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ESJOT GROUP OPENS NEW FACTORY IN CHINA TO CAPITALISE ON HUGE GROWTH POTENTIAL OF SAFETY FOOTWEAR MARKET

The increasing presence of international manufacturers in China is driving new legislation in Chinese industry demanding stricter safety controls and implementation of new quality standard requirements. As a result of these new measures, the supply of personal protective equipment is growing significantly, as employers are required to provide items such as safety boots to their employees.

Responding to this high growth potential, Esjot Group, part of Texon International – the world renowned leader of high quality shoe components – is opening a new factory in Foshan in October, to meet the increasing requirement for high quality steel toecaps locally, which is set to grow by over 60 per cent in 2006 and over 75 per cent by 2007.

The new factory will open alongside Texon's existing manufacturing facilities in Foshan, which have been established for over 14-years. The organisation employs a local workforce, including local management, and has strong relationships with local government.

The plant will also utilise the knowledge, resources, equipment and expertise of Esjot's European facilities. It is introducing experienced European technicians to provide rigorous training in China and ensure that European standards are maintained to continue the consistency of quality that is a hallmark of Esjot's product portfolio. In addition, European machinery is being shipped to the Chinese factory, enabling the site to produce toecaps from a much larger coil of steel.

Jim Wainwright, divisional managing director of Esjot Group, says: "Our aim is to produce better quality, more cost-effective products that will rival the marketplace. Improved delivery time to local shoe manufacturers will reduce their stock inventory by as much as 30 per cent, making Esjot Group a more attractive and competitive supplier. I am confident that in three years time we will be producing over 50 per cent of the world's steel toecap requirements."