



US Software Company to Open £3.6 Million Belfast Development Centre

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Florida-based **Allen Systems Group (ASG) Inc**, a worldwide enterprise software and professional services provider to Global 5000 companies, today announced it is opening a £3.6 million software development centre in Belfast.

The project is expected to provide 168 new jobs - including places for 130 graduates - over the next three years and generate salaries worth more than £3.7 million annually to the local economy. ASG will begin recruitment for the new operation immediately with software development scheduled to commence in January 2004.

Headquartered in Naples, Florida, ASG develops and supports software that helps commercial and industrial clients maximise productivity and enhance performance through the intelligent use of technology. It provides a full range of software solutions in the security, applications, operations, information, infrastructure and performance management areas, including business re-engineering, systems integration and systems development. The company has over 900 employees in 45 offices worldwide and annual revenues of around £100 million.

Announcing the investment today, ASG President and CEO Arthur L. Allen said:

"ASG evaluated a number of locations around the world, including China, India and Russia, and chose Northern Ireland because of the abundant availability of high-quality graduates in disciplines such as software, electronic engineering and mathematics from two, first-class universities.

"We were attracted to the Northern Ireland location because of the efficient accessibility and 'open door' approach to industry by the centres of excellence in software, informatics and electronics at Queen's University and the University of Ulster which have a longstanding track record of working closely with companies in the development of new technologies.

"Since R&D is an essential feature of our business model, we intend to develop close relationships with both universities to facilitate fruitful and productive two-way technology transfer benefits."

Allen added he was extremely pleased with the quality, service and expediency of Invest Northern Ireland.

"When we began the search for a location, we had four priorities: readily available, skilled people; competitive overall costs; excellent telecommunications; and accessibility. Invest NI provides a very competitive value proposition that meets all our requirements. I was highly impressed by the agency's quick response to all my inquiries and the organization's overall professionalism," said Allen.