



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **APRIL Combats and Reduces Haze Through Active Fire Prevention and Response**

*(19 August 2005, Singapore):* With the haze back in Indonesia, APRIL (Asia Pacific Resources International Holdings Limited), one of the world's leading producers of fiber, pulp and paper, has taken the lead among companies in combating fires by adding air-born firefighting capability to its existing ground and water-based competence.

A McDonnell-Douglas 500Er helicopter with a 476-liter water bucket have been contracted by APRIL to enable the company to respond rapidly to fires. APRIL also has an airboat which significantly improves movement in the lowlands and is effective in the rapid response to fires. This is in addition to the traditional fire truck and ground fire fighting teams.

Reiterating its commitment to fire and haze prevention in its fiber plantations, APRIL's fire-fighting team continues to actively conduct ground and air patrol to monitor and quickly respond to any potential fire situation in its areas of operations.

"We are concerned with the environmental and health impact of the haze problem across the region and our company is committed to help in its prevention. The past months have been the traditional dry season when the communities do land-clearing using fire and often, these fires spread across boundaries and to our plantations so we have to actively monitor and respond to ensure immediate control," said Bradford Sanders, APRIL Fire, Health and Safety Manager for fiber operations. "When possible we also help government efforts to extinguish fires outside our areas of operation."

APRIL's has long practiced a "No Burn" policy and as such does not carry out burning for land-clearing. The no-burn approach is incorporated into the company's Social,

Environmental, Health and Safety Policy, as well as being promoted through its membership in the Haze Prevention Group\* where it is a founding member.

As part of the company's ISO 14001-certified Environmental Management System, APRIL has established a fire management system, which enables it to maintain a high-level of preparedness in preventing and responding to fires quickly and efficiently. The company continues to invest in specialized forest firefighting equipment, and in the training of its fire and safety personnel in the prevention and suppression of fires.

“With low rainfall and strong winds, the chances of fires in the plantations due to other causes, such as escaped cooking fires or careless disposal of cigarettes, also need to be minimized. With our training and specialized equipment, we are able to react very quickly to any outbreaks,” Sanders noted.

Moreover, APRIL, together with the local government in Riau, Indonesia, also organizes joint meetings with the village heads of the communities in its areas of operations to help educate them on the environmental and health risks of the use of fire for land-clearing.

Through its Community Development program, APRIL also trains farmers in the Integrated Farming System which encourages farmers to switch from the slash-and-burn approach to a sustainable agricultural model. To date, APRIL has trained more than 2500 farmers in Riau.

\*The Haze Prevention Group was founded in January 2001 as an industrial initiative to prevent and suppress wildland fires, smoke and trans-boundary haze. All members are committed to implementing a “No Burn” policy where fire is not used as a management tool for land-clearing purposes and rapid response to wildland fires is immediately taken.

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## **Company Summary**

APRIL, with offices in Singapore and operations in Indonesia and China, is a leading producer of fibre, pulp and paper. APRIL operates one of the world's largest pulp mills with an annual production capacity of 2,000,000 tonnes in Indonesia. The company is committed to protecting the natural resources in its care through sustainable management of its mills and forestry operations to benefit our stakeholders, both now and in the future.

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