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School Partnership to support a new generation of scientists and engineers

ADELAIDE – 20 November 2008: “A ground-breaking partnership between Australia’s third largest defence company and one of South Australia’s finest public schools is aimed at igniting a new passion for maths and science,” according to the Managing Director of Raytheon Australia, Mr Ron Fisher.

Mr Fisher was speaking at the launch of a A\$450,000 partnership between the Aberfoyle Park High School and Raytheon Australia attended by the South Australian Premier, Mike Rann.

“This is a proud day for Raytheon Australia because today we make clear the strength of our commitment to tackle the need for a new generation of scientists and engineers.

“This package will grant a wonderful school in Adelaide A\$150,000 a year for the next three years to help provide students with the access to the computers they need to ignite their passion for maths and science,” Mr Fisher said.

Speaking at the launch, Premier Mike Rann said the partnership was a great example of schools and business working together to create career opportunities for students.

“The State Government provides \$255,000 in funding annually to run the Ignite program for gifted students in three schools, including Aberfoyle Park High School in the southern suburbs.

“The South Australian Strategic Plan aims to increase the number of students studying maths and science to cater for the growing demand for highly skilled workers for the defence and mining and other key industries,” Mr Rann said.

“This is a significant step towards achieving that goal through the creation of further strong links between schools and industry.

“We have also set up 10 Trade Schools for the Future across the State where businesses, industries and training providers work with schools to deliver skills to our young people, and we’re promoting science through initiatives such as the establishment Royal Institution Australia.

“Today’s announcement is another example of business working with schools in the best interest of students and the State’s future.”

Aberfoyle Park High School Principal, Wendy Teasdale-Smith, said the funding would provide students with the cutting edge technology and mentoring they needed to pursue technology-rich careers.

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“Aberfoyle Park High School has a tradition of innovation and this is another example of breaking new ground to provide the best possible outcome for our students,” she said.

Mr Fisher said “Raytheon Australia is endowed with some of the smartest, most innovative and capable engineers in our industry and we are grateful for the privilege of being able to work on nation building projects such as the Air Warfare Destroyer. The future of our country depends on the skills of the next generation and this exciting new collaboration will allow us to help meet our responsibilities to young Australians.

“This is more than a sponsorship. It is a genuine partnership between a school and a business who share a vision for the workforce of the future.

“Each and every day Raytheon engineers are applying their passion for maths and science. This partnership will allow them to share their passion with the students at Aberfoyle Park. By mentoring students to show them the possibilities that maths and science can present we hope to make a genuine contribution to their future.

“We are a real part of the South Australian community and share the desire of its Premier, Mike Rann, to build a workforce that will secure the state’s prosperity. To arrive at such an outcome will take the involvement a great many people and I pay tribute to the Principal of Aberfoyle Park High School, Ms Wendy Teasdale-Smith, for her determination to see that the students under her care have every opportunity to reach their full potential.

“I am also delighted that the Federal Government announced just a few days ago that it would be doing more to create new pathways between schools and the defence industry.

“For Raytheon, this new commitment complements our \$1 million partnership with Questacon, the National Science and Technology Centre, to bring to young Australians the Imagination Factory exhibition. Imagination Factory tells the story of systems integration of how things work together to do inventive things. The exhibition is currently touring Australia, inspiring school students with maths and science,” Mr Fisher said.

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With facilities located across the country, Raytheon Australia is a highly capable prime contractor with an engineering and technical workforce of 1300 backed by world-class management and quality systems. This local presence is bolstered by strong relationships with small and medium sized enterprises and access to the global resources of Raytheon Company.

Raytheon Company, with 2007 sales of \$21.3 billion, is a technology leader specialising in defence, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world. With a history of innovation spanning 86 years, Raytheon provides state-of-the-art electronics, mission systems integration and other capabilities in the areas of sensing; effects; and command, control, communications and intelligence systems, as well as a broad range of mission support services. With headquarters in Waltham, Mass., Raytheon employs 72,000 people worldwide.

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