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SYNCHROTRON VACUUM VESSEL CONTRACT AWARDED

Headline: SYNCHROTRON VACUUM VESSEL CONTRACT AWARDED

Released By: The Minister for Innovation

Release Date: Fri 14 May 2004

Main Text: The Minister for Innovation, John Brumby, today announced that a German-based company had won the \$4.5 million contract to supply high precision vacuum vessels for the Australian Synchrotron project.

Mr Brumby said that Feinwerk-und Meßtechnik GmbH (FMB) had a successful track record in delivering vacuum vessels for synchrotron facilities overseas, including ANKA in Germany and the Canadian Light Source.

He said the awarding of the contract again highlighted that the Australian Synchrotron was on track to be completed in 2007.

"The Auditor-General this week reported that 'the project has been well managed by a professional and skilled team and is currently running to plan, and on time. No cost over-runs have occurred'," he said.

"Construction of the facility is well underway at Monash University's Clayton campus. The awarding of this contract further confirms that the Bracks Government is getting on with the job of delivering this vital scientific research tool."

FMB's Managing Director, Uwe Schneck, said the company welcomed the opportunity to help build the Australian Synchrotron.

"We are delighted to be able to bring to this exciting project the wealth of knowledge and experience we have gained supplying precision engineered vacuum chambers for many facilities worldwide," Mr Schneck said.

Mr Schneck said FMB was looking forward to working with its local partner, Varian Australia Pty Ltd, and the Australian Synchrotron project team.

Varian, based in Mulgrave, will undertake vacuum chamber assembly at the synchrotron site under FMB project management.

Background

The electron beam that produces the synchrotron light must travel in a vacuum as empty as outer space.

Vacuum vessels enclose the electron beam in a continuous quarter kilometre ring of stainless steel. Powerful pumps remove air so nothing gets in the way of the beam.

If the electrons circling in the synchrotron machine bump into gas particles they lose energy and the beam disperses.



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