

Group Operations

Safety receives a high priority across the Group. During 2012, we implemented further strategies and initiatives to enhance safety performance and increase awareness throughout our operations. To address the significant challenges in emerging regions, a rigorous benchmarking process was completed during the year which will enhance our existing structures and support our safety strategies in these regions.

Trading conditions in many of our key markets remained challenging in 2012. We responded with a continued focus on improving efficiencies, adjusting our cost base and increased attention to procurement across the Group. In addition, we continued to adjust our portfolio of investments to strengthen the Group.

We concentrated on actions within our control, scaling our capacity and managing our costs to adapt to changing demand patterns across our businesses. We remain resolute in managing our cost base. Having delivered over €2.2 billion of cost savings in the past 5 years, we have identified further cost reductions of €0.3 billion in the three-year period to the end of 2015.

Our operational teams continued to focus on initiatives to maximise our performance and improve product quality and service to our customers. Examples range from the increased use of alternative fuels in our cement plants and recycled asphalt paving in our heavyside business, through to providing engineered solutions to our customers in building products and delivery optimisation in our distribution networks. In addition, we achieved further progress through Group-wide initiatives, leveraging our size, scale and expertise. Our global procurement programme continued to deliver significant benefits through increased co-ordination and further investment in processes and technology. Above all, the key to the success of these programmes is in the calibre of our teams and collaboration across the Group.

For 2013, we will continue to focus on cost effectiveness and operational performance by combining strong local operations with an effective sharing of Group resources and capabilities. We are confident that these targeted actions taken by CRH will provide sustained benefits to the Group in the years ahead.



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Albert Manifold