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Improved ergonomics for Audi's WEC drivers

- **New cockpit design optimizes operation of controls**
- **Better seating position enlarges field of vision**
- **Active safety is enhanced**

Ingolstadt, April 1, 2014 – Audi has developed a new concept for the R18 e-tron quattro's ergonomics for the 2014 season. The configuration of the elements in the cockpit is even more logical now, their functions have been rethought, and the seating position has been improved. This makes it easier for the Audi drivers in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) to operate the controls of the hybrid sports car.

The range of tasks is growing: The Audi drivers not only have to pay the same attention to safety, speed and precision on track as before, but now have to get an exact handle on efficiency as well. The maximum consumption per lap specified by the regulations requires utmost discipline to avoid penalties. To make optimal concentration easier, the drivers' work in the cockpit should involve as little effort as possible.

“Long before the 2014 season, we took an in-depth look at how we could support our drivers even better,” says Dr. Martin Mühlmeier, Head of Technology at Audi Sport. “The result is a cockpit in which we practically changed everything – from the pedals through to the functions on the steering wheel and on the dashboard. Additionally, the seating position has been changed according to the regulations.”

The innovations start in the foot well. The drivers no longer operate the clutch using a foot pedal but by means of paddles behind the steering wheel. “This is a principle I'm already familiar with from other race car categories which makes it easier to operate the clutch,” says Audi factory driver Lucas di Grassi describing the advantages.

The configuration of the controls between the dashboard and the steering wheel has changed as well. “Our objective was for the driver to be able to reach all the functions he frequently uses as easily as possible without having to take his hands



off the wheel,” explains Chris Reinke, Head of LMP at Audi Sport. One of the new features is a multi-functional rotary switch for selecting tasks that used to be performed by using various controls. Two push-buttons make it possible for the driver to easily change individual functions to adjust the car’s balance, for instance through traction control or brake force distribution. As balance changes when the fuel load decreases, the driver can quickly readjust the set-up of his race car this way.

Another ergonomic consequence results from the regulations for 2014. They prescribe a change in cockpit dimensions and a different seating position which significantly benefits the driver. While he used to lie relatively flat in the monocoque before, his upper body is now in a more upright position. “This enlarges the forward angle of vision,” says a pleased Lucas di Grassi. “And vision through the side windows has notably improved as well. This clearly helps us in the on-track battles with our rivals.”

So the new Audi R18 e-tron quattro is not only a particularly efficient race car but ergonomically superior to its predecessors as well. “The new ergonomics help our drivers concentrate on the optimal lap even better than before,” says Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. “In total, this enhances their performance capacity and adds to active safety.”

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Note to editors: Every Monday until the Le Mans race on June 14/15, 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. Next week’s topic: light-weight design.

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