

Zirpel: Mobility must remain affordable even in the age of alternative drives



“For the German passenger car market, 2023 is a year of tentative recovery. After three crisis years with high volatility and a massive decline in new registrations, the German passenger car market has grown 10 percent so far this year. Double-digit growth rates have even been recorded since March. On the one hand, this is a reason to take a deep breath. On the other hand, the market is still a long way from pre-crisis levels, with new car registrations in the first five months 13 percent below the 10-year average. Impaired production continues to plague the automotive industry.” This was stated today by Reinhard Zirpel, President of the Association of International Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (VDIK), on the occasion of the VDIK Members’ Meeting in Berlin.

The discussions at the members’ meeting focused on climate protection and the question of the powertrains of the future. Reinhard Zirpel: “The transformation of our industry is in full swing. I have great confidence in the innovative power of our companies and am confident that the transformation of the automotive industry will succeed. On the road to climate neutrality, however, it is important to bear in mind that the car remains an indispensable means of transport for many people. The transformation is also accompanied by the risk that individual mobility will become more expensive for many people. Industry and politics must work together to ensure that mobility remains affordable in the age of alternative drives.”

Zirpel criticized the plans for the new European Euro 7 emissions standard, saying that the European Commission was setting the wrong priorities: “New limits are not

only partly superfluous because the currently applicable emissions standards have already led to a significant improvement in air quality. It is also absurd to first set an expiration date for the internal combustion engine and then force manufacturers to make extensive new investments in this technology by tightening the emissions standards. This would not only make modern, clean vehicles significantly more expensive for consumers, but also unnecessarily burden the automotive industry in the midst of transformation.”

Board members elected

At the General Assembly of the Association of International Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (VDIK), several board members were elected. Jürgen Keller was confirmed as VDIK Vice President for another two years. Keller is the Managing Director of Hyundai Motor Deutschland GmbH. Werner H. Frey (Managing Director Mitsubishi Motors Deutschland GmbH) and André Schmidt (President Toyota Deutschland GmbH) were also re-elected as board members for two years. Jan-Hendrik Hülsmann (Spokesman of the Board of Management of ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland GmbH) was newly elected to the VDIK Board.

Libor Myška (ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland GmbH) and Haico van der Luyt (Stellantis Germany GmbH) left the Board. VDIK President Reinhard Zirpel thanked both former board members for their work on the VDIK board and their great commitment to the association. Already in 2022, Reinhard Zirpel, Bernhard Kaplan and Jan-Kas van der Stelt were confirmed in their positions for two years.

The new VDIK Board is composed as follows:

Reinhard Zirpel, President

Jürgen Keller, Vice President

Managing Director Hyundai Motor Deutschland GmbH

Werner H. Frey

Managing Director Mitsubishi Motors Deutschland GmbH

Jan-Hendrik Hülsmann

Spokesman of the Board of Management ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland GmbH

Bernhard Kaplan

Managing Director Mazda Motors (Deutschland) GmbH

André Schmidt

President Toyota Germany GmbH

Jan-Kas van der Stelt

Managing Director Jaguar Land Rover Deutschland GmbH