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Commitment to Quality is Built into each 2015 Chrysler 200

- Quality and customer satisfaction are part of everyone's job at Chrysler Group
- Newly-constructed Quality Assurance Center, body shop, paint shop and metrology center significantly raise quality levels at Sterling Heights Assembly Plant (SHAP)
- Workers identified and integrated more than 3,500 quality controls into the 2015 Chrysler 200 build process
- Development fleet of Chrysler 200 sedans were tested for more than 17 million miles on all kinds of roads and climates

March 21, 2014, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Inside an assembly plant once destined for closure, shiny new 2015 Chrysler 200 sedans now pass through the Sterling Heights Assembly Plant's (SHAP) newly-added Quality Assurance Center in the final step of the vehicle's exhaustive quality process.

Randomly selected vehicles are scrutinized each day in the first-of-its-kind Quality Assurance Center, which conducts quality audits and detailed technical measurements on more than 400 vehicle functions (such as heating, cooling, emissions, fit-and-finish), and houses a material laboratory staffed with an on-site chemist.

"The new Chrysler 200, and its customers, benefit from a significantly enhanced quality process at the plant that's part of our commitment to World Class Manufacturing," Doug Betts, Senior Vice President — Quality, Chrysler Group LLC, said. "Quality and customer satisfaction are part of everyone's job. We relocated our 200 development team from Auburn Hills to Sterling Heights during the early stages of this project in order to support a smooth, high quality launch."

More than one year ago, team leaders at SHAP started analyzing and planning how they would build the all-new Chrysler 200. SHAP employees identified and implemented approximately 3,500 quality controls into the assembly process before the first customer vehicles were built.

"The goal is to design each workstation so it's impossible to make a mistake," Betts explained. "The best expert on how to error-proof a specific assembly job is the person who does it every day – that's why it's so important to have all workers engaged in World Class Manufacturing."

While the primary objective is to prevent issues from occurring in the first place, the plant has increased the number of dedicated quality inspectors from 22 to 50 as an extra layer of protection for customers.

The all-new body and paint shops make SHAP one of the most versatile and flexible facilities within the Company, significantly enhancing the quality and consistency of each new car.

Like other Chrysler Group assembly plants, SHAP also constructed a state-of-the-art metrology center in preparation for the new vehicle launch. The metrology center is a high-tech laboratory with a clean room environment that allows engineers to find the root cause of any build variations – even when components appear perfect to the naked eye. The lab uses a complex set of fixtures, which mimic the body shop's process, plus laser scanners and blue light fixtures to measure and create 3-D digital models. All of these tools are used to find and resolve any fit-and-finish issues before customer vehicles are built.

The attention to detail and quality controls at the plant represent the final steps in a quality process that begins with the inception of each vehicle program at Chrysler Group.

The Chrysler team conducts extensive research with current customers – and competitor’s customers – to set the vehicle targets for things such as performance, safety, fuel economy and quality. This includes the Company’s Perceived Quality Team that works with designers, engineers and suppliers to enhance the fit-and-finish, surface quality, material options and even the sound quality of moveable parts like doors and storage bins. Customers make judgments on a vehicle’s quality the first time they see and touch a car, whether it’s at an auto show, dealership or neighbor’s driveway; the Perceived Quality team is tasked with making sure customers receive a strong first impression on the quality of the 200.

In final preparations for the market launch, a development fleet of 200 sedans undergoes testing, day and night, on all kinds of road surfaces, at high and low altitudes and through blizzard conditions, as well as dry, desert heat. All that testing adds up to more than 17 million validation miles, including tests done in Chrysler labs, at the proving grounds and on public roads.

Some of the most punishing tests take place inside the Chrysler Technology Center on the Road Test Simulator (RTS). It recreates the abuse vehicles endure at the hands of a 95th percentile customer – meaning a customer who drives the vehicle in more severe conditions than 95 percent of all drivers. The RTS recreates a wide range of on-road and off-road driving surfaces and puts a lifetime of wear-and-tear on a vehicle in one month’s time.

Continually improving its test methods, the 200 is one of the first Chrysler Group vehicles to be evaluated on the newly built Lateral Load Test Track at the automaker’s Chelsea (Mich.) Proving Grounds. The Lateral Load Test Track recreates the type of suspension stresses that a vehicle gets after years of hard driving on twisty roads that are more common in Europe. To validate the 200’s durability, development vehicles were run through the new track approximately 40,000 times, which simulates millions of rigorous miles and contributes to excellent long-term ride and handling characteristics.

Multimedia touchscreens and controls increasingly influence customers’ overall quality satisfaction. The award-winning Uconnect systems, available in the Chrysler 200, also receive thorough test drives as technicians work through an extensive checklist to validate the functionality and reliability of the system as well as how compatible it is with a wide variety of mobile phones, music players and other media devices.

The 2015 Chrysler 200 comes with a five-year/100,000 mile limited powertrain warranty and roadside assistance, in addition to three-year/36,000 mile bumper-to-bumper coverage.

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