Major Akzo Nobel investments in Coatings research and development

Arnhem, the Netherlands, April 28, 2004 – Akzo Nobel today opened a new state-of-the-art R&D laboratory at its Marine & Protective Coatings facility at Felling in the United Kingdom. The new lab is part of an ongoing investment of over EUR 10 million by the business unit into its research and development facilities around the world.

In addition to the new purpose-built R&D laboratory – which will serve the Company’s global Marine and Yacht Coatings businesses – the existing R&D building at the Felling site will be redesigned and transformed into the BU's Technology Center.

The improvements at Felling follow on from significant investments in two other Marine and Yacht Coatings R&D facilities. A new laboratory has been built at Geoje in South Korea, while a major upgrade was carried out at Newton Ferrers in the UK. Additional work was also carried out at the Asia Pacific Technical Center at Jurong Town, Singapore.

“These investments are part of our continuing commitment to innovative research and to deliver to our customers first class products coming from first class facilities,” said Rudy van der Meer, Member of Akzo Nobel’s Board of Management responsible for Coatings, during the official opening in Felling. “Innovation means keeping one step ahead of customer requirements. It should not only enable them to increase efficiency and productivity, but also to reduce costs. As the worldwide leading coatings company it is our aim to develop new products and technologies that combine excellent performance with compliance to the highest environmental standards.”

The primary development work at the newly opened laboratory will focus on the formulation of new antifouling technologies, new building coatings and maintenance and repair coatings for the marine and yacht markets.

“The existence of a worldwide network of integrated, first class laboratories capable of developing and testing products to the highest international standards is central to our ability to respond quickly to the constantly changing demands of the marketplace,” added Leif Darner, General Manager of the Marine & Protective Coatings business unit. “By investing heavily in laboratory facilities around the globe and developing new products and technologies, we will be in an even better position to keep pace with future needs, so ensuring that our customers the world over reap the best possible benefits.”
Akzo Nobel, based in the Netherlands, serves customers throughout the world with healthcare products, coatings and chemicals. Consolidated sales for 2003 totaled EUR 13 billion. The Company currently employs approximately 64,300 people in more than 80 countries. The financial results for the second quarter will be published on July 19, 2004.

The business unit marine and protective coatings has operations in 54 countries worldwide and over 3,900 employees. Its International® brandname, has worldwide market leadership positions in marine, protective and yacht paints, with Akzo Nobel Aerospace Coatings as global leader for aircraft primers and topcoats. International Marine Coatings are technology leaders in TBT-free antifoulings, anti-abrasion coatings, ballast tank coatings and fouling control systems for vessels being built, repaired or maintained. International Protective Coatings, offer an extensive range of high performance coatings for the oil, gas, chemical processing, paper and pulp, steel structure and mining industries. International Yacht Paints, worldwide leaders, with the International® and Interlux® brandnames, offer coatings with the latest and safest antifouling technology and the toughest protection for yachts from the smallest dinghy to the largest and most luxurious superyacht. Akzo Nobel Aerospace Coatings, worldwide leaders for original equipment manufacturers and the aircraft maintenance and repair industry.

Internet: www.akzonobel.com; www.international-coatings.com

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* Pursuant to the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act 1995.