PRESS RELEASE

COFIDE GROUP, SHAREHOLDERS APPROVE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2005: NET INCOME 39.8 MILLION EUROS

Consolidated earnings for financial year 2005
(with the new IAS/IFRS accounting standards)

REVENUES € 3,382.7 million (+10.5%)
EBITDA € 366.5 million (-6.8%)
EBIT € 271.5 million (-9.7%)
NET INCOME € 39.8 million (€ 74.5 million in 2004
which included extraordinary items for € 42.1 million)

Consolidated net financial debt € 487 million (€ 92.7 million at January 2005)
due to investments made by Energia and Editoriale L'Espresso
Total shareholders' equity € 1,906.6 million (€ 1,734.2 million at January 1 2005)

Distribution of dividend of € 0.015 per share approved (+15% on 2004)
Authorization given to Board of Directors for share buy-back

Today in Turin, under the chairmanship of Mr Carlo De Benedetti, the Ordinary General Meeting was held of the Shareholders of COFIDE - Compagnia Finanziaria De Benedetti SpA, which approved the statutory financial statements and examined the consolidated accounts of the Group for the year ended December 31 2005.

In 2005 COFIDE reported **consolidated net income** of 39.8 million euros, which, net of the extraordinary non-recurring items of the subsidiary CIR for 42.1 million euros, compares with 32.4 million euros in 2004, when consolidated net income was 74.5 million (for the part attributable to COFIDE) following a share capital increase in Energia by Verbund and financial income from the H3G transaction.

The **consolidated revenues** of COFIDE in 2005 totalled 3,382.7 million euros, up 10.5% compared to 2004 (3,062.4 million).

The **consolidated gross operating margin (EBITDA)** in 2005 was 366.5 million euros (10.8% of revenues) compared with 393.4 million (12.8% of revenues) in 2004, showing a decline of 6.8%.

The **consolidated operating margin (EBIT)** was 271.5 million euros, compared with 300.7 million in 2004 (-9.7%).

Consolidated net capital invested at December 31 2005 stood at 2,393.6 million euros, up from 1,826.9 million at January 1 2005, with a rise of 566.7 million following the significant investments made by Energia and l'Editoriale L'Espresso in particular.

The **consolidated net financial position** at December 31 2005 showed net debt of 487 million euros (92.7 million at January 1 2005), which was the balance of debt of 26.6 million euros (17.2 million at January 1 2005) for COFIDE and the wholly owned financial company COFIDE International, a financial surplus for CIR and CIR International of 359.8 million (448.6 million at January 1 2005) and total debt of the operating groups of 820.2 million euros (524.1 million at January 1 2005).

The **consolidated shareholders' equity of the Group** rose from 552.7 million euros at January 1 2005 to 617.2 million at December 31 2005 (+64.5 million). **Minority interests** rose from 1,181.5 million euros at January 1 2005 to 1,289.4 million at December 31 2005 (+107.9 million). **Total equity** at December 31 2005 stood at 1,906.6 million euros, up from 1,734.2 million at January 1 2005, with an increase of 172.4 million after the distribution of 9.3 million in dividends by COFIDE and a total of 56.7 million by the subsidiaries to their minority shareholders.

At December 31 2005 the COFIDE group had 10,053 **employees** on its payrolls.

The Shareholders approved the statutory financial statements of the **Parent Company Cofide SpA,** which closed 2005 with **net income** of 15.4 million euros (17.4 million in 2004) and **shareholders' equity** of 569.3 million at December 31 2005 (555.7 million at January 1 2005). The change in equity was due to the distribution of dividends for 9.3 million euros, the net income for the year of 15.4 million, and to the increase in the reserve for IAS adjustments for a net amount of 7.5 million.

Dividend – The Shareholders voted to distribute a dividend of 0.015 euros per share (+15% from 0.013 euros in 2004), which will be payable as from May 11 2006. The total dividend payout for 2005 is approximately 10.8 million euros.

Authorization to buy back shares – The Shareholders' Meeting adopted a resolution authorizing the Board of Directors, for a period of 18 months, to buy back a maximum of 30 million own shares with a maximum disbursement of 50 million euros, at a unit price that must not be more than 10% higher or lower than the reference price recorded by the share in the regulated market on the trading day prior to the date of each individual transaction.
The main reasons why this authorization has been requested are the following: on the one hand, the possibility of investing in shares in the Company at prices considered lower than their actual intrinsic value, based on the value of its equity and its income prospects, thus giving the Company a higher capitalization; and on the other hand the possibility of reducing the Company's average cost of capital.

Turin, April 27 2006

CONTACTS

COFIDE SpA
EXTERNAL RELATIONS
AND PRESS OFFICE
Beppe Pescetto
Francesca Sagramoso
Tel.: +39 02 722701
www.cofide.it