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FCA Belvidere Assembly Plant Awarded Silver Status for Continuous Efforts to Improve in World Class Manufacturing

- Illinois Jeep® Cherokee plant becomes 10th FCA North American facility to earn silver
- Award recognizes progress toward becoming World Class
- Belvidere is the 24th FCA North American facility to achieve silver or bronze since 2009

February 6, 2020, Auburn Hills, Mich. - The FCA Belvidere Assembly Plant,home of the Jeep® Cherokee,is the latest plant to be designated silver in the Company's World Class Manufacturing (WCM) program. Recognized for its efforts in expanding the implementation of WCM principles, the Illinois facility is the Company's 10th North American manufacturing location overall to achieve the silver milestone and the first plant this year.

WCM is the structured and rigorous FCA production system designed to make plants more flexible and competitive by eliminating waste and losses, improving safety and quality, and increasing productivity in a systematic and organized way.

First implemented by Fiat in 2006 and introduced to Chrysler Group as part of the alliance between the two companies in June 2009, WCM principles are applied to all aspects of the plant organization, from quality to maintenance, operations to logistics, with the goal of continuous improvement. WCM also engages the workforce to provide and implement suggestions on how to improve their jobs and their plants, promoting a sense of ownership.

"Achieving silver status is a major accomplishment for all the men and women who work at Belvidere Assembly and I congratulate them on this milestone," Jorge Lares, Head of Manufacturing, FCA – North America, said. "The achievement of WCM award levels recognizes the long-term commitment of our workforce in fostering a culture of continuous improvement that consistently places Belvidere at the top of the list for quality in North America."

Belvidere earned the silver milestone after being recognized with the bronze award in July 2016. Silver was awarded following a three-day audit during which the plant earned a minimum of 60 points in 10 technical and 10 managerial pillars by demonstrating clear WCM know-how and competence through employee-conducted pillar presentations and a review of projects that have been expanded across the shop floor.

Through established methodologies and tools, WCM engages the workforce to provide and implement suggestions on how to improve their jobs and their plants, promoting a sense of ownership. Award levels are confirmed through independent audits and awarded plants have a role in accelerating the implementation of WCM throughout the organization as coaches and mentors.

During an audit, zero to five points are scored for each of the 10 technical pillars, which include safety, workplace organization, logistics and the environment, and for each of the 10 managerial pillars, such as management commitment, clarity of objectives, allocation of highly qualified people, motivation of operators and commitment of the organization. A score of 85 would indicate World Class level.

In addition to Belvidere, nine other North American plants hold a silver designation, having been elevated from bronze. Silver is awarded to plants that have taken a preventative approach to implementing the WCM methodology throughout the facility. The silver plants are:

- Windsor (Ontario) Assembly Plant
- Dundee (Michigan) Engine Plant
- Toledo (Ohio) Assembly Complex
- Saltillo (Mexico) South Engine Plant
- Saltillo (Mexico) Van Assembly Plant

- Warren (Michigan) Stamping
- Toledo (Ohio) Machining
- Sterling Stamping (Sterling Heights, Michigan)
- Tipton (Indiana) Transmission Plant

Currently, there are 14 North American facilities that hold the WCM bronze designation:

- Saltillo (Mexico) Truck Assembly
- Toluca (Mexico) Assembly
- Trenton (Michigan) Engine Complex
- Brampton (Ontario) Assembly
- Kokomo (Indiana) Transmission Plant
- Indiana Transmission Plant I (Kokomo, Indiana)
- Indiana Transmission Plant II (Kokomo, Indiana)
- Kokomo (Indiana) Casting
- Warren (Michigan) Truck Assembly
- Jefferson North (Detroit) Assembly Plant
- CPK Interiors, Port Hope (Ontario)
- Etobicoke (Ontario) Casting
- Sterling Heights (Michigan) Assembly Plant
- CPK Interiors, Guelph (Ontario)

Belvidere Assembly Plant

Construction of the Belvidere Assembly Plant began in 1964 and the first car rolled off the line on July 7, 1965. Over the years, the plant has produced a variety of models from the Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge and Plymouth brands. Following the alliance between Fiat and Chrysler Group in 2009, the Company invested $700 million in the plant to construct an all-new body shop to produce the Dodge Dart, a vehicle that showcased the combined engineering and technologies of the two companies. In 2016, the Company announced another $350 million investment to retool the plant to build the Jeep Cherokee, which was being relocated from the north plant of the Toledo (Ohio) Assembly Complex. Production of the Jeep Cherokee began in June 2017. The plant employs more than 3,800 people working two shifts.

Belvidere was awarded a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Green Building System certification for meeting the highest environmental standards in April 2015. LEED, administered by the United States Green Building Council, is a comprehensive system to define, measure and validate green buildings. Certification in the national recognition program is based on strict standards in five key areas: site planning, water management, energy, material use and indoor environmental quality.

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