

Press Release

New city course test tracks officially opened at DEKRA Lausitzring

Automated and Connected: The Future of Mobility Starts Today

- Variable-use asphalt surfaces for a wide range of test scenarios
- Goal for the future: test tracks with simulation of weather conditions
- Further investments at the site are already planned

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The expert organization DEKRA is celebrating a special milestone at its site in Klettwitz, Germany, for safeguarding the mobility of tomorrow: the new construction section of the city courses has officially been opened at the DEKRA Lausitzring. "Tomorrow's mobility with increasingly automated and connected vehicles depends on the corresponding systems being put through their paces before they are approved", said Guido Kutschera, Head of DEKRA Germany and Chairman of the Board of DEKRA Automobil GmbH. "That is exactly what we do here – with a unique variety of test tracks, with the expertise of our colleagues and with test methods at the very cutting edge of technical development."

"Increasing road safety is a permanent task. The use of assistance systems or automated vehicle technologies can make road traffic safer. However, the use of such technologies requires extensive testing. I am therefore pleased that the DEKRA Lausitzring will in future offer ideal conditions for the realistic testing of autonomous driving functions with the city courses," said Guido Beermann, Minister for Infrastructure and State Planning of the State of Brandenburg at the opening of the new section. "In addition, jobs in a future technology will be created in the structural transformation region of Lusatia. This not only strengthens Lusatia, it strengthens all of Brandenburg and all of Germany."

Variable infrastructure enables highly complex test scenarios

Around 80,000 square meters of variable asphalt surfaces have been constructed on the spectator parking areas at the DEKRA Lausitzring for the city courses. The installation includes lanes, open spaces, intersection areas and much more. Among other things, some 300 meters of streetcar tracks have also been laid. With flexible markings, mobile infrastructure and, if necessary, simulated roadside buildings, a wide variety of scenarios for urban and, in some cases, interurban traffic can now be simulated. "In combination with highly modern test methods, we

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will be able to put vehicles in almost any complex situation to expose their automated driving functions to the maximum test challenge”, explains Uwe Burckhardt, Head of Test and Event at DEKRA Lausitzring. In so-called swarm tests, up to twelve moving objects are to be used in the environment of the test vehicle. They can represent a wide variety of other vehicles, but also pedestrians, and will be controlled with centimeter precision. This means that the same test sequences can be reproduced again and again, so that systems and functions can be tested under the same conditions in each case.

“After the preparations and some decisions had been delayed by almost two years – especially due to the pandemic – we have now been able to complete the new facility in record time”, Erik Pellmann, Division Manager Technology Center at DEKRA Automobil GmbH, said happily. “Only about seven months have passed from the start of the preparatory construction measures to today's opening. All those involved at our company and with our partners deserve a huge compliment for this achievement.”

The details of the asphalt surface layout for the new city courses have been planned in a joint working group with vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and research institutions. “Under the leadership of the Fraunhofer Institute for Transportation and Infrastructure Systems in Dresden, we evaluated in detail the inner-city and suburban accident history in Germany from 2013 to 2019”, Burckhardt said. “With the road geometries that our flexible city courses enable, more than 80 percent of these real traffic scenarios can be reproduced in tests.”

The DEKRA site in Klettwitz now offers a unique variety of test tracks that cover almost all of the so-called operational design domains of automated driving – in other words, the environments and conditions for which automated driving functions will be designed in the future. “We also want to close the last gaps soon; corresponding plans for further test tracks are already underway”, says site manager Pellmann. “In the process, our goal is to also be able to simulate specific weather conditions on certain tracks.”

Development of the site far from over

So even though a good five years after DEKRA took over the Lausitzring the scope of expansion announced at the time has now been completed: development at the site continues – also beyond test tracks. “We opened our DEKRA Technology Center here in Klettwitz almost exactly 20 years ago. Since then, the site has undergone massive development”, Guido Kutschera sums up. “Laboratories have been constantly expanded and adapted to meet changing requirements. New infrastructure has been added, as have new colleagues. Today, we have more than 200 employees here in Klettwitz – and that's far from the end.”

DEKRA has already announced to locate its new test center for automotive and stationary battery systems at the site in Brandenburg. It is scheduled to be fully operational by the end of 2024 and in itself means further investments in the two-digit million-euro range.

About DEKRA

DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for almost 100 years. Founded in 1925 in Berlin as Deutscher Kraftfahrzeug-Überwachungs-Verein e.V., it is today one of the world's leading expert organizations. DEKRA SE is a subsidiary of DEKRA e.V. and manages the Group's operating business. In 2022, DEKRA generated sales totaling nearly EUR 3.8 billion. The company currently employs almost 49,000 people in approximately 60 countries on five continents. With qualified and independent expert services, they work for safety on the road, at work and at home. These services range from vehicle inspection and expert appraisals to claims services, industrial and building inspections, advisory and training services, testing and certification of products and systems, also in the digital world, as well as temporary work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe, secure, and sustainable world. With a platinum rating from EcoVadis, DEKRA is now in the top one percent of sustainable businesses ranked.