

25th February 1999

FIRST PACIFIC SELLS GUARDFORCE UNIT FOR US\$120 MILLION

First Pacific announced today that it has sold FPD Guardforce Holdings Limited, its wholly owned regional security services business, for US\$120 million to Williams plc, a UK-based security services and fire-protection company.

The sale is a further step in First Pacific's restructuring process, which is refocusing the Group's investments on a select group of brand-oriented blue chip Asian companies that dominate their local markets, or possess the potential to do so. In addition to these major companies - which currently include Indofood, in Indonesia, Berli Jucker, in Thailand, and PLDT/Smart and Fort Bonifacio in the Philippines - the Group shall continue to own second-tier companies which it will grow to substantial size or ultimately divest.

First Pacific Executive Director Thomas Yasuda said, "Today's sale is another important step in our continued effort to build a new First Pacific that is better focused and better positioned to benefit from opportunities arising in the new operating environment that is emerging in the region. Guardforce is an excellent business and we are pleased to see it coming under the Williams umbrella."

The Guardforce sale, which crystallizes an annualized cash return of 19 per cent over six years, follows a number of other disposals by the Group over the past year, including:

- Smart Communications, a Philippines cellular provider. First Pacific sold a 22 per cent interest in the business in February 1999 for US\$214 million, crystallizing an annualized cash return of 58 per cent over six years.
- Tuntex Telecommunications, a Taiwan cellular provider. Sold in January 1999 for US\$73 million, crystallizing an annualized cash return of 40 per cent over two years.
- United Commercial Bank, a small California bank catering to the Chinese-America community. Sold in April 1998 for US\$18 million, crystallizing an annualized cash return of 19 per cent over 13 years.
- Hagemeyer, a Dutch-based international trading group. Sold in March 1998 for US\$1.7 billion, crystallizing an annualized cash return of 24 per cent over 15 years.

- Pacific Link, a Hong Kong cellular provider. Sold for US\$341 million in December 1997, crystallizing an annualized cash return of 23 per cent over 10 years.

First Pacific was advised on the transaction by ING Barings.