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Author: Mr. Christophe Rothmund
Airbus Safran Launchers, France, christophe.rothmund@airbusafran-launchers.com

BMW ROCKET ENGINES

Abstract

From 1939 until 1945, the BMW company had a rocket-engine department. Its activities were not limited to the development and production of rocket engines, but also to research on propellants and rocket engine components. Unfortunately its achievements were overshadowed by those of other companies, although its engines were not without qualities. Among these achievements is the BMW 003R turbojet with added rocket engine, the very first one to be tested.

The paper will be divided into two parts. The first part will be devoted to the research activities performed on engine components and propellants. The second part will describe the rocket engines developed by BMW and give insights on their developmental history.

It is based on a report on BMW engines authored by the former head of the Munich-Allach plant. It was established in May 1946 at the request of the military authorities. As such, it gives a unique point-of-view from an insider and gives extremely valuable information on the development and production of these rocket engines. This chief engineer later contributed to the establishment of the Bremen plant of Airbus Safran Launchers.

The paper will conclude on the legacy of these engines.