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Positive outlook for EAF electrode sales

As we move into 2012, having witnessed core markets on a general level deal with such variances in economic stability, UKCG is pleased with a pattern of continued growth that saw the company awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category in 2011. During some difficult times in Europe, UKCG remains progressive through well-managed expansion into larger and faster growing global markets.

Customers have been supplied with graphite products on six continents within the past decade and 2011-2012 is proving particularly strong in the Americas and the Middle East. These economies have been counter-balancing a difficult domestic market for UKCG. With widespread European customer confidence in its products, however, this region remains a key market that we are proud to serve well as a recognised quality brand.

Via a significant increase in global recognition for UK-XI grade EAF electrodes, UKCG has extended its technical service capabilities to ensure that not only are customers supplied with a market leading product but they are also provided a service that is highly regarded by melt shop personnel and electrical engineers. To maintain the growth of EAF electrode sales in North America, a USA technical service company has been established. With a southern USA location, this operation is strategically located to serve the USA and Canada, as well as other strong markets in Central and South America.

UKCG is privileged to have renowned regulation specialists and automation project engineering teams that can make EAF and LMF optimisation a reality for customers. In association with UK Carbon & Graphite Co Ltd, UKCG Technical Services LLC obtains results by means of measuring electrical and chemical variables during furnace operations to identify reason for changes in electrode consumption, in order to achieve improvements without impacting productivity. The team can finetune and programme arc regulation systems to limit any type of electrode breakage.

UKCG goes beyond the service surrounding its own electrode products and is committed to reducing overall customer melting costs with onsite power curve analysis to develop power profiles, working to decrease kWh/ton of steel produced, power on times, electrode consumption, refractory wear, flicker reduction, transformer protection and overall furnace stability. This knowledge of



regulation and process can be encompassed into training provided to melt shop operators and maintenance end users. The USA subsidiary can provide the same optimisation benefits to non-UKCG electrode customers, with competitive pricing for a comprehensive service.

We are now a year into the launch of our Chile-based industrial services company (UKCG-IS), which has been influential not only in maintaining and extending the UKCG customer base in South America but also offers a service that specialises in improving and creating steel grades, foamy slag practices, refining, casting etc. Each of these service companies complements one another to give a total and full service option.

In acknowledgment of customer requests for the same service offered to European customers, a dedicated machining facility is being initiated in the USA, focused on the regeneration of scrap graphite (broken electrodes). This operation will minimise graphite losses and maximise recycling possibilities for customers. With over 25 years of remachining and graphite handling experience, this is sure to prove invaluable to UKCG customers in North America, as it has in Europe and elsewhere.

With reliability, service and products that can be counted on, we are proud to be one of the most recognised, leading suppliers of graphite electrodes in the global market today and look forward to the remainder of 2012.

John McAuliffe, The UK Carbon & Graphite Co Ltd, part of UKCG Group Ltd