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ASX: Market Update – UniSA R&D Collaboration Expanded with a Global Company

SA Government supports expansion of LaserBond - UniSA R&D Collaboration with a global company

The South Australian Government's Mining and Petroleum Services Centre of Excellence innovation fund has announced support for R&D to extend analysis of LaserBond's wear life extension technology to percussive drilling engineering.

The grant supports a test drilling program that utilizes local and highly instrumented drilling test facilities to destructively test a number of drilling components in a highly characterised, geological environment. Such tests cannot take place in working mines. The group believes that success in understanding failure mechanics is the precursor for extending the technology through the drilling system.

Prof Bill Skinner, Research Leader in Minerals and Resource Engineering in the Future Industries Institute (FII), believes a major impact can be made in reducing the costs of exploration drilling, along with increased safety, if significant improvements in wear life of drilling components can be made. "Exploration drilling is an expensive exercise. More so as shallow deposit discoveries are decreasing rapidly. Extending drill component life saves time, money and reduces the frequency of component replacement – an inherently hazardous activity", says Prof Skinner. "This project builds on SA's resources strength, and contributes to METS sector innovation and initiatives such as the SA Government's Copper Strategy."

"We see this as a meeting of minds", says Greg Hooper, LaserBond's Exec Director R&D. "This is collaboration that brings our surface engineering DNA together with UniSA's extensive R&D capabilities, to create next generation solutions for drilling performance and industry economics. And we can manufacture them in SA."

This project will run into 2017, at which time the group expects to have identified a range of application opportunities.

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