



MSA Announces 'Project Outlook'

Dec 12, 2005

A Strategic Initiative to Position North American Operations for Future Growth

- More Effective Use of Talent & Resources
- Restructuring Includes Attrition Retirement
- Results in Annual Savings of \$4 Million
- Expected to Result in \$5 Million Charge to Earnings in '06

PITTSBURGH, Dec. 12 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- MSA (NYSE: MSA) has announced to its 2,200 North American associates the details of a strategic restructuring called "Project Outlook." The results of this initiative, which focuses on MSA's North American business segment, will ensure MSA's management teams, employees, product development processes and operational functions are fully aligned with the company's strategic goals and the needs of its customers.

The plan includes the consolidation of business and support functions among the company's two North American operating units -- the Safety Products Division and Instrument Division. This will result in a higher degree of collaboration, focus and efficiency throughout MSA North America. A significant portion of the cost reduction effort will be realized through an enhanced retirement program that will take place over the next two months.

Project Outlook will result in an estimated after-tax charge to earnings of approximately \$5 million in the first quarter of 2006. In addition to producing a higher degree of resource effectiveness among key managers and staff, the restructuring will deliver an annual after-tax cost reduction of at least \$4 million.

"Project Outlook represents an important step in our North American business strategy that will consolidate key management functions that were formerly separate within two major businesses units and in our North American Sales Organization," said John T. Ryan III, MSA Chairman and CEO. "This reflects the convergence of activities of our two divisions as there is a greater presence of electronics in personal protective equipment and an increasing requirement for our electronic products to serve in physically demanding conditions. North American President Bill Lambert and his team have created a long-term strategic plan that aligns our resources with our strategic priorities. It frees up a number of our talented people to pursue needed new initiatives within MSA. When fully implemented, this program will result in a more streamlined, cost-effective and customer-focused North American organization," he said.

"Our growth in recent years is enabling us to take these strategic steps that will ensure MSA's continued leadership in the development, manufacture and distribution of sophisticated safety products," said MSA North American President William Lambert. "This effort is based on the changes taking place in our customer markets and, as a result, throughout our organization," he added. "To help drive these programs, many of our key people who managed

areas for one division will now have new and broader responsibilities in restructured areas," he said.

Repeating his commentary from the recent third quarter earnings announcement, Mr. Ryan stated that the Company's most significant current challenges will be to deal with uneven patterns in mid year 2005, in the release of U.S. government funding to local fire departments, with a current shift to multiple suppliers in its defense business and with the general volatility in defense procurement. In addition, he noted that the outlook is good for the other 75 percent of MSA's business, including MSA Safety Works, MSA International and MSA Europe which continue to meet their respective goals. "If we are successful in these areas and in increasing productivity," he said, "I am optimistic we can show good progress in sales in the fourth quarter, complete the year with record results in sales and operating earnings, and handle the challenges of 2006 and beyond." Mr. Ryan concluded.

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements:

Except for historical information, certain matters discussed in this press release may be forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Forward-looking statements, including without limitation all projections and anticipated levels of future performance, involve risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause our actual results to differ materially from those discussed herein. Actual results can be affected by any number of factors, many of which are outside of management's control. Among the factors that could cause such differences are timing and market acceptance of new products, the company's ability to fulfill order backlogs, the timing and ability to obtain military contracts, delays in obtaining raw materials, the economic environment and interest and currency exchange rates. These risks, uncertainties and other factors are detailed from time to time in our filings with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"). You are strongly urged to review all such filings for a more detailed discussion of such risks and uncertainties. Our SEC filings are readily obtainable at no charge at <http://www.sec.gov>, as well as on a number of other commercial Web sites.

Established in 1914, MSA is a global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of sophisticated safety products that protect people's health and safety. Sophisticated safety products typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations. The company's comprehensive line of products is used by workers around the world in the fire service, homeland security, construction and other industries, as well as the military. Principal products include self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, gas detection instruments, head protection, respirators and thermal imaging cameras. The company also provides a broad range of consumer and contractor safety products through retail channels. These products are marketed and sold under the MSA Safety Works brand. MSA has annual sales of more than \$850 million, manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Europe, and more than 30 international locations. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at www.msanet.com.

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