

Contents of release

- Markus Bannert is appointed CEO of GKN Automotive following the company demerging from the Melrose Group on 20 April 2023
- Dirk Kesselgruber, previously President of ePowertrain at GKN Automotive, is appointed Chief Technology Officer
- Sean Bannon joins the company as its new Chief Financial Officer
- Piyush Upadhyay is appointed Chief Human Resources Officer

GKN Automotive announces four executive team appointments

25 April 2023, London: GKN Automotive, the global leader in drive systems, today announces four appointments to its executive team, including a new CEO.

Markus Bannert has stepped into the role of CEO, replacing Liam Butterworth who has moved into a new role as CEO of Dowlais Group plc¹. Bannert was previously President of Driveline at GKN Automotive. Before joining the business four years ago, he held a variety of positions at automotive supplier Hella, including CEO of its Lighting division, Chief Financial Officer for the company's NAFTA region, as well as Head of Program Management and Plant Manager within the Lighting division.

As part of a recent move by GKN Automotive to create two new functional arms of the business - operations and engineering - Dr. Dirk Kesselgruber has been appointed Chief Technology Officer. In this newly created role, he will lead the engineering and programme management arm of the business and oversee the company's comprehensive product portfolio. Kesselgruber was previously President of ePowertrain at GKN Automotive for more than two years; prior to that, he was President Chassis Systems at Schaeffler and Senior Vice President of Global Steering Engineering at ZF TRW.

Sean Bannon will join the company as Chief Financial Officer on 22 May, replacing Roberto Fioroni who has moved into the role of CFO at Dowlais Group plc. Sean has 25 years' experience in financial and international leadership roles, most recently at Amcor, a global packaging producer, where he has driven business transformation efforts as the Vice President of Finance & IT within its European Flexible Packaging business. Previously, Bannon held a variety of financial roles at Trinseo and Air Products & Chemicals. He holds an MBA from Cornell University, is a licensed CPA, and is a CFA charter holder.

Piyush Upadhyay was recently appointed Chief Human Resources Officer for the company. With more than 25 years' experience, he joined GKN Automotive in December 2022 and brings a wealth of global experience in HR and organisational transformation. He previously worked at Tenneco Automotive where he was the Executive Director (EMEA) for the company's Clean Air division. Upadhyay has held various roles in other global organisations including the Tata group and Volkswagen in India.

Markus Bannert, CEO of GKN Automotive, comments: "GKN Automotive is an incredible company with a rich history in developing leading technologies, building scale and operational excellence, and maintaining strong customer relationships with most global OEMs. Having spent over four years embedded in the business, I have been impressed by its capabilities as an engineering powerhouse at the forefront of innovation.



News Release

“Now is a truly exciting time for the business as we leverage our global leadership in driveline products and build on our capability to develop and deliver eDrive systems and components. We already have a comprehensive product portfolio that has evolved for electric platforms, as well as a strong R&D footprint that has enabled us to be a pioneer in the eDrive market for over 20 years, so I’m delighted to take on the role of CEO, working alongside our accomplished Executive team to continue our electrification journey.”

- ENDS -

¹ In September 2022, Melrose announced its intention to separate the GKN Automotive, GKN Powder Metallurgy and GKN Hydrogen businesses from the Melrose Group by way of a demerger of shares in a new holding company, which was later named Dowlais Group plc, to Melrose shareholders. Dowlais Group plc, which now owns all three businesses, listed on the London Stock Exchange on 20 April 2023.

Notes to Editors

ABOUT GKN AUTOMOTIVE

GKN Automotive is a world-leading global automotive technology company at the forefront of innovation. Its origins date back to 1759 and for the last 70 years it has been putting key technologies into series production. It is the trusted partner for most of the world’s automotive companies, specialising in developing, building, and supplying market-leading drive systems and advanced ePowertrain technologies. It is the global leader in seshafths, with eight out of ten of the world’s best-selling cars outside China using its seshafth technology. GKN Automotive’s first eDrive system was fitted to a production car over 20 years ago; today, over two million electrified vehicles worldwide are powered by this technology.

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