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Industry-wide News

Interview with President & CEO of 3E Company

3E Company-Ariel Beef Up Chem Info Services

3E Company (California, U.S.) acquired Ariel Research, a chemical database subsidiary of Eastman Chemical (U.S.), in the fall of last year, and took it under its wing. Through this, 3E not only established a position to furnish information related to environmental hygiene and safety: it was also able to augment its regulatory data base and offer a service spread across all processes, from the manufacture of chemicals, through usage, to disposal.

- Firstly, what is the general situation of 3E's business?

"We were established in 1988 with the objective of supporting chemical regulation. We take MSDS (material safety data sheet) data compiled by companies, input it into a database, and administer and update this database. We also distribute the data. Currently, 3E's client base extends to 5,000 companies. Starting with this database administration, we have developed our services to cover chemical products from their manufacture to their disposal, including adherence to chemical laws and regulations, and production of shipping labels.

Another unique aspect is a call center that rapidly responds to accidents involving leakage of chemicals at the site on a 365-days/24-hours basis throughout the entire year. We also quantify chemical inventories and report them to fire departments on behalf of companies at the state law level."

- What was the objective of bringing Ariel into the 3E fold?

"3E's MSDS service administers and provides client data. On the other hand, Ariel was the leader in global chemical regulatory information and it also compiled MSDSs. It had businesses that 3E was not involved in. Furthermore, while many of 3E's clients were final product manufacturers, many of Ariel's customers were chemical companies. Through merging 3E and Ariel, a comprehensive service from chemical manufacture through to disposal became possible. Furthermore, Ariel's regulatory database was global, encompassing North America, Europe, South America, and Asia-Pacific, and for 3E, this opened up the path to global entry greatly."

- What are the targets for the foreseeable future and sales forecasts?

"Legislation and regulation is conducted on a global scale, including in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For corporations, it costs money to comply with laws and regulations that can change rapidly, and a significant investment is demanded. If they are subject to penalties, corporate images can be damaged. On this account, services like those pro-



Robert S. Christie
President

vided by our company are in demand and governments and regulatory authorities also hold expectations.

Currently, there are other information service firms in the environmental hygiene and safety area. They are all strong in their areas of expertise but not many companies can respond in a comprehensive manner to chemicals in general. In terms of financial performance, we will double

last year's sales (of both companies combined) during the course of this year. Furthermore, we want to increase our sales and profits eight-fold by 2008 and besides organic growth, this will be achieved through business alliances, and mergers and acquisitions."

- Tell us about your Asian strategy, for Japan and China, for example.

"When we view Asia, we see three opportunities. Western firms export to China and Asian firms export overseas, and we can offer them both legal and regulatory compliance services. In addition, Japan and China have peculiar regulations and we can also cater to these. Through our acquisition and subsequent amalgamation, we want to offer global solutions so that our clients can respond to regulatory changes."