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Panasonic Shifts its Refrigeration Compressor Business Unit (RCBU) to Singapore

Osaka, Japan - Panasonic Corporation today announced the opening of the Refrigeration Compressor Business Unit (RCBU) in Singapore. Relocated from Kusatsu City, Shiga, Japan to the heart of Asia, the RCBU's move serves to more effectively meet growing customer demands in the Asian markets as well as to build a locally-based management structure for real-time decision making.

The relocated RCBU headquarters will be situated within Panasonic Appliances Refrigeration Devices Singapore (PAPRDSG). This newly established RCBU headquarters will bring together other business functions in R&D (technical expertise and intellectual property), Sales and Marketing, Human Resource, Accounting, Corporate Planning, Business Management, Manufacturing Innovation, Quality Innovation, and Procurement.

For instance, development functions for mass production, which are mostly handled in Japan, will also be shifted to Singapore. Furthermore, PAPRDSG's manufacturing functions will be integrated with the headquarters functions as the RC Manufacturing Center to further increase efficiency and to engage in new manufacturing utilizing the Internet of Things.

The robust infrastructure and conducive business environment in Singapore enable Panasonic to tap on and build a pool of local talent. To support its transformation into a SMART factory, Panasonic is committed to working with Singaporeans to increase their skillsets and build deep capabilities. For Singaporean talents, the presence of the RCBU Global R&D Centre in Singapore presents unique opportunities to take up leadership roles and drive innovative change in the region.

Advancing manufacturing processes with end-to-end R&D capabilities

From new product development to technology research, RCBU possesses end-to-end R&D capabilities aimed at developing high performance, cost competitive and environmentally-friendly products that meet customers' needs. With a robust manufacturing capacity, RCBU will cater to all the manufacturing sites in Asia, namely Singapore, Malaysia, China and Japan. As the global R&D Centre, RCBU is also responsible for providing global product design, development and engineering administrative support for these markets by combining its expertise with Panasonic engineering branches in China and Japan.

"We have established our operations in Singapore for 45 years and right now we are seeing huge growth opportunities here in Asia. The opening of RCBU marks our commitment to being the leading refrigeration compressor company globally through a focus on cutting-edge innovation. We are eager to embark on this journey of transformation through a combination of R&D and smart solutions to support our growth in the Singapore market and beyond," said Mr. Atsunao Terasaki, Director of RCBU & Managing Director of PAPRDSG.

Mr. Lim Kok Kiang, Assistant Managing Director of EDB said, "This latest investment by Panasonic Refrigeration Compressor Business Unit marks a new milestone in the transformation of its Singapore operations into a global R&D centre as well as a digitally-enabled Smart Factory. We are heartened by Panasonic's confidence in Singapore as we move towards advanced manufacturing to position our economy for the future. We look forward to working with Panasonic in driving innovation and capturing new growth opportunities."

Transformation into a SMART factory

With a full suite of R&D functions in place, PAPRDSG is set to evolve into a SMART factory in phases. The first phase will see a consolidation of operations, the introduction of automated guided vehicles (AGV) to replace manual transportation of parts, optimized supply routes and the establishment of a centralized storage.

The second phase will kick in to further support the streamlined operations through big data and automation. Using manufacturing execution system (MES) integration and production traceability, the factory will be well-equipped to integrate operational information and data for inventory, production quantity, equipment, and quality inspection to achieve advanced manufacturing. Combined with the deployment of advanced robots and automation equipment, the efficiency of manual, human assembly and skill-based processes will drastically improve.

Through the final phase, devices will be integrated for full connectivity to enable the monitoring of production against key performance indicators (KPI) as well as real-time operation control and monitoring of quality, inventory, equipment and processes through a remote centralized system.

The factory is expected to be fully revamped with smart manufacturing processes over the next five years.

About Panasonic

Panasonic Corporation is a worldwide leader in the development of diverse electronics technologies and solutions for customers in the consumer electronics, housing, automotive, enterprise solutions and device industries. Since its founding in 1918, the company has expanded globally and now operates 474 subsidiaries and 94 associated companies worldwide, recording consolidated net sales of 7.553 trillion yen for the year ended March 31, 2016. Committed to pursuing new value through innovation across divisional lines, the company uses its technologies to create a better life and a better world for its customers. To learn more about Panasonic:

<http://www.panasonic.com/global>.

About Panasonic Appliances Refrigeration Devices Singapore

Panasonic Appliances Refrigeration Devices Singapore was established in 1972, manufacturing energy efficient inverter compressors for fridges, water coolers and vending machines. The manufacturing set up is vertically integrated. The in-house processes range from iron casting, machining, component parts stamping, welding, motor core stamping and winding, and final assembly. The annual output capacity of the factory is seven million pieces, achieved through the use of highly automated machinery in the manufacturing process.

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