

## Message from the Chief Executive



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Venter'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

**Robert Venter** (Chief Executive)

For the past four decades, Altron and its subsidiaries have adopted a way of doing business that attempted to benefit all stakeholders. This approach has long been dictated by humanity and common decency. It will continue to guide us as we take Altron into a future where sustainable development is an intrinsic element of corporate success – a future where every person who interacts with our group, in however small a fashion, contributes to our success. A future where our responsibility to repay that contribution will determine our survival on the triple bottom line of financial, social and environmental accountability.

In this Sustainability Report, much attention is focused on transformation, guided by the targets set in our Altron Transformation Vision 2010 (Vision 2010). In the South African context, transformation specifically refers to broad-based black economic empowerment in the workplace. This is a process we fully support and one that

we are attempting to accelerate in our own business and in all organisations in our supply chain.

However, we believe transformation is much broader than the empowerment necessary to build an equitable economic base for our nation. Transformation is at the heart of sustainable citizenship – and at every level, from equity ownership to gleaming new soccer kits that see children take to the field with dignity and hope, the use of academics creating a useful tool for our 11 official languages to safe products and recycling initiatives that conserve our natural environment. This is the ambit of sustainable citizenship and a challenge we are meeting – at every level.

Although our Vision 2010 is being reviewed in light of recent draft codes and industry charters, the principles behind its development remain firmly in place and our group companies are being measured accordingly. The first round of reporting against our internal scorecard began last year and the amount of progress is indeed

heartening. Every effort is being made to address areas that are behind on target.

Altron is based in South Africa, and proudly so, but we transact in the global marketplace. Accordingly, in reporting to stakeholders, we have incorporated the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability guidelines on triple bottom-line reporting. GRI is the accepted international benchmark for reporting on economic, social and environmental performance to stakeholders. The 2002 GRI guidelines have been updated and are currently receiving international feedback. As these are finalised, they will be reviewed and incorporated into our own framework to ensure that the communication between our group and all stakeholders is meaningful and dynamic.

Sustainability reporting is an evolving process which relies on feedback from stakeholders and continual improvement to reach the goal of responsible citizenship. We accept this challenge. We are committed to incrementally improving our processes, systems and skills – and measuring our performance against international standards – to ensure that our business is sustainable on every level and touches the lives of stakeholders as they touch ours.

## Making a difference

- ▶ Altron is among the top 300 empowerment companies in South Africa as rated by Impumelelo, an annual publication that researches over 9 000 public, private and institutional organisations in 150 sectors of the economy.
- ▶ Altron was awarded gold as a top future company on the JSE and first place in the general industries category for electronic and electrical equipment in the PMR (Professional Management Review) Magazine's annual Top Future Companies survey.
- ▶ The 2005 Altron annual report won a merit award in the South African Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators annual report assessment, regarded as one of the most prestigious of its type in the country.
- ▶ BTG was ranked tenth in the annual Financial Mail Top Empowerment Companies' Survey and fourth in the ICT industry. The survey ranked the top 200 JSE-listed companies on their contributions to broad-based black economic empowerment in 2005.