



JATCO'S SUNDERLAND MOVE: A BOOST FOR THE NORTH EAST AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

JATCO's recent announcement of establishing JATCO UK in Sunderland is a significant vote of confidence in the North East's automotive industry. This move not only strengthens the region's position as a hub for automotive excellence but also promises to bring new opportunities and investment to the area.

JATCO, a global leader in automatic transmissions, has a long-standing relationship with the North East, primarily through its partnership with Nissan. The establishment of JATCO UK signals a deepening of this commitment and a strategic move to enhance its operational efficiency within the European market. By locating closer to its key customer, JATCO can streamline its supply chain, improve responsiveness, and foster closer collaboration.

The NEAA caught up with JATCO UK Plant Manager, Simon O'Donnell, to hear more about the company's £48.7m investment into the UK and how it will support the automotive industry's transition towards electrification.

Tell us more about JATCO globally and the products you manufacture?

Headquartered in Fuji, Shizuoka, Japan, JATCO is a leading automotive transmission and electric vehicle powertrain manufacturer, specialising in the design, development, and manufacture of automatic transmissions and CVTs. In addition to plants in Japan, JATCO has production facilities in Mexico, China, and Thailand. JATCO has supplied over 129 million automatic transmissions to the global automotive market since it was established. The launch of the Sunderland plant will mark JATCO's fourth overseas production plant.

What will take place at the Sunderland plant and how will this impact the region?

Situated on the International Advanced Manufacturing Park, Sunderland, the factory will produce electrified powertrains for the nearby Nissan plant. Initially, this will be the 3-in-1, which modularises and integrates the motor, inverter and reducer, making them smaller and lighter. The 138,840 sq. ft facility will create up to 183 highly skilled jobs and hopes to reach a production capacity of 340,000 units.

How will JATCO UK contribute to the electric vehicle (EV) sector?

This investment is particularly timely, as the automotive industry undergoes a rapid transformation towards electrification.

Jatco

The mission is passion.

JATCO's expertise in transmission technology will be crucial in supporting the development and production of next-generation vehicles. The presence of JATCO UK in Sunderland will undoubtedly contribute to the region's growing capabilities in electric vehicle (EV) technology.

When should we expect to see JATCO UK in full operation?

JATCO UK is beginning preparations to fit out its new unit – a high-quality detached advanced manufacturing facility with Grade A office space – to begin supply to Nissan Sunderland from 2026, when the facility is scheduled for completion.

What impact will this investment have on skills development in the North East?

Beyond the immediate economic benefits, JATCO's presence will also have a positive impact on skills development in the region. The company's commitment to innovation and technological advancement will create opportunities for local talent to acquire

cutting-edge skills and expertise. This will further enhance the North East's reputation as a centre for automotive engineering and manufacturing.

How do you expect the NEAA and its membership to support JATCO moving forward?

The NEAA has played a vital role in fostering a supportive ecosystem for automotive businesses in the region. JATCO's decision to invest in Sunderland is a testament to the NEAA's success in creating a business-friendly environment and attracting global players to the area. We expect to continue to build on this collaborative environment as we lay our foundations in the North East of England.

We have joined the NEAA to connect with industry leaders, access new opportunities, and drive innovation within the automotive sector.

For further details, visit: www.jatco.co.jp/english/

