

Media Release  
12 June 2003

### **BOC focuses on growth and customer service levels**

Mr John Walsh, Chief Executive- Industrial & Special Products and a member of the main Board of The BOC Group plc, one of the world leaders in the gases industry with a turnover of US \$6 billion and an operating profit of US \$ 800 million is on a three day visit to BOC India to review the growth strategy of the Group's Indian arm and reaffirm the Group's support to the ISP business and other initiatives being taken by BOC India.

This visit, which barely six months ago was preceded by the visit of the Group CEO, Mr Tony Isaac is clearly a pointer to the fact that BOC India is back in spotlight. Mr John Walsh described the reason for this as two fold - one is the significant growth opportunity in India and the other, the commitment of the new management team of BOC India to deliver an encouraging and improved performance, evident from the financial results for the year 2002-03, for which BOC India has reported a profit before tax of Rs.200 million against Rs.11 million in the previous year.

BOC sees a significant growth opportunity in India. This is a result of its strong infrastructure and capabilities, established channels to market, strong customer relationship and high growth in the economy. Besides, as a cost effective economy, India is also likely to benefit from getting a significant investment in the manufacturing activity.

Mr Walsh clearly spelt out the strategy and stated that BOC India was committed to delivering safe, reliable and high quality products to its customers on time - consistently. Three years ago, BOC put a major effort on globally aligning the organisation to the Lines of Business (LoB) organisation to change the focus from the geography to the customer in each LoB. This has also been successfully done in BOC India and has paid off in terms of significant benefits in marketing focus, clear alignment, and adaptation of best operating and commercial practices from within the Group.

Mr Walsh also outlined the focus on safety and said that he was impressed with the awareness and commitment to safety in BOC India, which will also differentiates BOC in our target markets.

Mr Walsh mentioned that BOC India was in advanced stage of commissioning its new 225 tpd plant for Tata Steel at Jamshedpur and more such additional capacities will drive future profitable growth in the years to come.

While talking about the various acquisitions made by the BOC Group in Canada, Poland, Malaysia, Thailand etc., Mr Walsh stated that one thing which is demonstrated clearly is the BOC Group's willingness to invest by making acquisitions.