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Steady progress for alufoil continues as overall tonnage improves again

Deliveries of aluminium foil products continued to move ahead in the second quarter of 2013, confirming that the recovery in demand seen in 2012 continues. Overall production for the year to date reached 419,800t, a rise of 2.5% compared with the first half of 2012 (409,500). Exports too maintained momentum, increasing by 3.2% in the second quarter of 2013, helping first half sales outside the European market to an impressive 6.6% rise.

Q2 results showed thinner gauges, used largely for flexible packaging and household foils, once again led the way with a rise of 2.3%. Thicker gauges, used typically for semi-rigid containers and technical applications, dropped back by just 1.8%, indicating recovery is more uneven for these products. Total deliveries, at 210,400t achieved a rise of 1.3% compared with Q2 2012.

An encouraging sign for thicker gauges is that the deliveries in the first six months of 2013 remained positive at +0.3%, evidence that this sector of the market is finally stabilising after a lengthy period of declining demand.

Cautious optimism seems to be the mood among EAFA's members. EAFA Vice-President and Roller Group Chairman Manfred Mertens commented, "While the outlook is still somewhat uncertain there are clear signs that the trend is upward, although there may still be some negative quarters in some areas, the 'downs' seem to be smaller and the 'ups' larger."

"Our members are now very experienced at dealing with this situation and have adapted to the market climate positively and imaginatively. Some factors, such as the financial and investment conditions as well as likewise credit lines are outside our control and we have very limited influence on these areas," added Manfred Mertens.

Exports continue to perform well, despite some slowdown in demand from Asian markets as their rates of economic growth decline. In the second quarter of 2013 export sales improved by 3.2% compared with the same quarter of 2012. This continues to be a major factor in the recovery, according to EAFA

Aluminium foil characteristics are strength, formability and barrier properties which have made it an essential part of many flexible packaging and container applications. Other uses of aluminium foil include automotive and heat exchange components, insulation material and many industrial applications.

** EAFA region covers Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and UK*

Further information:

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The European Aluminium Foil Association is the international body representing companies engaged in the rolling and rewinding of alufoil and in the manufacture of aluminium closures, alufoil semi-rigid containers and of all kind of flexible packaging. Its more than 100 members include companies in Western, Central and Eastern Europe.