

## **SAUDIS COMPRISE MORE THAN HALF BAE SYSTEMS WORKFORCE**

For the first time local nationals comprise more than half the Kingdom-based workforce for BAE Systems. In December 2003, the total number of Saudis in employment with the company was 2,386 (52 per cent) out of a workforce of 4,579. BAE Systems is one of the largest private sector employers of Saudis in the Kingdom.

The development comes as a result of the continued recruitment of young Saudis to join training programmes to become aircraft technicians, engineers and other specialists. After thorough periods of intensive instruction they then work alongside expatriates, many of whom have 25 or more years' experience.

Paul Ethell, BAE Systems' human resources director for Saudi Arabia, said the trend towards Saudisation was strong.

"Just over 10 years ago we had 700 Saudi employees who constituted 15 per cent of the then-workforce in the Kingdom. Our policies have ensured that both the number and the proportion have increased.

"It is a slow process at times because of the high-tech nature of the work. For instance, minimum training times to become an aircraft technician are five years, and Saudis in our Mustakbal management development scheme expect to take up to 10 years to reach an executive position.

"But we are making significant headway, much of which is down to the hard work of the individuals concerned.

"We have embraced the Government's call to treat the development of Saudis as a priority. This is a critical aspiration for the country, bringing major social and economic benefits," added Paul. "In addition, Saudi Arabia is the centre of operations in the Middle East for BAE Systems and the company envisages Saudis playing an important role in developing the company's business throughout the Arab world."

BAE Systems has developed considerable expertise in developing young Saudis for employment in skilled occupations, expertise which is now being provided to other employers in the Kingdom through Saudi Development and Training. This is a joint venture formed under the terms of the Saudi economic offset programme.

In other areas, too, the company is helping to develop the labour market. It is the sponsor of the programme managed by the General Organisation for Technical Education and Vocational Training to create national occupational skill standards and their associated training curricula. These are set to radically transform the labour market for Saudis seeking employment in skilled trades.

**BAE SYSTEMS**

## **PAUL DUGAN BECOMES CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF SDT**



Saudi Development and Training, one of the largest specialist training firms in the Arabian Peninsula, has appointed Paul Dugan OBE as Chief Executive. In this role Mr Dugan will be responsible for the supply of technical training, local nationalisation programmes, recruitment and staff assessment for organisations throughout the Gulf Co-operation Council customers.

Saudi Development and Training was formed in the mid-1990s as a joint venture under the Saudi economic offset programme. Owning partners are BAE Systems and Khalifa Algosaihi Holdings. The company owns and manages the Saudi British Electronics Institute in Riyadh and works closely with the Al Yamamah project, the General Organisation for Technical Education and Vocational Training and the Ministry of Education in Bahrain.

Paul Dugan has been a resident of Riyadh for over 30 years and was formerly General Manager of BAE Systems' central province operations. Earlier this month, he was presented with an OBE award by Prince Charles, for his contribution to building closer ties between the people of Saudi Arabia and Britain. Earlier in the year the company also presented Paul with a prestigious award for his close work with the Saudi community in Riyadh.

The former Chief Executive of Saudi Development and Training, Ron Ross, has returned to BAE Systems in Riyadh to take up a senior role in the development of the company's industrial strategy.