Honda To Move North American Leadership To Ohio

The Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Honda is moving its North American leadership from California to a major factory campus in Ohio.

The Japanese automaker said Friday that about 50 leadership and support jobs will move to Marysville, Ohio, near Columbus.

But the company says its American headquarters and about 2,500 workers will remain in Torrance, Calif., near Los Angeles.

Honda has a huge factory complex in Marysville that makes the top-selling Accord midsize car and other vehicles.

Last year the automaker announced plans to have its sales, manufacturing and research operations North America play a greater role in the global business. The company said that the move to Ohio and several executive changes made Friday are the next step in that process.

Honda also said it would form a new services company based in Marysville.

Tetsuo Iwamura, president of Honda North America and CEO of American Honda Motor Co., will have offices in both Marysville and Torrance.

The move will start April 1 and continue through the next year, Honda said in a statement.

The automaker has built cars in Ohio for more than 30 years and has several other factories and research facilities in the region. Currently, more than 13,500 people work for Honda in Ohio at assembly plants in Marysville and East Liberty, an engine plant in Anna north of Dayton and a transmission plant at Russells Point. Honda also has a research and development center in Raymond, the largest such facility outside of Japan.

In November, the company announced it would make more than $200 million in new investments at the Anna and Russells Point plants, creating at least 200 new manufacturing jobs. Honda says it has announced investments of more than $800 million at its Ohio facilities in the past three years. The company employs 13,500 Ohioans.

"The evolutionary step we are announcing today will more efficiently group our regional executive management in one location close to our major manufacturing, purchasing and R&D centers in the region," Honda spokesman Jeffrey Smith said in

an e-mail. "So, in that sense the North American regional leadership function of Honda's North American management will be in Ohio."

Honda's automobile and motorcycle sales, dealer relations, marketing, distribution, and other operations will stay in Torrance, Smith said.

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