

**Sustainable Energy Efficient Motorsport Conference
28 August 2008**

**Detroit Yacht Club, Belle Isle,
to coincide with the Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix.**

The Motorsport Industry Association, with the support of UKTI, held its Sustainable Motorports conference in Detroit in August. The event was also supported by the Detroit Grand Prix, the American LeMans Series (ALMS) and the Indy Racing League (IRL).

The event attracted a VIP audience of 125 automotive and motorsports leaders, key influencers, advanced engineers, R&D specialists and marketing executives together with trade and business media. The Conference will also include a very successful networking lunch - an opportunity for all attendees to share opinions, develop business and raise their profile in this current hot topic. The conference was the only business to business event officially recognized as part of the Detroit Grand Prix race weekend.

Attendees heard from Bill Griffiths, UKTI's sector lead for high performance engineering in the USA, who spoke about the opportunities for the UK motorsport sector to increase business with the vehicle manufacturers and suppliers. These included technology transfer, accelerated research and development, and new marketing relationships.

Other speakers included representatives from leading UK engineering firms, including Lotus Engineering and Ricardo, who discussed their own activities in the field of fuel economy and energy efficiency in racing and how they transfer to the passenger vehicles of tomorrow. The audience was also the first in the US to hear about the TTxGP, the new zero emission motorcycle race planned to be a part of next year's Isle of Man TT race.

Also featured at the event were racing legend Bobby Rahal and race car drivers David Brabham and Lord Drayson. Drayson is the former government minister who is running a biofuel Aston Martin in the American LeMans Series for the 2008 season. General Motors Biofuels Implementation Manager, Coleman Jones, spoke about GM's powertrain strategy for the future as the company prepares to launch its first plug-in hybrid, the Chevrolet Volt, in 2010.

Attendees were welcomed by the Chairman of the Detroit Grand Prix, Bud Denker. Representatives from the ALMS and IRL racing bodies discussed their

“green” initiatives. The ALMS will hold its first official Green Racing Challenge next month, the winner of which will be the most fuel efficient entrant in this year’s Petit Lemans, a ten hour endurance race held in Atlanta. Ed Triolo of the ALMS pointed to the MIA’s leadership in stimulating their interest in “going green”.

Among those in attendance were engineers from General Motors, Mercedes-Benz, Ford Motor Company, AM General, Mazda, Chrysler and Volkswagen. There were also representatives from major Tier One suppliers and trade media. The conference was also covered positively in an article in the Detroit Free Press, the city’s leading newspaper.

The MIA’s worldwide energy efficiency initiative, which has been supported by UKTI, has made motorsports much more closely relevant to the future of the automotive industry. It showcases energy efficient success in the public eye, on the race track. It has created a compelling new case for closer technical partnerships and sponsorships which hail a great future for both industries.