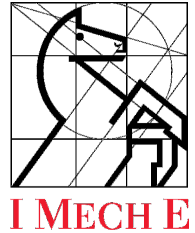


The MANUFACTURING  
EXCELLENCE Awards



## News Release

### **Best of UK Business: MX2008 Finalists 'Innovation Leaders' Business Minister congratulates world-leading manufacturers**

05 June 2008

Creators of the world's first double decker hybrid bus, the world's most powerful laser and a global space company – are among the finalists unveiled today in this year's Institution of Mechanical Engineer's (IMechE) Manufacturing Excellence Awards (MX) 2008.

This year 17 UK manufacturers have been announced as finalists for the awards, dubbed the 'Oscars' of the business world. Run by the IMechE, MX is Europe's only best practice benchmarking scheme that offers a panel of leading industry experts giving up to £20,000 worth of free, impartial advice.

The MX finalists are some of the world's most innovative companies including; space leaders Astrium, designers of Europe's largest communications satellite and Earth observation satellites, Irish-based Wrightbus, developers of the first public double-decker hybrid buses to hit the streets in Las Vegas and London, and Powerlase, creator of the world's most power industrial laser.

Baroness Vadera, a Business Minister and former adviser to Gordon Brown, said: 'Manufacturing is the unsung hero of the British economy. Following a restructuring in the sector UK manufacturing companies are a global success story based on their productivity, innovation and specialist skills.'

She added: "The MX finalists prove innovation is the key to maintaining their record in a fiercely competitive global market. These companies showcase the best of Britain's talent and I congratulate them."

David Wright, MX Judge and CEO of the Government's Manufactory Advisory Service (MAS) West Midlands, said: "The IMechE MX Judges have selected these finalists to showcase how UK engineers and manufacturers are amongst the global leaders in competitiveness and innovation and are inspiring the next generation of engineers to enter this exciting, highly-competitive sector."

MX judges including business experts from MAS, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Arup and the Warwick Manufacturing Group today (Wednesday 03 June) announced the finalists which are up for 13 'Oscars' including Product Innovation, Process Innovation, Best Finance Management, Best SME, Best Business Education Partnership and Sustainable Manufacturing. Past winners have included Ford, Land Rover and BAE Systems.

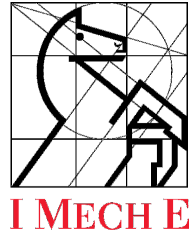
Winners of the MX Awards will be announced at a glittering awards ceremony on 26 June 2008 at The Dorchester in London.

**NB: Case studies on the MX Finalists are available from the IMechE Press Office on 020 7304 6888 or [media@imeche.org](mailto:media@imeche.org)**

**Media wanting to attend must contact the Press Office**



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## **MX 2008 Finalists: Is Britain's Best Manufacturer in your area?**

### **Scotland**

Rolls Royce – Inchinnan, West Scotland  
Converteam – Glasgow

### **North East**

Phoenix Beattie – Ashington, Northumberland  
Cummins Ltd – Darlington, Northumberland

### **Yorkshire**

Naylor Drainage – Barnsley

### **North West**

Leyland Trucks – Preston, Lancashire

### **West Midlands**

Chassis Systems – Telford, Shropshire  
Meggitt Plc – Coventry  
Hozelock – Sutton Coldfield - Winner of the MX2007 Business Development and Change Management Award  
ZF Lemforder – Solihull  
Air Tube Conveyors – Hartlebury, Worcestershire

### **South West**

EADS Astrium – Portsmouth

### **Ireland**

SAM Mouldings – Belfast  
Wrightbus – Ballymena, Northern Ireland - Winner of the MX Autodesk Award for Product Innovation 2006 & 2007

### **East Anglia**

Perkins – Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

### **South East**

Altro - Letchworth, Hertfordshire  
Powerlase – Crawley, West Sussex

### **Notes to Editors**

- The MX Awards are believed to be the UK's longest running business awards and were established by the IMechE 26 years ago to protect manufacturing and promote best practice.
- The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) first established its Manufacturing Excellence Awards scheme in 1981. In 1999 the process underwent a major review when the Self Assessment Audit and Benchmark Report were introduced. The IMechE now has around 78,000 members in 120 countries. It represents mechanical engineers involved in a diversity of fields such as the automotive, rail, aerospace, medical, power and construction industries to name a few. For more information on MX please visit [www.mxawards.org](http://www.mxawards.org) or [www.imeche.org](http://www.imeche.org).
- All media enquiries should be directed to the IMechE Press Office on 020 7304 6973 or [www.mxawards.org](http://www.mxawards.org)