

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The following statement, which should be read in conjunction with the reports of the auditors set out on pages 68 and 112, is made with a view to distinguishing for shareholders the respective responsibilities of the directors and of the auditors in relation to the annual report and financial statements.

The directors are responsible for preparing the annual report, the directors' remuneration report and the Group and the Parent Company financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have prepared the Group financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union, and the Parent Company financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The Group and Parent Company financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Parent Company and the Group and of the profit or loss of the Group for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state that the Group financial statements comply with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union and with regard to the Parent Company financial statements, that applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the Group and Company financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Group will continue in business, in which case there should be supporting assumptions or qualifications as necessary.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Parent Company and the Group and to enable them to ensure that the Group financial statements and the directors' remuneration report comply with the Companies Act 1985 and, as regards the Group financial statements, Article 4 of the IAS Regulation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Parent Company and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the Company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Each of the directors, whose names and functions are listed on page 51 confirms that, to the best of their knowledge:

- the Group financial statements, which have been prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the EU, give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and loss of the Group; and
- the directors' report contained on pages 52 and 53 includes a fair review of the development and performance of the business and the position of the Group, together with a description of the principal risks and uncertainties that it faces.