

Media Release

NORTHERN TERRITORY MANUFACTURING CAPABILITY TO LEAD THE NATION THROUGH STEELINE GRP INVESTMENT

- *Steeline GRP, the largest Territory-owned steel roll former and processor, will boost national manufacturing capability with the commissioning of advanced manufacturing equipment*
- *Supported via co-investment from the Northern Territory Government's Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund (AMEF), the new hardware adds substantive steel manufacturing and processing capabilities*
- *Introduction of leading-edge manufacturing technology has led to upskilling of existing staff and the addition of Territory first jobs in advanced manufacturing*
- *The \$3.5 million co-invested project is expected to generate \$7.25 million in additional revenue and up to 10 new jobs over five years for the local company – many of which do not currently exist in the Territory*

The Northern Territory now boasts advanced manufacturing capabilities unmatched anywhere in Australia. Steeline GRP (Steeline) has invested in Australia's longest-reach robot welder, largest aluminium router and a state-of-the-art beamline for metal processing and manufacturing.

This nation-leading machinery is underpinned by a substantial training and upskilling program to equip local workers with the skills needed to operate such sophisticated technology.

The collaborative project led by Steeline in partnership with local robotics and automation company Diverseco and Charles Darwin University (CDU) greatly boosts the NT's industrial self-reliance and skills base. It will reduce supply risk for many of the region's businesses and create a local source of high-quality processed products for critical industries such as defence, energy, gas, mining and construction.

To assist with advancing Territory capability, Steeline secured \$800,000 in co-investment from the NT Government's Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund (AMEF). The total project pool of \$3.5 million consists of matching the \$800,000 co-investment dollar-for-dollar, plus contributing an additional \$1.9 million through in-kind services, support, and labour.

Steeline GRP, General Manager Tony Halikos said: "The team at Steeline GRP is passionate about local manufacturing and local processing. The new in-house advanced manufacturing capabilities we have rival or match that of any manufacturer anywhere in Australia or SE Asia and will compliment all industries - defence, energy, gas, mining, maritime and construction - requiring the local capability for projects big or small,

"Based on the advanced capabilities we now have, Steeline GRP is now able to process some of the largest carbon steel, aluminium steel and stainless steel products in sizes currently unable to be handled elsewhere in many parts of Australia,

"Our overall aim is to ensure that the critical industries of the Northern Territory and Australia have access to world-class capabilities, underpinned by advanced machinery developed by sovereign entities and world class staff. By doing so, Steeline GRP and the entire Top End manufacturing ecosystem can become more resilient,

more prosperous and more capable as a result. Improving our sovereign capability and capacity to the benefit of our local industry and local manufacturing environment if the driver of this investment.” said Halikos.

Steeline’s facility is at the forefront of advanced manufacturing in the NT, featuring advanced automated metal manufacturing technology, including a Kawasaki Long-Reach Robotic Welding System with a 2.1m arm on an 8m track, a 14-axis ART Metaltek XB1200 Beamline Fabrication Machine and a true 2.5m x 11m ART Router Machine.

The technology is locally supported by skilled staff with specialised STEM capabilities not currently available in the region, increasing local employment and reducing the need for outsourcing.

In addition to the support made under the AMEF project, Steeline has further advanced its manufacturing capability by complimenting these pieces of equipment with a new 12000kw Fibre Laser Machine, a 40 metre Ocean Steel Shot Blasting machine and an LVD Turret Punch Press, to enable end-to-end processing capacity.

Managing Director of the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC), Dr Jens Goennemann said: “Steeline proves that investing in manufacturing boosts capability, skills and career opportunities too. It creates a ripple effect of increased local business activity. The Territory Government’s commitment to advancing its manufacturing ecosystem is yielding results with more jobs created and greater local spending retained within the Territory.”

The impact of the investment in this project alone will be significant for the Territory, which has a substantive list of companies looking for local manufacturing and supply of sovereign products such as large pieces of finished structural steel, aluminium plate and even composite panelling, normally bought in from interstate or overseas. This increased local capability reduces supply chain risks, lowers transport costs, increases efficiencies and cuts lead times.

AMGC’s Director for the Northern Territory, Charmaine Phillips said: “Steeline’s project is a key step forward in strengthening NT’s manufacturing industry, aligning perfectly with the goals of the AMEF to drive economic growth and self-sufficiency in the Territory.”

Upskilling and knowledge transfer has been led by Diverseco, CDU, Aeromech and the Industry Skills Advisory Council NT, covering expertise in robotic welding, 3D inspection software, and laser tracking systems. CDU will create pathways for STEM graduates into new roles at Steeline.

Steeline conservatively estimates the project will lead to cumulative revenues of \$7.25 million and create 10 new jobs within five years across the entire manufacturing value chain including apprentices, truck drivers, other skilled workers, engineers and administrative staff. Four of the forecast new jobs do not currently exist in the NT, bringing a raft of new skills to the Top End.

It opens great potential for the Territory’s ecosystem to supply important local projects in construction and in critical areas of defence (local and international), infrastructure, mining, oil & gas, aviation and other key sectors such as agriculture.

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About Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC)

The Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC) is an industry-led, not-for-profit organisation. AMGC’s vision is to transform Australian manufacturing to become an internationally competitive, dynamic and thriving industry with advanced capabilities and skills at its core.

Through the delivery of its world-leading research, Manufacturing Academy, workshops, and ground-breaking projects, AMGC aims to develop a highly skilled and resilient local manufacturing sector that delivers high-value products – via the integration of innovative technology – to domestic and international markets.

<http://www.amgc.org.au>

About Steeline GRP

Established in 1995, Steeline GRP is the largest Territory owned steel roll former and metal roofing supplier. Steeline Grp currently supports the NT's construction industry manufacturing Australian Made roofing and building products manufactured onsite in our modern 15,000m² manufacturing facility in Berrimah, Northern Territory.

Boasting many of the world's best manufacturing machines and the ability to manufacture an array of coil steel and structural products including roofing, walling, gutters, flashing, structural purlins, metal trusses and wall frames by using only the highest quality BlueScope Steel materials and producing superior building products that are specifically designed for Northern Australia conditions all with approved NT Deemed to Comply.

Steeline's commitment to investing in new machinery and new products is driven by its passion and commitment to support its local industry and locally community.

About the Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Fund

The Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem (AME) Fund of \$7.5 million seeks to build the advanced manufacturing ecosystem in the Northern Territory. The fund aims to grow advanced manufacturing capabilities and increase investment in and output of advanced manufacturing activity in the Northern Territory and grow the number of advanced manufacturing jobs located in the Northern Territory.

The AME fund will provide grants to industry led advanced manufacturing projects located in the Northern Territory across the Territory's priority sectors where those projects:

- Commercialise new products and processes, including transitioning a new product or process from prototype stage to full commercial operations
- Support early stage, fast fail, investment to support small scale/pilot research projects in manufacturing

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