

## In a Milestone Move, Trimble Acquires Spectra Precision

**In late-breaking news, Trimble Navigation Ltd. of Sunnyvale California has acquired the worldwide business of Spectra Precision.**

Spectra is based in Dayton Ohio and operates in seventeen countries, including Australia.

This acquisition is highly significant in the emerging high-tech field of positioning solutions and machine control, set to become really big news in the next few years.

Trimble are leaders in the development of GPS (Global Positioning System) equipment, originally developed for the U.S. military, but now widely used in commercial applications.

Their SiteVision system has recently been trialed by Thiess on a Cat D9 dozer at Foxleigh, with very positive results. Acceptance by the earthmoving industry has come rapidly in the U.S. and sales have accelerated strongly over the past twelve months.

Spectra Precision is prominent in laser equipment. In a sense their systems have been seen as competitive with Trimble's GPS, but experience seems to be showing that in fact the two approaches are complementary.

Spectra's recently released BladePro 3D is a robotic total station which monitors the precise location of

earthmoving equipment and permits automatic control of the machine and its blade.


Trimble's SiteVision is excellent for wide-area operations where fine tolerances are not essential, such as golf course construction and subdivisions.

It is capable of controlling a number of machines over a wide area, typically a radius of ten kilometres, and is accurate to about 2.5cm.

BladePro 3D is highly effective for precise work such as laying road base layers to an accuracy of millimetres, but has a working range measured in hundreds of metres, rather than kilometres.

The acquisition puts Trimble in the box seat to rationalise the continuing development of these technologies and get the best results from both.

A system that merges both technologies is planned for release next year. Upgrade options for existing users of both SiteVision and BladePro 3D will be available.

Marketing in Queensland will be divided into two main streams. Paul Bright's Ultimate Positioning organisation will distribute products for the engineering and construction sectors, whilst Brand and Muspratt's Spectra organisation will handle agricultural applications, a large part of the market. 

## State Government Seeks to Give Away More of Your Money Interested?

*The State Government is encouraged by results thus far from its job-creation initiative, "Breaking the Unemployment Cycle", but is looking for a greater level of active participation from Queensland employers.*


*According to Paul Braddy, Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, over fifteen hundred new apprenticeships and traineeships have been created in the building and construction industry since the scheme was introduced two years ago.*

*"Youth and long-term unemployment are well down on the levels they were when the Beattie Government came into office," says Braddy.*

*Recently released figures indicate that the Beattie state government has paid 1,028 employers a total of \$3,120,000 since the scheme began.*

*The \$363 million "Breaking the Unemployment Cycle" initiative aims to create 34,500 jobs across Queensland over five years.*

*Eligible employers receive up to \$2,200 for each extra apprentice and trainee employed in crucial areas of skill shortage.*

*So if you haven't looked in to this yet, maybe you should. *

## Queensland Liberal Leader Promises a Break on Payroll Tax to Aid Unemployed

**David Watson, State Leader of the Liberal Party, has proposed a payroll tax break to encourage employers to take on long-term unemployed workers.**

Speaking at the state Liberal Party convention in September, Watson undertook that if elected he would introduce incentives whereby anyone hiring a person aged over forty five who has been out of work for six months would pay no payroll tax on their salary for two years.

For others (no age specified) who have been out of work twelve months or more, the same would apply, i.e., no payroll tax would be payable on their salary for two years.

"This year Labor will spend \$91 million on a job training scheme," said Watson.

"But how will they pay for it? By hitting business in Queensland for an extra one hundred million dollars in payroll tax!

"That is economic insanity!" 