Beat: Automobiles

SuperTruck Study receives an award from the U.S. Department of Energy

Distinguished Achievement Award

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USPA NEWS - With the “Distinguished Achievement Award“, the U.S. Department of Energy has honoured the results of the SuperTruck Study by Daimler Trucks North America. Research and development project achieves significantly improved efficiency in the road goods transport of the future.

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) has received the “Distinguished Achievement Award“ of the U.S. Department of Energy. With this prestigious award, the Department has recognized the commitment and extraordinary results of the SuperTruck Study. These show ways in which the road goods transport of the future can be made as environmentally compatible and fuel-efficient as possible. At the same time, the study also showed that certain efficiency measures are technologically possible, but they do not make sense economically from today´s perspective.

DTNA initiated the 5-year SuperTruck Study in 2010, and received subsidies amounting to 40 million US dollars from the U.S. Department of Energy for this research and development undertaking. The aim of the Department was to increase the transport efficiency of trucks in U.S. class 8 by 50 percent. Daimler managed to exceed this figure significantly. The SuperTruck improves transport efficiency by 115 percent (measured in ton-miles per gallon) compared to a 2009 baseline truck used for comparison.

The fuel consumption of the SuperTruck is also outstanding. On test drives the truck consumed an average of around 19 liters per 100 kilometers with a gross vehicle weight of 29.5 tonnes and at a speed of around 100 km/h. In this weight category regular consumption to date has been around the 39 liter mark. This means that Daimler Trucks has set a further technological standard for the North American truck market.

The Freightliner SuperTruck demonstrates how fuel consumption can be further reduced by means of specific aerodynamic and energy management measures, plus the use of an intelligent powertrain and other actuators. The SuperTruck is for example equipped with the Detroit DT12 automated transmission and predictive technology which uses GPS and digital 3D maps to control the vehicle speed.

The results of the study relating to aerodynamics and the powertrain have already been incorporated into the series production models Freightliner Cascadia Evolution and Western Star 5700 XE. For example, one in four Freightliner Cascadia Evolution trucks are equipped with the automated Detroit DT12 transmission. While these optimizations are feasible for customer use, the SuperTruck study also shows that for example ultralight materials are not economically viable at this time. Although aluminum for the truck frame and carbon-fiber inside and outside the cab reduce the vehicle weight, they also incur higher material and production costs.

About Daimler Trucks North America
Daimler Trucks North America LLC based in Portland, Oregon is the leading manufacturer of heavy trucks in North America. DTNA produces and markets commercial vehicles under the brand names Freightliner, Western Star and Thomas Built Buses. The DTNA production network extends to nine locations. In addition to headquarters and production in Portland (Oregon) there are four production locations in North Carolina (Cleveland, Gastonia, High Point and Mount Holly) plus production plants in Redford (Michigan) and in Gaffney (South Carolina). DTNA has two further production locations in Mexico (Saltillo and Santiago Tianguistenco).

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