



Press Release

Grigny (France), November 14th, 2022
Brisbane (Australia) and Dunedin (New Zealand), November 14th, 2022

ECF GROUP announces the acquisition of the New Zealand Company SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY Ltd, leader in specialised distribution for food service, founded in 1989. This operation is strategic for ECF GROUP, which is completing a cycle of regional consolidation and, on this occasion, has become the largest distribution platform serving players in the Hospitality & Care industries in Asia-Pacific. The combined strength of REWARD HOSPITALITY and SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY now enables the Franco-Australian group to cover all of its customers' needs for tableware, equipment, kitchen utensils, consumables, takeaway packaging, hygiene and now venue design and stainless steel fabrication.

ECF GROUP announces a fourth M&A transaction in Asia-Pacific with the acquisition of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY Ltd, the second in New Zealand since the beginning of the year after the acquisition of SAFCO Ltd (June 2022). This transaction definitively consolidates the presence of ECF GROUP in the region with the recent acquisitions of CHEMWORKS Pty (September 2022) and HISCO Pty (October 2022), in Australia. The acquisition of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY also boosts the capacity of ECF GROUP to grow in new businesses like professional kitchen design with a specialty in stainless steel fabrication and extraction hood manufacturing. The presence in Asia-Pacific of the Franco-Australian group now includes a sales force of 200 salespeople, 4 call centers, 4 e-commerce sites, 16 stores/ showrooms and 16 logistical distribution warehouses.

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY is a benchmark operator in New Zealand for the catering & food service sectors, specialising in the distribution of food service solutions, with strong expertise in the design & conception of professional kitchens, an extensive range of exclusive import products, as well as the unique ability to export to the Pacific Islands. Integration with ECF GROUP will allow SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY to access a wider product offering and access the group's global expertise in product sourcing, logistics, customer solutions and capabilities in digital and CRM.

The importance of maintaining local management is essential to the ECF GROUP's success and is something ECF Asia Pacific has an ongoing commitment to. **Deb MACKAY** who currently leads SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, will remain in office to lead the next stage of development of the brand which will be retained for a period of time on account of its reputation within the market.

ECF Group would particularly like to pay tribute and thank **Roger FEWTRELL**, co-founder of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, who has devoted more than 30 years to developing and adapting SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY to food service trends and customer expectations. Roger FEWTRELL will retire at the end of the operation to devote himself to charitable projects in New Zealand and South-West Asia.

This new acquisition is part of the profound evolution of ECF GROUP initiated since 2017 with the support of **NAXICAP PARTNERS**. The Group's M&A activity has made it possible to carry out nearly 30 external growth operations over the last 5 years and to open 4 new countries (Germany, Italy, Great Britain, New Zealand), with no impact on the pursuit of organic growth on the Group's historical bases (France, Middle East and Australia).

Subject to certain final conditions, completion of the sale is expected to be effective in February 2023.

ECF Group

Europe – Middle-East & Africa – Asia-Pacific.

Chomette - Ecotel - Coldis - La Corpo - Cobal - Lantin - Noveo - Santor - Groupe Lepage - CHS - Andy Mannhart - GoodFellows - Restofair - Reward Hospitality - Tas Hotel - Safco - Chemworks - Gastrototal - Hisco - Southern Hospitality



Christophe ALAUX, Chairman and CEO of ECF GROUP, explains:

"This new operation shows the attractiveness of ECF GROUP in the B2B distribution for food service players. The acquisition of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY is a strategic move for ECF GROUP in the region, which completes other M&A operations in a very short time to consolidate a new business: Large Kitchens & Large Equipment for professional kitchens, which now represents nearly 15% of our global turnover".

Deb MACKAY, Managing Director of SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, adds:

"We are very pleased that we have achieved the sale of the business and are excited about the future. This is a new chapter in the company's history, and we expect to work together with our new owners to continue to grow the business and strive to be a world class company".

David BULL, Managing Director of ECF GROUP ASIA PACIFIC, concludes:

"In addition to our recent acquisitions, having the Southern Hospitality team as part of our group solidifies our position as the leading hospitality and care supplier in Asia Pacific. We are confident this acquisition will deliver benefits to customers, staff and suppliers and we look forward to growing and developing together."

M&A Advisors

Buyer

ECF Group : Christophe Alaux (Chairman & CEO), Bertrand Ferraton (CFO), Augustin Dupont (M&A VP)

Reward Hospitality : David Bull (CEO & ECF Asia Pacific MD), Julien Robillard (Business Transformation VP)

Seller

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY LTD : Roger Fewtrell (Co-founder), Deb Mackay (Managing Director), Andy Rayneau (Director)

Buyer's advisors

Legal – Buddle Finlay : Grant Dunn, Benjamin Sutton, Jessica Seo

Finance – EY : Andrew Taylor, Rajnesh Tarsoloo, Kaylene Mattheys

Fiscal – KPMG : Nisha McGowan, Jordan Fincham, Sophia Primrose

Seller's advisors

M&A – Cameron Partners : Toby King, Daniel Good, Chris Gibson, Jonathan Stuart

Finance – BDO : Daniel Martin

Legal – Anderson Lloyd : Anne McLeod, Cushla Harnett



ECF Group at a glance ⁽¹⁾

Alongside Hospitality & Care professionals for 140 years

- **ECF Group is an international specialized distribution group**, a reference partner for the Hospitality & Care professions since the creation of Maison Chomette in Paris in 1880. For 140 years, the group has been developing commercial brands and own brands for professionals in the hotel, catering, tourism, catering trades, communities or the health and social sector.
- **ECF Group is a “collective” in permanent development**, led by entrepreneurs-managers at the service of all professionals in the sector.

690 M€
Revenue

Our service offers

- **The widest range of products on the market** : ECF group is able to meet all equipment or supply needs, whether in tableware, kitchen utensils and equipment, large equipment, furniture, textiles, hygiene products, consumables or take-away sales...
- **Omnichannel solutions** : the ECF Group teams together form a "collective" committed to nurturing the experience of its customers, who can reach us at all points of contact: mobile sales representatives, stores, e-commerce sites, data center calls and emails...
- **A responsive supply chain** : made up of 20 logistics sites around the world, the strength of ECF Group and the responsiveness of its supply chain are able to respond to all requests in real time, 7 days a week, to act and serve our customers with real proximity.

230 000
Customers

Our Values

- **Performance** : this means guaranteeing an irreproachable quality of service and profitable growth for the group, its subsidiaries and all its customers.
- **Professionalism** : it is to remain the reference and trusted partner of customers who alone brings together the best specialists in each field and shares a commitment at all times.
- **Proximity** : it means encouraging listening, while guaranteeing unrivaled customer support, combining breadth and depth of the product offer, high level of service and omnichannel.

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Countries

Our network

- **3 regional Hubs** : thanks to its international network structured in three major regions Europe (Grigny – France), Middle East (Dubai – United Arab Emirates) and Asia-Pacific (Brisbane – Australia), ECF Group is able to provide rapid and tailor-made solution for all its customers, in particular large accounts throughout the world.
- **The strength of local brands** : a platform for consolidating the sector, ECF Group does not believe in a centralized vision of the business based on a single commercial brand, unique and worldwide, for its operations; on the contrary, ECF Group develops or integrates local brands with a strong reputation, with a strong spirit of decentralization, by giving them the financial, human and supply chain resources essential to their success.

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Brands

Our CSR engagements

- **Reduce** our ecological footprint and promote environmental protection.
- **Propose** eco-responsible offers.
- **Develop** respectful, inclusive and equitable relationships.

1 700
Employees

⁽¹⁾ Budget like for like + Pro forma M&A (April 2022 - March 2023)