

MAS HAS BIG PLANS FOR SOUTH EAST – THE UK’S BIGGEST MANUFACTURING REGION

More than 7,000 manufacturers across the South East - which is now officially the UK’s biggest manufacturing region - are set to benefit from expert, hands-on support over the next three years.

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has revealed that it is doubling the budget for the region’s Manufacturing Advisory Service to £6 million to help manufacturers succeed in the face of growing competition from countries such as China and India by adopting business improvement techniques such as ‘lean’.

Unveiling the plans, SEEDA Chairman James Brathwaite committed the MAS to delivering assistance to one in three of the South East’s manufacturers – support that will help companies to benefit from the latest lean techniques.

Mr Brathwaite was speaking at an event on the future of manufacturing support.



He said: “The South East is the UK’s biggest manufacturing region and is home to world leading companies in a number of high value sectors, such as aerospace, pharmaceuticals and digital technologies. It is vital to the success of our economy that we provide expert support to these and other businesses to help them succeed in an increasingly competitive global market.

“The MAS has already delivered more than £21 million of added value to the region’s manufacturers – our plans for the next three years will expand this programme to reach one third of manufacturing companies in the South East. The focus will be on providing hands-on support to enhance productivity and promote a culture of innovation within businesses and their supply chains.”

Mr Brathwaite’s message was underpinned by a special presentation from Prof Dan Jones, an acknowledged world leader on lean thinking in manufacturing. Prof Jones spoke about the need for manufacturers to become more responsive to the needs of customers by refocusing their design and product development processes and cutting lead times.



Leading lean thinker Prof. Dan Jones (centre) is pictured alongside SEEDA Chairman James Brathwaite, EEF South Chief Executive David Seall, Royal British Legion Industries Director of Manufacturing Frank Myers and SEEDA Board member John Peel.

The MAS South East is funded by SEEDA and the DTI and delivered by EEF South, the regional engineering employers federation, with the support of the Business Link network.

MAS SOUTH EAST SUPPORT

The MAS South East supports manufacturers in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and Sussex. Manufacturers can reach MAS South East Specialists by calling the Information Desk on 0845 609 2121, by visiting www.mas-se.org.uk or by emailing info@mas-se.org.uk

Talk to the MAS about:

- Improving productivity through lean manufacturing
- Gaining maximum advantage from the supply chain
- Developing best practice in product development and innovation

- Getting information and advice on a wide range of manufacturing issues
- Benefiting from practical training and networking events

Many of the services are free of charge, including a one-day review, with subsidised in-depth programmes also available.