

March 28, 2001

Antargaz

Paribas Affaires Industrielles (PAI), with its partners UGI and Medit, has acquired the entire capital of Elf Antargaz, previously a subsidiary of the TotalFinaElf group. The company has adopted the name ANTARGAZ.

ANTARGAZ is the second largest propane and butane (LPG) operator on the French market, and is currently the leading independent with a market share of 24%. The company realizes annual sales of around 700,000 tonnes in France.

This operation was approved by the European Commission, as part of the Totalfina and Elf Aquitaine merger. Prior to this transaction, the TotalFinaElf group had assumed the international activities of Elf Antargaz, and Elf Antargaz looked to TotalFinaElf for the logistics assets associated with its activity.

PAI (Paribas Affaires Industrielles) is a leading European private equity operator. In recent years it has realized some of the biggest LBO (Leveraged Buy Out) transactions in Europe. PAI will be involved in ANTARGAZ through its new investment fund PAI Europe III.

PAI owns approximately 70% of the capital of ANTARGAZ, alongside a 20% stake for the American group UGI, the leading distributor of LPG in the USA (via its subsidiary Amerigas), and a 10% stake for the Italian group Medit, a specialist in LPG transport and provision. The management of ANTARGAZ is also involved in the operation.

PAI, UGI and Medit intend ANTARGAZ to be a profitable autonomous operator with independent reserves. It will conduct a dynamic sales and marketing policy, based on the widely known ANTARGAZ brand.

PAI is investing in ANTARGAZ with a medium/long-term perspective, and with the intention of creating high value by establishing an operator that is independent in reserves, dynamic in sales, efficient in management and ambitious in development.

Complementing PAI's cumulative experience in the takeover and long-term development of companies, ANTARGAZ will benefit from the expertise of its two industrial partners, UGI and Medit.

Monsieur François Varagne, previously Chairman of VIA GTI, has been appointed Chairman of ANTARGAZ.