Melbourne, September 7, 2005
For immediate release

Wood CRC set to carve out commercial success with new CEO

The Board of Directors of CRC Wood Innovations announced today that Professor Tom Spurling has been named Chief Executive Officer and appointed to the Company's Board of Directors. Professor Spurling will take up his appointment early in October. He succeeds former CEO Professor Peter Vinden, who will continue to serve as Director of Research of CRC Wood Innovations.

Professor Spurling has been Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Industrial Sciences, Swinburne University of Technology since 2004. Prior to this appointment, he was Professor of Molecular Science and Director of the Industrial Research Institute Swinburne.

"CRC Wood Innovations is entering a new phase where our efforts must be tightly focused on bringing our technologies to market," said CRC Chairman Thorry Gunnersen. "CRC researchers, led by Professor Vinden, have accomplished a tremendous amount in developing technologies to pre-market readiness. Professor Spurling’s extensive experience with facilitating the launch of new products and spin-off companies will be of enormous value to the CRC in the next three years."

"The CRC has identified several microwave-assisted technologies with the potential to offer significant economies in production and resource usage to the timber industry," Mr Gunnersen said. "We are in the process of forming a spin-off company that will use CRC wood bending technology to create shaped components for the furniture industry. The CRC is also working closely with industry partners to bring wood drying and wood preservation applications to commercial reality." Close links with industry are expected to play a vital role in the successful commercialisation of CRC technologies, he said.

Professor Spurling became Chief of the CSIRO Division of Chemicals and Polymers in 1989 and of the CSIRO Division of Molecular Science in 1997. During his time with CSIRO Professor Spurling was instrumental in increasing interaction of the Divisions with Australian and international companies. This gave rise to launch of a number of new products based on CSIRO research by both Australian and overseas companies, and the formation of spin-off companies to commercialise CSIRO research. He successfully transferred his experiences to the major Indonesian research institute LIPI while leader of the MSS-LIPI project in Jakarta from 1999-2001. In his role as CEO of CRC Wood Innovations he will work closely with Professor Peter Vinden.

CRC Wood Innovations also announced a change in address of its offices. Effective immediately, CRC Wood Innovations will be located at Swinburne University of Technology, Building A, 144 High Street, Prahran.
Biographical information on Professor Spurling:

Tom Spurling received his BSc and PhD degrees in Physical Chemistry from the University of Western Australia in 1962 and 1966. He was a post-doctoral Fellow at the University of Maryland from 1965-1967 and a Lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Tasmania from 1967-1969. He joined CSIRO in 1969 where he became the Chief of the Division of Chemicals and Polymers in 1989 and the Chief of the Division of Molecular Science in 1997. He led the World Bank funded Management and Systems Strengthening-Lembaga Ilmu Pengetuhan Indonesia (MSS-LIPI) project in Jakarta from 1999-2001.

He was appointed Professor of Molecular Science and Director of the Industrial Research Institute Swinburne in 2002 and is now Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Industrial Sciences at Swinburne University of Technology.

Tom is a Fellow of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering and a Fellow of the Federation of Asian Chemical Societies. He was President of the RACI from 1987-1988 and of the FACS from 1989-1991. He will become the President of the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies in November 2005.

In 2000 he was awarded the inaugural CSIRO Award for Business Excellence and in 2003 the Centenary Medal from the Australian Government.

For more information, please contact:
Nola Wilkinson, Communication and Education Manager
Phone: (03) 9214 6094   Email: nwilkinson@swin.edu.au