

‘Smart factory’ to produce innovative low carbon heat pumps that tackle climate change developed in Scotland by Mitsubishi Electric Air Conditioning Systems Europe Ltd

Livingston, U.K., 4th November 2021 - Mitsubishi Electric Air Conditioning Systems Europe Ltd is investing £15.3m in its Livingston manufacturing facility to significantly increase its productivity, efficiency and research & development (R&D) capabilities to meet increasing European and UK demand for its innovative and sustainable low carbon heat pumps that tackle climate change.

Decarbonising heat is a key priority in achieving Net Zero targets worldwide to address the climate emergency, with heating accounting for more than 40% of global CO₂ emissions¹.

The heating products manufactured at Livingston incorporate air and ground source heat pump technology, which are renewable low carbon alternatives to traditional high carbon heating systems. This reliable, renewable heating technology delivers highly efficient sustainable space heating and hot water all year round.

The company’s R&D activity will support the development of next generation heat pump technology in Scotland, including investigating new ‘low global warming potential’ refrigerants and materials. Following investigations, the company will seek ways to incorporate the outputs into future product manufacturing to create world-leading products that reduce their overall environmental impact, while delivering renewable energy that is urgently required for meeting environmental goals and achieving net zero status.

Earlier this week, as COP26 kicked off in Glasgow, Mitsubishi Electric Air Conditioning Systems Europe Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Scottish Enterprise to formalise their alliance. This strategic agreement was witnessed by Tatsuya Ishikawa, President and CEO of Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV, and Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport Michael Matheson MSP.

¹World Economic Forum Decarbonising Heating Community Report June 2021

The MOU will enable exploration of a low carbon heat pump centre of excellence in Scotland, as well as help the company extend its Scottish supply chain and innovation partners, leading to more high quality, green jobs in this critical sector.

Tatsuya Ishikawa, President and CEO of Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV commented, “We believe it is our corporate responsibility to conduct business in a way that contributes to creating new values, a sustainable society and that further supports other businesses that contribute to the environment. In this sense the MoU we just signed with Scottish Enterprise is an important step towards fulfilling these responsibilities.”

Scottish Enterprise is contributing to Mitsubishi Electric Air Conditioning Systems Europe Ltd.’s investment project with a wide package of support, including £1.8m of grant funding, creating 55 new jobs and protecting 324 existing jobs. These jobs are well-paid technical and engineering roles which will be required to manage and operate the new processes delivered during the project.

Adrian Gillespie, CEO of Scottish Enterprise, said, “The global transition to low carbon heating creates a huge potential market for companies and their supply chains to tap into. The technology developed by the company in Scotland and exported across Europe demonstrates the pioneering low carbon manufacturing innovation taking place here in Scotland, with global potential.

“The MOU builds on the strong partnership we’ve developed with the company in the 28 years they have operated in Scotland, and marks our commitment to a deeper strategic relationship that will support future growth and jobs for the company, its supply chain and the heat pump sector.”

Mr Masao Nagano, President of Mitsubishi Electric Air-conditioning Systems Europe Ltd, commented, “This MoU cements an already strong relationship with Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Government and our commitment in Scotland to produce low carbon heating systems. We are developing our ‘smart factory’, where we can integrate automation and robotics equipment into operations, install industrial advanced sensing systems to provide real time information, and develop digital skills for our employees. Not only will this lower our own manufacturing emissions, it enables us to help our customers lower their emissions too.

Reducing manufacturing emissions with 'smart factories' is possible because as productivity increases, time and energy to manufacture reduces, which creates a net reduction in CO₂ and delivers a more sustainable high value manufacturing facility.

In Scotland, heating buildings accounts for around 20% of the country's emissions and meeting the Scottish Government's ambitious target to fully decarbonise the heat supply to Scotland's buildings by 2045 requires rapid deployment of zero emission technologies such as heat pumps, in both domestic and non-domestic buildings.

Net Zero and Energy Secretary Michael Matheson said, "Scotland is wholly committed to ending its contribution to climate change and we recently set out our vision for more than 1 million homes to convert to zero emissions heat by 2030 in order to help achieve this ambition.

"Heat pumps are a vital part of our strategy for making this transformation happen and it is magnificent to see Mitsubishi Electric Air Conditioning Systems Europe Ltd investing to expand their heat pump manufacturing capacity in Scotland.

"The Scottish Government has committed £1.8 billion over the course of this parliament to kick start the rapid decarbonisation of Scotland's homes and buildings.

"The company's investment, with the help of Scottish Enterprise, ensures that our public funding is supporting a just transition which creates good, green jobs and drives Scotland's green recovery and onward journey to net zero."

This announcement comes on the same day that the COP26 presidency programme theme is 'Energy'. To mark this, Scottish Enterprise is hosting a series of Decarbonising Heat events as part of its COP26 trade and investment activity. Industry leaders will share Scotland's innovative solutions for decarbonising heat and explain how Glasgow is moving towards a zero-carbon heat future.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The transition to decarbonised heat through the installation of heat pumps is expected to double the size of the heat pump industry in Scotland, with the manufacture of heat pumps expected to rise six-fold, from 2000 a year in 2019 to 45,000 each year from now until 2030. The low carbon economy in the UK could grow 11% each year and figures from the office for National Statistics highlight that the production of clean energy is a growth industry with 13,500 Scottish businesses in the low carbon and renewable sector in 2019.

Mitsubishi Electric Air-conditioning Systems Europe Ltd is a jointly owned subsidiary of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV; manufacturing high quality and innovative air to air and air to water heating indoor and outdoor products.

Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation; helping customers meet their business challenges through providing innovative technologies and high-quality products and solutions.

For more information visit <https://emea.mitsubishielectric.com>

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