ENTERPRISE IRELAND

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Mr Richard Bruton T.D. today launched Enterprise Ireland's new Lean Business initiative. Launching the programme Minister Bruton said "this major initiative will help Irish companies significantly improve their competitiveness in international markets and increase their export sales." Enterprise Ireland's Lean Business Programme is a business transformation programme that applies lean business tools and techniques to Irish companies to help them address efficiency, productivity and costs to improve competitiveness in international markets.

The programme has already been piloted in a number of companies and resulted in €15m in savings. Launching the new programme, Minister Bruton said:

"Irish companies that compete and win in global markets sustain and grow employment at home. Irish businesses across all sectors need to operate at world class levels of performance to secure and grow their share of export markets. Competitiveness is fundamental to success.

"In today's Jobs Initiative, the government will be announcing a series of measures to address the competitiveness of Irish business. It is apt that Enterprise Ireland's new Lean Business Programme is launched on the same day. With the help of this programme, Irish businesses in every sector can learn best practice in efficiency and competitiveness, gain market share and help drive the recovery."

Enterprise Ireland's CEO Frank Ryan added:

"Competitiveness is based on many factors. Lean helps companies address and improve the internal factors over which they have control over and can affect. Lean is about learning the best way to do things for on-going competitiveness gains, sustainable continuous improvement and business transformation across the business and its supply chain."

Enterprise Ireland has already piloted the programme in a number of companies with significant tangible returns being reported by all of the companies in terms of their competitiveness. The programme applies beyond the traditional areas for lean such as manufacturing to service and

software companies, to food and medical companies.

Results reported by companies included:

•16% reduction in packaging line cycle time
•14% reduction in production cost per unit
•600% improvement in sort-line throughput
•Reduction in product build time from 5 days to 0.8 of a day
•Net margin increase from 5% to 15%
•35% increase in labour productivity on fabrication line
•Gross profit up to 20% from 9%

As part of the Lean initiative, Enterprise Ireland hosted a major conference for Irish companies in every sector on Lean Business.

The conference, which took place in Dublin Castle, was addressed by world experts in lean including representatives from Diageo, Ducati, Lego and Toyota. A number of Irish companies that have already gone through the programme also addressed the conference including Lily O’Brien’s, Forward Emphasis, Richard Keenan & Company and Rosderra meats.

For further details of Enterprise Ireland's Lean Business Offer click here .