

Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

In this global health crisis, the CFE Group's absolute priority is to protect the health of its employees and that of its customers and subcontractors. In this context, CFE has issued measures that are necessary, such as the temporary shutdown on numerous construction sites, travel restrictions, generalization of telework, strict compliance with the rules on social distancing, and teleconferencing.

The activities of DEME are impacted by the seclusion measures, border closures and the disruption of certain supply chains. Those measures will have a considerable impact on revenue and order intake, without the financial impact on the results being quantifiable as yet. The sale of the 12.5% stake in Merkur Offshore is still planned for the second quarter of 2020.

In Contracting, the execution of the construction sites in Belgium and Luxembourg has been suspended since 18 March, whereas in Poland activity continues at a lower level. Projects in the Multitechnics and Rail & Utilities clusters are also on hold, save for a few exceptions. CFE Contracting expects an extremely low level of activity in the second quarter of 2020. After the seclusion period, the duration of which is not yet known, projects will probably be started up again gradually.

BPI is also feeling the impact of the pandemic, with delays in the delivery of buildings, a temporary slowdown in the rate of sales, and the inability to execute non-urgent notarial deeds.

The CFE Group has substantial cash reserves, with available cash and unused confirmed credit lines totalling nearly € 0.9 billion as at December 31, 2019.

In these exceptional circumstances, it is important for the group to preserve as much of its financial resources as possible to confront this crisis. The Board of Directors of CFE has therefore decided to propose to the annual general meeting not to pay out a dividend for the financial year 2019. To the extent that the evolution of the pandemic so permits, the Board of Directors plans to convene an extraordinary general meeting in the autumn to deliberate on the payment of an interim dividend.

At this stage, even if the group makes every effort to limit the damaging impact of the pandemic, CFE anticipates a decrease of its revenue, cash flow and results in 2020, without however being able to quantify the financial impact on the Group's accounts. CFE will communicate this impact as soon as it can be calculated.

The CFE Group remains solid and has all the resources and strengths to recover from this health crisis.

About CFE

CFE, founded in 1880 is a Belgian industrial group active in three different divisions. The first, Dredging, Environment, Offshore and Infra, is carried out by its wholly owned subsidiary DEME, one of the world leaders in the field. DEME has a modern fleet of multipurpose vessels equipped with the latest technologies. The second, Contracting, encompasses the group's construction, multitechnics and rail activities in Belgium, Luxembourg and Poland. The third, Real Estate Development, covers the real estate projects developed by BPI in Belgium, Luxembourg and Poland.

The CFE group currently employs more than 8,000 people and is active on every continent. CFE is listed on Euronext Brussels and is 60,91% owned by Ackermans & van Haaren.

This press release is available on our website at www.cfe.be.

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Note to editors

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