

Zirax plc announces Opening of Rosignano plant

Zirax plc ("Zirax" or the "Company"), the AIM quoted speciality chemical company focused on the development, production and sale of oilfield process chemicals and de-icing solutions is pleased to announce the opening of the Rosignano plant in Italy, which will significantly increase the Company's total capacity of calcium chloride ("CaCl₂") by 55,000 Metric Tonnes (MT) per annum. In total, the Company has increased capacity by over 100% since 1 January 2006 and become the second largest global supplier of CaCl₂ pellets.

At our existing Volgograd facility, Zirax's expansion programme has already increased total capacity by 35,000 MT per annum to 115,000 MT per annum, following a \$5m upgrade. Together with today's announcement the Company now has a total capacity of 170,000 MT per annum. Zirax's CaCl₂ pellets are specifically manufactured from synthetic hydrochloric acid, generating ultra low contaminant levels with 94-98% purity.

The opening of the Rosignano facility follows an agreement which Zirax signed with Solvay SA ('Solvay'), the international chemical and pharmaceutical group, in June 2006. Under the agreement, Solvay has built the new plant to produce 80,000 MT per annum of CaCl₂ pellets, of which Zirax will acquire two-thirds of all production, enabling the Company to meet the growing demand from the oilfield process chemicals markets in nearby Africa and the Middle East, plus target potential de-icing and industrial markets in Europe. The Company has already begun marketing Zirax's products in these new markets by establishing new relationships and developing existing ones, and is confident of the outlook for the future.

The Rosignano production process is based on technology owned by Zirax and used at the existing Zirax plant in Volgograd, Russia, for which a technology license agreement was signed with Solvay. The new production line will allow Solvay to broaden its present CaCl₂ product portfolio and to consolidate its production capacity in Rosignano.

Commenting on this announcement, Valery Andosov, Chief Executive of Zirax said:

"We are delighted to be working with Solvay and are pleased that Zirax can announce such a significant increase in capacity. Our calcium chloride pellets are of the highest quality at 94-98% purity, with ultra low contaminant levels, as a result of being manufactured utilising synthetic hydrochloric acid. The opening of Rosignano has lifted us to being the second largest global supplier of calcium chloride pellets and along with Volgograd has provided us with the ability to cost effectively service the global market".

Commenting on this announcement, Giordano Zappelli, Business Manager Calcium Chloride for Solvay said:

"With this new unit, Solvay Rosignano is becoming one of the world's largest solid CaCl₂ production sites, which further enhances its competitiveness. CaCl₂ in pellets are a useful addition to Solvay's product range and will help to better meet the needs of its customers. The timeliness of the launch of this new production unit is yet another token of the seriousness and efficiency of our long term co-operation with Zirax, who have proven to be a professional company, strongly dedicated to the CaCl₂ business."

About Zirax

Zirax is a speciality chemical company manufacturing and supplying oilfield process chemicals and de-icing solutions to a global customer base. Zirax is the second largest supplier of calcium chloride pellets globally and the leading supplier in the Eastern Hemisphere. Zirax is quoted on AIM section of the London Stock Exchange (ticker: ZRX), is headquartered in London and has supply sources based in Western Europe and Russia. More information is available at <http://www.zirax.com>

About Solvay

Solvay is an international chemical and pharmaceutical Group with headquarters in Brussels. It employs some 29,000 people in 50 countries. In 2006 its consolidated sales amounted to EUR 9.4 billion generated by its three activity sectors: Chemicals, Plastics and Pharmaceuticals. Solvay is listed on the Euronext 100 index of top European companies. Details are available at <http://www.solvay.com>.

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