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Siemens praised by Ministers for investment in skills and training

On Saturday, 10 March, Siemens hosted a visit to its Integrated Energy Service Training Centre in Newcastle for Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats, and deputy prime minister, and Vince Cable, business secretary. Siemens was praised for its commitment to skills and training, especially its much-prized apprenticeship programme and investment in a world class training facility in the heart of the North East.

The visit, which coincided the Liberal Democrats spring conference in Gateshead, was focused on skills and apprenticeships - key themes of the government's approach to tackling youth unemployment. Siemens, as a major employer in the North East, was selected as a leading example of a major engineering and manufacturer employer, which puts skills and training at the centre of its business. The deputy prime minister and business secretary, as part of the tour of the £8 million training facility, met with Siemens apprentices to learn first hand, what is involved in this four-year practical programme. The tour included a visit to the gas and steam turbine service training bay, and the wind turbine training area.

Commenting on the visit, the deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg said: "Our visit to the Siemens Training Centre in Newcastle has helped highlight the positive role that industry can play in training the next generation of engineers, which the country will need. Siemens' investment in and commitment to skills and training is very impressive. The apprentices we met today were positive and fully

engaged in their tasks and well aware of the value of pursuing a vocational path and the career opportunities that lie ahead for them. We hope that this message about vocational training gets out to employers and potential employees alike."

Siemens Energy Service Training Centre was opened last year by Lord Willis of Knaresborough. This £8 million investment by Siemens provides a unique in-house training environment and experience for service technicians working on conventional and renewable power plants and helps put the North East firmly on the map as a centre of excellence for skills and training.

The UK skills agenda is one of the most significant challenges faced by the country. The demand for engineers far outstrips current supply in long-established engineering sectors, as well as new areas, such as renewables. Siemens has addressed this challenge comprehensively and proactively by investing in an in-house resource to develop the skills and talent needed for the future. The centre now has dedicated areas containing steam, gas, wind turbines and generator technology, where employees are trained in an environment closely resembling that which they will experience out in the field. The wind power training facility, the first to open in the UK, includes a full-size 2.3MW nacelle and two training towers. There are plans next year to add a 3.6MW nacelle to the facility. The latest investments have also included the development of 15 state-of-the-art classrooms kitted out with the latest IT.

Siemens has a thriving apprenticeship programme in the region. Of the 200 current apprentices on Siemens scheme across the UK, 50 are based in the North East, and 36 of these are wind power service technician apprenticeships, trained in the wind power training school. Another 8 places are for technicians who will work on conventional power plants and 6 more will be based at Siemens Transmission and Distribution Service Business in Hebburn, which also serves the

renewables and sub-sea sectors.

Graham Hartley, managing director, Siemens Energy Service UK, commenting on the visit said: "We were delighted to host the visit by Nick Clegg and Vince Cable. It was a great opportunity to demonstrate what we as a major engineering employer in the UK are doing to address the skills gap and create long term employment opportunities in the North East region. It is a very exciting time for the UK Service business, with the high growth projected in Renewables, as well as the growth of the global market for combined cycle power plants. Having a world-class training facility to support this business is critical to future development. Given the North East's history and engineering heritage, we're incredibly proud to house the UK's only training centre combining training facilities for technicians working on wind farms and power plants."

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

About Siemens in the UK

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 169 years ago and now employs 12,972 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £4.4 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, infrastructure & cities 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

** Data includes intercompany revenue. Data may not be comparable with revenue reported in annual or interim reports.*

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