

Press release

SKF's technology creates new car concept

A new car concept, developed by SKF and BERTONE, was unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show today. The new car, called FILO – Italian for wire - contains new, technically advanced products developed by SKF that have enabled the revolutionary design of the interior architecture of the FILO car.

Steering, brakes, gear change and clutch are all controlled by SKF's by-wire technology. At the heart of each system there is an SKF smart electro-mechanical actuating unit under intelligent control. Signals from the driver's control unit are interpreted by logic systems developed by SKF that ensure appropriate behaviour from the individual by-wire systems.

The Guida-Filo - the driver's control unit - blends familiar design elements from today's proven man-machine interface with the benefits of full by-wire operation. The result - a control arrangement that dispenses with the steering column and the pedals - providing designers with an unprecedented freedom to pursue new ideas of how we should think about cars and about driving.

The introduction of the by-wire technique also helps the car manufacturers to produce cars that are more environmentally friendly and with increased safety. The brake-by-wire system, as an example, allows for the elimination of the braking fluid. The steering column and the pedal assembly are still a significant safety worry in frontal impacts. The control system in the FILO concept eliminates both, freeing the driver's side of these potentially dangerous structures.

Mechatronics is a major strategic focus within SKF and its Automotive Division. For the automotive industry, drive-by-wire is now established as the technology to replace many of the traditional hydraulically and mechanically operated systems and will increasingly be introduced in the coming years. Within SKF's Automotive Division a dedicated drive-by-wire Business Unit has been established to focus specifically on this increasing important market.

- While the developments for drive-by-wire are new, SKF is able to draw on existing skills and experience as a firm foundation. Smart electro-mechanical actuating units, specifically for high volume applications, have been a recent focus at the SKF Automotive Development Centre. The Group's aerospace business has over 15 years

experience in mechatronic controls and actuating units for the civil aerospace industry, says Mr. Tom Johnstone, President, SKF Automotive Division.

- By-wire systems are moving at an increasing pace from the development and engineering labs into mainstream production. The FILO shows that the vision that this new technology brings, can be transformed into reality. We have proved it. SKF's technology and our manufacturing skills in high-precision, high-volume engineered units gives us an ideal base from which to seize the exciting marketing opportunities drive-by-wire has to offer, Mr Johnstone adds.

SKF has today an ongoing project together with the Italian brake manufacturer Brembo, to develop a brake-by-wire system. Target is to start serial production during the year 2004.

SKF is the world's leading provider of products, customer solutions and services in the business of rolling bearings and seals. The Group's main competencies include technical support, maintenance services, condition monitoring and training.

Yearly sales amount to some SEK 40 000 million, number of employees is 41 000 and the number of manufacturing sites is 80. The Group's sales network, including own sales companies and distributors and dealers, covers 150 countries.

Göteborg, February 27, 2001
Aktiebolaget SKF
(publ.)

For further information, please contact:

Lars G Malmer, SKF Group Communication, tel +46-705 371541, e-mail: Lars.G.Malmer@skf.com