

## News Release

1 March 2002

### BOC and Linde to combine plant engineering operations and technology

(Windlesham, UK, 1 March 2002) BOC has reached agreement with Linde AG to combine its process plant business based in Murray Hill, New Jersey, US with Linde's process plant operation based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, US.

The new entity, Linde BOC Process Plants LLC, will be based in Tulsa and is scheduled to start its activities by the summer of 2002. BOC will have a 30 per cent holding in the new entity.

BOC and Linde will also combine their process plants research and development capabilities, related to the production of industrial gases, which are currently based in Murray Hill and Munich, Germany respectively.

BOC Process Plants is part of BOC Process Gas Solutions, the arm of BOC that provides tailored solutions to the process needs of some of the world's largest corporations, primarily in industries such as oil refining, chemicals and steel. Dick Grant, chief executive of BOC Process Gas Solutions, said: 'We continue to look at extending the range and quality of the solutions we can offer our customers anywhere in the world and at managing our cost base. This agreement with Linde achieves both objectives.' BOC expects cost savings to be worth around £15 million a year and most of these will be attained in calendar 2003.

Aldo Belloni, member of the Executive Board of Linde AG, commented: 'Linde Engineering has valued the business with BOC Process Plants for many years, as substantiated by numerous successful projects, including the world's largest air separation facility in Mexico. This combination will cement our relationship with BOC in the field of gas processing technologies and provide a wider basis for their commercial application.'

The new Linde BOC Process Plants operation will employ some 500 people, including 250 in fabrication shops at Port of Catoosa, Oklahoma and Holly Springs, Georgia. It will cover all engineering aspects from initial engineering studies, through construction, to commissioning of a full range of plants: air separation, hydrogen and carbon monoxide generation and purification, helium liquefaction and recovery and other refinery and chemical facilities. It will have access to technology from The BOC Group, Linde AG and third parties.

BOC and Linde will each continue separately to market and sell process solutions to end-customers.

The BOC Group (LSE: BOC) is one of the world's largest suppliers of industrial gases, a leading supplier of materials, systems and services in the semiconductor industry and a specialist logistics company. BOC serves two million customers in more than 50 countries. It employs nearly 43,000 people and had annual sales of more than £4 billion in 2001. Further information about The BOC Group may be obtained on the Internet at <http://www.boc.com>.

Contact: Christopher Marsay, Group Manager - Investor  
Relations, The BOC Group

Tel. 01276 477222 (International +44 1276 477222)