

# PRESS RELEASE

**ROCKFORD**

ROCKFORD SECURES BEST PRACTICE AWARD AND  
CREATES 100 NEW JOBS - 3 OCTOBER 2017

## BUSINESS



Rockford Components has won a new national award which recognises how its staff and management have worked together to grow the business.

The Sharing in Growth Inspire trophy was handed over this week in front of the plant's 100-strong workforce at Worksop who were praised for their skills and commitment by Bassetlaw MP John Mann and aerospace and defence industry experts.

A trophy and certificate were presented to Rockford Managing Director Peter Lion by Andy Page, CEO of Sharing in Growth, the intensive government-backed programme designed by industry to raise the competitiveness of the UK aerospace supply chain.

Rockford, which has plants in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, Rendlesham, Suffolk and Salisbury, Wiltshire, was selected for the Sharing in Growth transformation programme in 2014. Since then, with the support of Sharing in Growth, Rockford has developed its business significantly, changed its culture, created a farsighted strategy and delivered operational performance in line with world-class practices.

As a result, it has secured £30 million in contracts, created 100 new jobs and increased exports to more than 50% of production. It is currently recruiting a range of roles to cope with its increased sales, including shop floor operatives, engineers and technicians and has just launched a new System Solutions Capability where Rockford is working with its suppliers to provide full systems rather than just cable assemblies or wire harnesses. The company's new business winning strategy also includes additional investment in a concept called Future Factory in its Worksop facility, which could help move annual sales up from £16 million to £40 million and could potentially lead to another 60 new jobs.

The award event was attended by VIP guests including Steve Strachan, Global Supply Chain Director, Lockheed Martin UK, one of Rockford's key customers, John Mann MP and representatives from industry body EEF and Sheffield City's economic development unit, Creative Sheffield. Rockford staff led a shop floor tour that featured the many advances implemented with the support of Sharing in Growth. These included business improvement techniques, where 20 staff have been awarded nationally recognised qualifications as part of the development, lean manufacturing cells, new communications processes, manpower planning and problem solving.

Presenting the award, Andy Page recognised Rockford staff for their dedication to continuous improvement. He said: "As a country we have surprisingly low productivity compared with competitors in the USA, Germany and France. Sharing in Growth was created to help companies compete globally in high value manufacturing, making jobs more fulfilling, rewarding and secure. Ambitious companies deserve support so Sharing in Growth is proud to have played a part in Rockford's fabulous success."

Accepting the award Rockford Managing Director Peter Lion said: "We have grown from being a small family firm in 1978 to becoming the UK's largest independent provider of wiring, interconnect and system solutions for the defence, aerospace, marine and nuclear industries. The traditional UK family-run business can only go so far and we had started to hit the glass ceiling. We recognised that we needed to change and improve. Fortunately Sharing in Growth gave us the path to deliver and we now have the structure and capability to deliver and sustain growth."

**Contact Rockford on 01394 420800**

[sales@rockford.co.uk](mailto:sales@rockford.co.uk)



MP John Mann congratulated the whole Rockford team and described how overseas competition had become intimidating. He said: “In the past this country had been happy to muddle along. But, if this area wants to be a decent area, with decent jobs and decent pay then there is no choice but to invest in skills and technology. Doing what Rockford is doing now, secures the company and helps secure the country. It helps everyone earn by helping the company make profits.”

Steve Strachan of Lockheed Martin UK praised Rockford for being flexible, responsive and always willing to go the extra mile. He said: “Rockford’s journey has been an evolution from a supplier customer relationship into a partnership and that is testament to both Rockford and Sharing in Growth. We congratulate you all and look forward to strengthening our relationship further in future.”

Heather Lawson, Regional Manager with the EEF, said: “Innovation and skills are vital in closing the productivity gap. Companies, like Rockford, who invest in their company and their staff are helping to secure the future of UK manufacturing.

Steve Hayter, Rockford’s Commercial and Finance Director, explained that the company is also determined to help other smaller supply chain companies by representing SMEs on the trade body ADS’s AMC Committee and the SC21 Steering Board. He said: “We achieved SC21 bronze and then SC21 silver and it was a springboard to take us into Sharing in Growth. Taking part in the Sharing in Growth programme has changed us from being a good British company to being a great international company with over 50% of production exported last year.”

The SiG programme is endorsed by Airbus, BAE Systems, Boeing, Bombardier, GE, GKN, Leonardo, Lockheed Martin, MBDA, Rolls-Royce, Safran and Thales. It is supported by the Regional Growth Fund and around £60 million in private investment.

With SiG support, the first 43 companies on the programme have secured around £2 billion in contracts to date – almost 20% of which is for direct export. Consequently, having secured more than 3,000 jobs, SiG is well on target to hit its ultimate objective of safeguarding 10,000 UK jobs by 2022.

Companies interested in joining the SiG programme can complete an expression of interest form which is available at [www.sig-uk.org/apply](http://www.sig-uk.org/apply).

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## ABOUT ROCKFORD

Rockford's unique engineering-driven approach to design and manufacturing delivers a cost-effective, high-quality solution to customer needs.

Rockford has since 1978 successfully addressed the high-reliability requirements of the major Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) in the defence and aerospace sectors. Our broad capability and competitiveness, combined with a reactive attitude to service means Rockford has become a major part of many important supply chains.

Rockford has the capabilities, technologies, products, and knowledge to design, manufacture, test, and deliver system-level electrical equipment that ranges from simple electrical cable assemblies and electro-mechanical sub-assemblies, and on to complete systems.

We offer a simplified, competitive and reactive supply chain, meeting your offset requirements and mitigating your risk: Designing high-performance, environmentally sealed, next-generation, high-speed, flexible cabling and system-level electrical equipment with engineering and production capacity for rapid prototypes and low to medium volume orders, delivered with on-site global engineering support.

Rockford has over 280 employees, 39 years of experience and operates from three SC21 Silver award-winning sites around the UK.

Rockford has been given the SC21 Silver award thanks to high standards of delivery, quality, sustainable improvement, and relationship excellence. The SC21 award reflects the exacting requirements of many defence and aerospace organisations worldwide.

Rockford can deliver a globally competitive solution through design excellence, ensuring all customer requirements are captured and met. Rockford's lifecycle management offers prototyping, on-site-installation, production, logistics, spares and obsolescence management.

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**Steve Hayter | 01394 420800**

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