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NORFOLK'S EXPORTERS RECOGNISED: TRADE MINISTER PRAISES THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

The hard work and achievements of 23 companies from across East Anglia, including six from Norfolk have been recognised through winning Passport to Export (P2E) Awards from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI). They received their Awards from Lord Digby Jones, Minister for Trade and Investment in a ceremony at Ickworth House.

Winning the regional **Passport to Export Award** was **BroadBridge Wraith** of **Great Yarmouth**, while **Best Service Sector Company** was **AgChem Access** of **Norwich** and the **Best New Exporter** was **VIP Bin Cleaning Ltd** of **Wymondham**. Winner of the **Norfolk Passport to Export Award** title was **PPI Engineering Ltd** of **Norwich** while **The Big Prawn Company Ltd** of **Melton Constable** and **Falcon Global Ltd** of **Norwich** were both **Highly Commended**.

Speaking at the event, Lord Digby Jones, said "I am greatly impressed by the variety of companies being recognised for their efforts to compete in the global marketplace. This diversity of businesses is good for the strength of the region and for the UK. All have taken on the demands of exporting and all have benefited from working with Passport to Export. I would strongly urge others to take up the challenge."

Managing Director of security and risk management company BroadBridge Wraith is Rick Matthews. He said, "I am absolutely delighted that our company has been recognised. We are, perhaps, an unusual business but I hope our success will demonstrate to others that, by tapping in to Passport to Export, it is possible to succeed."

Winners were judged to be those who best applied the knowledge and skills they had learnt during the Passport to Export programme in developing their business overseas.

The Passport to Export Awards are organised by UKTI with the support of East of England International (EEI) who deliver services in the region, and itrade, a network for exporters. In addition to the various category awards, companies in each of the six counties in the region were recognised for their achievements.

Details of Norfolk winners:

Passport to Export Regional Winner:

BroadBridge Wraith has grown its security, risk management, life support and tactical training business to the point where it now calls on the expertise of almost 5,000 specialists with an associated rise in turnover. It has made use of range of P2E services finding the diagnostic, business review, planning, export market workshop and access to International Trade Advisers particularly useful.

Best Service Sector Company

AgChem Access facilitates in the sale or purchase of registered agrochemical products, locally, nationally and around the world. The company used P2E to research and identify markets around the world, and aid with the company website and general decision-

making. Its export turnover has increased from £30,000 to £85,000 since joining the programme. Managing Director, Nick Gooch, commented, "We are grateful to John Rimmer, our International Trade Adviser, and Passport to Export for their consistent support in enabling research in to new international markets. Without the excellent team I have working alongside me and the aid and guidance of Passport we could never have achieved this award. The award has set a benchmark for the business and reinforces our credibility in the agrochemical industry."

Best New Exporter

VIP Bin Cleaning Ltd is a franchising company specialising in cleaning wheelie bins in an environmentally friendly way. It found the Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) of particular value especially when breaking into the USA market. It has quadrupled its export sales since getting involved in P2E and is looking to consolidate business in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and build on its work in the USA. Mark Harvey, Managing Director, said, "Winning the UKTI award gives a clear signal we are on course to succeed in our plans for International development. This seal of approval will strengthen the reputation and brand that VIP Bin Cleaning has already built in our market sector".

Norfolk Exporter of the Year

PPI Engineering Ltd specialises in the supply and support of large high voltage rotating electrical machines and associated equipment. It aims to provide round the clock assistance and a complete technical and commercial support package to customers. PPI provides engineering support and expert advice for product design and application engineering; site services of diagnostics, re-engineering, repair and commissioning of electromechanical equipment; operation and maintenance support, expediting and

inspection services; specification and supply of new equipment. Company Director, Mike Robinson, said, "Passport to export provided valuable funding and support when we were growing our business. The access to the funds assisted greatly - when you are starting out in a new market money always seems to flow out. The time when you are developing a market is the time you need the most support. The expertise provided by our International Trade Adviser, John Rimmer, was also invaluable. Finally the ability to use the whole of the worldwide structure provided by UKTI gave us immediate access to any target customer whatever the market."

Highly Commended.

The Big Prawn Company Ltd has, from a standing start, rapidly grown overseas sales of its seafood products past the six-figure mark. It targeted France, Belgium and Italy, working with Food From Britain (FFB), and has been so successful it has won awards in those countries. The company says it found the planning and export market workshop elements of Passport very helpful as well as access to advice together with financial support.

Falcon Global Ltd provides highly specialised software applications for energy, oil, gas and heavy engineering sectors. Since joining Passport the company and its PathMaker Systems has become recognised by major global players in the industry and has more than doubled its overseas sales. Says it has benefited from the umbrella of support provided by Passport and UKTI.

Note to Editors

Photos of the awards being presented are available from GNN East on 01223 372793.

Winners contact details:

BroadBridge Wraith; Rick Matthews 0777 760215

AgChem Access: Kelly Matthews. Tel: 01603 617887

VIP Bin Cleaning Ltd; Mark Harvey 01953 857830

PPI Engineering Ltd; Michael Robinson 01603 305504
The Big Prawn Company Ltd; Paul Byrne 01263 860303
Falcon Global Ltd; Alan Mills 01603 821201

UK Trade & Investment is the lead government organisation that provides support for UK companies looking to develop international business. It also provides support for overseas companies wishing to invest in the UK. UK Trade & Investment has a wide range of services, backed-up by a network of trade advisors worldwide who can provide market intelligence, advice on regulations, sales leads, and financial and practical support.

In the East of England UK Trade & Investment services are delivered through East of England International.

East of England International (EEI) is the official regional organisation that provides business support to companies seeking to trade internationally and assists foreign-owned businesses looking to invest in the East of England. EEI is funded by and works in partnership with the UK Government, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and a wide range of businesses and partners in the region. EEI has a dedicated Customer Services Team on **08456 419 955** for all export support enquiries. They can also be contacted by email at trade@eeia.com.

East of England Development Agency (EEDA) is the driving force behind sustainable economic regeneration in the East of England: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Its vision is to create a leading economy, founded on a world-class knowledge base, creativity and enterprise to improve the quality of life for all who live and work here.

itrade is a global network aimed at helping companies from every sector in the East of England trade internationally by exchanging knowledge and ideas. Companies can search itrade for the latest industry specific news and trends from around the world, find like-minded companies, relevant events and courses, participate in online discussions and discover a wealth of useful information.

For further information on the above organisations visit:

www.exporteastofengland.org.uk

www.eeia.com

www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

www.eeda.org.uk

www.itrade.org.uk

For more media information contact Catherine Bradley

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