



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2009

**Minimax and Viking Group merge to create a world leader  
in the fire protection industry**

**The merger is backed by Minimax' majority owner IK Investment Partners**

Bad Oldesloe, Germany and Grand Rapids, MI USA – German based Minimax and US based Viking Group announced today that the two leaders in fire protection and life safety systems are combining their activities. The transaction will create a global leader with over \$1.1 billion USD in sales and 6,000 employees. Importantly, the combined company will be able to leverage the strengths of their respective firms to enhance the products and services available to its existing and future customers across the globe.

The combined company will have a fully integrated business model with complementary product and service offerings capable of serving a wide variety of customers in various industries around the globe. Minimax is renowned for its installation, service, and engineering capabilities and the complete range of fire protection systems including gas based and fire detection systems, whereas Viking Group's technology, production capabilities, and distribution network involving fire sprinklers and related products is among the best in the industry. The new group will also benefit from a complementary geographic footprint.

Klaus Hofmann, CEO of Minimax commented: "For about the last two years we screened the market for a manufacturer and distributor of fire suppression products. Viking is in all critical aspects far ahead of its competitors. This combination will create a real global player with strong product, service, and distribution skills based on Minimax' focus on installation and service and sophisticated non-water products and Viking Group's focus on production and distribution of high-quality water sprinklers and sprinkler systems. With the expanded capabilities of both firms, the combined company will be better positioned to take advantage of the opportunities not only in its existing markets, but also across the globe."

Tom Groos, Chairman of Viking Group commented: “There are many complementary aspects of this combination. Minimax is an ideal partner, enabling Viking Group to offer an expanded line of non-water based products to our customers and to effectively service more markets outside of North America. We believe this transaction will be beneficial for our customers, employees, and shareholders.”

Detlef Dinsel, Managing Partner at IK: “We are very happy with the development of Minimax so far having built a much stronger company by extending the service offering and increasing the geographical reach. This combination will enable us to achieve synergies driven by the cross-selling opportunities and further execute on our consolidation strategy in order to increase sales and operating profits.”

The current CEO of Minimax, Mr. Klaus Hofmann, will remain CEO and Tom Groos, presently serving as Chairman of Viking Group, will become Chairman of the Advisory Board of the new company. The transaction is a combined cash and stock deal where existing shareholders will remain shareholders in the new company, with IK remaining as the largest shareholder. The new company will be headquartered in Bad Oldesloe, Germany.

The proposed transaction is subject to customary regulatory approvals and closing conditions and is expected to close by year end. Clifford Chance and Hengeler Mueller acted as IK’s and Minimax’s legal counsel. Citigroup acted as Viking Group’s financial advisor and Jones Day LLP acted as Viking Group’s legal counsel.

# # #

**For further information, please contact:**

Kevin Ortyl  
Viking Group – President and CEO  
(616) 831-6448  
kortyl@vikingcorp.com

**General Inquiries:**

Jeff Norton  
Viking Group – Director of Marketing  
(269) 945-8312  
jnorton@vikingcorp.com

**About Minimax Group**

Founded in 1902 with its headquarters in Bad Oldesloe, Germany, this company is an international leader in the provision of complete fire protection services. The company group generated sales of 788 million euros in the year 2008 and employs a staff of around 5,200 employees worldwide. Minimax was acquired by IK and its management team in 2006. Since then Minimax has executed a plan that involves both organic growth and strategic acquisitions in the global fire protection market. For further information please visit [www.minimax.de](http://www.minimax.de).

**About Viking Group**

Viking Group is a global leader in the manufacture and distribution of innovative fire protection and life safety systems. The company generated sales of more than 450 million US dollars in the year 2008 and employs a staff of around 800 employees worldwide. For nearly 90 years the company's products and services have protected lives and property worldwide from the devastating effects of fire. For more information on Viking's complete line of quality fire protection products and services, please visit [www.vikinggroupinc.com](http://www.vikinggroupinc.com).

**About IK Investment Partners**

IK Investment Partners (formerly known as Industri Kapital) ("IK") is a European private equity firm, having raised a total of EUR 5.7 billion, including EUR 1.7 billion in the latest fund IK2007. Since 1989, IK has acquired 69 European companies. The current portfolio encompasses 19 companies with a total turnover close to EUR 7 billion. IK invests mainly in mid-sized companies with strong cash flow and profit improvement potential, operating in mature industries with fundamental underlying growth. For more information visit our website: [www.ikinvest.com](http://www.ikinvest.com).