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Chrysler Group Announces Pricing for New 2005 Jeep® Liberty CRD

- Jeep® Liberty is first mid-size SUV available with diesel in the U.S.
- Nearly 40,000 consumers have already expressed interest in Jeep Liberty's "Clean Running Diesel"

November 4, 2004, Boston -

In a speech today during press days at the New England International Auto Show, Jeff Bell, Vice President - Jeep, announced pricing for the 2005 Jeep® Liberty Common Rail Diesel (CRD), the first diesel-powered mid-size sport-utility vehicle in the U.S. The new 2.8-liter turbo diesel engine delivers the torque of a V-8, the performance of a V-6 and the fuel economy of a four-cylinder engine.

The base Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) for the Jeep Liberty CRD Sport 4x4 is \$25,125, including \$610 destination. The base MSRP for the Jeep Liberty CRD Limited 4x4 is \$27,355, including \$610 destination. The Jeep Liberty CRD will begin arriving in dealerships later this year.

"Response to the new Jeep Liberty CRD has been huge," said Bell. "Nearly 40,000 consumers have expressed interest in the diesel-powered Jeep Liberty, well ahead of the manufacturing launch in November. Jeep vehicle owners and prospects understand that the Jeep Liberty CRD is another go-anywhere, do-anything option from Jeep that will help them enjoy their active life-styles."

The Liberty diesel is a technologically advanced power plant designed to be an efficient, smooth, clean-running engine that produces lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions without sacrificing performance. The engine produces 160 horsepower and gets an estimated fuel economy of 22 miles city and 27 miles highway. The 2.8-liter diesel gives the Liberty best-in-class numbers in three categories: 295 lb-ft of torque @ 1,800 rpm; driving range of approximately 500 miles, and towing capacity of 5,000 lbs.

Production begins at the Toledo (Ohio) North Assembly Plant later this month. Each 2005 Jeep Liberty CRD leaving the factory will be powered by B5 diesel fuel, comprising five percent biodiesel made from Ohio soybeans. Renewable biodiesel fuel reduces dependence on petroleum and lowers emissions, including carbon dioxide.

The 2.8-liter diesel uses an advanced common rail direct injection fuel system. Direct injection of fuel into an open combustion chamber is more efficient than a pre-chamber indirect injection configuration. The system in the 2.8-liter CRD operates at fuel pressures nearly 70 percent above the older distributor pump systems, producing finer atomization, leaner combustion and higher power. At the same time, direct injection provides inherently lower engine-out hydrocarbon exhaust emissions and lower NO_x emissions. A high pressure pump driven by the cog belt from the camshaft supplies fuel at up to nearly 24,000 psi. The pump's electronic control system responds to fuel demand and delivers the optimal fuel pressure, injection timing and injection duration.

Injectors on the 2.8-liter diesel have been improved so that fuel burns more thoroughly, producing fewer particulates and lower emissions than previous generation diesel engines.

An electronically controlled variable geometry turbocharger improves control of boost pressure, reducing emissions and improving full load engine power and torque. The turbocharger features moveable vanes that allow it to act like a small turbocharger under launch conditions. At higher engine speeds it acts like a larger turbocharger. The benefit to customers is enhanced low-end and high-end torque. Meanwhile, a vacuum reservoir improves cold launch performance by allowing the turbo to spool up faster from idle, thus, minimizing turbo lag.

The Liberty diesel engine uses two pilot injections prior to the main injection. This system prepares the cylinders for the main injection of fuel, which helps to smooth out the main combustion and quiet the engine, especially at idle.

In another improvement, the 2.8-liter diesel uses electronically controlled ceramic “smart” glow plugs with a warm-up time of only two seconds. They assist with low ambient-temperature start conditions and only glow when needed. This is an advance over older, timer-operated glow plugs that require up to 10 seconds of warm-up prior to engine start.

To reduce the NVH levels of the Liberty diesel, Jeep engineers made dozens of improvements affecting the engine and body-in-white. Three types of improvements were addressed: the source of the NVH, the structure of the vehicle and acoustics.

Source - Since the engine is the primary source of undesirable NVH levels, improvements to the 2.8-liter turbo diesel include engine balance shafts, a new noise-reducing engine cover, and a torque converter turbine damper. Also, an air induction resonator reduces induction noise emissions.

Structure - The structure of the Liberty was also reengineered. Improved engine mounts, called hydro mounts, function in a manner similar to shock absorbers. The fluid within the mounts provides isolation and damping, which reduces the amount of vibration and harshness that reaches the body. In another application, the dash, plenum and the body-in-white panel consist of an isolation material sandwiched between two metal layers. This process of stiffening the sheet metal reduces the amount of noise that travels across the vehicle.

Acoustics – Air-borne noise is kept from the passenger compartment of the Liberty diesel in a number of ways. For example, an acoustic belly pan is attached beneath the engine to absorb its noise. Noise is also absorbed via an engine compartment hood liner. And the cabin contains noise absorbing carpet.

“The 2.8-liter turbo diesel engine performs better and pollutes less than previous diesel engines, while delivering reduced NVH levels,” said Bell. “In tandem with the proven capability of the Jeep Liberty, this engine gives sport-utility owners and prospects an exciting new driving opportunity.”

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