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SALTIS comments on planned closure of BECTA

24th May 2010

The Suppliers Association for Learning Technology and Interoperability in Schools (SALTIS) notes the Treasury's announcement today that Becta is to be closed as part of the new government's efficiency savings.

SALTIS supports the aspiration Becta had to improve learning in UK schools through the use of technology. In particular, SALTIS has worked with Becta to establish interoperability standards for learning technology products. This work will continue and SALTIS members believe that it will be fundamental to establishing the decentralised, user-driven market that end users require.

Chairman of SALTIS, Crispin Weston, commented:

"We welcome the new government's move to create an open, decentralised market, in which companies both large and small can compete on equal terms to supply what teachers and learners really need. As well as financial savings, we are excited about the opportunities which this strategy will bring for the development of new learning technologies and the transformation of our schools.

"SALTIS looks forward to continuing its work with government to create the technical standards that are required by the market to allow different products to work together in an integrated environment".

Notes to editors

SALTIS (Suppliers Association for Learning Technology and Interoperability in Schools) was established in October 2007 by its current Chairman as a working group of the British Education Suppliers Association (BESA), specifically to address issues around technical interoperability in schools. Over 125 companies and organisations have joined SALTIS as members or partners.

The critical importance of better interoperability was highlighted by BESA's Policy Commission, chaired by Charles Clarke, which reported on 5th November 2008. Becta welcomed the commission's recommendation that it should lead the development of robust standards, in close consultation with industry.

Since August 2009, SALTIS has been working with Becta to improve interoperability between Virtual Learning Environments and other learning software.

For further information on SALTIS, see <http://www.saltis.org> or contact its Chairman, Crispin Weston, at crispin.weston@alphalearning.co.uk or on his mobile on 07780 811 806.

Last updated: May 24, 2010