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NEWS RELEASE

BEDFORDSHIRE FIRM RECEIVES NATIONAL INDUSTRY AWARD

High-Tech Engineering, a Dunstable company that uses leading-edge technology to produce quality precision-engineered components for customers in the aerospace, defence, scientific, electronics and auto motorsport industries has won a national award for supply chain excellence.

The bronze award - to be presented on 11 September to High-Tech Engineering's MD Steve Tickner, at an industry Taskforce meeting in Fareham, Hampshire - is from the aerospace and defence industry's Supply Chain for the 21st Century (SC21) programme. It recognises the company's excellence in implementing supply chain improvements and is sponsored by a key customer company - in this case GKN.

Steve Tickner, Managing Director of High-Tech Engineering, said:

"We are delighted to receive the award from SC21. It rewards the hard work of everyone at High-Tech Engineering and recognises their efforts. We recognise that the future competitiveness of our business - as well as of the industry in general - lies in having the most efficient supply chains possible. The SC21 programme has been invaluable in helping us to achieve this in our business."

Achieving supply chain improvement is critical to the continued competitiveness of the UK aerospace and defence industry and SC21 aims to accelerate the process. With international competition increasing, the participation of companies of all sizes throughout the UK supply chain is crucial to delivering real results from this modernisation programme.

SC21 companies have signed up to a formal recognition process that reflects the contribution and commitment of their supply chain. It costs nothing to join SC21. Member companies can benefit from specific savings - for example they may achieve reduced overheads from supporting fewer supply chain audits from customers, which is valuable in offering the most competitive solutions to customers. Through participating in SC21 businesses also

understand how the industry will be changing in the future and will be aware of the latest developments in the sector - key competitive advantages to them.

Organisations achieving and maintaining agreed criteria in terms of delivery, quality, sustainable improvement and the associated improvement frameworks (business and manufacturing excellence) will receive recognition in the form of a bronze, silver or gold award sponsored by an SC21 company. Implementing these four aspects of development and performance achieves a benefit to all parties in the areas of competitiveness, enhanced customer perception and lower internal costs.

Russ Armitage, Chairman of SC21, said:

"Congratulations are very much in order for High-Tech Engineering. As the first precision machining company to be the recipients of an SC21 award they are among the leaders in implementing this vital supply chain modernisation programme. The future of the UK aerospace and defence industry depends on having an efficient supply chain if we are to remain globally competitive. I believe that SC21 is the way to achieve that."

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

1. Established in 1985 High-Tech Engineering has grown steadily and now operates from a new purpose-build facility utilising advanced technology to produce quality precision components cost effectively in a variety of materials. For more information on High Tech Engineering please go to <http://www.high-tech-eng.co.uk/index.php>
2. SC21 is sponsored by the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC). For more information on SC21 please go to www.sbac.co.uk/sc21 and for more about the SBAC please go to www.sbac.co.uk. More details on the SC21 awards can be found at <http://www.sbac.co.uk/pages/55028933.asp>
3. For more information on GKN please go to <http://www.aerospace.gknplc.com/index.aspx>.