

Press Release

The SOCOTEC Group, which is a major player in risk management and performance improvement for businesses, has today confirmed that Cobepa has acquired a majority stake in its capital.

Qualium Investissement, the SOCOTEC Group's majority shareholder since 2008, has just sold its shares. SOCOTEC's shares are now owned as follows:

- about 63% of the capital is owned by the Belgian investment company Cobepa;
- about 20% of the capital is owned by the fund Five Arrows Principal Investments (FAPI); and
- about 17% of the capital is still owned by the SOCOTEC Group's employees and management.

In 2008, SOCOTEC took an important first step forward when it made the transition from an employee shareholder model that had existed since the company was formed in 1953, to control by Qualium Investissement, which invested in the capital by way of an LBO. This investment enabled the company to maintain its development strategy and to embark upon a process of change: a change in its governance, reorganisation of its structures, definition of its international strategic priorities, and forward progress in a difficult economic environment.

The arrival of Cobepa opens a new page in SOCOTEC's development, and will enable it to deal with new challenges.

"Cobepa is a long-term investor whose values and fundamentals match those of SOCOTEC. It will provide us with long-term support for our ambitious business plan aimed at increasing in size and strengthening our position internationally", said Vincent Oudin, SOCOTEC's Chief Executive Officer.

Jean-Marie Laurent Josi, Cobepa's Managing Director, said: "We are delighted with this investment in the SOCOTEC Group, which we intend to provide with the resources to strengthen its position in its markets and broaden the scope of its activities both in France and internationally".

Marc-Olivier Laurent, Chairman of Five Arrows Managers, said: "SOCOTEC has huge growth potential in France and internationally, and in that sense is a perfect match for Five Arrows' investment strategy. We are very pleased to be supporting it in its development".

About SOCOTEC

The SOCOTEC Group is a global provider of services to businesses and local authorities, contributing to the optimisation of their performance by controlling the risks inherent in their activities.

Over a period of 60 years, the company has built its reputation as an independent third party in the areas of quality, health and safety, and the environment.

The SOCOTEC Group's skilled workforce carries out inspection, technical support, consultancy, training and certification missions in the construction, property, industrial and tertiary sectors.

With consolidated sales of €475 million (2012 pro forma), 5,000 employees, more than 150 external recognitions, a network of 200 establishments in France and a presence in more than 40 countries, the SOCOTEC Group is a major player in risk prevention consultancy.

More information is available at www.socotec.com

About Cobepa

Cobepa is a private investment company whose shareholders are major European industrial families, and which has been active in Europe since 1957. It now manages investments of about €1.2 billion, including 16 key investments, 80% of which are outside Belgium. It has a diversified portfolio of industrial and service companies occupying leading positions in their respective markets. Cobepa is based in Brussels.

More information is available at www.cobepa.be

About Five Arrows Principal Investments

Five Arrows Principal Investments (FAPI) is a pan-European fund of €585 million investing in medium-sized companies. It is managed by Five Arrows Managers (FAM), a subsidiary of the Rothschild Group in charge of unlisted investments (equity capital and debt). Together with its affiliates, FAM manages nearly €3.5 billion. The Rothschild Group is an independent international group specialising in financial services, which employs nearly 2,800 people in more than 40 countries.

More information is available at www.rothschild.com

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