

Washington H Soul Pattinson and Company Limited

ASX + MEDIA RELEASE

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WH SOUL PATTINSON OUTPERFORMS IN FIRST QUARTER 2005

Investment house, Washington H Soul Pattinson and Company Limited (WHSP), today reported improved first quarter performances from several group companies and an outperformance of its \$2.2 billion investment portfolio.

Chairman, Mr Robert Millner, told shareholders today at WHSP's 102nd annual meeting that the group's principal businesses in building products, coal, telecommunications and television and financial services had all increased first quarter results significantly.

The first quarter return from the WHSP share portfolio was 13.3 per cent compared with the benchmark S&P ASX 300 Accumulation Index of 8.4 per cent, with its value over the quarter increasing 17 per cent to \$2.2 billion.

The portfolio includes listed controlled entities and WHSP associates.

Among significant first quarter performances from group companies for the three months to September compared with the previous corresponding period were:

- Brickworks Limited, net profit after tax up 22 per cent to \$28.5 million, with building products trading conditions slightly softer on the east coast and slightly stronger on the west coast
- New Hope Corporation Limited, profit after tax and outside equity interest more than double, with world coal prices expected to remain strong for the rest of the financial year, possibly to be offset partially with a strengthening Australian dollar
- SP Telemedia Limited, profit after tax almost doubled to \$4.4 million, with acquisition of Comindico, at a price between \$26 million and \$39 million for a business in which \$400 million had been invested, to be settled at end November

In financial services for the first quarter, merchant bank, Pitt Capital Partners, is well ahead of budget and Souls Funds Management increased funds under management 26 per cent, with this trend expected to continue.

In food, Clover Corporation Limited has lifted profit before tax 14 per cent to \$984,000 for the four months to October while Keith Harris & Co Limited recorded a first quarter loss of \$952,000 before tax.

Australian Pharmaceutical Industries Limited, which is 23.2 per cent owned by WHSP, acquired New Price Retail in September for \$112 million, with the acquisition expected to be earnings per share positive.

Mr Millner also drew attention to the optimisation of shareholder value through group company share prices.

Among group share price rises since the beginning of the financial year (August 1, 2003) to November 15, were WHSP (SOL) rising 53 per cent to \$9.13, New Hope (NHC) up 237 per cent to \$1.35, SP Telemedia (SOT) increasing 58 per cent to \$1.69 and API (API) up 30 per cent to \$3.30.

Among other items of news from WHSP group companies reported by Mr Millner were:

- Clover's new soy plant in Moree, which will produce a new flavourless soy food additive, will be completed in February
- Pitt Capital Partners continues its expansion in Australia and internationally
- a new automated baking plant in South Australia for Balfours, the Keith Harris subsidiary, will be completed in December, with cost savings to be evidenced fully in 2006

Shareholders approved payment of a final dividend of 12 cents a share fully franked, to be paid on November 29 coinciding with payment of the first special dividend of 10 cents a share arising from the sale of NBN Television to SP Telemedia.

Full year dividend of 20 cents is up 17.6 per cent compared with the previous year and over the past five years, dividend has almost doubled from 10.5 cents.

ISSUED FOR : WASHINGTON H SOUL PATTINSON & CO LIMITED (ASX CODE: SOL)

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A copy of this news release can be downloaded from www.westbrookfin.com.au

About Washington H Soul Pattinson & Company Limited

www.whsp.com.au

Washington H Soul Pattinson is Australia's fourth oldest listed company. Beginning as a chemist shop in Pitt Street in 1872, the company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange 30 years later. Over the 102 years since listing, WHSP is the only Australian company to pay a dividend every year, including throughout the depression of the 1930s.

Today, WHSP is a diversified investor in basic commodities such as bricks, coal, equities, media, telecommunications, food, financial services and pharmaceuticals.