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VIASAT SWITCHES OFF LEGACY ENCRYPTION SYSTEM

Modern Times Group MTG AB, the international media group, today announced that Viasat Broadcasting has switched off the legacy ‘Viaccess’ encryption of its premium pay-TV channels in the Nordic region (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland). This follows the successful implementation of NDS Group plc’s ‘VideoGuard’ conditional access technology on the Viasat DTH satellite television platform.

The switch-off of the old system will render ‘pirate’ pay-TV cards useless as pirate cardholders will no longer be able to receive the Viasat packages of premium pay-TV channels. Viasat broadcasts both its own and third party entertainment channels digitally via satellite and had 436,000 premium subscribers at the end of the second quarter of this year (30 June 2004).

The migration has been implemented via the downloading of software to subscribers’ TV set-top decoders and the distribution of new smart cards. Only 22,000 existing Viasat premium subscribers remain to be migrated to the new conditional access system. Viasat will also switch off the legacy encryption of its digital basic pay-TV channels in the Nordic region as soon as possible.

NDS provides secure conditional access technology for thirty-four pay-TV platforms and forty-four million subscribers around the world, protecting US\$ 20 billion of annual subscription revenues.

Hans-Holger Albrecht, President and CEO of MTG, commented: “The project has been delivered on schedule and is one of the first times that a satellite pay-TV broadcaster has migrated its subscriber base to a new conditional access system. We have accomplished the migration at low cost and made the transition as simple as possible for existing customers.

“Viasat has broadcast all of its digital channels with both the NDS ‘VideoGuard’ technology and the legacy system for the last year and VideoGuard is secure. The implementation is therefore expected to eliminate piracy on the Viasat pay-TV platform. We have also further strengthened our pay-TV offering with the addition of new sports and movie channels and Viasat remains the premium pay-TV price leader in each of its markets.”

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MTG is an international media group with operations in more than 30 countries around the world and principal broadcasting businesses in Scandinavia, the Baltic States, Hungary and Russia. MTG is the largest Free-to-air and Pay-TV operator in the Nordic and Baltic regions and the largest commercial radio operator in Northern Europe. MTG's Viasat channels reach over 50 million people in 15 countries every day and MTG Radio's stations reach 3 million daily listeners. The Viasat Broadcasting DTH satellite TV platform offers digital multi-channel TV packages of over 50 own-produced and third party entertainment channels. MTG is a leading European direct response TV network operator, broadcasting home shopping channels into 100 million homes in 52 countries, as well as one of the world's leading originators and producers of Reality TV formats.

Modern Times Group MTG AB class A and B shares are listed on the Stockholmsbörsen O-list (symbols: MTGA and MTGB).

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