

ElectraMeccanica moves from development to build stage

Electric vehicle builder ElectraMeccanica Vehicles Corp., headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia and with an engineering and manufacturing plant under construction in Mesa, Arizona, has issued a letter to shareholders from CEO Kevin Pavlov, stating that they have “transitioned from a development stage company to a well-capitalized, high-quality automotive OEM,” having begun the first commercial deliveries of their flagship single-seat EV, the SOLO, to retail and fleet customers, aimed at “thought leaders, fun-seekers, city planners and environmentally conscious consumers around the world.”

Last year’s focus was on developing a retail footprint across the US, expanding in Arizona, Colorado, California, Oregon and Washington, while breaking ground on the 235,000-sq-ft. Mesa assembly plant and technical center in August. Their goal is to rapidly scale production, with an initial capacity to produce 20,000 SOLOs per year in Arizona once the plant is completed this summer. This plant will produce in tandem with strategic manu-

facturing partner Zongshen, in China, for a combined capacity of up to 40,000.

Test drive and showcase events last year included the LA Auto Show, the Advanced Clean Transportation (ACT) Expo in Long Beach, and the huge SEMA Show (the Specialty Equipment Market Association) in Las Vegas, where they introduced concept convertible and performance variants, potential future customized options, and the SOLO Cargo with an expanded cargo box.

They also signed a strategic agreement with global industrial technology firm Bosch to establish the Bosch Car Service Network, a pilot service and maintenance network of approved independent automobile repair shops throughout the western US, which will eventually expand nationwide.

Their biggest landmark came in October, when they delivered the first commercial SOLOs at an invite-only unveiling event in Los Angeles for early reservation holders and fleet operators. Capped off by 19 SOLO EVs during December, a total of 61 SOLOs were delivered for 2021. They say the initial

customer response to the quality and experience of the SOLO has been exceptional.

With \$228 million on their balance sheet, they expect production to ramp significantly in 2022, now that they have the necessary sales, marketing, logistics and service networks in place.

The company’s flagship vehicle is the three-wheeled SOLO single-seat EV, an urban vehicle designed to revolutionize commuting, delivery and shared mobility. SOLO has a range of 100 miles, a top speed of 80 mph, front and rear crumple zones, side impact protection, a roll bar and torque-limiting control, making it safe for highways. The vehicle also has power steering, power brakes, air conditioning, Bluetooth and an XM entertainment system for a pleasant commute. All this starts at a price point of \$18,500 (available for pre-order).

As of January 31, the company had delivered a total of 20 SOLO EVs to kick off 2022, focusing on fleet and commercial customers. Companies with the SOLO already in operation include Skechers USA, Faction Technology, Cyber Yogurt, Ruby’s Diner, Which Wich, UC Berkeley, the City of Mesa, Ross Painting, Maria Villareal Real Estate, Medcenta Pharmacy and Vortex Mental Health.

UC Berkeley fleet supervisor Michael Fujita

notes, “Using the SOLO instead of a full-size pickup truck will not only be more ‘Green,’ but also easier to navigate throughout the campus.”

President and executive director Nancy Hormann of the Downtown Mesa Association says, “Having the very first SOLO in Arizona delivered to Downtown Mesa has been a great experience. Using the car as our parking compliance vehicle has been met with great enthusiasm. The compact design of the car is great for helping our compliance officer navigate tight spaces in the garages as well as cutting patrol time in half. The curiosity demonstrated by our downtown patrons has made the car a great conversation starter. The technology we were able to easily install in the SOLO is the perfect complement to our ‘Smart City’ designation.”

Expected to boost commercial interest even more so is the roll-out of the SOLO Cargo EV.

The new Cargo EV variant (below) was developed based on direct input from prospective buyers, modified with an expanded cargo box to accommodate a wide variety of fleet and commercial applications. Basic specifications and safety features are the same as for the standard SOLO EV, while its cargo space has been expanded to a total of 11.8 cubic feet, compared to 5 cubic feet in the standard SOLO EV. The Cargo version contains a variety of features for commercial applications including a bulkhead to separate the driver



from the cargo contents, an adjustable folding interior floor panel, cargo netting, lighting in the rear cargo space and a telematics enabled device. For added safety, the roof is reinforced with a Kevlar band. SOLO Cargo starts at \$24,500.

Demand is already rolling in for the SOLO Cargo EV, with deliveries expected to be early in the third quarter of this year. In February, Pelican Food Concepts of Arizona, a franchisee of Mountain Mike’s Pizza (a 40-year-old regional chain with restaurants across Arizona and other Western states) signed on as a SOLO Cargo EV initial test, reference and market validation account for Electra-

Meccanica, provided the vehicles meet its pizza delivery specifications for cost and performance in initial trials. The vehicles, with space for about 15 standard pizza boxes in their 11.8 cubic feet trunk, operate at an average cost of \$.30 per mile (roughly five times the savings of existing third-party deliveries, optimizing a transition to in-house deliveries or equally good for individuals looking for a low-cost alternative to drive for third-party delivery apps, all while reducing their carbon footprint). An order for 20 vehicles or so is expected by both parties. Once final engineering is complete and production of the vehicles begins. This comes on top of five existing fleet customers for ElectraMeccanica in the food delivery space. ■

The SOLO Cargo, with its eye on commercial sales, strikes us as a genius move—not only because the market itself should be strong, but let’s not forget that the whole personal pickup craze began because people saw commercial vehicles and said, hey, I’d like to have one of those for myself!



ElectraMeccanica’s 235,000-sq-ft assembly plant and technical engineering center under construction in Mesa (above) is due for completion this summer.

