



SHARP DOWNTURN IN ACTIVITY AND EARNINGS EXPECTED FOR FOURTH QUARTER OF 2008

Against a backdrop of a slowdown in the construction market that has rapidly spread through the major European countries, and the effects of which have been greatly magnified since mid-September by the violent financial liquidity crisis, the MANITOU Group has experienced a faster than expected fall-off in its activities over the last few weeks. These developments have led it to review its earnings forecasts for the fourth quarter of 2008, and to ramp up its action-plans aimed at preparing for a 2009 that is going to prove difficult, both in Europe and North America.

Business trend in Q4

Over the last three months, the order-book has rapidly shrunk, reaching a level of slightly over two months as against three and a half months at the end of September. Order intake continued to decline, and the last five months ended 75% down on the same period of last year. This development is explained by:

- the fall in general economic activity,
- difficulties encountered by users in obtaining finance,
- numerous requests for postponement of deliveries from distributors and dealers who are also facing very tight cash situations.

Sales figures at constant scope for the months of October and November were down by 5% and 35% respectively on the same months of 2007, intensifying the slowdown felt in the third quarter (+3% as against +8% in the first six months of the year). For December, the Group expects a reduction in its activity of nearly 40% compared with December 2007.

In these conditions, the result for Q4 is expected to show a small loss, due to the sharp drop in the level of activity, measures taken to clear stocks and costs associated with financial transactions following the acquisition of GEHL (interest paid and currency hedges).

Forecast for 2008

The consolidated sales figure for 2008 (without consolidating GEHL, which was acquired at the end of October) should be close to €1.245m, down by some 1% on the 2007 figure. The contribution from GEHL for the last two months of the financial year should come out at around \$34m in sales, with a small loss.

The MANITOU Group's earnings for the year will be negatively affected by developments in the fourth quarter and by accounting adjustments associated with the consolidation of GEHL, currently being assessed.

Outlook for 2009

In order to prepare for a year that could well see a sharp contraction in sales, in the course of the next few weeks the MANITOU Group will strengthen the action-plans already in force so as to significantly reduce its operating expenses and trim its production capacity to reflect the new level of activity. To date these measures have translated into:

- a significant reduction in temporary employees (330),
- an adjustment to the number of permanent employees in both Europe and USA (117),
- the introduction of short-time working in all the Group's production units,
- a substantial reduction in overheads, and
- the containment of working capital requirements.

Commenting on the situation, Marcel Claude BRAUD, President and Chief Executive Officer, said:

"Faced as we are with this serious economic and financial crisis that affects all manufacturers of capital goods, we have no choice but to adapt quickly to the new market conditions in order to ensure the long-term survival of our Group. I have no doubts about the ability of our teams and our distribution networks to take up this challenge".

Company information is available at:

www.manitou.com and www.gehl.com

Shareholder information:

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