



**Communications Motorsport**

Eva-Maria Veith

Tel: +49 (0)841 89-33922

E-mail: [eva-maria.veith@audi.de](mailto:eva-maria.veith@audi.de)

[www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)

## **Audi and the long way to Le Mans**

- **The key steps in the development of the new R18**
- **Concept established back in July 2012**
- **First track test in October 2013**

**Ingolstadt, January 27, 2014** – On June 14/15, Audi will leave no stone unturned to continue its string of victories in the Le Mans 24 Hours. The new Audi R18 e-tron quattro the brand will be competing with is the most complex race car in Audi's history. Chris Reinke, Head of LMP at Audi Sport, outlines the key milestones of the project.

**July 2012:** Shortly after our first hybrid victory at Le Mans, the concept of the new R18 e-tron quattro is established – even though the regulations have not been finalized at the time.

**October 2012:** Initial tests in the wind tunnel – aerodynamics play a major role at Le Mans and have significant influence on the overall design of the car.

**December 2012:** Start of the engineering design stage – the new Audi R18 e-tron quattro consists of over 4,200 single parts. Almost every one of them will be redesigned.

**Beginning of 2013:** Decision that the new R18 will be running with laser light – a technology which Audi's production development has been researching for years and in which it is ahead of the competition.

**March 2013:** Production of the first components for the new R18, followed shortly afterwards by initial component tests on test rigs and the race track.

**June 2013:** On the test day at Le Mans, we gather important data with the slimmer tires specified as of 2014 for our tire partner Michelin, using a fourth R18 with test driver Marco Bonanomi. There are no other testing opportunities available at the Le Mans race track.



**June 2013:** Shortly before the race at Le Mans, the new V6 TDI engine for the 2014-specification R18 is run on the dyno in Neckarsulm for the first time.

**July 2013:** Start of the simulator tests – in parallel to the real-world race car, Audi continues to develop the virtual version of the R18.

**September 2013:** Assembly of the first test prototype (chassis number 401).

**October 8, 2013:** A special day in any race car project: the roll-out on the race track. In this case, it is Le Castellet in the south of France. Lucas di Grassi is at the wheel before Oliver Jarvis takes over driving duties. On the following days, the main focus is placed on checking the functionality of all the components of the new R18.

**December 8, 2013:** The first photograph of the new R18 is published. Track tests at Sebring, Florida, start the next day. All new Audi prototypes have had to prove their viability on this track that is rough on the vehicles' technology. It is particularly well suited to identifying weak points.

**December 18, 2013:** At the Audi Sport Finale in Ingolstadt, the new R18 celebrates its world premiere. Allan McNish and Loic Duval present the car on stage, with Tom Kristensen at the wheel. At the same time, Audi showcases laser light as the latest innovation in automotive lighting technology.

#### **Going forward:**

From January to May, the new Audi R18 e-tron quattro is being tested on various race tracks. The basic homologation of the new LMP1 sports car has to be completed by the end of February. The durability of the R18 will be verified in a 30-hour test. From then on, there should be no more changes made to any components, as assembly of the race cars and engines for Le Mans will be in progress. On March 27, the first technical scrutineering will take place before the official tests of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) at Le Castellet. Furthermore, practice units focused on how to change parts and numerous pit stop practice sessions are on the agenda. The WEC season opens at Silverstone on April 20. Two weeks later, Audi will compete in round two at Spa-Francorchamps, before the new R18 e-tron quattro hits the race track at Le Mans on the test day on June 1 – afterwards, there will only be a short time left before the race to analyze the data gathered.

– End –

**Note to editors:** Every Monday until the Le Mans race in June, we will be providing you with new background information on the R18 project and Audi's commitment in



the world's most famous endurance race that will be held on June 14/15 this year.  
Next week's topic: the drivers of Audi Sport in the R18 project.

The Audi Group delivered around 1,575,500 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2013. From January through the end of September 2013 the Company posted revenue of €37 billion and an operating profit of €3.74 billion. The Audi Group is globally present in more than 100 markets and produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun (China) and Jakarta (Indonesia). The brand with four rings produces cars also in Foshan (China) since December 2013, in 2015 in São José dos Pinhais (Brazil) and 2016 in San José Chiapa (Mexico). AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy) and the sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy). The Group currently employs almost 73,000 people worldwide, including around 50,000 in Germany. Total investment of around €22 billion is planned from 2014 to 2018 – mainly in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi lives up to its corporate responsibility and has strategically established the principle of sustainability for its products and processes. The long-term goal is CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.