

Trailer firm is out in front as a world leader

Europe's biggest trailer maker has been hailed as a "world leader".

The comment came from Alyn and Deeside AM Carl Sargeant following a visit to IWT Deeside, on Deeside Industrial Park.

Mr Sargeant, who is also Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, was taken on a tour of the factory which is part of the Ifor Williams Trailers group.

Production of the company's flagship horsebox is located in Deeside.

They have applied the production standards of top car manufacturers in building the horsebox with flowing lines.

As well as being sold through a network of UK distributors, the trailers are also exported all over the world with distributors as far afield as Australia and New Zealand.

Sales are growing dramatically in Germany where a leading equine magazine, Cavallo, recently declared the horsebox as the best in Europe.

Mr Sargeant was particularly interested in the manufacturing methods at IWT Deeside because of his background in industry as a Quality and Environmental Auditor.

He said: "I am very impressed with the company. They have a vision about taking the company forward in the very difficult trading times we're in at the moment.

"I'm really impressed about the quality of the product and the way operations here are using lean management skills to develop the business."

"Innovation is always important. If you want to be a market leader than you've got to adapt the way you work and do business differently.

"Ifor Williams Trailers are not sitting back on their laurels as the manufacturers of a quality product.

"They are always striving to reach the next level. It's about reaching for the stars in terms of business excellence - and that's what they're doing here.

"Training and developing skills are very important. I welcome industries that can add value, add skills to people, and that's clearly happening here.

"Ifor Williams Trailers is flying the flag for Wales in general and Flintshire in particular. They are showing that Wales can be a world leader in terms of skills and quality.

"France and Germany are extremely tough markets to compete in, particularly in this sector, so it's good to see a Welsh company out there winning.

"This is a UK based company with a strong Welsh dimension that has developed and grown into a market leader.

"Their credentials were underlined by the survey in Cavallo magazine which helps to promote user confidence.

"It always an added help when you've got a leading magazine that promotes your company as one that makes a world class product. It says an awful lot about the company."

Paul Watkins, the Business Operations Manager at IWT Deeside, was delighted that Mr Sargeant had taken the time and trouble to visit.

Mr Watkins said: "We are very proud of what we do here and our achievements as a company.

"We were impressed with the insight and interest shown by Mr Sargeant - his background in industry has given him an innate understanding of what we do."

