



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 4 OCTOBER 2022**

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### **FIRST MOLD IN COLOR WEATHERABLE GRILLE NAMED 2022 SPE® AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS “HALL OF FAME” WINNER**

**Troy, (DETROIT) MICH.**— The first Mold In Color (MIC) weatherable grille, used on the 1987 Volkswagen Golf, has been named the 2022 Hall of Fame Winner by the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®). This will be celebrated by honoring the technology and the companies and people originally involved in developing this application during SPE’s 51<sup>st</sup> annual Automotive Innovation Awards Competition & Gala on November 2, 2022. The industry’s first MIC weatherable grille, made possible with Luran S® ASA from INEOS STYROLUTION (precolored plastic resins used in the plastic injection molding process so the molded part emerges in a specific color and finish), proved to be a game changer for vehicle front grilles by providing a weatherable, paint free exterior surface.

To be considered for a Hall of Fame Award, an automotive plastic or composite component must have been in continuous service in some form for at least 15 years and broadly adopted in the automotive industry. This application certainly qualifies as MIC grilles have become the industry standard used by every major OEM for front grilles replacing traditionally painted materials on over 300M exterior parts including grilles, mirrors, pillars, spoilers, fog bezels and more. Further technology now being developed around MIC ASA includes radar detection covers, lidar equipment, and CHMSL (Center High Mounted Stop Lamp) bezels. The automotive market for MIC ASA has now grown to over 100M pounds globally.

The benefits of MIC grilles vs painted front grilles include the elimination of the paint process, 25-35% cost savings (\$25 per part), excellent wearability, high impact strength and excellent dimensional stability. The environmental benefits include a significant reduction in CO2 and VOG, energy usage and green-house gasses. MIC grilles have had a huge impact on automotive design by enabling increased design flexibility including grained low gloss and smooth high gloss appearances and hot foil stamping.

The companies involved in developing the first MIC weatherable grille application include: OEM – Volkswagen Group; Molder/Processor – Volkswagen Group; and Material Supplier – INEOS STYROLUTION. Representatives from these companies will accept the SPE Automotive Hall of Fame Award, on behalf of the original team that worked to develop the first MIC weatherable grille on the 1987 Volkswagen Golf, at the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala on November 2, 2022 at the Burton Manor in Livonia, Michigan.

The SPE Automotive Innovation Awards is the oldest and largest competition of its kind in the world. Dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, and polymer producers submit nominations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle and why it merits the claim as the *Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics*. This annual event typically draws over 800 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from this event are used to support SPE educational efforts and technical seminars, which help educate and secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Automotive Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments in all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments in the global transportation industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more info on the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Competition and Gala go to: <https://speautomotive.com/innovation-awards-competition-and-gala/>

For more info on the Society of Plastics Engineers go to: <https://www.4spe.org/>

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