

PRESS RELEASE

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Akzo Nobel and CIRS to Cooperate

Amersfoort, the Netherlands, January 11, 1999. - From January 1, 1999, the Polymer Chemicals business unit of Akzo Nobel will be a worldwide distributor for the full range of specialty additive products of CIRS SpA, which includes reactor anti-fouling agents and suspending agents. These products are marketed by CIRS under the trade names Noxol[®], Ethapol[®], DCloud[®], Hypol[®], and Active[®], and are mainly used in the PVC industry.

Akzo Nobel will market these products together with its full line of organic peroxide initiators, which are offered by Akzo Nobel under the trade names Trigonox[®], Perkadox[®], and Laurox[®]. Until such time as the transfer of distribution activities has taken place, CIRS will continue to handle the sales of their products as in the past. The transfer starts in the first quarter of 1999.

Akzo Nobel and CIRS are regarded as market leaders in their respective fields of organic peroxides and anti-fouling agents.

According to Arend-Jan Kortenhorst, Polymer Chemicals General Manager, "This cooperation with CIRS fits very well in our strategy to further expand the product portfolio in order to offer a full range of products to our customers throughout the world."

The combined product lines create a useful synergy for customers to purchase these products from one main, global supplier. The CIRS product line, together with Akzo Nobel's, provides the polymer producer "one stop shopping" capabilities unlike any other supplier to a polymer producer, purchasing products used in the reactor.

CIRS SpA is a private Italian company founded in 1986 with its main headquarters at Padova, Italy. Main sectors of activity are the research and production of chemical additives used to produce plastic materials such as PVC, PS, ABS, SAN and others. CIRS' Colafonda, Italy, production site is certified ISO 9002 and last year construction of a new American production site started at Conroe, Texas. Today CIRS has more than 70 clients spread across 40 countries worldwide. In 1998, CIRS produced 3,500 tons of fine-chemicals which allowed the production of approximately 15 million tons of polymers, for a global turnover of around ITL 24 billion (NLG 27 million / GBP 8 million / EUR 12 million). The 1999 CIRS product line includes, among the others, the anti-fouling agent Noxol[®] and the new line of PVA (primary and secondary suspending agents) Active[®] and Hypol[®].

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Polymer Chemicals holds worldwide leading positions in the production, handling and supply of organic peroxides, metal alkyls, Ziegler-Natta and other polymerization catalysts. These products are used in the production of thermoplastic polymers and thermoset plastics. Production is carried out at more than 15 sites worldwide. In 1997, sales for the business unit amounted to NLG 1.1 billion (USD 550 million / GBP 329 million / EUR 493 million).

Akzo Nobel, based in the Netherlands, serves customers throughout the world with healthcare products, coatings, chemicals and fibers. The fibers businesses, now known as Acordis, will be demerged in the course of the second half of 1999. The company currently employs some 87,500 people in more than 60 countries. Consolidated sales for 1997 totaled NLG 24.1 billion (USD 12 billion / GBP 7.5 billion EUR 10.8 billion). Financial results for 1998 will be announced February 22, 1999.

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Note for the editor / not for publication

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