

# Seeing Machines has great vision for the future

Canberra company Seeing Machines has set out to develop a product that will alert drivers when they become distracted or drowsy.

“What started as a great idea in the minds of a few engineering research academics at the ANU has now grown into an exciting company,” Seeing Machines Nick Cerneaz, chief executive said.

It started with Professor Alex Zelinsky, Dr Yochen Heinzmann, Dr Sebastian Rougeaux and Mr Tim Edwards in 1997 when Volvo was putting money into research efforts. Professor Zelinsky’s lab started looking at driver fatigue. In July 2000 they rolled their intellectual property into a company and Seeing Machines was born with shareholding split between the ANU, founders and Volvo.

“In May 2001 we produced a product called FaceLAB which measures in real time the head pose and eye gaze direction of the subject,” Mr Cerneaz said.

FaceLAB is currently being used by: car manufactures (such as Mitsubishi, Hyundai



*Nick Cerneaz, chief executive, Seeing Machines*

and Toyota) in the design of vehicles: the US Army is using it to design optimal vehicles and the Highway Transport Safety Agency in the United States.

“We also have a development agreement in place with Hella in Germany to develop head and face tracking technology, to sense whether

drivers are fatigued or distracted, to get into serial production for heavy vehicles,” Mr Cerneaz said.

“Getting this technology from development to production and into the hands of car manufacturers will be an important stepping stone for us and the realisation of a long term goal of the company.”

In addition, Seeing Machines has licensed, and is developing, a medical device for visual field testing that will be the world’s first objective, non contact visual field test for glaucoma and other visual and neurological disorders.

“This device is objective, takes less time – ordinary test does one eye at a time and up to 25 minutes per eye, we do both eyes in four minutes – quicker, less stressful and more reliable,” Mr Cerneaz said.

Seeing machines is aiming to launch this new product before the end of 2006.

“The potential is fantastic and our ultimate goal would be to see one in every ophthalmologist and optometrist office around the world,” Mr Cerneaz said.