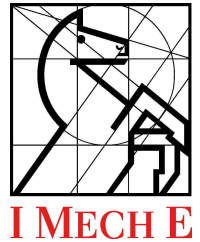


INSTITUTION OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

NEWS RELEASE



Sell-Out Event Proves Engineering is Core to Midlands' Success

For Immediate Release

28 February 2006

Over 500 of the Midlands' biggest names in industry will gather at Birmingham's Hilton Metropole Hotel on Thursday 2 March to show their support for what they believe is still at the 'heart' of the region's success: **manufacturing and engineering**.

The Midlands Engineering Dinner 2006 is the biggest event of its kind in the region and has been organised by two of the UK's leading engineering groups, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMEchE) and Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE), to celebrate engineering achievements with the support of the premium brand car manufacturer BMW Group.

Manufacturing is pivotal to the West Midlands economic growth and equals 30 per cent of its GDP (Gross Domestic Product), which is 10 per cent higher than the national average. Latest figures show the West Midlands manufacturing sector also employs over 500,000 people in more than 20,000 companies including Alstom Power, Areva T&D, E.On Central Networks, Goodrich (Wolverhampton), JCB, and Mott MacDonald (all of which will be represented on the night).

The DTI's Manufacturing Advisory Service West Midlands - Chief Executive, David Wright, said: "As manufacturing in the UK moves forward and becomes more innovative, a professional body to support and guide its members will continue to play a key role. MAS-WM values the contribution that both the IMechE and IEE make to West Midlands manufacturing."

Steven Gasser, IMechE Regional Manager for the Midlands, said: "We must continue to show support for our engineers and colleagues in manufacturing. It is a sector that employs so many people and supports so many livelihoods. This time last year was a difficult situation but the region cannot survive without engineering and the fact that this event sold-out within weeks is testament to that."

BMW Group is the main sponsor for the event, and the guest speaker will be Harald Krüger, Plant Director of the BMW engine factory at Hams Hall. Opened in 2001, the £400million state-of-the-art production facility is the first [BMW engine plant](#) built outside Germany and Austria. In addition to producing all of BMW's four-cylinder petrol engines, it is gearing up to build a new family of petrol engines that will power future variants of the MINI.

Birmingham Children's Hospice will be the benefactors from the event and Top Gear racing icon, The Stig (aka Perry McCarthy) will be the after-dinner speaker.

-Ends-

Notes to Editor

- Media are welcome to attend and take photographs but should call Steve Gasser, IMechE Regional Manager (Midlands) on 07887 931689 or IMechE Press Office on 0207 304 6877 or email media@imeche.org.uk
- The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) has over 75,000 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 visit www.imeche.org.uk. Sponsors for this year's event include Roevin Management Services, the EEF, Manufacturing Advisory Service and Balfour Beatty Power Networks.
MAS is a national DTI initiative. MAS-WM is one of 10 regional operations and exists to assist all manufacturers in the West Midlands at various levels of intervention. MAS-WM will assist any aspect of manufacturing operation, processes, production or materials technologies. Since August 2002, the MAS-WM service has been called upon more than 3,600 times in the West Midlands. It has assisted in excess of 1,200 manufacturers through Business Improvement Projects and helped contribute in excess of £50 million worth of added value to the region.
- The IEE is one of the largest engineering and technology institutions in the world. Its 120,000 plus members work in a variety of fields including IT, communications technology, electronics, electrical, power engineering, software, control, informatics and manufacturing. For more information visit www.iee.org.