

Freightliner Specialty Vehicles Joins Quality Job Program

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Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc., is the first rural company to qualify for the Oklahoma Quality Jobs Program under a change of control provisions by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC). The company was recently recognized at a ceremony in Oklahoma City. Pictured are (from left): Oklahoma Department of Commerce and Tourism Secretary Natalie Shirley; John Robertson, ODOC; Jonna Kirschner, ODOC; Tim Sinor and Alan Aneshansley, both of Freightliner Specialty Vehicles; Clinton City Manager Grayson Bottom; and Paul Walenciak, Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance.

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Officials with Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc., were recently recognized by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce for becoming the first rural company to qualify for the Oklahoma Quality Jobs Program under a change of control provisions.

Paul Walenciak, a manufacturing extension agent for the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, assisted in the process. Walenciak is sponsored by Southwestern Oklahoma State University and Western Technology Center.

On behalf of Governor Brad Henry, Secretary of Commerce Natalie Shirley presented a plaque to Tim Sinor, owner and president of Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc. and Alan Aneshansley, chief financial officer, in honor of their commitment to Oklahoma.

"This is a successful company that could have chosen to locate anywhere in the world, but they made the decision to stay in Oklahoma," Shirley said. "Our partners at the Oklahoma Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence and the City of Clinton worked with us every step of the way to ensure that this company would remain in Oklahoma. We are thrilled that Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc. has made Oklahoma their home."

In 1995, Sinor opened Sinor Manufacturing and began building emergency vehicles. Because of the long production schedule for an ambulance or rescue truck—sometimes up to 120 days—Sinor decided the factory could manufacture a "fun" vehicle to balance the long lead times.

"Recreation towing vehicles seemed to fit that bill," Sinor said. "As a result, we designed what became the SportChassis and production began in early 1997."

In 1998, Freightliner, a division of DaimlerChrysler, acquired controlling interest in the company and created Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc. Since 2002, the Clinton factory has manufactured only the SportChassis line.

In 2006, due to changing business conditions and new federal regulations, DaimlerChrysler adopted a corporate strategy to divest itself of some of its subsidiaries, including Freightliner Specialty Vehicles, Inc. THS Holding Company, owned by Sinor, stepped in to purchase the company and despite attractive incentive offers from a neighboring state, decided to keep the company in Oklahoma, in large part due to the recently enacted legislation under the Quality Jobs Program.

“Oklahoma’s successful Quality Jobs incentive program promotes job growth and helps improve a company’s bottom line by injecting cash back into the business as it expands and creates new employment,” said Walenciak, who is one of 20 manufacturing extension agents working in communities across Oklahoma.

Sinor remains optimistic about the company’s future.

“Our goal is not a radical increase in sales,” he said. “We want to control growth by integrating new production efficiencies. We’ve always prided ourselves on building the best and most innovative products. That has not changed and our skilled work force will allow us to do that while growing the business.”

Sinor said western Oklahoma is a great place to operate a manufacturing business and he commends the Oklahoma Department of Commerce for having the foresight to support rural development with the Quality Jobs program.