer about self-driving cars. Seven in ten (72 percent) U.S. adults would feel safer riding in a self-driving car if they had the ability to take over control if something goes wrong. A similar proportion (69 percent) would feel safer if there was a human backup driver.

Half (47 percent) would feel safer knowing the self-driving car has passed rigorous testing and inspections. Four in ten (42 percent) would feel safer after seeing or experiencing a demonstration prior to getting into a self-driving car.

“Knowing how people truly feel about self-driving cars will help the industry to identify the steps needed to move con-

sumers towards greater acceptance,” continued Woodland.

Today, there are semi-automated vehicles on the road. However, a fully automated fleet is still decades away, Woodland said. AAA conducts research like this study and others to help inform and encourage the industry, media and policymakers to find ways to help consumers connect

better with advanced vehicle technology.

Due to a change in methodology in 2020, this year’s survey results are not directly comparable to results from prior years. This survey was conducted Jan. 17 – 19, 2020, using a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population overall.

The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population, Woodland said. Most surveys were completed online; consumers without internet access were surveyed over the phone. A total of 1,301 interviews were completed among U.S. adults, 18 years of age or older.



Companies like Waymo are working with OEMs like FCA to develop AV tech, but the public remains doubtful.

Virus Shutting Down European Auto Events

by JAMEY KEATEN and FRANK JORDANS
Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) – The Geneva auto show was canceled after the Swiss government put an immediate ban Feb. 28 on all large events in order to halt the spread of the new coronavirus.

The Swiss ban on public and private events involving more than 1,000 people will last until at least March 15. The move highlights the growing impact of the virus on daily lives and livelihoods, as governments try to fight an outbreak that has infected more than 82,000 people and killed over 2,700 worldwide.

Outbreak concerns have already led organizers to call off several major industry events around the world, including a mobile technology conference that was due to happen this week in Barcelona, Spain, and Facebook’s developer conference set for May in San Jose, Calif. Still others, such as a cybersecurity conference in San Francisco and a popular video game convention in Boston, proceeded this week even after big companies dropped out. The Geneva International Motor Show was due to run March 5-15 and draws tens of thousands of visitors every year. The event was expected to generate 200 million to 250 million Swiss francs (dollars) worth of spending in the Geneva area.

“We are aware that this measure will have a significant impact on public life,” Swiss interior minister Alain Berset said, insisting it was necessary to help prevent or delay the spread of the virus in Switzerland.

Switzerland has reported 15 confirmed cases of the new coronavirus. The country borders northern Italy, which has seen the largest cluster of cases in Europe.

In other communities hosting big conferences, local authorities have pushed event organizers and marquee exhibitors to proceed as planned and cautioned against overreaction. After Japanese electronics giant Sony announced it was skipping the Pax East gaming conference in Boston over virus concerns, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh urged the PlayStation-maker to reconsider, saying the risk in Massachusetts remains extremely low.

“While we are taking every possible precaution to protect residents, visitors, and workers, we have no reason to believe that people should cancel their

plans to visit our city,” Walsh wrote last week to Sony CEO Kenichiro Yoshida.

Sony was a no-show and other game companies scaled back their presence.

Nonetheless, thousands of attendees still thronged an exhibition center for the four-day convention, which opened Thursday. A roving cleaning crew wiped game consoles and controllers with disinfectant after attendees touched them.

“We’re upping all of the hand sanitizer, advising people not to shake hands or hug if you don’t really have to, try to give everyone a little bit of distance,” said Ryan Hartman, an executive with the Pax gaming convention organizer, Penny Arcade Expo.

Dozens of attendees also wore filtration or decorative masks, though it’s not uncommon for enthusiasts to dress up in costume at video game events. Jakeem Johnson said he thought the fears were overblown but as added protection brought a mask representing Scorpion, a fearsome ninja from the fighting game Mortal Kombat.

Maurice Turrettini, chairman of the Geneva auto show’s organizing company, GIMS, said that over 160 brands had been due to exhibit at that show, but it was a case of “force majeure,” a disruption that is out of people’s control that can free businesses from liability in a contract. Exhibitors will not be reimbursed, but ticket-holders will be.

Swiss authorities said that for events with fewer than 1,000 people, organizers must conduct a risk assessment with regional officials. Berset said that large offices or public buildings wouldn’t be shut down by the measure.

Aside from the auto show, affected events include the Basel-world watch and jewelry fair, the traditional Carnival procession in Basel, a ski marathon and several soccer matches. The national Swiss hockey league said all games this weekend will be played behind closed doors, with no fans present.

It wasn’t immediately clear whether the ban would also affect meetings at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva. The global body has a special extraterritorial status that may exempt it from national health measures. Rolando Gomez, spokesman for the U.N. Human Rights Council, said “well over 1,000 participants” were taking

part in a four-week session that began Feb. 24.

After organizers of Mobile World Congress canceled the Barcelona show over virus fears, Spanish officials insisted there wasn’t a public health threat. The show normally represents a huge source of revenue for hotels, restaurants and taxi companies.

As for Facebook’s annual F8 conference in San Jose, Facebook said it will donate \$500,000 to organizations serving city residents.

In San Francisco, the Game Developers Conference announced Friday that it will postpone its annual conference, which draws people and companies from around the world. Organizers announced no new date, but said it was aiming to hold an event later in the summer.

“Having spent the past year preparing for the show with our advisory boards, speakers, exhibitors, and event partners, we’re genuinely upset and disappointed not to be able to host you at this time,” conference organizers said in a statement.

Before the postponement, the San Francisco Travel Association had sought to tamp down concerns, noting there were no confirmed cases in the city and little reason to worry despite an emergency order to prepare for possible future impacts.

For many companies dropping out of conferences, the concerns have been more about long-distance travel than health conditions in the host city. Facebook said it considered a scaled-back conference, but it “didn’t feel right” to have the event without many of its developers from outside the U.S.

Ex-UAW Officials Enters Guilty Plea, Admitting to Conspiracy Charges

DETROIT (AP) – A former senior official at the United Auto Workers pleaded guilty March 2 to conspiring with other labor leaders to steal more than \$1 million in dues while enjoying golf, lavish lodging, meals and liquor.

“Our office will never tolerate the abuse of union funds for the benefit of corrupt union officials,” U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider said.

Edward “Nick” Robinson’s guilty plea is the 10th from union officials or the spouse of an official. Three more people at Fiat Chrysler have also pleaded guilty in the government’s corruption investigation.

Robinson, 72, of Kirkwood, Missouri, was based at the UAW’s Region 5 office near St. Louis. The office was led by Gary Jones until Jones became UAW president in 2018.

He quit the top union job in November while under investigation but hasn’t been charged.

Robinson has “worked very hard to rectify wrongs he’s made and we are well on our way there,” defense attorney James Martin said outside U.S. District Court in Detroit. Robinson said he conspired with at least six other UAW officials in a multi-year effort to embezzle money for their personal benefit.

“Cigars, good liquor, golf items – and sometimes I got the benefit of these items,” Robinson told U.S. District Judge Paul Borman.

Robinson agreed to pay \$42,000 to the Internal Revenue Service for personal tax obligations. Restitution to the union hasn’t been determined yet.

In February, Vance Pearson pleaded guilty in the scheme. His conviction was significant because he worked closely with Jones and succeeded him in the Region 5 office. Pearson is cooperating with investigators.

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GM Pledges to Spend \$20B to Develop 11 EVs by Year 2025

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Barra said the new vehicles can increase sales and market share, and the batteries and drive units could be licensed to other companies to bring in more revenue.

She said the company plans to sell more than 1 million electric vehicles in North America and China by the middle of the decade. To get there, GM will spend more than \$20 billion developing the vehicles through 2025, she said.

Electric vehicle sales will have to grow substantially both worldwide and in the U.S. for GM to meet its targets. Last year manufacturers sold just over 236,000 fully electric vehicles in the U.S., about 1.4 percent of total new vehicle sales, according to Autodata Corp.

GM is making a huge investment ahead of consumer demand, said Jeff Schuster, senior vice president of the consulting firm LMC Automotive.

“They’re going to need to weather that, not only with investors, but just from an overall financial standpoint,” he said.

The announcement also comes at a time when the global economy is slowing, in part due to the coronavirus outbreak. LMC on March 4 reduced its 2020 U.S. new vehicle sales forecast from 16.8 million to 16.5 million, according to Schuster.

GM’s flexible, modular approach to EV development will drive significant economies of scale and create new revenue opportunities, Barra said, including:

Continuous Improvement in Battery Costs: GM’s joint venture with LG Chem will drive battery cell costs below \$100/kWh. The cells use a proprietary low cobalt chemistry and ongoing technological and manufacturing breakthroughs will drive costs even lower.

Flexibility: GM’s new global platform is flexible enough to build a wide range of trucks, SUVs, crossovers, cars and commercial vehicles with outstanding design, performance, packaging, range and affordability.

Capital Efficiency: GM can spend less capital to scale its EV business because it is able to leverage existing property, including land, buildings, tools and production equipment such as body shops and paint shops.

Complexity Reduction: The vehicle and propulsion systems were designed together to minimize complexity and part counts beyond today’s EVs, which are less complex than conventional vehicles powered by internal combustion engines. For example, GM plans 19 different battery and drive unit configurations initially, compared with 550 internal combustion

powertrain combinations available today.

Rising Customer Acceptance: Third-party forecasters expect U.S. EV volumes to more than double from 2025 to 2030 to about 3 million units on average. GM believes volumes could be materially higher as more EVs are launched in popular segments, charging networks grow and the total cost of ownership to consumers continues to fall.

New Sources of Revenue: By vertically integrating the manufacture of battery cells, the company can reach beyond its own fleet and license technology to others.

The first generation of GM’s future EV program will be profitable. The initial programs will pave the way for further accretive growth. GM’s technology can be scaled to meet customer demand much higher than the more than 1 million global sales the company expects mid-decade.

Chevrolet, Cadillac, GMC and Buick will all be launching new EVs starting this year. The next new Chevrolet EV will be a new version of the Bolt EV, launching in late 2020, followed by the 2022 Bolt EUV, launching Summer 2021.

The Bolt EUV will be the first vehicle outside of the Cadillac brand to feature Super Cruise, the industry’s first true hands-free driving technology for the highway, which GM will expand



This mockup shows how the new GM battery systems will look.

to 22 vehicles by 2023, including 10 by next year.

The Cruise Origin, a self-driving, electric shared vehicle, shown to the public in January 2020 in San Francisco, was the first product revealed using GM’s

third generation EV platform and Ultium batteries. Next will be the Cadillac Lyriq SUV in April.

Details about its launch will be shared then. The reveal of the Ultium-powered GMC HUMMER EV will follow on May 20.

Ford Adding EV Technology to Its Commercial Van Portfolio

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now,” said Farley. “We know their vehicles operate as a connected mobile business and their technology needs are different than retail customers. So Ford is thinking deeply on connectivity relationships that integrate with our in-vehicle high-speed electrical architectures and cloud-based data services to provide these businesses smart vehicles beyond just the electric powertrains.”

Smart technology built in to the all-electric Transit helps to optimize fleet efficiency and reduce waste, as well as improve driver behavior by providing insights into operator performance, Farley said. Fleets can leverage insightful data collected through Ford Telematics using an embedded FordPass Connect modem featuring a 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspot with connectivity for up to 10 devices.

Managers can use Ford Data Services tools like live map GPS tracking, geofencing and vehicle diagnostics to see key performance indicators at a glance for vehicle and driver.

A suite of Ford driver-assist technologies can help improve driver confidence and avoid or reduce the severity of a collision. The vehicle includes standard Pre-Collision Assist with Automatic Emergency Braking plus Pedestrian Detection, Forward Collision Warning, Post-Collision Braking, Lane-Keeping System and auto high-beam headlamps.

With 35 years of commercial vehicle leadership, Ford knows customers need the right tool to get the job done.

The all-electric Ford Transit will offer uncompromised cargo capacity and the power of choice with a variety of chassis options, including cargo van, cutaway and chassis cab, plus three roof

heights and three body lengths, Farley said.

Customers will have the full backing of the company’s massive electric vehicle-certified dealer network, more than 730 commercial vehicle centers

across the U.S. and Canada, and access to Ford’s charging network – North America’s largest public charging network.

Fleet operators can expect advantages beyond just eliminating trips to the gas station. All-electric

powertrains mean significantly less scheduled maintenance than internal combustion engines, plus lower operating costs.

Electric vehicle fleets may benefit from federal, state and local electric vehicle tax incentives.



Jeffrey Kommor



David G. Buckingham



Mike Koval Jr.

Bigland Leaving FCA, Replacements Named

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- 2010, Director - Midwest Business Center.
- 2009, Senior Manager - Sales Operations, Northeast Business Center.
- 2008, Senior Manager - Retail Sales Promotions, Northeast Business Center.
- 2005, Senior Manager - Dealer Operations.

Kommor holds a bachelor’s degree in marketing from Clarkson University in Potsdam, N.Y., and an associate degree in management from Nassau Community College in Garden City, N.Y.

David Buckingham was named chairman, president and CEO of FCA Canada. Previously, Buckingham was Chief Operating Officer of FCA Canada, a position he was named to in June 2011. Prior to that he served as V.P. - Sales, a position he was named to in June 2006. In that role, he was responsible for all sales development and strategy, business management, dealer development, retail strategies, fleet sales, and business center operations.

Since joining the company in

1988 as a sales trainee, Buckingham has worked in the Toronto and Calgary markets, as well as the Windsor Headquarters.

Buckingham’s professional background includes:

- 2020 - current, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, FCA Canada.
- 2011, Chief Operating Officer
- 2006, Vice President - Sales.
- 2006, Senior Manager - Eastern Business Center Operations.
- 2002, Senior Manager - Sales, Ontario Region.
- 2001, Distribution Supervisor - Sales.
- 2000, Field Operations Planning Specialist - Sales.

Mike Koval was named Ad Interim head of Ram Brand, North America. Previously he was Director - U.S. Ram Brand Product Marketing, a position he held since June 2019. In that role, he was responsible for Ram brand strategy including product portfolio, marketing and retail sales planning in the U.S.

Koval has held a variety of positions of increasing responsibility which included head of

Ram Brand Operations where he handled vehicle and media mix optimization and pricing strategies.

His work experience and academic background include:

- 2020 - current, Ad Interim Head of Ram Brand, FCA - North America.
- 2019, Director - U.S. Ram Brand Product Marketing.
- 2016, Head of Ram Brand Operations - FCA North America.
- 2013, U.S. Retail Incentives, Sales Incentives Specialist.
- 2011, Demand Planning and Order Management.
- 2009, Retail Supply Chain Manager - Great Lakes Business Center - FCA US LLC.
- 2008, Operations Manager – Great Lakes Business Center - Chrysler LLC.
- 2004-2008, Variety of sales positions within the Great Lakes Business Center.
- 2002, Senior Staff Agent - Global Customer Relations - DaimlerChrysler.

Koval holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Central Michigan (2002).

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The Preferred Brand of Detroit's Auto Industry

Detroit Manufacturing Class Now Gets National Roll-Out

In response to the significant need for employees with “up-scaled” knowledge and skills in the advanced manufacturing environment, LIFT, the Detroit-based National Manufacturing Innovation Institute, and Amatrol have roll-outed nationally a new learning system designed to prepare a workforce of highly skilled technicians who understand materials science and have the abilities needed to optimize manufacturing technologies, processes, and systems.

Following successful pilots in three different school districts in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois, IGNITE: Mastering Manufacturing will now be available for implementation by high schools across the nation. IGNITE is an innovative three-year curriculum built around real industry prob-

lems and challenges, said LIFT spokesman Joe Steele.

It uses engaging, technology-infused course materials to inspire student interest and encourage participation in learning. Students completing the curriculum are equipped for success as the next generation of multi-skilled engineering technicians, technologists, or engineers. The program was designed in modules, so it can be rolled out as a one, two, or three-year program.

Three components form the IGNITE curriculum, informing and building off each other to help students develop their skills in a learning environment.

They are Materials Science, Advanced Manufacturing Systems and Processes and Introduction to Advanced Manufacturing.

GM to Add 3500 Charging Stations

Call it putting your money where your mouth is.

GM CEO Mary Barra said the company is on a path to zero emissions and that means building a lot more electric cars.

As part of that effort, General Motors is making electric vehicle charging for employees even more accessible with the addition of 3,500 new EV charging plugs throughout its U.S. and Canadian facilities. This will triple the amount of charging locations that GM currently provides, said GM spokeswoman Jordana Strosberg.

“This is another step down the path to making EV ownership easier for everyone, especially for our own employees,” said Mark Reuss, GM president. “Charging infrastructure is crucial to wider acceptance of EVs, and we’ll continue to do everything we can to improve it, both for our employees and for all our customers. We encourage other companies to do likewise.”

Increasing the number of EV charging locations available to consumers is one of the top contributors to growing EV adoption. GM believes charging should be ubiquitous and is working with charging providers to offer EV owners options on where to charge.

With the internal popularity of the Chevrolet Bolt EV, and with the well-publicized GMC and Cadillac models that will roll out in the future, GM is committed to ensuring that all employees are able to conveniently charge their vehicles as the employee EV-owner population grows, Reuss said.

Currently, General Motors helps owners connect with certified at-home charging electricians through Qmerit and recently made enhancements to its Energy Assist feature in the latest version of the myChevrolet app to provide Chevrolet Bolt EV owners improved access to a nationwide network of public charging locations and real-time location data.

Workplace charging is a primary charging source for many EV drivers, yet 900,000 out of 1 million EV drivers are not able to charge their vehicles at work, Strosberg said. Availability of workplace chargers has been shown to encourage EV adoption, and drivers are six times more likely to drive an EV when charging capabilities are provided at their workplace.

“Over 90 percent of EV owners charge either at home, at work or a combination of both,” said Rick Spina, vice president of EV/AV commercialization and infrastructure. “We have new EVs from GMC for the 2022 model year and from Cadillac planned for the 2023 model year, and we want to make it as convenient as possible for our employees to enjoy the rewards of EV ownership.”

Workplace charging is valuable for employees and businesses alike, Spina said. GM hopes to show other companies the value of investing in workplace charging, as it is an affordable employee benefit, supports talent attraction and retention, and showcases the company’s commitment to sustainability.

GM will prioritize charging installation sites based on employee need and will work with charging infrastructure companies to

begin installing the charging locations starting in late 2020. GM employees will have access to Level 2 charging, ideal for efficiently charging EVs throughout a workday.

Level 2 chargers can charge the current Chevrolet Bolt EV model up to a speed of 25 miles every hour, Strosberg said.

GM recently accelerated its commitment to power 100 percent of global operations with renewable energy by 2040. In the U.S., 100 percent of facilities will be powered with renewable energy by 2030, which means the EVs charged at GM campuses will eventually all be powered by a green grid.

This EV charging investment is a continuation of GM’s commitment to an all-electric future, Reuss said.

GM also announced that the Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant will be GM’s first plant that is 100 percent devoted to electric vehicles and will build the new GMC HUMMER EV for the 2022 model year.

In 2019, General Motors announced a new collaboration with LG Chem to mass produce battery cells for future battery-electric vehicles, and a partnership with Qmerit to create a more accessible at-home charging solution.



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Ex-UAW President Jones Enters Guilty Plea

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

describes a scheme to pocket cash and enjoy luxuries, starting in 2010, long before he rose to the presidency. The cost: more than \$1 million.

Jones and other officials set up accounts that were supposed to be used for legitimate conference expenses in California.

Instead, according to the government, officials used the money to pay for “private villas, high-end liquor and meal expenses, golfing apparel, golf clubs and green fees.”

For example, Jones ordered more than \$13,000 worth of cigars from a shop in Arizona in 2015, according to the court document.

The latest person to plead guilty in the scheme was Edward “Nick” Robinson, on March 2. He was based at the UAW’s Region 5 office near St. Louis, which was led by Jones until Jones became UAW president in 2018. The government said Robinson fraudulently obtained \$500,000 to \$700,000 and gave at least \$60,000 to Jones.

Vance Pearson, another Jones ally from his time in St. Louis, pleaded guilty in February. He succeeded Jones as head of the regional office.

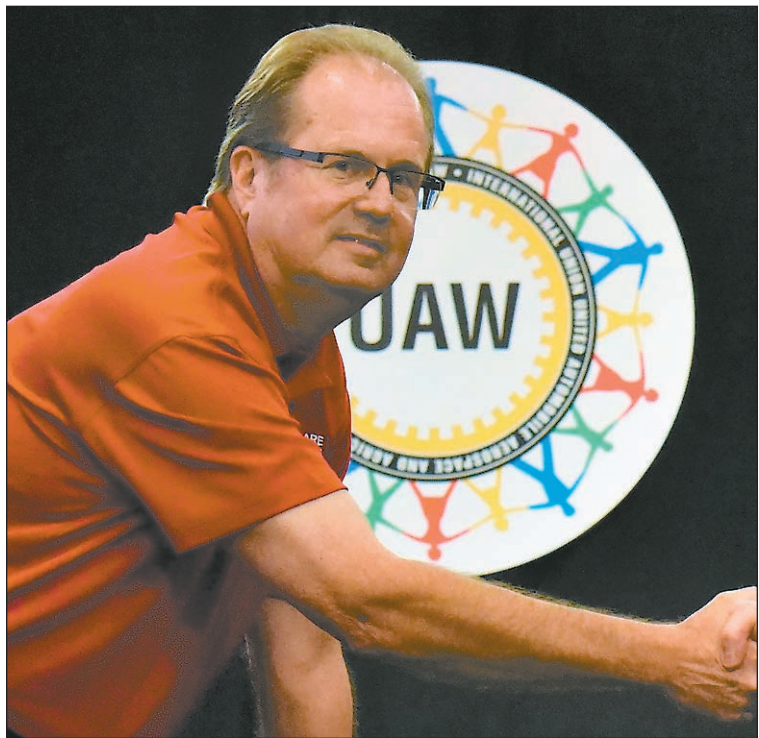


GM is making it easier for its employees to plug-in their electric cars.


The UAW expressed disgust about the allegations against Jones, who marched in Detroit’s Labor Day parade in September, just days after agents seized golf clubs and more than \$30,000 from his home in Canton Township.

“This is a violation of trust, a violation of the sacred management of union dues, and goes against everything we believe in as a union,” the UAW said.


The union now is led by Rory Gamble, who’s promised to reform the culture in its top ranks.



Jones has agreed to cooperate with federal authorities in their probe.



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Detroit Automakers Show Off Their Work Trucks

Chevrolet's Silverado HD Truck Sales on the Rise

Where better to show just how hard your work trucks perform than a national truck show?

At The Work Truck Show, Chevrolet announced a new engine for the Express and Low Cab Forward trucks, as well as a host of improvements for the Silverado 4500 HD, 5500 HD and 6500 HD chassis cabs.

These changes are expected to fuel further growth for General Motors' commercial fleet business, which has seen a 67 percent increase in sales since 2013, said GM spokesman Chris Bonelli.

"Our commercial fleet sales growth is a result of excellent product and an even better team," said Ed Peper, U.S. vice president, GM Fleet. "The changes for Express, Low Cab Forward and medium-duty trucks are great examples of the team's commitment to helping customers with their fleet vehicle needs. With the product changes for 2020, we are on track for another year of strong commercial growth."

For 2021, Express configurations and Low Cab Forward will be available late this summer with a new 6.6L V8 gas engine. Originally introduced in the all-new 2020 Silverado 2500 HD and 3500 HD, the direct-injected engine is SAE rated at 401 horsepower and 464 lb-ft of torque for the Express, Bonelli said.

That is 17 percent more horsepower and 24 percent more peak torque than the 6.0L it replaces. The 6.6L output on the Low Cab Forward is 350 horsepower and 425 lb-ft of torque, which is nearly 18 percent more horsepower and 14 percent more peak torque than its outgoing 6.0L.

Whether hauling equipment, supplies or people, the additional output and wider torque band will give drivers more on-demand power and confidence, especially with heavy payloads. Approximately 70 percent of current Express owners opted for the 6.0L V8 option, and Chevrolet expects this new engine to garner the same or increased take rate.

Demand for Express remains



2021 Express configurations will be available late this summer with a new 6.6L V8 gas engine.

high across passenger, cargo and cutaway configurations, with commercial fleet increasing 12 percent year over year in 2019, Bonelli said. Low Cab Forward trucks also had an excellent 2019 with a 109 percent increase in commercial sales year over year, gaining an estimated two points of share in the segment.

Debuting in 2018, the Silverado 4500 HD, 5500 HD and 6500 HD chassis cab trucks fill an important space in the Chevrolet Commercial portfolio.

Continuing to listen to its customers, Chevrolet is bringing a host of updates to medium-duty chassis cabs to further increase performance and flexibility for

upfitting, Peper said. This includes maximum gross combined weight rating is now up to 37,000 pounds, offering a 23 percent increase in hauling capability.

A new mechanical locking rear axle improves traction by automatically locking when a rear tire slips – such as driving off-road or on slippery surfaces.

Ford's Adding More Options To F-650 and F-750 Trucks

Call it big news for Ford truck fans.

The company is marking 35 years as the country's best-selling line of commercial vehicles by adding even more customer-driven options to its F-650 and F-750 Medium Duty trucks and E-Series cutaway and stripped chassis, said Ford spokeswoman Elizabeth Kraft.

"We are just as passionate about the success of our customers' businesses as they are," said Mark Buzzell, Ford director of fleet, lease and remarketing operations. "So, we have devoted decades to developing deep insights into their wants and needs. This focus has led us to create a winning portfolio of commercial vehicles customers love and rely on every day."

One of Ford's latest innovations, the new F-600 Super Duty chassis cab is now available to order. Ford F-600 delivers the capability of a Class 6 truck in a familiar Class 5 package, giving a new choice to fleets and vocational customers

who need additional payload or want to mount heavier upfits without moving into a bigger truck, Buzzell said.

It will be available for delivery during the summer of 2020, Kraft said.

For customers who prefer alternative fuels, Ford is offering a gaseous fuel prep package for its new 7.3-liter V8 gasoline engine in current model year Super Duty F-450, F-550 and F-600 chassis cab, Medium Duty, E-Series and F-53 and F-59 stripped chassis vehicles.

The package includes upgraded valvetrain components to withstand higher operating temperatures and lower lubricity of gaseous fuels so the vehicle can be converted by a Ford Qualified Vehicle Modifier to run on CNG or propane.

Ford sold more of its biggest work trucks last year than it has since 1997, Kraft said. Sales of F-650 and F-750 are up 37 percent year-over-year, with total volume of 16,510 trucks for 2019.

Building on this momentum,



Sales of F-650 and F-750 are up 37 percent year-over-year, with total volume of 16,510 trucks for 2019.

Ford further enhances the versatility of its Medium Duty trucks for model year 2022 with a new option for the available 7.3-liter gas engine, Kraft said.

For the first time, an integrated air compressor will be available for the 7.3-liter engine.

The compressor can be used to

power air brakes, air suspension and other accessories like air horns or air ride seats. Currently, air brakes are only available on diesel-powered trucks, Kraft said. Ford is the only manufacturer offering a choice of gasoline or diesel engine for Class 6-7 conventional cab trucks – its 7.3-liter gas

V8 or updated 6.7-liter Power Stroke diesel V8.

Ford Medium Duty trucks with the 7.3-liter gas engine can cost up to \$9,245 less than those with the 6.7-liter diesel. They are recommended for applications with lighter duty cycles, annual mileage and torque requirements.

Ram Offering a Snow Plow For Its 1500 Truck Line

Winter may be winding down for 2020, but it will return for 2021 and Ram wants people to be prepared.

That's why Ram Truck introduced a new Snow Plow Prep package for the 2021 Ram 1500 at National Truck Equipment Association's (NTEA) "The Work Truck Show" in Indianapolis, said FCA spokesman Trevor Dorchies.

"As part of Ram's commitment to continuous improvement within the segment, we now offer a Snow Plow Prep package for Ram 1500 customers," said Reid Bigland, head of Ram Brand. "Ram has taken a larger presence in the commercial vehicle market and this offering is the latest expansion of our hard-working trucks."

The new Ram 1500 Snow Plow Prep option is available for \$195 and includes a 220-amp alternator, truck-side plow wiring harness and a rear power-sliding window with defroster. The ac-

tive air dam is removed when this option is selected to make way for plow mounts. This new package is available on 2021 Ram 1500 Tradesman, Big Horn and Laramie 4x4 models that are equipped with the 5.7-liter Hemi V8, 5.7-liter Hemi eTorque V8 or 3.0-liter EcoDiesel V6 engine.

The plow, mounts and controller are all sold separately and are available through several manufacturers. The Ram 1500 Snow Plow Prep package will be available later this year.

The Ram 1500 is the no-compromise benchmark for durability, technology, efficiency and convenience with features never-before offered in a pickup.

The Ram 1500 features up to 12,750 pounds of towing capability and 2,300 pounds of payload. The eTorque mild hybrid system delivers improved fuel efficiency in both V-6 (standard) and V-8 configurations. The Ram 1500 is America's most powerful half-ton diesel pickup



Ram Truck introduced a Snow Plow Prep package on 2021 Ram 1500 at The Work Truck Show in Indianapolis.

with 480 lb.-ft. of torque and most capable light-duty diesel, with towing capability up to 12,560 pounds.

With growing sales, the Ram Truck brand continues to win new customers, Dorchies said. The brand has emerged as a

leader by investing in new products, infusing them with durable powertrains, robust chassis, new technology and features that further enhance their capabilities while delivering low total cost of ownership.

Commercial truck and van

customers have a demanding range of needs and require their vehicles to work. The Ram 1500, 2500 and 3500 pickups; 3500, 4500 and 5500 Chassis Cabs; and Ram ProMaster and ProMaster City vans are designed to deliver a total package, Dorchies said.

Carlos Ghosn Faces Some Additional Legal Trouble

by BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) – Lebanon's president on March 2 suggested to visiting Japanese deputy justice minister that Nissan's fugitive ex-boss Carlos Ghosn won't be extradited back to Japan and remains in the hands of Lebanon's judiciary, according to a presidential statement. The Japanese official said Ghosn should stand trial in Japan.

Ghosn was smuggled out of Japan to his ancestral homeland of Lebanon late last year despite supposedly rigorous surveillance. He had jumped \$14 million bail to evade charges of financial misconduct that could carry a jail sentence of up to 15 years.

Ghosn, who led Nissan for nearly 20 years, says he is innocent and that he fled Japan in the belief he could not get a fair trial there.

Hiroyuki Yoshiie, Japan's deputy justice minister, met Monday with Lebanese President Michel Aoun and the ministers of justice and foreign affairs.

Ghosn was arrested in Japan in late 2018 and is facing charges there of under-reporting income and breach of trust.

A statement released by Aoun's office said the president told Yoshiie that Lebanon repeatedly sent letters to Japan regarding Ghosn's case while he was under arrest, without getting any official response.

The president stressed the two country's had no extradition treaty, and added that Ghosn entered Lebanon legally through its international airport using his French passport and a Lebanese identity card.

Lebanese prosecutors issued a travel ban for Ghosn in January and asked him to hand in his French passport, following an Interpol-issued notice against him.

Yoshiie gave a measured response to journalists' questions about whether Japan was officially asking for Ghosn's extradition, during a press conference March 2 at the Japanese Embassy following the meetings.

"He should be obviously tried in Japan and this is something we want to emphasize," he said in Japanese, as his comments were simultaneously translated into English.

He said he'd explained Tokyo's views on Ghosn's flight from Japan and was "able to gain understanding of the Lebanese government." He said Tokyo and Beirut have "agreed to cooperate with each other," but did not elaborate on the extent of that cooperation.

On Feb. 28, Japan's Justice Minister Masako Mori said she was dispatching Yoshiie to Beirut to explain the Japanese criminal justice system and improve cooperation.

Ghosn had made his first public appearance in Lebanon in early January saying he fled a "nightmare" and vowed to defend his name wherever he can get a fair trial.

Nissan, maker of the Leaf electric car and Z sports car, said in a statement regarding the justice official's trip that it hoped Ghosn would return to Japan to stand trial, "so that all the facts can be properly established under Japan's judicial system."

Nissan's sales have plunged recently, and the brand is widely considered to have been tarnished by the controversy around Ghosn.

Fuel Leaks Starting Fires Force Kia to Recall 193K

by TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Kia is recalling more than 193,000 cars and minivans in yet another move to fix nagging problems that could cause engine fires.

The largest of two United States recalls released by the government in the last week of February covers nearly 142,000 2013 and 2014 Optima midsize cars.

They have 2.4-liter direct fuel injection or 2-liter direct injection turbocharged engines.

Kia says a fuel hose can deteriorate and crack due to engine heat. The hoses can leak and cause fires.

A fix is still being developed. The recall is expected to start April 16.

The second recall covers about 51,000 2011 and 2012 Sedona minivans.

The fuel injector rail can crack from exposure to heat, causing a gas leak.

Dealers will replace the injector part starting April 16.

No fires or injuries have been reported in either recall. But Kia has eight reports of fuel leaks in Optimas and 24 reports in Sedonas.

The recalls are the latest in a litany of problems that can cause engines to burn in models made by Kia and affiliated South Korean automaker Hyundai. Past problems have triggered investigations by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Earlier this month Kia recalled nearly 229,000 older Sedonas and Sorento SUVs because moisture can get into the antilock brake control computers, causing an electrical short and possibly a fire.

Hyundai recalled nearly 430,000 older Elantra small cars due to the same problem.

Last April, NHTSA opened two additional investigations into fires involving Hyundai and Kia vehicles after getting complaints of more than 3,100 fires and 103 injuries.

The agency granted a petition seeking the investigations by the nonprofit Center for Auto Safety, a consumer advocacy group.

The investigations, one for Hyundai and the other for Kia, cover noncrash fires in almost 3 million vehicles from the affiliated automakers.

NHTSA had previously said it would incorporate the noncrash fires into a 2017 investigation that examined recalls of Hyundai and Kia vehicles for engine failures.

It opened the new probes “based on the agency’s analysis of information received from multiple manufacturers, consumer complaints and other sources.”

Engine failure and fire problems with Hyundais and Kias have affected more than 6 million vehicles since 2015, according to NHTSA documents.

So far, Hyundai and Kia have recalled approximately 2.4 million different vehicles to fix problems that can cause fires and engine failures.

In addition, the automakers are doing a “product improvement campaign” covering another 3.7 million vehicles to install software that will alert drivers of possible engine failures and send the cars into a reduced-speed “limp” mode if problems are detected.

Holden Brand Made Some Interesting Cars Over the Years

by Jim Stickford

GM's announcement that it was closing down all its Holden operations in Australia and New Zealand left some fans of the brand asking if there wasn't a way for GM to sell the brand to let it survive.

Randy Reese, co-owner of Left Hand Utes in Denver, said that while the Holden brand isn't that well known in the United States, it still has some fans.

"In my opinion, GM could have gifted the company to, I don't know, the government of Australia," Reese said. "They could have turned Holden from a subsidiary brand back to Holden Ltd. and then sold that company the parts it needed to operate. There are still a lot of companies that use right-hand wheel vehicles – Australia, New Zealand, South Africa."

Reeves said that GM had done good things for Holden, giving the company a true world engine in the early 2000s. And Holden provided GM with a couple of vehicles in the United States.

"The 2004 Pontiac GTO was a left-handed version of the Holden Monaro, which itself was a coupe version of the Holden Commodore," Reese said. "They imported that car to this market."

Jim O'Clair, a columnist for *Hemmings Classic Cars* and a general auto enthusiast, said the Holden was able to export some of its vehicles as Chevy SS and a police pursuit vehicle. They used rear-wheel drive technology.

"I liked some of their Utes," O'Clair said. "But Holden really didn't have a reputation over here. I will say that when GM went to X bodies and a more square look for their cars here, Holden vehicles still had their own distinct look, cars that still caught the eye with a muscle look. This was at a time when GM was getting away from performance cars."

O'Clair agreed with Reese that it would be nice for GM to have found investors who could have taken over Holden's remaining operations.

"GM was reducing its operations there for a long time," O'Clair said. "But with this last move, they are putting 1,000 people out of work in Australia and 2,000 out of a job in New Zealand."

Alex Luft of the Web site The GM Authority said that Holden's history under GM for the past couple of decades is interesting. The company attempted to introduce the Opel brand to Australia in 2012. The move lasted a year.

Luft said a lot of resources went into the move, but it was unsuccessful. This was happening at about the same time that GM was trying to build Chevrolet into more of a world brand and tried to introduce it to Europe.

That attempt also failed and GM eventually sold Opel to PSA in 2017.

"With Holden and Opel no longer part of GM's portfolio, I think in five or 10 years, GM can attempt to truly build Chevrolet into a true world brand," Luft said.

In the past GM has had different brands selling in different parts of the world. If you lived in Europe and wanted a GM product, you bought an Opel. If you lived in Australia, you bought a Holden.

But that business model is no longer sustainable, Luft said.

"If you want to buy a Hyundai, you buy an Hyundai, no matter what part of the world you are in," Luft said.

GM spent a lot of time and money working against itself in Europe, Luft said. It was trying to build the Chevy brand while also

trying to make Opel profitable. GM tried to introduce Chevy into Australia at a time when it was spending money on Holden.

Now GM, when it's ready, can introduce one brand into these markets.

"There's power in that," Luft said. "The days of GM being a multi-brand company in different regions of the world is gone. Holden was the last bastion of that."

GM's moves have raised the ire of government officials and employees.

The Web site GoAuto.com.au reported that a "federal parliamentary inquiry will be held into General Motors' decision to withdraw the Holden brand and operations in Australia."

"The push for a Senate probe into GM's shock move – announced earlier this month and to cost the US auto giant more than \$1.6 billion (including the related exit from New Zealand and Thailand) – was led by the Labor party and was unopposed when put to a vote in the upper house on Thursday."

"The terms of reference for the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment, as moved by ALP Senator for Western Australia Louise Pratt, will include the impacts of GM's decision on Holden employees, the dealer network, the company's research and development facilities, and on vehicle owners, the latter including service and repair."

"It will also cover the role of the franchise code and the government's proposed dealership amendments to the code, and "government policy settings on manufacturing, research and development, business support and transition, and employee support."

"General Motors delivered the devastating news on February 17 that it was pulling up stumps with Holden in Australia, taking with it around 600 company jobs and sending many thousands more out of work as some 200 franchised dealerships are also closed by the end of this year."

Luft said that in its day, Holden made some interesting cars that used rear-wheel drive to make vehicles that performed and were fun to drive. Vehicles like the Pontiac GTO and the Pontiac G8. The fifth generation Camaro was a rebadged Holden and the Chevy SS was a four-door muscle car that worked.

Reese said that GM had depended too much on financial aid from the government in Australia.

According to Wikipedia "In March 2012, Holden was given a \$270 million lifeline by the Australian, South Australian and Victorian governments. In return, Holden planned to inject over \$1 billion into car manufacturing in Australia."

"They estimated the new investment package would return around \$4 billion to the Australian economy and see GM Holden continue making cars in Australia until at least 2022."

"Industry Minister Kim Carr confirmed on 10 July 2013 that talks had been scheduled between the Australian government and Holden. On 13 August 2013, 1,700 employees at the Elizabeth plant in northern Adelaide voted to accept a three-year wage freeze in order to decrease the chances of the production line's closure in 2016. Holden's ultimate survival, though, depended on continued negotiations with the Federal Government – to secure funding for the period from 2016 to 2022 – and the final decision of the global headquarters in Detroit."

"Following an unsuccessful attempt to secure the extra funding required from the new Liber-



1961 Holden EK Special Edition Station Sedan



1971 Holden Monaro GTS Coupe



1985 Holden SS Commodore VK

al/National coalition government, on 11 December 2013, General Motors announced that Holden would cease engine and vehicle manufacturing operations in Australia by the end of 2017. As a result, 2,900 jobs would be lost over four years. Beyond 2017 Holden's Australian presence would consist of a national sales company, a parts distribution centre and a global design studio.

"In May 2014, GM reversed their decision to abandon the Lang Lang Proving Ground and decided to keep it as part of their engineering capability in Australia."

"In 2015, Holden again began selling a range of Opel-derived cars comprising the Astra VXR and Insignia VXR (both based on the OPC models sold by Vauxhall) and Cascadia."

"Later that year, Holden also announced plans to sell the Eu-

ropean Astra and the Korean Cruze alongside each other from 2017.

"In December 2015, Belgian entrepreneur Guido Dumarey commenced negotiations to buy the Commodore manufacturing plant in South Australia, with a view to continue producing a rebadged Zeta-based premium range of rear and all-wheel drive vehicles for local and export sales. The proposal was met with doubt in South Australia, and it later came to nothing. On 20 October 2017, Holden ceased manufacturing vehicles in Australia. Holden then imported their cars from Opel in Germany and GM plants in Canada, U.S., Thailand, and South Korea."

Highlights of Holden's history include:

1856 – James Alexander Holden establishes a saddlery in King William St, Adelaide, and what is later to become the second old-

est brand in automotive transport, after Peugeot.

1885 – JA Holden and Son partners with Henry Frost, to become Holden and Frost which later starts building horse drawn carriages and coaches

1951 – First Holden Ute goes on sale – named the 50-2106 Coupe Utility.

1978 – VB Commodore is launched, to replace the Kingswood and quickly becomes Australia's top selling car.

1999 – Last Australian built Holden V8 engine produced at Fishermans Bend.

2007 – New export deal announced – SS Commodore to be sold in US as Pontiac G8.

2019 – After 41 years as Holden's longest serving nameplate in Australia, Holden announces ZB Commodore will not be replaced as part of Holden's move to an all SUV and LCV product range in line with market trends.



GM will be adding approximately 1,200 additional hourly employees at its Lansing facilities in the near future.

Indian Car Market Sees No Fast Recovery

Animesh Kumar, director of Automotive Consulting at Global-Data, an international research and consulting company, said the Indian auto industry is in a doldrums.

“The Indian automotive industry showed no sign of recovery in February 2020 as the year-on-year (YoY) domestic sales volume across passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles and two-wheelers segments continued to decline by 3.65 percent,” Jumar said. “According to the data from the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, the top OEMs, including Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai and Mahindra and Mahindra witnessed a decline of 3.6 percent, 7.2 percent and 42 percent, respectively, in their YoY overall vehicle sales.

“The prolonged economic slowdown, Bharat stage VI emission standards (BS-VI) transition, increasing cost of vehicle ownership and supply chain disruptions due to the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) are some of the key factors that hampered the passenger vehicle sales.

“The Union Budget 2020 also failed to include measures or announcements that could have elevated sales as well as sentiments. The recent price hikes announced by some OEMs have also impacted the sales as the costs have gone up between 2 to 5 percent.

“Due to the BS-VI transition, customers are postponing their purchase decisions as they are either looking for BS-VI compliant and new models or are await-

ing discounts from OEMs and dealers to clear BS-IV inventory.

“In March 2020, the domestic sales of passenger vehicles is expected to be flat or at the best, there would be a nominal increase in volumes. Even though there are some key new and facelift models, including Hyundai Creta, Honda City and VW T-Roc, scheduled for launch in March, any improvement in sales is likely to be witnessed only in late March and following months. While some customers are expecting huge discounts in March on BS-IV inventory, it is unlikely that the sales will increase significantly. Unlike previous similar transitions, the BS-IV inventory levels with OEMs and dealers are low due to measures put in by OEMs since late 2019.”

GM's Sales of Popular SUVs Mean More Hires for Plants

General Motors is adding more than 1,200 jobs at its Lansing manufacturing operations to meet customer demand for popular mid-size SUVs and to support the launch of two all-new Cadillac sedans.

Lansing Grand River Assembly will add a second shift in General Assembly, resulting in the plant adding almost 400 employees to support the launch of the Cadillac CT4 and CT5.

Lansing Delta Township Assembly will add a third shift to support production of its popular Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave.

Approximately 800 employees will be added, said General Motors spokesman Dan Flores.

“We are excited to provide these opportunities in Lansing,” said Phil Kienle, vice president, GM North American Manufacturing and Labor Relations. “Our team members have proven experience in building high-quality vehicles and are well-prepared to meet the needs of our customers. This is great news for our manufacturing sites as well as the Lansing community.”

Since 2015, GM has invested more than \$1 billion into Lansing manufacturing.

This includes the \$36 million investment at Lansing Delta Township last year for future mid-size SUV production, as well as the \$175 million investment at Lansing Grand River in 2018 to modernize tooling and equipment for the all-new Cadillac CT4 and CT5.

Both shift additions will be operational in the second quarter of 2020, Flores said.

Lansing Delta Township Assembly has produced over three million vehicles since it opened

operations back in the year 2006.

The plant is GM's newest plant in the United States, blending the best practices and newest technology into one facility. With more than 110 years of automotive history in the Lansing Area, LDT is proud to be a community partner and the first manufacturing facility to be a Gold Certified Leader in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

General Motors' Lansing Grand River Assembly is in Lansing, Michigan and is GM's second-newest U.S. assembly plant, Flores said.

Lansing Grand River manufactures the Chevrolet Camaro as well as the Cadillac CT5 and CT4 family of vehicles and their V-series performance versions, on a single production line.

General Motors' Lansing Grand River Assembly is in Lansing, MI and is GM's second-newest U.S. assembly plant. Constructed in 1999, it is designed around GM's Global Manufacturing System (GMS) and focuses on maximum performance in safety, people systems, quality, customer responsiveness, cost and environment, Flores said.

In 2019, GM paid a total of \$166,006,878 in wages. A total of \$28,619,569 in total taxes were paid, not including social security and medicare taxes, Flores said.

The facility is on 111 acres, or 3.4 million square feet, of land and employs 1,235 for assembly and 159 for stamping. Hourly employees total about 220.

GM's Lansing Delta Township facility generated a total of \$248,881,507 in wages in 2019. Total taxes withheld, not including social security and medicare, was \$44,476,502.

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