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Caparo Vehicles Technologies

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Caparo, a metal processing multinational, has acquired the Engineering Company Freestream, that recently unveiled the T1 concept vehicle. The new brand will be named Caparo Vehicles Technologies.

From the official Press Release:

Caparo - a \$1.25-billion multinational with business interests in aluminium and steel processing and vehicle structural components - is to create an advanced automotive technology and engineering design company to be called **Caparo Vehicle Technologies**.

The new company will provide advanced technology development, materials engineering and design services to mainstream automotive, motorsport and aerospace markets. Coupled with its global manufacturing resource and capability Caparo aims to accelerate the use of lightweight materials in vehicle structures.

To launch the company Caparo has acquired the automotive consultancy recently established by Ben Scott-Geddes and Graham Halstead. Both engineers were part of the team that developed the iconic McLaren F1.

Their automotive engineering skills have already spawned the impressive **Freestream T1** currently in prototype build, which will now be launched as the **Caparo Freestream**.

This ultra high performance road and track car is designed for low volume production to demonstrate the company's technical know-how and competence in whole vehicle design. Ben Scott-Geddes becomes design director of the new company, while Graham Halstead becomes engineering director. In addition to their skills in vehicle design and engineering the two engineers have particular expertise in materials technology having been responsible for the Mercedes SLR McLaren sports car; the first advanced composite all carbon body structure to undergo Euro NCAP testing during its development. This unique capability and understanding of materials performance, including how materials as dissimilar as aluminium, advanced composites, engineering plastics and high strength steel can be joined - and which is the best material for a particular part of the car - is important to manufacturers needing to reduce the weight of vehicles to make them more fuel efficient without compromising vital active and passive safety.

Caparo has recruited ex-Ricardo head of computer-aided engineering **Mark Findlay** as managing director, whose first task is to recruit an elite team of around 30 professional engineers with the skills necessary for handling sophisticated engineering design contracts from carmakers and first tier suppliers.

Emphasis will be placed on rapid turnaround of projects so that concepts can be developed for production as quickly as possible in order for clients to gain advantage from being first to market.

Caparo group chief executive **Angad Paul** will take the position of chairman while fellow main board director **Richard Butler** will also take a seat on the Caparo Vehicle Technologies' board.



Ben Scott-Geddes (left), Sean Butcher (centre) and Graham Halstead



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[Freestream T1](#)

Sean Butcher who identified the commercial opportunity and brought the two parties together becomes commercial director. *"This is an exciting and logical development for Caparo,"* said Angad Paul.



Richard Butler, director of
Caparo Vehicle Technologies

Asked to comment on the group's move into advanced vehicle technology he added: *"I warmly welcome this opportunity for the group to move up the value chain with this high added value proposition. We will use our vehicle technology company to add new materials know-how to our existing aluminium and steel structural capabilities. To me, advanced composites represents an important*



Angad Paul, chief executive of Caparo Group
and chairman of Caparo Vehicle Technologies

development in delivering to our customers better vehicle efficiency with less environmental impact and without having to compromise the enjoyment of motoring. The optimum combination of these different materials in the next generation of vehicles - be they cars, trucks, boats or planes - will be a unique selling proposition for our customers."

As well as helping to solve fundamental vehicle engineering issues facing the car industry, the huge interest and publicity already surrounding the Caparo Freestream car plus the added-value once it has completed its test programme, will allow customers of the group's advanced automotive technology company to gain additional marketing advantage by citing Caparo's technical involvement in their vehicles.

The compact, lightweight, highly developed powertrain for the Caparo Freestream car will feature a bespoke 2.4-litre V8 engine; branded the Caparo T1. The supercharged engine delivers 480bhp at 10,500rpm. Combined with a small motorsport transmission the complete powertrain weighs approximately 130kg; a comparatively featherweight figure which was crucial to achieving a total vehicle mass of 465kg. This has enabled the company to be the first in the world to produce a road and track car able to exceed 1,000bhp-per-tonne – a significant breakthrough in terms of pure automotive engineering.

The car is also highly developed aerodynamically and is designed to offer a unique racecar performance experience that is simply not achieved by the current generation of sports cars. The driver and passenger of the Caparo Freestream will experience extremely rapid acceleration as well as 3g cornering and braking performance comparable to that of a Le Mans prototype when on the track; yet with its 15 gallon (70-litre) fuel tank is expected to travel safely for 400-500 miles (600-800km) on public highways without refuelling.

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