



To business editors:

## Press release for immediate publication

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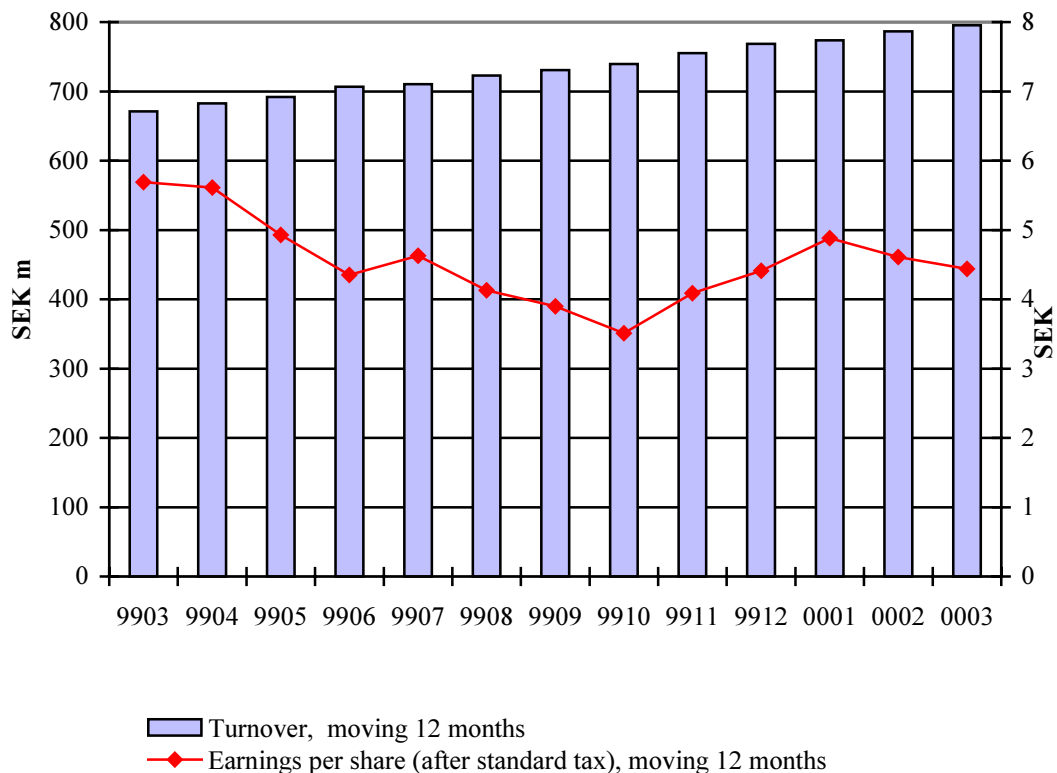
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# Interim report January – March 2000 HL Display AB (publ)

- Consolidated sales rose by 15.6 per cent to SEK 200.5 m (173.4). During March sales was SEK 80.1 m (71.3).
- The periods profit before tax totalled SEK 5.7 m (5.5). Profit for the month was SEK 5.4 m (7.3).
- Sales over Internet has increased substantially in the Swedish sales company.



# Interim report January to March 2000

## Sales and earnings

Group sales during the period amounted to SEK 200.5 m (173.4), an increase by 15.6 per cent compared to the equivalent period 1999. Exchange rate fluctuations had a negative impact of 1.4 per cent on net sales.

The period's profit before tax was SEK 5.7 m (5.5), an increase by 3.6 per cent.

SEK 1.0 m of totally SEK 4.5 m that has been reallocated to the Group from the pension insurance company SPP, has positively affected the result. This amount equals what will be paid out cash during the third quarter 2000. The remainder of the total sum has, for prudential reasons, not been taken into the accounts. This will be done when a detailed instruction from SPP has been released.

The profit has been negatively affected by SEK 3.3 m due to the dramatic price increase of the Group's largest raw material, PVC compared to first quarter 1999.

Exchange rate effects has compared with the preceding year reduced profit before tax by SEK 2.5 m.

## IT strategy

HL Display has during the latest two years been working with the building-up of a common technical platform for all group companies. The work has included hardware platform, office software, communication over Internet and a common ERP-system. During year 2000 the work will be concentrated on further development of the areas electronic trade, Internet and Intranet. HL Display so far offer customers in Sweden and Norway electronic trade via HL Smart Shop. Since the start utilisation has increased substantially and in Sweden are now around 5-10% of all orders placed using this channel. The number of registered users is 420.

## Acquisitions

No new acquisitions are reported for the first quarter.

## Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure during the period amounted to SEK 15.6 m (19.4). Depreciation according to plan during the period amounted to SEK 9.2 m (6.8).

## Financial position

Liquidity has weakened by SEK 4.7 m since year-end 1999 and amounted to SEK 18.2 m (19.0) on March 31. The equity/assets ratio was 46.9 (49.7) per cent, compared with 51.6 per cent at year-end 1999.

## Share data

Earnings per share after full tax for the past 12-month period amounted to SEK 4.20 (4.89). Shareholders' equity per share at the end of the period was SEK 28.08 (25.19). The total number of shares outstanding is 7,688,872.

## Personnel

The average number of employees during the period was 741 (631), and the number of employees end of period was 759 (647).

## AGM

The dividend suggested by the Board, SEK 1.30 per share was adopted by the annual general meeting of shareholders, which was held March 20, 2000.

### Reporting dates:

Monthly report	4 months 2000	16.05.2000
Monthly report	5 months 2000	19.06.2000
Interim report	6 months 2000	17.07.2000
Monthly report	7 months 2000	16.08.2000
Monthly report	8 months 2000	15.09.2000
Interim report	9 months 2000	17.10.2000
Monthly report	10 months 2000	16.11.2000
Monthly report	11 months 2000	18.12.2000

## Key figures for the Group <sup>1)</sup>

SEK (000s)	3 months Jan 2000 - Mar 2000	3 months Jan 1999 - Mar 1999	Change in per cent	12 months April 1999 - Mar 2000	12 months April 1998 - Mar 1999	Full year 1999
Net sales	200 503	173 376	+ 15.6	795 578	671 049	768 451
Operating profit	8 538	9 684	-11.8	54 255	62 280	55 401
Profit before tax	5 670	5 529	+ 2.6	47 266	60 810	47 125
Profit margin %	2.8	3.2	-12.5	5.9	9.1	6.1
Equity/asset ratio, %	46.9	49.7	-5.6	46.9	49.7	51.6
Investments, SEK m	15.6	19.4	-19.6	64.1	67.3	67.9
Return on capital, %	-	-	-	12.6	18.2	12.9
Return on shareholders' equity, %	-	-	-	15.8	20.4	15.3
Shareholders' equity per share, SEK	-	-	-	28.08	25.19	28.89
Earnings per share after standard tax, SEK	-	-	-	4.44	5.69	4.41
Earnings per share after full tax, SEK	-	-	-	4.20	4.89	4.20

## Summary of consolidated income statement

SEK (000s)	Jan - March 2000	Jan - March 1999	Change in percent	Full year 1999
Net sales	200 503	173 376	+ 15.6%	768 451
Cost of goods sold	-107 843	-95 637	+ 12.8%	-415 643
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>92 660</b>	77 739	+ 19.2%	352 808
Selling expenses	-48 256	-37 156	+ 29.9%	-167 185
Administrative expenses	-28 985	-24 668	+ 17.5%	-105 641
Development costs	-7 515	-6 231	+ 20.6%	-24 581
Other operating income/cost	634	-	-	-
<b>Operating profit</b>	<b>8 538</b>	9 684	-11.8%	55 401
Financial income and expenses <sup>2)</sup>	-2 868	-4 155	-31.0%	-8 276
<b>Profit before tax</b>	<b>5 670</b>	5 529	2.6%	47 125
Tax <sup>3)</sup>	-1 911	-1 769	8.0%	-14 848
<b>Net profit</b>	<b>3 759</b>	3 760	0.0%	32 277


## Summary of consolidated balance sheet

SEK (000s)	March 31, 2000	March 31, 1999	December 31, 1999
Fixed assets	174 595	144 158	168 241
Current assets	285 433	245 428	262 131
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>460 028</b>	389 586	430 372
Shareholders' equity	215 928	193 653	222 168
Provisions	14 433	18 278	14 051
Long-term liabilities	96 556	56 491	71 207
Current liabilities	133 111	121 164	122 946
<b>Total shareholders' equity and liabilities</b>	<b>460 028</b>	389 586	430 372

## Summary of consolidated cashflow statement <sup>4)</sup>

SEK (000s)	Jan - March 2000	Jan - March 1999	Full year 1999
Operating profit	8 538	9 684	55 401
Depreciation	9 183	6 843	31 255
Other items not included in the cash flow	-854	-4 351	-5 668
Interest income, paid	719	233	1 425
Interest expenses, paid	-1 504	-1 058	-4 923
Income tax, paid	-797	-4 847	-29 007
Change in working capital	-18 829	3 413	-2 259
<b>Cash flow from operations</b>	<b>-3 544</b>	9 917	46 224
Cash flow from investments	-15 610	-19 421	-57 367
Cash flow from financing, dividend etc	14 444	-10 239	-4 623
<b>Change in liquid funds</b>	<b>-4 710</b>	-19 743	-15 766

For the Board of Directors:  
Stockholm, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000

  
Anders Remius  
President

1) See Annual Report for definitions

2) Of which, translation differences March 31, 2000: SEK -1.1 m;  
March 31 1999: SEK -3.1 m; Dec 31 1999: SEK -3.8 m

3) Estimated full tax

4) Before exchange difference on liquid assets