

FIAMM Bringing Alternative Energy Sodium Batteries to North America

Advanced, Proven and Available Technology Designed for Electric Mobility, Telecoms, Uninterruptible Power Supplies, Renewable Energy Generators and Electric Utilities

WAYNESBORO, Ga. (May 4, 2010) – FIAMM, one of the world's largest battery manufacturers, and Switzerland-based MES-DEA, the leading global producer of sodium-nickel-chloride batteries, have partnered to create a new company called FZ Sonick that will manufacture and market alternative energy storage solutions throughout the world. This proven and highly reliable storage technology is available for immediate deployment. FIAMM's North American headquarters are located in Waynesboro, Ga.

Currently, MES-DEA sells advanced battery technology under the ZEBRA brand for use in electric vehicles. A version of the ZEBRA batteries is scheduled to power the first electric vehicle fleet of the European postal service. The new company's SONICK-branded sodium-nickel-chloride product portfolio will improve energy storage in wireless cell sites, telecom data centers, uninterruptible power supplies, wheelchairs, busses, trains, and electric utility SmartGrid applications, among others.

"After more than 10 years of steady testing and growth in the transportation sector, we are now ready to also focus on the stationary applications of this innovative energy storage technology," said Cesare Sinigaglia, former general manager of MES-DEA and FZ Sonick's new managing co-director.

The SONICK advanced battery technology delivers numerous benefits versus existing energy storage solutions, such as increased capacity, longer lifecycle, zero emissions, low-cost raw materials, enhanced safety, and high energy density that reduces the battery size and weight compared to lithium ion and lead acid batteries, according to Nicola Cosciani, FIAMM's director of strategic development and FZ Sonick's new managing co-director.

"A number of battery-dependent industries have been looking for an alternative energy storage solution that is both environmentally friendly and efficient," said Cosciani. "Through this partnership, FIAMM is now able to offer a unique solution in the form of the SONICK batteries that are a clean and renewable energy. They are durable and reliable, and can be recycled completely because of their composition of salt and nickel."

Further, the SONICK sodium-nickel-chloride technology enables a wider range of applications than sodium sulfur (NaS) technology, which has received notable attention as an emerging alternative energy source. According to the Electricity Storage Association, NGK Insulators, Ltd. of Japan is currently the only manufacturer and supplier of sodium-based batteries; however, General Electric (GE) announced in May 2009 its plans to manufacture sodium-based batteries at a plant that is scheduled to open in mid-2011.

According to Rick Fioravanti, director of storage applications and support, KEMA, Inc., "As electricity grids continue to evolve into smarter systems, energy storage is expected to play a key role across multiple areas of our future grids. Advancements in electricity storage throughout the last few years have allowed the technology to grow from a future concept to an accepted tool of today's smart grid." KEMA is a leading energy and utility consulting, testing and certification firm active in energy storage.

Based on projected market demand for energy storage solutions, FZ Sonick plans to increase annual production to 170 MW from the 90 MW level recently achieved by MES-DEA. The company is evaluating additional manufacturing capacity for this advanced battery technology in North America, Cosciani noted.

FZ Sonick will be headquartered in Stabio, Switzerland where MES-DEA currently operates its manufacturing facility with a staff of 190 employees. Research and development efforts will take place at FIAMM's headquarters in Italy. As part of the financial terms of the partnership, FZ Sonick purchased all patents, intellectual property and manufacturing equipment that were previously owned by MES-DEA.

The addition of advanced battery technology complements FIAMM's existing line of industrial lead-acid batteries traditionally used in telecoms, electric utilities, data centers and manufacturing sites.

About FIAMM

The FIAMM Group, constituted in 1942, produces and sells batteries for the starting of cars, industrial use (units of continuity, back-up of energy) and warning horns (electric horns and sirens). FIAMM, which is headquartered in Italy, operates manufacturing facilities in Italy, Czech Republic, China, Brazil and United States. The company projects 2010 sales to exceed \$660 million. Globally, it serves the leading automotive, telecommunications and technology companies such as General Motors, Vodafone, AT&T, Verizon, and the U.S. Government. FIAMM Energy, located in Waynesboro, Ga., manufactures stored energy solutions for diversified power applications such as telecommunications, industrials, security and renewable energies, among others. The FIAMM Energy product line comprises sealed (VRLA) and vented (flooded) batteries available in a wide range of capacities and technologies to cater for all requirements. For more information, visit www.fiamm.com, www.fiammsonick.com, www.fzsonick.com, or call 706-437-3220.

About MES-DEA

MES-DEA is a business unit of the CEBI Group, which has been active for decades in the automotive components sector, appliances and alternative energy components. The CEBI Group has more than 3,000 employees worldwide with an expected turnover in 2010 of \$690 million. Major markets served by CEBI companies are Europe, China, United States, South America and Australia. It serves customers such as Whirlpool, Electrolux, Bosch, BMW, Ford, Chrysler and Visteon, among many others. For more information, visit www.cebi.com.

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