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## Firm wins award for its X-ray vision

X-RAY technology company Kromek has received more than £240,000 to fund the development of its explosive detection products after scooping the Security SME of 2009 award.

The firm, which is based in Sedgfield, County Durham, has been developing a range of technologies to be used within the defence industry, including a machine that can scan bottles and bags for explosive devices.

It said it will be using the cash prize to complete the development of its bag technology and said that its turnover was projected to be more than double the £0.5m it achieved last year.

Spun-out of the physics department at Durham University, Kromek pioneers X-ray imaging for the medical, security, industrial inspection and defence markets.

The cash prize was awarded at the Global Security Challenge Event in London and was funded by the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG) department of the US Government, which is the national research and development arm for combating terrorism at home and abroad.

Kromek has already secured a deal with the US Government to supply radiation detection equipment and said that this would be its target market in years to come.

Kromek chief executive Arnab Basu said: "It's an amazing achievement to be named as the security SME of 2009.

"The award represents an important validation of Kromek's technology and a valuable boost to our funding, which will help to develop our range of security products.

"Winning this category reflects the extent to which the company is pushing technological boundaries."

This is not the first time that the firm has received external funding, as last year saw it secure £1.6m in private equity backing as well as winning a £250,000 R&D grant from regional development agency One North East.

The firm is valued at more than £46.5m and also secured £350,000 of investment from the Home Office in 2007.

Since taking the plunge to commercialise Kromek in 2003, Mr Basu has grown the business from a two-man operation to a 42-strong workforce.