



p r e s s r e l e a s e

AVIA extends its range to 12 tonnes

AVIA a.s. the renowned Czech producer of lightweight trucks in the 6-9 tonnes gross weight category launches its latest model, the 12 tonne gvw D120 at the Autotec commercial vehicle show (June 3rd – June 7th, Brno, Czech Republic).

In the 1980's and 1990's AVIA was the key supplier of small trucks throughout central and eastern Europe, producing up to 20.000 "blue" AVIAs each year. Strategically located in Prague, AVIA is one of the growing renaissance stories of Czech automotive business, and the Czech Republic is rapidly becoming one of Europe's most important automotive manufacturing states.

Throughout the EU, truck toll schemes such as Germany's "Maut" scheme, and the forthcoming road pricing scheme in the Czech Republic have increasingly shifted the emphasis in the N2 sector to 11.99t gross vehicle weight, the maximum weight at which trucks may circulate without paying this "pay-as-you-go" tax.

AVIA already had a fully competitive product range in the 6-9 tonne range and having considered various development routes for the D120, including joint venture collaboration, AVIA chose to develop D120 from scratch, using the best of European componentry to give top quality performance, reliability and productivity.

The result is a vehicle which is already giving AVIA's competitors some concerns as it is a top quality product which immediately broadens the market available to AVIA throughout Europe. D120 has an unladen weight of between 3300kg to 3450kg, dependent upon wheelbase in standard day cab EURO 3 form.

With an increasing number of 12 tonne trucks used in urban distribution, AVIA have been intent in maintaining a low step and frame height for the D120 and this was the key design parameter in determining frame and suspension design. As a result, on 17.5 " wheel and tyre equipment, the step height is similar to AVIA's lighter D75 at 7.5t gvw, and unladen frame height at the rear axle is around 880mm.

Frame

The frame itself has rolled steel side rails with dimensions 203 x 62 x 6.5 mm thick, and maintains a width across the chassis frame of 853mm in common with lighter trucks in the AVIA range. To reduce tooling costs, a maximum number of chassis components are shared with lighter trucks in AVIA's range – including cross member components which are assembled to a slightly narrower gauge to take account of the thicker side rails. Cab mountings are also the same. A number of components designed for D120 will also appear on revamped EURO 4 versions of the lighter D60 and D75 models later this year.

A total of five wheelbases ranging from 3.4m to a new 5.6m layout are offered.

Axles

AVIA has decided to fit Albion axles on the D120. Albion supply the same axles already to two other leading truck manufacturers in the EU, so these are very much “tried and tested” units. The Albion F48 front axle has the advantage of a 45 degree inner wheel lock angle whilst the Albion 8.20 rear axle is a lightweight welded assembly with a hypoid bevel differential and a capacity of 8500kg.

Both front and rear axles feature disc brakes with 406mm diameter discs. Foundation braking is dual circuit full air, operating at a nominal 8.5 bars, with spring park brakes fitted to the rear axle.

The braking system has standard ABS and optional ASR. The rear axle can be equipped with an optional differential lock.

Both axles are of 8 stud design and on the D120 are fitted with 17.5”x 6.75” wheels plus Continental 245/70R17.5 low profile tyres. Optional 19.5” wheels can be fitted with 245/70R19.5 or 265/70R19.5 tyres.

After several years of testing by AVIA, a new three leaf rear taper leaf spring also appears for the first time on the D120. New 40mm diameter anti-roll bars are also fitted.

Drivetrain

In the initial phase, D120 will be offered with a Cummins 4 cylinder EURO 3 engine for the domestic market. In common with lighter trucks in the AVIA range, this will be the Cummins ISB^c 170-30 engine, developing 170hp (125kW) and 600Nm of torque. A low horsepower option using the Cummins ISB^c 150-30 engine (150hp or 112kW and 550Nm of torque) will also be available.

AVIA has seen good results from the cable-shift ZF S6-850 gearbox, and this six speed box is used in all applications on D120.

Cabin

AVIA’s modern cab is maintained without any changes. With a generous bumper to back of cab dimension of 1776 mm in day cab form and 2476mm in extended sleeper cab form, the cab is one of the longest in its class offering outstanding driver protection. Cab width across sheet metal is 2150mm, similar to most competing European products in this market segment. In sleeper form, the 750mm wide bunk is permanently available for use. Unlike the bunk in some of its competitors’ vehicles, it does not need to be unfolded. The bunk hinges up to reveal a handy 200 litre storage locker. Offered in various trim levels dependent upon market and operator requirements, the cab offers a car like driving environment and outstanding ergonomics.

Variants

A EURO 4 variant will also be shown at Autotec (see separate press release). With an optional drawbar package, the D120 is equipped to tow upto 22 tonnes gross train weight.

AVIA has also taken the opportunity to derive two lighter variants from D120. These are the D110 at 11 tonnes gw and D100 at 10 tonnes gw. The D100 will also be available with optional 6 stud axles and 225/75R17.5 tyres and the D110 with optional 235/75R17.5 tyres.

On display

AVIA will display the following D120 variants at Autotec 2006:

- D120 (11.99t gvw) 3.4m “N” wheelbase chassis cab with Cummins ISBe 170-30 EURO 3 engine, 265/70R19.5 tyre equipment and fitted with container hook-lift system.
- D100 (10.0t gvw) 5.1m “S” wheelbase chassis cab with drawbar package (22.0 tonnes gtw), Cummins ISB^{e4} EURO 4 engine, 225/75R17.5 tyre equipment.

A note about AVIA

AVIA a.s. is an Odien Group company. AVIA was restructured in 2005 by Odien Group – the Czech company specialising in financial restructuring and investment. Furthermore, Odien, through their investment arm, Odien Capital Partners, and their wholly owned Dutch subsidiary SGM International B.V., became the majority shareholder, taking ownership of over 95% of AVIA’s equity. It is first and foremost thanks to Odien Group that AVIA “lives”, and is going through a remarkable period of “renaissance” i.e. of a real re-birth.

Supported by its new owner and with active management leadership from Odien Group, AVIA underwent a fundamental re-structuring and revitalisation throughout the last twelve months which was concentrated into 3 crucial areas:

- Financial restructuring
- Physical restructuring
- New product development

Having invested in these three fundamental areas, Odien Group has made AVIA an attractive proposition for eventual sale to a long term strategic partner, who would continue the production and sale of AVIA trucks from its Letňany base in Prague

For additional information please contact:

Mr. Andrew Granger, Marketing and Sales Director,
tel +420-266-142-015
fax +420-266-142-062
mobile +420-602-252-492