

PRESS - RELEASE

Baden-Württemberg backs a new source of energy and heat

The First efc Fuel Cell Unit goes to Field Test

The formal commissioning in Germany of the first fuel cell heating unit from european fuel cell (efc) took place on 12th January 2006 in the town of Schiltach, Baden-Württemberg. Together with the town dignitaries and the cooperation partner, Energie Baden-Württemberg AG, Thomas Haas, the mayor of Schiltach, connected to the mains the BETA 1.5 fuel cell heating unit to be utilised by the local tourist office. The prototype is to generate heat and energy locally under real conditions over a two-year field test period.

Baden-Württemberg, Germany, 13th January 2006 “Local authorities are required to deploy technologies that are less damaging to the environment, at an acceptable cost”, Thomas Haas, mayor of the municipality of Schiltach, explained about this forward-looking step and, with these words, he led the floor in the first of a round of eulogies.

Those present at the formal commissioning of the first fuel cell heating unit of european fuel cell gmbh included Sten Daugaard-Hansen, managing director of Brötje and head of Baxi Northern Europe, Stefan Thiele, spokesman for the management board of the EnBW Vertriebs- und Service-gesellschaft, and Helmut Nitschke, managing director of the Mittelbaden power generation plant which is involved in the EnBW fuel cell programme.

Sten Daugaard-Hansen explained the significance of fuel cells as a future heating technology. In his speech he stressed that “Baxi, as currently the third largest manufacturer of heat generators in Europe, carries its own share of the responsibility to bring even more efficient, and environmentally friendly equipment onto the market, so that we can better exploit the limited energy resources of this planet”. The Hamburg based company, efc, belongs to the European Baxi Group with its headquarters in England.

For Guido Gummert, managing director of efc, the commissioning of the first field test aggregate in Germany successfully completes a development programme for the fuel cell heating unit that has been carried out since 1997. Following the laboratory test phase, efc will now be concentrating on new insights in the operative behaviour of the equipment – obtained under real conditions in the field. Achieving the best performance of each individual component is the basis for the setting up of a pilot production run of the fuel cell heating unit at the end of the field test stage. european fuel cell has invested around €25m in the field test equipment alone. The sums that have been invested by the development partners and suppliers have not yet been included in this figure. Indeed, without the development assistance of the German Federal Ministry for Economics and Labour (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft (BMWA)*), who supported efc with

around €8m, the development of the BETA 1.5 would not have been possible in Germany.

The Hamburg based europaean fuel cell company will be first carrying out this crucial test of its fuel cell heating unit with its cooperation partner Energie Baden-Württemberg AG, based in Karlsruhe, and ensuring that maintenance and service is provided. To this end, the EnBW technicians – who will in future be looking after the Schiltach fuel cell unit – travelled especially to Hamburg to undergo a training programme. “With the first ever installation of the efc prototype at the Schiltach Tourist Office we have together taken an important step forward in the future supply of energy”, said Stefan Thiele, managing director of the EnBW Vertriebs- und Servicegesellschaft.

The BETA 1.5 generates energy and heat at

With its living space and office area, the energy and heat requirement of the building to be supplied is approximately equivalent to that of a detached, or semi-detached single-family house – just the right size for the BETA 1.5 heating unit. With an input of natural gas, a built-in reformer separates off the hydrogen which, in turn, generates energy in the heart of the unit – the fuel cell. The performance parameters of the fuel cell heating unit, with its polymer electrolyte membrane fuel cell, are 1.5 kW electrical output and 3 kW heat output as well as the additional output of an integrated 15 kW calorific burner suited to the requirements of a detached, or semi-detached single-family house.

“The simultaneous generation of energy and heat serves to increase efficiency and ensures that our fuel cell heating unit provides an economical and innovative heating technology”, Mr Gummert explains. After the symbolic “pressing of the button” for the commissioning, the forty guests inspected the fuel cell heating unit and Guido Gummert, managing director of efc, instructed them in the technical details of the BETA 1.5 fuel cell heating unit.

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picture caption: The BETA 1.5 takes up its starting position: The first fuel cell heating unit from europaean fuel cell gmbh has been in operation in Germany since 12.01.06. From left to right: Sten-Daugaard-Hansen (Baxi Group) Mayor Thomas Haas, Helmut Nitschke (Electricity Works Mittelbaden), Stefan Thiele, Bernhard Heyder and Markus Edel in the boiler room of the Schiltach Tourist Information Office, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

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