



**MEDIA RELEASE
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SCIENCE AND INNOVATION MINISTER CALLS FOR CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICERS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Speaking at an *Engineering the Future* fringe event at the Labour Party Conference, Lord Drayson, Minister for Science and Innovation this week called for the equivalent of Chief Technology Officers in Government Departments.

Lord Drayson told delegates:

"It is engineers and technologists that will get this country back on track. To achieve this and to implement Government priorities effectively and strategically, we need more technological knowledge within the Government. We need the equivalent of Chief Technology Officers within Government Departments.

Science, technology and engineering represent Britain's "Big Three" for the future. They are essential to our economic growth and to maintaining our quality of life as we tackle the major challenges like climate change. We cannot build for the future without world - class engineers."

The Minister's comments were warmly received by the audience of science, engineering, education, business and industry representatives who agreed with the Minister that the need was not simply for advice but for expert representatives who could help implement new engineering technologies and projects in practice.

Jonathan Flint, Chief Executive of Oxford Instruments, defined engineering as a discipline that benefits society while generating wealth. Calling for a rethink of the place of engineers in corporate hierarchies, he pointed out that engineers needed to acquire management and communications skills to complement their highly-valued numeracy and attention to detail. "Too often, engineers can limit their opportunities. We want to see more of them with the management training that will put them on boards of companies," he said.

Dr Hanna Sykulska-Lawrence, current IET Young Woman Engineer of the Year", wanted to see more young people considering a career in engineering and called on Government to help raise the profile of the profession.

Philip Greenish, Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Engineering, said:

“Lord Drayson’s recognition of science, technology and engineering as Britain’s ‘Big Three for the Future’ is excellent news, as is his acknowledgement that there should be Chief Technology Officers in Government Departments. The next step is to ensure that practical steps are taken to follow up on these bold new proposals. Government, business and industry, education providers and the engineering community must all now step up to the task of actually making things happen.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Jonathan Flint

Oxford Instruments is a leading supplier of high technology tools and systems for research and industrial markets. With an annual turnover of over £200m, it employs a total of 1300 staff worldwide, with 600 of those in the UK. He joined Oxford Instruments as Chief Executive in April 2005. He holds a BSc in Physics from Imperial College and an MBA from Southampton University. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Physics and Institute of Engineering and Technology. He has held senior management positions within Vislink plc, BAE Systems, GEC Marconi and Matra Space Systems.

Dr Hanna Sykulska-Lawrence

Hanna Sykulska studied engineering at Oxford University before moving to the Electrical Engineering Department at Imperial College. In 2008 she began work on the Phoenix NASA mission, responsible for designing and manufacturing mission hardware, monitoring instruments, making decisions on engineering parameters and advising on long term planning. Away from work Hanna competes in ballroom dancing and frequently speaks at workshops and events to stimulate interest in engineering.

Engineering The Future

Engineering the future is an alliance an alliance of the engineering community including the Engineering Council UK (EC^{UK}), the Engineering and Technology Board (ETB), the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE), the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), the Institute of Physics (IOP) and the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng.) – in association with the think tank Reform. We are working jointly to raise the profile of engineering by strengthening national policy and also promoting the contribution of engineering to the UK’s economic recovery and beyond

The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB)

The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) is an independent organisation that promotes the vital role of engineers, engineering and technology in our society. The ETB partners business and industry, government and the wider science and engineering community: producing evidence on the state of engineering, sharing knowledge within engineering and inspiring young people to choose a career in engineering, matching employers’ demand for skills.

For more information about the ETB please visit www.etechnology.co.uk.

For further information please contact:

Laura Marsh, PR and Communications Manager, the ETB

Tel: 020 3206 0444 or (m) 07887 943 017

Email: lmars@etechnology.co.uk

