



Press Release

London – 13 January 2010

Accor continues its expansion Mercure signs ten new hotels in the UK

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, has announced it has signed a franchise agreement with Focus Hotels, adding ten hotels to its UK network in the first quarter of 2011. This forms part of Accor's aggressive expansion strategy to increase its UK network to 300 hotels by 2015.

Focus Hotels is a collection of quality midscale hotels with a wide variety of styles at a range of excellent locations throughout England. The group has systematically upgraded its product over the past few years, investing heavily in refurbishment and training with a view to identifying suitable franchising partners. The partnership with Mercure hotels will allow the ten hotels to retain their individuality and style whilst enabling them to reach an international market.

The franchise agreement means that 763 rooms will be added to the Mercure network. This expansion represents a major step in the development of the Mercure network in the UK, increasing its existing footprint from 33 to 43 hotels.

The hotels will join the Mercure brand, an established network of over 700 midscale hotels operating in more than 50 countries across the world. Mercure hotels guarantee the quality of a well-known brand, with the charm and personality of individual hotels.

Jean-Jacques Dessors, Chief Operating Officer of Accor UK and Ireland, said, "We are very excited to announce a deal that significantly increases Mercure's presence across the UK. We have ambitious plans for the UK and we are totally committed to extending our Accor network and bringing our expertise in all segments from economy, midscale, upscale and luxury to the UK market."

Peter Cashman, CEO of Focus Hotels said, "Our strategy in taking on these hotels, many of which were in administration, was to bring them up to a high standard and make them profitable, with a view to finding the right 'home' for them. I am a passionate believer in matching the brand to the property and we identified Mercure as the perfect partner for these ten hotels; Mercure will allow them to maintain their individuality and character whilst offering the credibility of one of the most respected international hotel brands."

The new hotels, located nationwide, include

- Mercure Altrincham Bowden Hotel
- Mercure Blackburn Ribble Valley Hotel
- Mercure Chester North Hotel
- Mercure Hatfield Oak Hotel
- Mercure Hull Royal Hotel
- Mercure Stafford South Penkridge Hotel
- Mercure Swindon East Hotel & Spa
- Mercure Telford Hotel
- Mercure Wigan Oak Hotel
- Mercure Wolverhampton Hotel



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Notes to editors

About Mercure:

For more than 35 years, within the Accor Group, Mercure has exemplified expert hospitality and personalised service. Operating in more than 50 countries around the world, Mercure boasts hotels with distinctive personalities carefully preserved through the type of services offered and the decor, both of which vary from one hotel to the next. The hotel managers and staff of the 700 Mercure hotels are hospitality professionals. Attentive and available, they are ready to listen and make sure their guests enjoy a stay full of genuine moments of pleasure and relaxation in a truly warm and comfortable setting. More information on Mercure hotels is available on mercure.com.

Accor UK and Ireland has a portfolio of 145 hotels and more than 18,000 rooms, with **Sofitel, Novotel, Mercure, Ibis, All Seasons** and **Etap Hotel**.

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 90 countries with 4,100 hotels and close to 500,000 rooms.

Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands – **Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, Ibis, All Seasons, Etap Hotel, Formule 1, hotelF1 and Motel 6**, and its related activities, **Thalassa Sea & Spa** and **Lenôtre** - provides an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With **145,000 employees** worldwide, the Group offers to its **clients and partners** nearly 45 years of know-how and expertise.

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About Focus Hotels

Founded in July 2007 by hospitality entrepreneur Peter Cashman and fellow board directors Alun Edwards and Tony Mylchreest, Focus Hotels leases and provides management services to hotels in key city centres and prime business destinations across the UK.

Offering management to both branded and independent hotels, Focus Hotels draws on a formidable 60 years of hotel and hospitality industry experience at senior level and an in-depth understanding of the business environment to deliver consistent profitability in an increasingly competitive market.

CEO Cashman was a founding and main board director of Choice Hotels (CHE Group PLC) for over 20 years and has also held senior management roles with Ladbroke Hotels (now Hilton), Comfort Hotels International, Centre Hotels and Trust House Forte. He is also a director of Kasterlee Ltd, an Irish based hotel group which operates 10 four-star hotels in Ireland and the UK and 3P Investments GMBH which owns and operates hotels in Germany.

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