

Press Release**Bossard Group****Sales first quarter of 2018****Successful start to the year – best quarter in company history**

Zug, April 9, 2018 – **The Bossard Group continues its high-level growth: Sales in the first quarter of 2018 hit a record-breaking CHF 220.4 million, an increase of 10.9 percent (+8.7 percent in local currency). Once again, the Group posted broad-based growth in all three market regions. In Europe, where Bossard generates about 60 percent of its sales, growth was 14.8 percent. Business in America and Asia also made a strong contribution to this gratifying first quarter performance. The above-average sales growth confirms the Group’s investment policy of previous years, which has allowed it to systematically consolidate its market position in different countries and regions. Above all, this surge in growth had a positive impact on earnings performance.**

Bossard’s successful investment policy is especially evident in Europe where over the last several years the Group has made major acquisitions, expanded capacities, and pushed the development of new activities. This allowed all European markets to contribute to a vigorous 14.8 percent growth (+8.5 percent in local currency). Double-digit growth rates were achieved in most Southern and Eastern European countries, where Bossard continues to see considerable growth potential. Even in more mature markets such as Switzerland, Germany and Denmark, growth was encouragingly solid. The Group’s targeted development efforts on the European continent paid off in broad-based growth.

Growth in America

Bossard also posted gratifying growth in America. In local currency sales increased by a respectable 8.2 percent (in Swiss francs: +2.1 percent) to CHF 58.1 million. This boost in performance stems from a solid overall demand for Bossard products and services in America.

Business with the largest US electric vehicle manufacturer was less dynamic in the first quarter. In spite of higher production volumes, sales remained at the previous year's level, mainly due to a change in product mix. This cooperation did fuel some discussion in the financial markets over the past two weeks. The fact is that this customer accounted for less than 6 percent of Group sales in the first quarter. The rather flat business development with this customer was compensated by sales growth with other customers.

Groundwork in Asia creates solid foundation

The groundwork of the past years is paying off in Asia as well. Sales in this market region rose by 12.7 percent to CHF 30.2 million (+10.7 percent in local currency). The investments made in past years have created a solid foundation for additional growth, especially in China. In this market, our most important in Asia, growth reached double digits in the first quarter of 2018. We also posted double-digit growth rates in Taiwan and Thailand. In addition, we see positive signs in India: After government intervention brought business in the wind energy sector to halt, we were able to increase our sales volumes in other industrial sectors and gain market share.

Optimistic outlook

Our business performance in the first quarter bodes well for the coming months. We expect sales volumes in fiscal year 2018 to approach CHF 850 million, compared to last year's CHF 786 million. Our confidence in this forecast is based on the Group's ability and strength in different markets and countries. Other meaningful indicators, such as the purchasing managers' indices which point to substantial industrial growth in our key sales markets, also give us reasons to be optimistic.

Net sales 1st quarter			change in %	
in CHF million	2018	2017	in CHF	in local currency
Europe	132.1	115.1	14.8%	8.5%
America	58.1	56.9	2.1%	8.2%
Asia	30.2	26.8	12.7%	10.7%
Group	220.4	198.8	10.9%	8.7%

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Profile:

The Bossard Group is a leading international supplier of product solutions and services in industrial fastener and assembly technology. With its comprehensive product range of over 1,000,000 items, combined with its proven expertise in technical consulting (engineering) and inventory management (logistics), Bossard is one of the established companies in the industry, both as an end-to-end supplier and a partner. In addition, Bossard is a pioneer in developing intelligent production facilities in line with Industry 4.0.

The Group's customers include local and international industrial companies who use Bossard solutions to improve their productivity. With 2,300 employees in 80 locations throughout the world, the Group generated CHF 786.2 million in sales in 2017. Bossard is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange.