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First Minister hails UK's first Modern Apprenticeship for renewables industry

Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond today joined with the wind energy sector to formally mark the launch of the UK's first Modern Apprenticeship for the renewables industry.

Speaking in Glasgow at RenewableUK 2010, the wind and marine energy trade body's 32nd Annual Conference & Exhibition, the First Minister awarded the collaborative efforts of the six partners involved in delivering the Wind Turbine Technician Modern Apprenticeship. Siemens, REpower and Weir Group were each recognised for pioneering the recruitment of apprentices for the training route. The qualification holds the quality hallmark of City & Guilds and meets the standards of the National Skills Academy for Power.

The fifteen candidates, who have become the first young people to start the full-time scheme at Fife's Carnegie College also attended the launch and met with the First Minister. The three-year engineering qualification is split evenly between on-the-job training with the employers and college-based learning.

The **First Minister** said:

"The Wind Turbine Technician Modern Apprenticeship is an exciting first for Scotland and the UK - and I'm pleased we're supporting it through Skills Development Scotland. The Scottish Government delivered more than 20,000 Modern Apprenticeships last year and we expect another 20,000 new starts this year. This new scheme highlights the flexibility and responsiveness of our Modern Apprenticeship programme, by engaging a key emerging sector where we already have comparative advantages. Construction and related sectors are now incorporating training for low carbon technologies and we recently launched a low carbon fund designed to re-skill and up-skill employees. I congratulate those embarking on this pioneering apprenticeship scheme at Carnegie College and thank the employers and partners who helped deliver it. These apprentices will play a key role in forging a new green economy in Scotland."

RenewableUK chief executive, **Maria McCaffery MBE**, said:

"This is a truly significant step for the industry and I would like to congratulate the tenacious efforts of all those involved. Over the next decade the UK expects to see the contribution to electricity from wind to increase to around 30% from the 5% it stands at today. With a twelve-fold increase in the number of employees needed to fuel this growth, training initiatives such as the apprenticeship are absolutely crucial. The

industry and its partners in education and skills should be extremely proud of what has been achieved here and we look forward to seeing more colleges and employers across the country taking up the scheme."

Christoph Ehlers, Managing Director, Siemens Renewables Division, UK said:

"As the leading supplier of offshore and onshore wind turbines, grid connections and service and maintenance in the UK, our support of the apprenticeship scheme is critical, not only to our business, but to the industry as a whole. We already provide a great deal of training via our dedicated wind power training centre in Newcastle, but the new scheme complements this perfectly. We want to build up a sustainable way of offering young people careers in the Wind Industry. We wish all current and future apprentices all the best in their careers."

Rick Eggleston, Managing Director, REpower UK said:

"We're proud to be supporting the UK's first apprentice scheme for wind turbine technicians. REpower has always recognised that a shortage of relevant skills is a major challenge facing the renewables industry, and we're thrilled to be doing our bit to bring in new talent. Courses such as this one provided by Carnegie College are paramount in ensuring the continued growth and long-term success of the wind industry."

David Arnold, Business Development Director, Renewables for Weir Power and Industrial said:

"Weir Power and Industrial are delighted to be supporting this very important initiative. Consistently a shortfall in the availability of trained and competent wind turbine technicians is highlighted as an industry concern. This programme developed by the industry to help alleviate this issue lends credibility to the maturity of the wind industry. Weir Power and Industrial look forward to working with partners Siemens, REpower and Carnegie College to ensure the aims of the course are delivered and a new generation of technicians are introduced professionally to this industry that is very important for both Scotland and the rest of the UK."

Mike Phillips, Business Development Manager at City & Guilds said:

"City & Guilds are proud to be the first awarding body to offer the new Wind Turbine Service Technician Apprenticeship, the first of its kind for the renewable energy sector. Working collaboratively with RenewableUK and its other partners, we are helping the UK meet its targets for the generation of renewable energy."

"This industry is one area that we believe will see a lot of growth in the coming years and City & Guilds are glad to be leading the way in providing the skills for this development. The Apprenticeship is a significant step towards unlocking the talent that the UK requires for a more sustainable future."

New apprentice, **Lewis Hamilton**, 18 from Dunfermline, Fife said:

"It was great to be selected for this new course. I always wanted to get into engineering and now I have one of the best opportunities for training from Siemens and Carnegie"

College. I am looking forward to getting out on site and putting some of the theory we are learning into action.”

DONG Energy also announced today that they will commit to employing up to eight apprentices under the scheme in 2011. The apprentices will receive training at DONG Energy’s three existing offshore wind sites in the UK as well as at their projects that are under construction including the London Array, which will be the UK’s largest offshore wind farm.

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Notes

1. RenewableUK is the trade and professional body for the UK wind and marine renewables industries. Formed in 1978, and with 620 corporate members, RenewableUK is the leading renewable energy trade association in the UK, representing onshore wind, offshore wind, wave and tidal and small wind system technologies. Wind has been the world's fastest growing renewable energy source for the last seven years, and this trend is expected to continue with falling costs of wind energy and the urgent international need to tackle CO2 emissions to prevent climate change.
2. Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 167 years ago and now employs 16,915 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £4.2 billion. As a leading global engineering and technology services company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges, across the key sectors of energy, industry and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit www.siemens.co.uk
3. REpower UK is a private limited company wholly owned by REpower AG, the German based manufacturer. It is responsible for sales, installation and servicing of REpower wind farms onshore and offshore. Headquartered in Edinburgh, REpower UK has a team of 80 staff and a growing client list.

REpower Systems AG, a Suzlon group company, is one of the leading manufacturers of onshore and offshore wind turbines. The international mechanical engineering company develops, produces and markets wind turbines with rated outputs of 2.05 MW to 6.15 MW and rotor diameters of 82 meters to 126 meters for almost any location. The company also offers a comprehensive portfolio of service and maintenance packages. The profitable and reliable systems are designed at the REpower TechCenter in Osterrönnfeld and manufactured at its plants in Husum (North Friesland), Trampe (Brandenburg) and Bremerhaven as well as Portugal and China.

With more than 2,000 employees worldwide, the company, which has been listed since March 2002 and is headquartered in Hamburg, can make use of the experience gained from the manufacture and installation of around 3,000 wind turbines around the world. REpower is represented by distribution partners, subsidiaries and participations in European markets such as France, Belgium, the UK, Italy, Portugal and Spain as well as on a global level in the USA, Japan, China, Australia and Canada.

4. The Weir Group PLC, headquartered in Scotland, is a global leader in the design, supply and ongoing service of engineering equipment and solutions for the Mining, Oil & Gas and Power & Industrial sectors. With annual sales of £1.4bn Weir employs 9000 people and operates in over 42 countries with manufacturing

facilities in North and South America, the UK, mainland Europe, Australia, South Africa, India and China.

For further information about The Weir Group PLC and its businesses, visit www.weir.co.uk.

5. As the UK's largest vocational awarding body, City & Guilds is leading the talent revolution by inspiring people to unleash their potential and develop their skills. Offering over 500 qualifications across 28 industries, we currently award around two million certificates every year. Since our establishment over 130 years ago, we have helped more than 30 million learners achieve their goals.

City & Guilds recognises the need for skills surrounding sustainability and is leading the way in developing green qualifications and training provision for the future.

6. Carnegie College based in Dunfermline, was founded in 1898. Our mission is to 'Enable Learning and Enthuse Learners' and today stand at the forefront in the delivery of Further and Higher Education in Scotland. Each year we provide purposeful and meaningful education for over 10,000 students. Our vision is to 'engineer a sustainable energy future' and our newly established £1m centre of excellence, the Whitlock Energy Collaboration Centre, will provide sector leading learning, training, skills development and associated educational services that will ensure the growth of skilled and qualified personnel to take the industry forward and guarantee it long term future success.
7. The National Skills Academy for Power will sit at the heart of the Power Sector, driving excellence in skills and bringing together employers, skills organisations and stakeholders. It will raise the profile of the sector as it becomes the global leader in power skills development, maximising the benefits for UK businesses. As well as delivering the skills required to address the governments energy challenge and support low-carbon and resource-efficient economy, the National Skills Academy for Power will be recognised as a key factor in maintaining the security of the UK power supply.
8. Danish firm DONG Energy is one of the leading offshore wind operators in the UK and has the biggest stake of fifty percent in what will be the UK's largest offshore wind farm, the London Array. The UK is one of DONG Energy's primary markets for developing offshore wind and DONG Energy has over 20 years experience in the wind power industry. DONG Energy has, since 2005 invested 3.7 billion GBP in the UK.