



**PRESS RELEASE**



## **PARTNERSHIP TO BOOST BILLION POUND AEROSPACE AND DEFENCE SECTOR SUPPLY CHAIN**

Northern Ireland's billion pound aerospace and defence industry is set for a significant competitiveness boost through an important new partnership officially marked this morning.

ADS, the trade organisation for companies operating in the UK's aerospace, defence, and security industries, approved Northern Ireland's Centre for Competitiveness (CforC) as a strategic partner to further roll out a major change programme to enhance the sector's supply chain locally.

By working with dozens of local businesses who supply the likes of Bombardier and Thales, CforC will help companies raising standards, reducing overheads, enhancing skills, and ultimately increasing the competitiveness of one of Northern Ireland's most important industries.

Chief executive of CforC, Bob Barbour, says that this could deliver hundreds of millions of pounds of additional value to the local economy every year.

"The sector is vital to Northern Ireland, directly employing over 8,000 people, contributing about 20% of our exports, and delivering over £1billion to the local economy per year. Revenues are targeted to increase to £2billion within 10 years and direct employment to 12,000. But the industry operates in an extremely competitive global marketplace and a rapidly changing environment, so continuous improvement is essential to continue to grow. Achieving improvements in supply chains is absolutely critical to this, so this programme with ADS is of huge strategic importance," Mr Barbour adds.

CforC has been approved as ADS's strategic partner for the implementation and certification of the highly-regarded SC21 (21<sup>st</sup> Century Supply Chains), a change programme designed to accelerate the competitiveness of the aerospace and



defence industry by raising the performance of its supply chains.

This involves a comprehensive diagnostic and certification process with the aim of raising standards of supplier cost and delivery to international best practice.

Phil Curnock, ADS Head of Supply Chain, says: “We are delighted to work with the Centre for Competitiveness and to benefit from their expertise to promote and deliver SC21. The evidence shows that SC21 brings very real and tangible benefits for the supply chain and the sector as a whole. We believe CforC’s role as a strategic partner will really help accelerate the achievement of those benefits in Northern Ireland.”

ADS is the premier trade organisation advancing the UK Aerospace, Defence, Security and Space industries. Farnborough International Limited (FIL), which runs the Farnborough International Airshow, is a wholly-owned subsidiary.

ADS has offices in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, France and India. Together with its regional partners, ADS represents over 2,600 companies.

The aerospace, defence, security and space industry in Northern Ireland currently contributes over £1 billion per year to the Northern Ireland economy, providing more than 8,000 direct, high value jobs and an estimated 9,600 indirect jobs.

The NI Executive’s target is to more than double revenues from the sector to over £2 billion within 10 years and to increase direct employment from 8,000 to 12,000.

The Centre for Competitiveness is a private sector, independent, not for profit membership organisation established by industry to actively support the development of an internationally competitive economy through innovation,



productivity improvement and quality excellence in the private, public and voluntary sectors of the economy. The Centre is governed by a Board of directors representing its members from across all sectors of the economy. It is the National Partner organisation for the European Foundation for Quality Management, Brussels and an active member of the thirty nation Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils headquartered in Washington DC and it provides its members with insights into international best practices, global trends and leading edge business practices.

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