

SC BMW Adds 100 Jobs Amid X3 Demand

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GREER, S.C. (AP) — German automaker BMW is adding 100 new jobs at its South Carolina plant and shifting to a six-day work week as it ramps up production for its vehicles.

BMW Group Board Member Harald Krueger announced Wednesday the company will be looking for engineers, information technology specialists and production management associates to work at the plant in Greer.

Krueger said the company also is adding a new recruitment program and a health services center for employees, retirees and dependents.

Gov. Nikki Haley was present for the announcement, saying in a statement issued by her office that BMW is an example of "manufacturing excellence. They understand what it means to take care of and invest in their employees."

In cooperation with Spartanburg Community College, Greenville Tech and Tri County Tech, the firm will be involved in what will be known as the BMW Scholars Program.

The schools will be part of a two-year program where students can attend classes while working part time at the BMW plant. Fifteen students have begun working with the program and another 35 are expected to start later this year.

Officials said the program has been used to recruit and train workers in Germany.

The German automaker said it expects to increase production at the South Carolina plant by 11 percent to 300,000 vehicles in 2012.

BMW Chairman Norbert Reithofer said Tuesday the first half of 2011 was the best six-month period in the group's history. He says the company had difficulties meeting demands for its X3 sports activity vehicles, which are built in Greer.

Demand has been particularly high in China, BMW officials said.

BMW reported its earnings increased sharply during the second quarter to nearly \$2.6 billion compared with \$1.8 billion during the same quarter last year.

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