

Press Conference Paris Motor Show

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Speech Bernhard Maier

CEO ŠKODA AUTO

Bonjour Mesdames et Messieurs and a very warm welcome to ŠKODA!

And here it is: The new KODIAQ RS!

With the first SUV RS model in ŠKODA's history, we continue to write our RS story.

The predicate “RS” has a long tradition at SKODA and is the label for our most sporty models – since more than 40 years. And these models are truly successful: In some markets we achieve up to 20% overall market share.

So it became crystal clear, that with the setup of our recently started SUV campaign, the RS badge will be seen on our top product. And by the way: There was a strong demand from the market side.

The KODIAQ RS is equipped with the most modern, clean and highly efficient twin-turbo diesel engine, which delivers 240 horsepower and 500 Newton-meters of torque. It's the perfect combination of sportiness and exceptional everyday utility.

Ladies and gentlemen,
our industry is living in a fundamental paradigm change. And in these days we are again facing lots of discussions about the individual mobility.

At ŠKODA, we already accepted the long-term challenge two years ago and with the implementation of our Strategy 2025 we do have a clear plan and SKODA is on the move:

In the next days, our one millionth vehicle this year will roll off the production line – we smash this magic number even earlier than in previous years. Our models have been very well received by our customers worldwide – especially here in France: In the first half of the year, we delivered 25% more cars than in the year before. I would like to thank all customers for the confidence they have in us. They – you, Ladies and Gentlemen – are the reason we continue this path with great passion and dedication!

And since we're on the topic of big numbers: At the beginning of August, we celebrated already another millionth anniversary. A very special KAROQ left our production halls – it was the millionth SUV that ŠKODA has ever manufactured. And here on the picture you see the very proud customers at the day of the handover.

The success story began in 2009 with the YETI. And since their launch, our current KODIAQ and KAROQ SUVs have become true bestsellers.

Now we're taking it to the next level, expanding our compact SUV range to include the rugged KAROQ Scout and the dynamic KAROQ Sportline. Both versions are celebrating their world premieres here in Paris.

Our SUV campaign is a central part of ŠKODA's Strategy 2025 and is also essential to our broader product campaign: And with today 'till the end of 2020, we will be bringing 20 new models to our customers – nine of them electrified.

Ladies and gentlemen,

SKODA has the potential to exceed the two-million-annual-sales mark by the middle of the next decade. We are transforming the company from being a straightforward volume manufacturer into a real global player.

And this means we're picking up the pace in another two key areas of our Strategy 2025: New mobility services and e-mobility. Within the next five years, we will be investing around two billion euros in these fields alone, making this the largest investment programme in ŠKODA's history.

One example of our new mobility services is the work of our Prague DigiLab's spin-off in Israel: Our colleagues there are cooperating with ten promising start-ups. And since July, we have been involved in Anagog – an Israeli high-tech company developing Big Data technologies.

And we are already on the starting blocks for e-mobility: Next year you will see our first plug-in hybrid and our first all-electric model. And with these cars we deliver what we promised: We bring new technologies like e-mobility to our customers at a time when it's really attractive thanks to shorter charging times, greater travelling distances and a well-developed infrastructure.

And now Ladies and gentlemen, 'really attractive' is also a great description of a very special highlight we've brought along with us today.

Ladies and gentlemen,
the ŠKODA VISION RS!

With the VISION RS we show how the distant future of our RS idea could look like. And as always with our VISION cars: We give a glimpse of an eye of a new model to be offered in short time – especially in regards of the exterior design.

The Paris Motor Show is the perfect place for us to get valuable feedback from you – the experts from the media – and our customers of course.

However, this car is much more than "just" another exciting ŠKODA model. This car is a demonstration of how the RS idea is evolving – an idea that goes back more than 40 years:

Since the legendary victory of the ŠKODA 130 RS at the Monte Carlo Rally, emotions and sportiness have been a solid part of ŠKODA's DNA. So solid, in fact, that we are on the best way to win the WRC 2 Team Championship for the fourth time in a row. And the driver's title is well within our grasp.

Ladies and gentlemen,
so performance is a given. Now for the first time with the VISION RS, we are combining it with sustainability.

Why? Because at ŠKODA, we never settle for "either-or"; we always strive for both.

And in this VISION RS we are using a plug-in hybrid: The 1.5-litre TSI engine gives the car an output of 110 Kilowatts. This is supported by a 75 Kilowatt electric motor, giving the model a range of 70 kilometres on the battery alone – and therefore emission-free local driving. And best of all, thanks to the electric motor, the maximum torque is already available from standstill.

And the interior? Of course, it offers the generous space and many 'Simply Clever' ideas that have made ŠKODA so popular. At the same time, our concept car provides a taster of our enhanced interior design:

In the future, we will rely on a large, central display – the command centre for operation and infotainment for the driver and front passenger. Best-in-class voice command for all the important information on the vehicle – from home or on the road. And for the first time we showcase vegan materials for the seat covers. Another proof of our environmental awareness.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To summarize: the VISION RS combines performance and sustainability. This is how we are transforming the RS idea for the future.

We wish you all an exciting motor show and a good time here with us at the ŠKODA stand. Thank you for being our guests!

Thank you.
