

Joint venture in growth sector with massive future potential

Wattwil and Baar, June 20, 2001. Gurit-Heberlein AG, Wattwil, and Sika Finanz AG, Baar, have decided on a strategic expansion of the cooperation that already exists between individual subsidiaries in the advanced composites sector with a view to opening up new fields of application.

Advanced composites are carbon, aramide or glass cloth materials strengthened with synthetic (e.g. epoxy) resins. These materials have outstanding properties such as high rigidity, light weight, corrosion resistance and excellent mouldability, and have already established themselves as the materials of the future in many high-growth areas.

Gurit-Heberlein has already established a significant market position for itself with advanced composites in the ski and snowboard sectors, in the manufacture of materials for large wind generator vanes, and as a supplier to the aircraft industry. Sika has a worldwide reputation as a pioneer in the use of advanced composites for the reinforcement of load-bearing structures, such as bridges.

Sika and Gurit-Heberlein have agreed on a strategic expansion of the cooperation that already exists between individual subsidiaries, particularly in the development, manufacture and distribution fields. Gurit-Heberlein already supplies Sika with carbon fibre plates to reinforce load-bearing structures such as bridges as well as the calendered sheeting used in tunnel linings.

Both companies are confident that the tie-up will expedite the opening of new and important growth markets. Not least, the unique qualities offered by advanced composites will open up enormous opportunities in the construction and transport sectors. The agreement effectively combines the complementary strengths of the two Swiss groups: Gurit-Heberlein's prime contribution is its comprehensive expertise in advanced composites technology, while Sika will use its solid international presence to concentrate on the worldwide marketing of composites in the construction and transport markets.

Contact addresses for further information:

Dr. Rudolf Wehrli, Chief Executive Officer Gurit-Heberlein AG
Tel. +41 (0)71 987 10 10

Fax +41 (0)71 987 10 05

Dr. Walter Gruebler, Chief Executive Officer Sika Finanz AG

Tel. +41 (0)41 768 68 00

Fax +41 (0)41 768 68 50

Gurit-Heberlein AG
9630 Wattwil
Tel. 071 987 10 10
Fax 071 987 10 05
www.gurit.com
info@gurit.com