



Building on our
strengths

Keller Group plc
Interim Report 2008

Welcome to Keller

The International Ground Engineering Specialist

We are the world's largest independent ground engineering contractor, renowned for providing technically advanced and cost-effective foundation solutions. Our reputation is built on engineering excellence and a commitment to continual innovation.

We have unrivalled coverage in Europe, North America and Australia and a growing presence in the Middle East and Asia.

Our services are used across the construction spectrum in industrial, commercial, infrastructure, housing and environmental projects.

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Chairman's Statement Dr Michael West

I am pleased to report another excellent set of results for the six months ended 30 June 2008, which once again demonstrates both the successful implementation of our strategy and our robust business model.

In particular, our investment in recent years into the fastest-growing parts of the Group, namely the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Australia, has brought significant benefits as these regions continue their rapid progress. The trend of increased geographic diversification has continued, with over 60% of Group profit now derived from markets outside the US, compared to less than 30% three years ago. As a result, the Group is now more broadly based than ever and therefore less exposed to individual market cycles.

Group revenue from continuing operations was up 28% at £568.7m (2007: £443.9m) and the first-half operating profit on the same basis was up 18% at £56.1m (2007: £47.4m). On a constant currency basis, revenue increased by 20% and operating profit was up 9%.

Profit before tax from continuing operations increased by 19% to £54.2m (2007: £45.4m) and earnings per share from continuing operations were up 20% at 51.6p (2007: 42.9p).

Cash generated from operations increased to £43.6m, compared to last year's £40.2m, continuing our excellent record of converting profits into cash.

Net debt at 30 June 2008 stood at £74.4m, which compares to £53.8m at the end of June 2007.

The year-on-year increase is stated after expenditure of £28.0m on acquisitions and capital expenditure of £55.3m over the last twelve months. This increased level of capital expenditure has enabled us to make further progress in modernising and expanding our equipment fleet, particularly in those areas of the business offering the best growth potential.

Net debt at 30 June 2008 represented 0.5 times annualised EBITDA and EBITDA interest cover remains very comfortable at over 30 times.

Share buy-back programme

In our preliminary results announcement in March of this year we said that, given the continuing strength of the Group's balance sheet, the Board proposed to buy back up to 5% of the Company's ordinary shares (equivalent to approximately 3 million shares) during

the remainder of 2008. During the first half, 1.1 million shares were purchased, all of which are held in Treasury. In addition, a further 325,000 shares were purchased specifically to satisfy Performance Share Plan awards. The average cost of purchased shares was £6.50.

Dividend

The Board has declared an interim dividend of 6.9p per share (2007: 6.0p), in line with the policy announced in March 2007 of increasing the dividend by 15% per annum for the foreseeable future, subject to maintaining three times' dividend cover. The interim dividend will be paid on 3 November 2008 to shareholders on the register at 10 October 2008.

Operational overview US

Overall, the US non-residential construction market remains resilient, driven by strong demand from the power and industrial sectors and year-on-year growth in public infrastructure spending. As expected, housing starts were significantly down on 2007.

Our US operations as a whole reported another good set of results. Total US revenue was 5% ahead of last year at £245.5m (2007: £232.7m). Operating profit of £22.1m compared with £29.4m in the first half of last year mainly reflecting, as expected, a significant weakening of Suncoast's margins. These results were not impacted by currency movements.

US Foundation Contracting

Hayward Baker, the largest and most diverse of our US businesses in terms of both geography and product range, reported a very solid first half result. The overall performance of the four US piling businesses – Anderson, Case, HJ and McKinney – was also good and in line with our expectations at the start of the year.

As the synergies between our foundation contracting businesses develop, the growing tendency to pool resources and expertise enables them to take on larger, more complex projects, often requiring a range of techniques. For example, Case and Hayward Baker partnered on a contract to install thousands of 18-inch diameter piles and 16,000 square feet of braced sheet piles for a major industrial facility in Illinois. By working together, they were able to meet a very demanding schedule, completing the work on time at the end of March.

Case and McKinney also continued to work together regularly on joint venture projects, such as the installation of foundations for the Fort Martin Power Station in West Virginia, with more such work lined up for the second half of this year.

Good progress was made in integrating HJ, the Florida-based continuous flight auger (CFA) piling specialist, which we acquired in October 2007 to enable the Group to accelerate the introduction of CFA piling in our other US companies. Although, as expected, the HJ business suffered from weakness in the Florida market, co-operation between HJ and Keller's other US companies continues to gather momentum.

A contract in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to install CFA piles for the new Majestic Star Casino was successfully completed in the first half by HJ and Case. Similarly, Hayward Baker teamed up with HJ to provide a complete foundation support package for a four-storey parking garage in Largo, Florida. Hayward Baker installed vibro stone columns across the site for ground improvement and micropiles for higher loads in limited access or low headroom areas, whilst HJ installed CFA piles in the open access areas.

Suncoast

Reduced volume in both its slab-on-grade and high rise products as a result of the recession in US housing, together with steep increases in its raw material costs, put further pressure on Suncoast's margins. Despite this, the business reported a profit for the first half, reflecting management's proactive approach to cost control and pricing.

The global supply and demand for steel remain unpredictable and the fortunes of Suncoast in the second half of the year will be affected by its ability to pass on any further increases in its raw materials. Nonetheless, the business is expected to remain profitable and its strong reputation and leading market position mean that it is better placed than most to ride out these testing conditions.

Continental Europe, Middle East & Asia (CEMEA)

CEMEA had an excellent first half, with particularly significant contributions from the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Revenue of £204.4m (2007: £136.2m) was 50% ahead of the previous year, whilst operating profit of £23.8m (2007: £13.7m) increased by over

70%, putting the division well on track to deliver another year of extremely strong organic growth. On a constant currency basis, revenue was 31% ahead, whilst operating profit was up by more than 50%.

Continental Europe

In Western Europe, our business is well spread across four main markets – Germany, Spain, France and Austria – where public infrastructure projects make up a significant element of our work and only around 10% of the business is exposed to the residential market.

In our German business, the steady improvement which started in 2006 continues. Its first-half result reflects full utilisation of its equipment and people and good progress on a number of large infrastructure projects, such as the Leipzig City Tunnel project, where we are using special grouting techniques to support the city's buildings during tunnelling. Spain fared less well in the first half, with reduced revenue and margins reflecting the much weaker market conditions, which are not expected to improve in the short term. Our French business gave a steady performance in the first half. In Austria, the smallest of these markets, we remained busy, with the second phase of the large slope stabilisation project on the A2 motorway between Vienna and Graz making a good contribution.

An excellent first-half performance from Eastern Europe was once again led by our business in Poland, where revenue was up more than 50% on the same period in 2007. Over the past three years the Polish business has transformed itself from a ground improvement specialist to a full-service foundation business, deriving over 60% of its revenue in the first half of this year from heavy foundations. Likewise, in the smaller Eastern European markets, where to date we have restricted our offering to ground improvement products, our strategic focus is now on building our heavy foundations capacity, with significant recently-committed investment in piling rigs which we will operate across these markets.

Middle East

Our Middle Eastern business continued to build on the excellent progress made in 2007, with UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain all reporting outstanding results for the first six months and the region anticipating a very busy second half. The contract at the new Saudi Kayan

“Across the Gulf, many more substantial development projects are in the pipeline which should underpin future growth in the Middle East”

Dr Michael West, Chairman

petrochemical complex in Saudi Arabia is nearing completion, with over 15,000 piles and almost 300,000 linear metres of ground improvement successfully completed. In the UAE, good progress continued at Palm Deira and we successfully undertook our first piling contract, which we are confident will lead to further piling work in the region. Across the Gulf, many more substantial development projects are in the pipeline which should underpin future growth in the Middle East.

Asia

In our Asian markets we are still seeing a good range of infrastructure and industrial developments for which our ground improvement products are well suited. Against this background, our business in the region reported a solid result. With some sizeable contracts underway, such as ground improvement works for the Ipoh to Pedang Besar railway project in Malaysia and for a biodiesel tank farm in Singapore, the business is well positioned for the remainder of the year.

Australia

A large proportion of the Australian construction market continues to be extremely strong, particularly the public infrastructure and commodities-related sectors. Whilst very recently we have seen some localised tightening in the commercial sector, it is too early to say whether this is the start of a trend.

Australian revenue of £74.0m (2007: £39.6m) was 87% ahead and, with an exceptionally strong operating margin, operating profit was £10.7m, compared to £4.6m in the first half last year. On a constant currency basis, revenue was 64% ahead, whilst operating profit more than doubled.

All parts of the Australian business performed very well in the first half, particularly Piling Contractors, our 2006 acquisition, which managed to beat its excellent 2007 first-half performance. The Gateway Upgrade project in Brisbane, where Piling Contractors is leading a joint venture involving all four of our Australian companies, has progressed extremely well and is now around 90% complete.

Our ground engineering subsidiary, set up in 2004 to introduce new techniques to the Australian market, came of age with its largest ever contract to provide ground improvement works at a coal-handling facility

in Newcastle and a contract for stone columns and dry soil mixing for a road bypass scheme in northern New South Wales.

UK

Overall, the UK market remained quite resilient in the first six months of the year, with the exception of the housing sector, from which historically around 30% of our UK ground engineering revenue has been derived and where we do not foresee improvement in the short term.

Reporting revenue of £44.8m (2007: £35.4m) and operating profit of £2.2m (2007: £1.7m), our UK business had a good first half, despite a shortage of ground improvement projects for the housing sector. This result was helped by an excellent contribution from Phi and a good performance on the contract to install the foundations for the 2012 Olympics Main Stadium. Our design and construct solution for this site, presented as an alternative to the original piled specification, combined three different techniques to deliver significant cost and programme savings.

Makers

Having successfully completed the disposal of the vast majority of the Makers business last year, we continue to resolve the legacy issues, which resulted in a pre-tax loss of £1.5m in the period.

Outlook

Looking across the Group, we expect to see a continuation of the positive momentum in our high growth markets and some moderate tightening in certain of our Western European markets as the year progresses. Whilst currently the US non-residential construction market remains resilient, the medium term prospects for our US markets, particularly the commercial sector, remain unclear.

We go into the second half of 2008 with a strong order book which is around last year's record level. Based on this, and our robust current trading, the Board anticipates that the Group's results for the year as a whole will be broadly in line with last year's excellent performance.

Dr Michael West

Chairman
28 July 2008

Consolidated Income Statement

for the half year ended 30 June 2008

	Note	Half year to 30 June 2008 £m	Half year to 30 June 2007 Restated* £m	Year to 31 December 2007 £m
Continuing operations				
Revenue	3	568.7	443.9	955.1
Operating costs		(512.6)	(396.5)	(847.7)
Operating profit	3	56.1	47.4	107.4
Finance income		1.0	1.4	2.5
Finance costs		(2.9)	(3.4)	(6.7)
Profit before taxation		54.2	45.4	103.2
Taxation	4	(17.9)	(16.1)	(35.9)
Profit for the period from continuing operations		36.3	29.3	67.3
Discontinued operation				
Loss from discontinued operation net of taxation		(1.2)	(3.7)	(10.5)
Profit for the period		35.1	25.6	56.8
Attributable to:				
Equity holders of the parent		32.9	24.5	54.0
Minority interests		2.2	1.1	2.8
		35.1	25.6	56.8
Earnings per share from continuing operations				
Basic earnings per share		51.6p	42.9p	97.6p
Diluted earnings per share		51.3p	42.2p	96.4p
Earnings per share				
Basic earnings per share		49.9p	37.2p	81.8p
Diluted earnings per share		49.6p	36.7p	80.7p

* See note 1 Basis of preparation

Consolidated Statement of Recognised Income and Expense

for the half year ended 30 June 2008

	Half year to 30 June 2008 £m	Half year to 30 June 2007 £m	Year to 31 December 2007 £m
Foreign exchange translation differences	8.6	(0.1)	4.9
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	0.3	1.8	2.0
Tax on items taken directly to equity	(0.1)	(0.5)	(0.6)
Net income recognised directly in equity	8.8	1.2	6.3
Profit for the period	35.1	25.6	56.8
Total recognised income and expense for the period	43.9	26.8	63.1
Attributable to:			
Equity holders of the parent	40.6	25.7	59.8
Minority interests	3.3	1.1	3.3
	43.9	26.8	63.1

Consolidated Balance Sheet

as at 30 June 2008

	Note	As at 30 June 2008 £m	As at 30 June 2007 £m	As at 31 December 2007 £m
Assets				
Non-current assets				
Intangible assets		83.3	63.9	80.8
Property, plant and equipment		181.3	130.8	155.8
Deferred tax assets		8.1	8.3	9.2
Other assets		14.7	12.4	13.7
		287.4	215.4	259.5
Current assets				
Inventories		41.9	27.4	26.9
Trade and other receivables		320.2	260.5	273.6
Cash and cash equivalents	8	21.9	17.9	30.9
		384.0	305.8	331.4
Total assets		671.4	521.2	590.9
Liabilities				
Current liabilities				
Loans and borrowings		(3.3)	(7.1)	(7.6)
Current tax liabilities		(18.0)	(10.6)	(12.4)
Trade and other payables		(289.1)	(222.2)	(244.8)
		(310.4)	(239.9)	(264.8)
Non-current liabilities				
Loans and borrowings		(93.0)	(64.6)	(77.8)
Employee benefits		(14.8)	(18.2)	(14.6)
Deferred tax liabilities		(5.3)	(6.1)	(5.4)
Other liabilities		(12.4)	(13.6)	(16.8)
		(125.5)	(102.5)	(114.6)
Total liabilities		(435.9)	(342.4)	(379.4)
Net assets		235.5	178.8	211.5
Equity				
Share capital		6.6	6.6	6.6
Share premium account		37.6	37.4	37.6
Capital redemption reserve		7.6	7.6	7.6
Translation reserve		7.4	(4.5)	(0.1)
Retained earnings		167.1	124.3	150.6
Equity attributable to equity holders of the parent	7	226.3	171.4	202.3
Minority interests		9.2	7.4	9.2
Total equity		235.5	178.8	211.5

Consolidated Cash Flow Statement

for the half year ended 30 June 2008

Note	Half year to 30 June 2008 €m	Half year to 30 June 2007 €m	Year to 31 December 2007 €m
Cash flows from operating activities			
	56.1	47.4	107.4
	(1.4)	(5.3)	(13.3)
	54.7	42.1	94.1
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	10.9	7.9	17.4
Amortisation of intangible assets	0.2	0.1	1.0
(Profit)/loss on sale of property, plant and equipment	(0.1)	(0.2)	0.4
Other non-cash movements	0.6	0.5	1.0
Foreign exchange (gains)/losses	(1.1)	(0.8)	0.2
Operating cash flows before changes in working capital	65.2	49.6	114.1
Movement in long-term liabilities and employee benefits	(5.6)	(3.1)	1.9
Increase in inventories	(14.1)	(2.2)	(0.9)
Increase in trade and other receivables	(32.3)	(33.8)	(32.8)
Increase in trade and other payables	30.4	29.7	34.9
Cash generated from operations	43.6	40.2	117.2
Interest paid	(2.2)	(2.5)	(5.3)
Income tax paid	(11.9)	(14.0)	(32.0)
Net cash inflow from operating activities	29.5	23.7	79.9
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received	0.3	0.7	1.3
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	0.5	1.0	1.0
Acquisition of subsidiaries, net of cash acquired	(2.5)	(9.0)	(34.5)
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	(30.0)	(22.8)	(48.1)
Acquisition of other non-current assets	(1.4)	(1.7)	(2.8)
Net cash outflow from investing activities	(33.1)	(31.8)	(83.1)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Proceeds from the issue of share capital	–	0.4	0.5
Repurchase of own shares	7 (7.1)	–	–
New borrowings	20.0	8.8	22.2
Repayment of borrowings	(5.3)	–	(0.7)
Payment of finance lease liabilities	(0.8)	(0.9)	(1.9)
Dividends paid	(10.2)	(8.0)	(12.3)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from financing activities	(3.4)	0.3	7.8
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(7.0)	(7.8)	4.6
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	26.1	20.3	20.3
Effect of exchange rate fluctuations	1.9	0.1	1.2
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	8 21.0	12.6	26.1

Notes to the Condensed Financial Statements

Half year ended 30 June 2008

1. Basis of preparation

The condensed financial statements included in this interim financial report have been prepared in accordance with IAS 34 – Interim Financial Reporting, as adopted by the European Union. They do not include all of the information required for full annual financial statements, and should be read in conjunction with the consolidated financial statements of the Group as at and for the year ended 31 December 2007. The same accounting policies and presentation are followed in the financial statements that were applied in the preparation of the Company's published consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2007.

The figures for the year ended 31 December 2007 are not statutory accounts but have been extracted from the Group's statutory accounts for that financial year. The auditor's report on those accounts was not qualified and did not contain statements under section 237(2) or (3) of the Companies Act 1985. A copy of the statutory accounts for that year has been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.

The financial information in this interim financial report for the half years ended 30 June 2008 and 30 June 2007 has neither been reviewed, nor audited.

The Board announced its decision to withdraw from Makers on 20 August 2007. The business was treated as a discontinued operation in the consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2007, but was not a discontinued operation or classified as held for sale as at 30 June 2007; consequently the comparative interim consolidated income statement has been re-presented to show the loss from discontinued operation net of tax separately from continuing operations.

The key risks and uncertainties facing the Group, as explained in the Group's Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2007, continue to be market cycles, acquisitions, technical risk and people.

2. Foreign currencies

The exchange rates used in respect of principal currencies are:

	Average for period			Period end		
	Half year to 30 June 2008	Half year to 30 June 2007	Year to 31 December 2007	Half year to 30 June 2008	Half year to 30 June 2007	Year to 31 December 2007
US dollar:	1.98	1.97	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Euro:	1.29	1.48	1.46	1.26	1.49	1.36
Australian dollar:	2.14	2.44	2.39	2.08	2.36	2.28

3. Segmental analysis

The Group considers that it has only one business activity: specialist construction services.

Revenue and operating profit by geographical segment is presented below:

	Revenue			Operating profit		
	Half year to 30 June 2008	Half year to 30 June 2007	Year to 31 December 2007	Half year to 30 June 2008	Half year to 30 June 2007	Year to 31 December 2007
	£m	Restated £m	£m	£m	Restated £m	£m
United Kingdom	44.8	35.4	78.0	2.2	1.7	3.8
North America	245.5	232.7	473.2	22.1	29.4	61.6
CEMEA ¹	204.4	136.2	296.8	23.8	13.7	30.4
Australia	74.0	39.6	107.1	10.7	4.6	14.7
	568.7	443.9	955.1	58.8	49.4	110.5
Central items and eliminations	–	–	–	(2.7)	(2.0)	(3.1)
Continuing operations	568.7	443.9	955.1	56.1	47.4	107.4
Discontinued operation ²	–	21.3	36.8	(1.4)	(5.3)	(13.3)
	568.7	465.2	991.9	54.7	42.1	94.1

¹ Continental Europe, Middle East and Asia.

² Discontinued operation was previously reported in the United Kingdom segment.

Notes to the Condensed Financial Statements

continued

4. Taxation

Taxation from continuing operations, representing management's best estimate of the average annual effective income tax rate expected for the full year, based on the profit before tax is: 33.0% (half year ended 30 June 2007 – restated: 35.5%; year ended 31 December 2007: 34.8%).

Taxation in the period relating to the discontinued operation was £0.4m credit (half year ended 30 June 2007: £1.6m credit; year ended 31 December 2007: £3.7m credit).

5. Dividends paid to equity holders of the parent

Ordinary dividends on equity shares:

	Half year to 30 June 2008 £m	Half year to 30 June 2007 £m	Year to 31 December 2007 £m
Amounts recognised as distributions to equity holders in the period:			
Final dividend for the year ended 31 December 2007 of 12.0p (2006: 11.4p) per share	7.9	7.5	7.5
Interim dividend for the year ended 31 December 2007 of 6.0p per share	–	–	4.0
	7.9	7.5	11.5

In addition to the above, an interim ordinary dividend of 6.9p per share (2007: 6.0p) will be paid on 3 November 2008 to shareholders on the register at 10 October 2008. This proposed dividend has not been included as a liability in these financial statements and will be accounted for in the period in which it is paid.

6. Earnings per share

Earnings for the purposes of calculating the basic and diluted earnings per share from continuing operations were £34.1m (half year ended 30 June 2007: £28.2m; year ended 31 December 2007: £64.5m).

The weighted average number of shares for the purposes of calculating the basic and diluted earnings per share from continuing operations was 66.0m (half year ended 30 June 2007: 65.8m; year ended 31 December 2007: 66.0m) and 66.4m (half year ended 30 June 2007: 66.8m; year ended 31 December 2007: 66.9m) respectively.

7. Reconciliation of movements in equity attributable to equity holders of the parent

	Half year to 30 June 2008 £m	Half year to 30 June 2007 £m	Year to 31 December 2007 £m
Equity at start of period	202.3	152.4	152.4
Total recognised income and expense	40.6	25.7	59.8
Dividends to shareholders	(7.9)	(7.5)	(11.5)
Share based payments	0.6	0.4	1.1
Share capital issued ¹	–	0.4	0.5
Shares repurchased	(9.3)	–	–
Equity at end of period	226.3	171.4	202.3

¹ Includes share premium.

During the period, the Company has repurchased 1.1 million shares, all of which are held in Treasury. In addition, the Company purchased a further 325,000 shares specifically to satisfy Performance Share Plan awards. The average cost of purchased shares was £6.50. All shares issued in comparative periods related to share options exercised in those periods.

8. Analysis of closing net debt

	As at 30 June 2008 £m	As at 30 June 2007 £m	As at 31 December 2007 £m
Bank balances	21.5	17.7	30.8
Short-term deposits	0.4	0.2	0.1
Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet	21.9	17.9	30.9
Bank overdrafts	(0.9)	(5.3)	(4.8)
Cash and cash equivalents in the cash flow statement	21.0	12.6	26.1
Bank and other loans	(91.4)	(62.7)	(75.0)
Loan notes due within one year	-	-	(1.1)
Finance leases	(4.0)	(3.7)	(4.5)
Closing net debt	(74.4)	(53.8)	(54.5)

9. Related party transactions

Transactions between the parent, jointly controlled operations and its subsidiaries, which are related parties, have been eliminated on consolidation and are not disclosed in this note.

During the period the Group undertook various contracts with a total value of £4.8m (half year to 30 June 2007: £5.4m, year ended 31 December 2007: £11.6m) for GTCEISU Construcción, S.A., a connected person of Mr López Jiménez, a Director of the Company. An amount of £5.9m (30 June 2007: £7.1m, 31 December 2007: £8.0m) is included in trade and other receivables in respect of amounts outstanding as at 30 June 2008.

All amounts outstanding from related parties are unsecured and will be settled in cash. No guarantees have been given or received. No provisions have been made for doubtful debts in respect of the amounts owed by related parties.

Responsibility Statement

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge:

- the condensed set of financial statements has been prepared in accordance with IAS 34 – Interim Financial Reporting;
- the interim management report includes a fair review of the information required by DTR 4.2.7R – indication of important events during the first six months and description of principal risks and uncertainties for the remaining six months of the year; and
- the interim management report includes a fair review of the information required by DTR 4.2.8R – disclosure of related parties transactions and changes therein.

By order of the Board

J M West Chairman

J W G Hind Finance Director

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