

East Midland Companies Point The Way To The Future Economy At Downing St

Four days before the start of critical global climate change negotiations in Copenhagen, a forward thinking company from the East Midlands has been invited to Downing Street to showcase how the UK's low carbon innovation and partnership are already shaping business for the future economy.

Among 100 companies gathering in Downing Street on Thursday evening who have embraced the low carbon economy will be leading-edge Delta Motorsport, designers of next-generation electric cars based in Silverstone, Northamptonshire.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown said:

'Our transition to a low carbon economy will be a key driver of our future economic prosperity. Delta Motorsport is at the forefront of this transformation. Their innovation and expertise demonstrates why the UK is one of best places in the world for low carbon business.'

When Delta Motorsport first turned its attention to designing an electric vehicle, top speeds of 50 or 60 miles per hour were the norm, and a travel distance of only 30 to 50 miles was possible between charges. Using the advanced technology and engineering skills involved in designing racing vehicles, the company developed the E-4 Coupe, a four-seater car capable of a top speed of 140 miles per hour, and over 200 miles between charges. Currently in production, the first one is due for completion in January 2010. This was only made possible by an initial grant for research and development of £235,000 from the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA).

Lord Davies, Minister for Trade, Investment and Small Business, said:

'The world is engaged in a race to low carbon. Acting early will mean we are well positioned in the new industries that are being created, at the forefront of the technological and social shift that will define the next century. The low carbon transition is therefore everybody's business and everybody's opportunity.'

'The UK's lead in this area makes us well-placed to secure new business overseas and act as a global hub for low carbon products, services and technologies. This is a fine example of how a company with low carbon products and services is already seeking out opportunity and shaping the UK's future economy.'

Simon Dowson co-founder and Managing Director of Delta Motorsport commented;

"When we first looked into developing an electric car, we knew that a key element was to make the vehicle as lightweight as possible, but also affordable. So, we teamed up with another UK company, Advanced Composites Group, to develop press-mould composites, creating the same kind of steel or aluminium panels used for conventional cars at a fraction of the weight.

"We then applied what we knew about aerodynamics in race cars to create an all-new ultra low energy vehicle. In the UK, small companies like ours can benefit from government support, funding and incentives. We also collaborate with other innovative UK companies, pushing us further and helping us to develop the best possible technology. It's an exciting place to be right now."



Picture shows (L-R): Simon Dowson (Delta Motorsport); Donald Burton (Don Bur Trailers); Mark Blundell (Polymer Welding); PM Gordon Brown; and foreground is Lord Davies (Minister Trade, Investment and Small Business).