



Ashtead Technology attracts new strategic owners

Buckthorn Partners and the Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (APICORP) have acquired Ashtead Technology, a leading independent provider of subsea equipment and services to the offshore oil and gas industry.

The undisclosed funding package from Buckthorn and APICORP a financial institution established by the ten member countries of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, will allow Ashtead to further expand its service offering through both organic and acquisition lead growth. The investment will also enable Ashtead to expand its geographical reach, with the Middle East being a particular area of interest and focus for the company.

Since its launch in 1985, Ashtead has grown to become a leading independent provider of subsea technology and services to the oil and gas industry with a strong customer base built on trust and quality. With offices in the UK, Houston and Singapore, Ashtead is focused on delivering cost savings and value-added services to its customers.

Allan Pirie will continue to lead Ashtead's management team as Chief Executive Officer. Nicholas Gee from Buckthorn joins as Chairman and Bennie Burger from APICORP also joins the board.

Mr Pirie said: "This deal signals confidence both in our business and in the long-term direction of the market sector in which we operate. It's a great outcome for Ashtead's customers, suppliers and staff around the world.

"As the market evolves to cope with the long-term effects of the current oil price, service companies like Ashtead must assist in reducing project cost and risk, helping our customers to focus on their core competences. This initial investment coupled with access to further capital will enable us to significantly expand our expertise in subsea inspection, repair and maintenance (IRM) to fulfil our ambition of becoming an integrated services provider."

Mr Gee commented: "With its long subsea heritage, strong management team and robust market position Ashtead is well placed to make the most of the current market conditions. Its reputation, expertise and quality of operations and management systems are cornerstones on which we will build. Our objective is to develop an innovative business that will bring new services to reduce cost and risk, and add value to customers throughout the value chain. The market fundamentals for subsea services remain strong and Ashtead Technology is in great shape to play a crucial and defining role in this sector."

Prior to joining Buckthorn, Nicholas Gee was an officer and Executive Vice President of Weatherford International. He started his career with BP in the North Sea as a petroleum engineer.

Dr Raed Al Rayes, Deputy CEO and General Manager of APICORP, commented: “We are very pleased to have completed the acquisition of a stake in Ashtead. It perfectly matches our stringent acquisition criteria, and is in line with our strategy of rebalancing our portfolio by making value adding equity investments in the energy sector. Ashtead’s market position, cutting edge technology, experienced management and track record of achieving cost savings for their clients in the oil industry leave it well placed to take advantage of the prevailing economic conditions. We are looking forward to working with Ashtead’s executive team and applying our own regional industry knowledge to achieving further growth.”

The investors behind Buckthorn include the BMO Global Asset Management (EMEA) and Souter Investments Limited, the family investment office of Sir Brian Souter.

Following this transaction, Phoenix Equity Partners remain as investors with a minority stake in the business.

ENDS

Issued on behalf of Ashtead Technology by The BIG Partnership. For more information contact Rebecca Cox on 01224 211045.

About Ashtead Technology

Ashtead Technology employs 75 people in Aberdeen, London, Houston and Singapore with agents in Abu Dhabi, Perth and Stavanger.

For more information about Ashtead visit www.ashtead-technology.com.

About Buckthorn Partners

Based in London, Buckthorn makes private equity investments in the oil field services and water sectors. Buckthorn works in partnership with experienced management teams, providing primary capital and strategic direction to help build successful companies in the energy sector both organically and through acquisition.

For more information about Buckthorn visit www.buckthornpartners.com.

About APICORP

The Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (APICORP) is a multilateral development bank established to foster the development of the Arab world’s oil and gas industries. The organization was created under the terms of an agreement signed by the 10 Member States of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in September 1974. APICORP’s vision is to transform the Arab energy industry into a powerful force for the region’s economic progress. Driven by this vision, APICORP seeks to make equity investments and provide project loans, trade finance, advisory and research to the energy industry.

APICORP is one of the five organizations established by OAPEC to promote cooperation and economic integration in the Arab hydrocarbon and petrochemical industry. Since its founding, APICORP has made significant contributions to the evolution of the region’s energy industry. It has made equity investments in 22 oil and gas joint venture projects worth over \$13 billion and participated in direct and syndicated energy finance transactions worth over US\$126 billion. APICORP’s aggregate commitments in these transactions, including both in equity and debt, are valued in excess of US\$11 billion. Apart from this, it has provided advisory and treasury services

related to financing and project development; and published highly regarded macro-economic research. These areas continue to define APICORP in today's marketplace.

APICORP is independent in its functioning and carries out its operations on a commercial basis. The Corporation's headquarters are located in Dammam, in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. APICORP also operates a Banking Branch in Manama, Bahrain.

For more information about APICORP visit www.apicorp-arabia.com.

About Souter Investments

Souter Investments is the family investment office of Sir Brian Souter, co-founder and Chairman of Stagecoach Group plc. It makes investments across a broad range of asset classes, with a primary focus on private equity.

Souter Investments has over 30 direct investments in its portfolio, across a range of sectors, recent deals include Clive Christian, Ardent Hire, Baywater Healthcare, Avalon, Oteac and First Scottish.

For more information about Souter Investments and our portfolio, please visit www.souterinvestments.com.