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## **Mechanical engineering: a cross cutting industrial strategy planned**

Alliance opens plans for a sector wide initiative

In response to government's industrial strategy development, the Engineering and Machinery Alliance (EAMA) have announced plans for a complementary industrial strategy for the machinery and allied component (MAC) supply chain sector. It will be based on the conclusions of a pilot study EAMA commissioned from the University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) with assistance from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

EAMA believes its initiative will greatly increase the ability of MAC SC companies, particularly SMEs, to benefit from the wide variety of schemes available to help build competitive performance. Commenting on the cross-cutting initiative, Martin Walder, EAMA chairman said: "Having decided to proceed, EAMA are now inviting all interested associations and organisations representing companies operating in MAC supply chains to contact us so that we can share our plans in more detail.

"Associations don't have to be members to join in. That's the offer we made for the scoping study which enabled four non-members to participate and we are repeating the invitation this time.

"The pilot study has convinced us that there are significant opportunities to help member firms grow. The ultimate aim is, of course, to raise UK supply chain performance. We aim to achieve this by accessing and developing schemes that increase individual company competitiveness and productivity in a programme that reflects the fact that many firms serve more than one supply chain. Accordingly, the wider the participation, the greater the benefit to UK plc.

"From the out-set, we have made two major commitments to encourage engagement by as broad a cross section of interests as possible. First, we will be careful not to duplicate or inadvertently replace any schemes, but rather 'hook' into them and make it easier for MAC firms to participate in them.

"Second, participation fees have been set at a level that will enable organisations of all sizes to 'pitch-in' so that their firms benefit from the links that will open-up as the strategy develops. In some areas we expect to move on to implementation quite quickly, for example in automation/motion control.

"The government's approach to an integrated industrial strategy has encouraged EAMA, and many other associations like us, to re-evaluate how we can both help our members to access the myriad of opportunities that are available and at the same time ensure government designs policies that will deliver in-line with their requirements and those of the MAC sector as a whole.

"Developing an industrial strategy for an enabling sector such the machinery and allied component suppliers is a direct response to that challenge. There's more contact information on our website"

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### *Notes to editors:*

1. EAMA comprises 13 associations: Agricultural Engineers Association, -- British Automation and Robot Association -- British Compressed Air Society -- British Fluid Power Association -- British Paper Machinery Suppliers Association -- British Plastics Federation -- British Turned Part Manufacturers Association -- Gambica -- Gauge and Toolmakers Association -- Manufacturing Technologies Association -- Printing Industry Confederation -- Processing and Packaging Machinery Association -- UK Industrial Vision Association
2. They represent 1,950 firms with a turnover of some £9 billion typically supplying 'enabling technologies' to other sectors (e.g. automotive, aerospace, medical, power, printing and food industries) in the form of machinery, components or packages of services and products.
3. The Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) is a division of the University of Cambridge Department of Engineering. IfM is working with the EAMA via IfM Education and Consultancy Services which disseminates IfM research to industry and government. IfM ECS is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Cambridge.