



TRANSIT CONNECT SPORTVAN CONCEPT SHOWN AT BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham (UK), April 24, 2007 – Ford of Europe's commercial vehicle division are revealing at Birmingham an exciting concept vehicle to add to their growing SportVan portfolio of production models; the Transit Connect SportVan Concept.

Positioned between the Fiesta SportVan and new Transit SportVan models, the Transit Connect SportVan short wheelbase concept is an indication of how the range could be further extended to offer a sporty light commercial vehicle for those business owner-drivers seeking extra performance and styling from their van.

Originally launched Europe-wide in 2002, the Transit Connect has established itself as the perfect mid-sized partner to the small but functional Fiesta van and the renowned and trustworthy Transit.

The Transit Connect SportVan Concept is proudly showcased in Performance Blue metallic paint; a colour already associated with many of Ford's performance sporty cars and a signature colour for a SportVan. The combination of exterior styling features such as the full bodycoloured bumpers, bright chrome grille and protective silver 'cups' behind the exterior door handles, side skirts, front and rear sports skid plates, bodycoloured roof spoiler and silver door mirror housings distinguish the Transit Connect SportVan Concept as something special.

Bold GT-style white stripes extend from the lower front bumper across the bonnet and 18-inch seven-spoke alloy wheels and an aerodynamic roof spoiler add sporty top to bottom visual impact to the profile.

"We recognise a requirement for additional sporty performance and styling features on vans," explained Peter Fleet, Director, Commercial Vehicles, Marketing, Sales and Service, Ford of Europe. "Drivers using a van for business typically tally the highest mileages or hours behind the wheel. By giving customers a sense of pride through the combination of special performance, styling and comfort features, we can add substantially to their enjoyment of a commercial vehicle."



The Transit Connect SportVan Concept is highly specified with safety features such as a passenger airbag, ABS and traction control. Twin rear doors and a sliding side load door provide superb access with the contents protected by the vehicle alarm system. A park distance control helps to ensure that the painted bumpers remain pristine and helps to avoid any blushes of the professional driver.

In the cab, air conditioning is provided along with a 6006 audio system operated via stalk control with front loading in-dash six CD player. Stowage areas are provided throughout, including an overhead storage area that extends the entire width of the cab. Seats fully trimmed in pewter leather complement the leather sports steering wheel and gear knob and a centre stack featuring bright silver all add luxurious qualities for the driver and passenger.

"Building the Transit Connect SportVan Concept as an exercise shows in an eye-catching way how the Transit Connect perfectly complements the Fiesta van and Transit to offer a suite of exciting and sporty vans for a wide variety of customers that want a stylish and highly-specified van," said Peter Fleet. "Ford's commitment to offering our customers reliable and dependable vans has never diminished. With the SportVan range we take things a step further; we offer performance and style for a van that reflects the driver's personality and makes a positive statement about their own business."

Having identified a trend of artisan owners who increasingly need to use their vehicles as dual purpose for their work and leisure time, Ford provides the answer by equipping their SportVan models with high levels of specification and a combination of interior and exterior design features to add premium-like comfort and luxury. The Transit Connect SportVan Concept is fitted with a 1.8-litre Duratorq TDCi 110 PS engine, delivering 280 Nm of torque.

"At Birmingham last year we launched our new Transit along with the new Ranger and the updated Transit Connect. Since that time we have continued to expand on that to offer new features and derivatives of these models," explained Phil Collareno, Ford of Europe's Vehicle Line Director for Commercial Vehicle Programmes. "The Transit Connect SportVan Concept is a reflection of our dedication to this very important area. Having won the International Van of the Year with the new Transit we're determined and committed to finding new ways to identify demand and satisfy this very important area of our business and our customers' business."

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