



Press

information

Date 17 January, 2007

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ARC International announces the project to close its cookware plant in Sunderland (United Kingdom)

Paris, 17 January, 2007 – ARC International today announced its project to close the Arc International Cookware (AIC) plant at Sunderland in the North East of England.

This plant has not managed to overcome some economic difficulties: the cost of power supplies in the UK has doubled over the last 4 years the cost of raw materials is much higher than on the European continent and the production capacity is not sufficiently exploited (amounting to 75% only). This has meant structural losses over several years (£760,000 in 2006), with no sign of an upturn, in spite of the full commitment of the staff to the productivity efforts.

This decision, taken with great regret, will affect about 240 employees. AIC will ensure that all staff are treated in a fair and reasonable way. Discussions with employees and the trade unions have begun and it is anticipated production will cease by the end of September 2007. During the transition period, all employees will be given assistance in dealing with their particular problems.



Francisco Azcona, General Manager of AIC, said “The decision is based solely on the continuing adverse situation in our plant and in no way reflects on the performance of the employees. We must now do everything we can to help them in this transition period. I would like once again to express my gratitude for all their efforts.

Francisco Azcona concluded by saying “Arc International is continuing its strategy of consolidating its position in glass ovenware products and confirms that the Pyrex brand is a key part of this strategy. To reinforce our leadership in glass products we will shortly be launching a new range based on an innovative approach. This range will be produced in our plants in Châteauroux and Arques (France)”.

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Arc International Cookware is a subsidiary of ARC International.

ARC International employs 19,000 people worldwide.

The Group, whose head office is located in Arques in the French Pas-de-Calais region, achieved a turnover of 1.3 billion euros in 2005, selling tableware products in more than 160 countries.

With a portfolio of seven brands, Luminarc®, Mikasa®, Cristal d'Arques® Paris, Arcoroc®, Pyrex®¹, Salviati, and Studio Nova® that cover all distribution channels for mass and luxury market, ARC International has launched an offensive strategy in order to consolidate and strengthen its leadership throughout the world.

This policy led to the diversification and integration of materials other than glass. Consequently, the Group offers total concepts intended for the table and home decoration markets and combines glass, porcelain, stainless steel and earthenware, etc. In order to continue research into new materials, the Group has invested in research and development facilities which allowed it to create Kwarx® which surpasses the best qualities of glass, crystal and crystalline products.

ARC INTERNATIONAL is present in five continents with production sites (France, Spain, USA, Italy, China, UAE), distribution subsidiaries (France, UK, Spain, Australia, Mexico, Brazil, Netherlands, Japan, Italy), liaison offices and a network of fully owned retail outlets, Mikasa stores (USA and Canada), outlet stores, Salviati jewellery stores, and Arc Décoration and Arc International retail stores.

For further information please contact:

Sophie Moissard ARC International
Corporate Communication Manager
Mobile +33 6 62 08 03 97
E-mail: Sophie.moissard@arc-intl.com

Or

Paul Dobbie
Persuasion Public Relations
Mobile + 44 (0) 7967 197224
E-mail: paul.dobbie@persuasion-pr.com

¹ Pyrex® is a trademark of Corning Inc., licensed by Arc International Cookware SAS in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa