

News story: UK companies lead the world's nuclear decommissioning market

Forth Engineering, near Maryport, and Createc, of Cockermouth, played host to Kiyoshi Ando, from the Nikkei Newspaper.

The 2 firms have built equipment, originally designed to solve some of the unique challenges at the nearby Sellafield site, which has been put into action at nuclear plants all over the world.

Both companies have worked on the Sellafield site, and have benefitted from the close UK-Japan relationships fostered by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and Sellafield Ltd.

Mr Ando took the opportunity to speak to the region's industry specialists, learn more about the decommissioning sector and see some of the cutting-edge technology being developed to solve some of the world's most complex nuclear challenges.

The visit, hosted by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Sellafield Ltd, was arranged by The British Embassy in Tokyo.

Dr Adrian Simper, Strategy and Technology Director at the NDA, said:

The UK is at the leading edge of nuclear decommissioning. We have made real progress in addressing some of the most complex challenges, which involves finding ways of working safely in the most hazardous environments known to man.

The NDA is committed to supporting research and development that will find new, innovative and creative ways to safely clean up the UK's civil nuclear legacy. The nuclear supply chain – particularly those who are based here in West Cumbria – plays an absolutely vital role in helping the NDA deliver its mission.

Createc, has pioneered imaging technology which has been tested within Sellafield's oldest and most hazardous plants. As a result of the success, the company was awarded a contract to develop innovative radiation sensors for use at the Fukushima nuclear site in Japan.

Createc is the only partner working with Mitsubishi to develop sensors for the Fukushima project. Createc has also just secured a major new contract with Japanese engineering giant, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

Forth Engineering was launched in 2000 by former Sellafield apprentice Mark Telford. The Maryport business is now a global specialist in remotely operated equipment and sensor systems.

Mr Telford believes that having Sellafield on the doorstep gives West Cumbrian suppliers, like Forth, a huge advantage. He said:

It's a testbed where we can develop unique skills and technologies.

Sellafield needs innovative technology to undertake difficult engineering tasks in harsh environments underwater.

Successfully using our technology at Sellafield means we can then transfer it to other industries like marine and oil and gas, which are looking for similar products.

Forth has built its own unique facility in West Cumbria, which is used to simulate ponds and silos filled with radioactive waste, where the robotic equipment is put through its paces before being sent out to work on nuclear sites.

Over 1,500 delegates – including visitors from Japan, all over Europe, the US and Canada – came to [the recent NDA Supply Chain Event in Manchester](#). The ever-popular [Innovation Zone](#), supported by the government's Innovate UK, hosted around 40 UK companies supplying leading-edge nuclear decommissioning technologies.