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BISHOP STEERING NAMED EXPORT AWARD WINNER

Leading innovation and engineering firm Bishop Steering Technology has been named a winner in the 2000 Australian Export Awards.

The win in the "Small to Medium Manufacturer" category caps a highly successful year for the Sydney-based leader in automotive steering gear technology.

As a business unit of the Bishop Technology Group, the company has decades of experience in the successful commercialisation of intellectual property.

Bishop Technology Group's Managing Director Bruce Grey said the recognition of the Export Award was a tribute to the company's founder, Dr Arthur Bishop, and the dedicated team of people who make up the Bishop Group.

"Dr Bishop's commitment to engineering design and excellence, and intellectual property protection and commercialisation, are key reasons behind our success," Mr Grey said.

The Bishop Technology Group has a successful track record of seeking out international opportunities for the development of Australian engineering innovation.

In September 2000 Bishop Steering Technology signed a multi-million dollar licensing agreement with Germany's Robert Bosch GmbH to manufacture elements of the patented Bishop Torque and Angle Sensor (BTAS).

The technology will play a key role in the introduction of electronic steering for passenger vehicles, which is set to replace the more traditional hydraulic steering over the next decade.

The technology should debut on European-produced vehicles in 2004.

By 2006 around two million BTAS units are expected to be in production annually, with production continuing to rise.

The company's other major export "win" of recent years came in July 1998 with the creation of a joint venture with Mercedes-Benz Lenkungen GmbH, a fully-owned subsidiary of the Daimler-Chrysler Group.

The new company, BMB Steering Innovation GmbH, manufactures Bishop's patented Variable Ratio steering racks, using Bishop's warm forge manufacturing technology. The deal effectively doubled the size of Bishop Steering Technology's business at that time.

Bishop Steering Technology has traditionally earned the bulk of its income from the licensing of its technology to offshore automotive manufacturers.

A significant amount is then reinvested in Australian-based research and development within the company - a long term commitment of Dr Bishop.

Some element of Bishop-developed steering technology is used in 20 percent of the world's passenger cars manufactured each year. The company also holds more than 400 patents and patent applications worldwide.ends.

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