ASX RELEASE

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ASX RELEASE

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SPICERS LIMITED 2017 FULL YEAR RESULTS

Spicers Limited (ASX: SRS) today reported a statutory profit after tax of $1.7 million for the financial year ended 30 June 2017 (FY2017). Underlying EBIT(1) for FY2017 was $4.9 million, 8.1 percent higher than the prior corresponding period (pcp). A net cash inflow from operating activities of $6.3 million for FY2017 represents a significant improvement over an outflow of $(13.6) million in the pcp.

Key features of the 2017 full year results:

- Continuing sales revenue of $380.7 million was 3.1 percent lower than pcp.
- Declining sales revenue in the commercial print category was partly offset by strong growth in other revenue streams, particularly Sign & Display.
- Group underlying EBIT(1) for FY2017 was $4.9 million versus $4.5 million in the pcp. Strong and improved performances from New Zealand and Asia offset weakness in the Australian result. Refer to the 'Operating Performance by Regional Segment' section for more commentary.
- Corporate costs were reduced in FY2017, with activities rationalised as legacy issues were resolved and the Company's structure simplified.
- Profit after tax from continuing operations was $0.4 million compared to $1.5 million in the pcp. This decline was due to the impact of restructuring costs of $2.1 million related to warehouse rationalisation and headcount reduction.
- Statutory profit after tax was $1.7 million versus a pcp result of $5.3 million, with the prior period including a greater level of non-recurring benefits related to the discontinued operations in Germany.
- Net cash inflow from operating activities (including discontinued operations) was $6.3 million versus an outflow of $(13.6) million in the pcp.
- Net cash inflow from operating activities for continuing operations was $6.7 million compared to a net outflow of $(4.6) million in the pcp. The Australian business delivered the majority of this significant improvement, due to a sharp focus on working capital and cash management.
- The Group finished the year with a 'net cash' position of $31.8 million at 30 June 2017, 3.8 percent higher than at 30 June 2016.
- One of Spicers' primary funding facilities, in New Zealand, was refinanced on improved terms during the period. Activities to replace the other main financing facility in Australia are well advanced.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

Commenting on the result, Spicers' Chief Executive Officer David Martin said: "While volumes continue to decline and trading conditions remain tough in our commercial print markets, it is pleasing to report that we have been able to deliver an increase in group underlying earnings with good results from our New Zealand and Asian businesses and a reduction in continuing corporate costs as activities continue to be rationalised."

"I am also pleased to be able to confirm an operating cash inflow of $6.3 million for FY2017, with the Australian business in particular delivering a significant turnaround on the prior year due to a strong focus on cash and working capital."

"Our changed approach to portfolio and product segmentation has delivered profitable growth in Sign & Display and other diversified categories, while we continue to focus on maximising our positions and returns in our Print & Packaging markets. I am confident this approach will also bring future growth opportunities as we move forward."

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About Spicers Limited (SRS)
Spicers Limited is a merchant group with market leading positions in Australia, New Zealand and Asia. Spicers offers a full suite of products and services to the printing, signage, visual display and graphics industries – incorporating commercial print, packaging, digital media, sign & display, hardware, pressure sensitive labels and industrial packaging offerings.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

Spicers Limited has reported a statutory profit after tax of $1.7 million and group underlying EBIT(1) of $4.9 million for the year ended 30 June 2017. All amounts are stated in Australian Dollars ($), unless noted otherwise.

Results Summary		Actual 2017	Actual 2016
Net sales revenue	$000	380,666	422,802
Net sales revenue - continuing	$000	380,666	392,682
Earnings before interest and tax - continuing	$000	2,822	4,112
Underlying earnings before interest and tax (1)	$000	4,880	4,515
Profit before tax - continuing	$000	2,467	3,175
Profit after income tax - continuing	$000	387	1,497
Profit after income tax - discontinued	$000	1,305	3,799
Statutory profit after tax	$000	1,692	5,296
Net working capital (1)	$000	86,099	93,550
Net cash flow from operating activities	$000	6,287	(13,589)
Cash conversion – continuing (1)	%	108.8	(75.9)
Net debt / net debt & equity	%	(31.2)	(28.1)
Basic earnings per share (3)	cps	0.2	0.8
Dividend per ordinary share	cps	nil	nil
FTEs - continuing		430	445

The following table shows sales revenue and underlying EBIT(1) by operating segment for the year ended 30 June 2017.

		Sales Revenue		Underlying EBIT (1)	
					Restated (2)
Operating Summary		**2017**	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**
Operating segment:					
Australia	$000	201,816	210,975	2,345	4,235
New Zealand	$000	101,058	97,919	7,477	6,906
Asia	$000	78,035	83,923	1,851	1,517
Corporate / eliminations	$000	(243)	(135)	(6,793)	(8,143)
Total continuing operations	**$000**	**380,666**	**392,682**	**4,880**	**4,515**
Discontinued operations	$000	-	30,120		
Total	**$000**	**380,666**	**422,802**		

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2
(2) Restated – refer Appendix 2
(3) FY2017 basic earnings per share included in the 'Results Summary' table exclude an exceptional, non-cash, gain of $209 million, taken directly to retained earnings as a transaction with owners, that resulted from the Company's acquisition of SPS Units as part of a Trust Scheme to simplify the Company's capital structure. Statutory reported basic EPS including this exceptional accounting gain was 30.9 cents.

Spicers

GROUP OPERATING PERFORMANCE

Revenue

Continuing sales revenue of $380.7 million was 3.1 percent lower than pcp. Sales revenue in Australia was down, with structural decline in Commercial Print revenues offset by strong growth in other revenue streams. Sales revenue in New Zealand was stable in local currency terms, while Asian sales revenue declined by 3.5 percent in local currency terms due to changes in sales-mix between territories.

The chart below gives a further breakdown of continuing sales revenue across the three regional operating segments by revenue stream:

Revenue - continuing		2017	2016	% Change
Print & Packaging	$000	303,320	325,012	(6.7)
Sign & Display	$000	77,346	67,670	14.3
Total revenue - continuing	**$000**	**380,666**	**392,682**	**(3.1)**

Sales revenue from Print & Packaging categories declined by 6.7 percent. While packaging related revenue streams grew during FY2017, sales revenue from the commercial print category fell due to a combination of lower volumes in line with ongoing structural decline in paper markets and changes in sales mix in some locations.

Sign & Display revenue streams grew strongly, increasing by 14.3 percent year-on-year. This was delivered via strong sales efforts and organic revenue growth in Spicers' main Australian and New Zealand Sign & Display markets.

The recent 'bolt on' acquisition of a New Zealand based LED and Neon component distributor, Sign Technology Ltd (as announced in a "Business Update" ASX release on 26 June 2017), will provide further opportunities for growth in Sign & Display revenue streams going forward by giving Spicers' New Zealand and Australian operations access to strong global brands in this market sector.

The Asian regional operating segment has recently secured several key supplier agency arrangements, and it is anticipated that these will support future growth in its Sign & Display revenue streams from a relatively low current base.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

Earnings and Statutory Profit

Group underlying EBIT[1] for FY2017 was $4.9 million, 8.1 percent higher than pcp. Strong and improved underlying EBIT[1] results from New Zealand (up 5.1 percent in local currency terms) and Asia (up 26.6 percent in local currency terms) were offset by weakness in the Australian full-year result (down 44.6 percent).

Consistent with prior years, seasonal factors of higher sales in the months leading up to December followed by slower sales in January and February, meant that the FY2017 first-half underlying EBIT[1] result of $3.3 million was stronger than a second-half result of $1.6 million.

Continuing corporate costs of $6.8 million were 16.6 percent lower than pcp[2]. Activities and costs continue to be rationalised as legacy issues are resolved, including the recent simplification of Spicers' capital structure. The restructuring of corporate activities (as announced in a "Business Update" ASX release on 26 June 2017) will further reduce corporate costs in FY2018.

FY2017 continuing profit after tax of $0.4 million was $1.1 million lower than pcp, with restructuring costs of $2.1 million (versus $0.4 million in FY2016) recorded as a significant item. These FY2017 restructuring costs relate primarily to Australian and corporate restructuring, as announced to the ASX on 26 June 2017.

Statutory profit after tax for FY2017 was $1.7 million compared to $5.3 million in the pcp. This difference is attributable to one-off benefits in discontinued profit after tax results in the respective periods, both of which were predominantly related to the Group's previous operations in Germany.

Cash Flow

The Group reported a net cash inflow from operating activities of $6.3 million for FY2017 versus an outflow of $(13.6) million in the pcp (which included cash outflows from discontinued operations, primarily in Germany).

Net cash inflow from operating activities for continuing operations was $6.7 million in FY2017, a significant turnaround compared to an outflow of $(4.6) million in the prior year. This was driven by a sharp focus on cash management and working capital performance.

As a result, the cash conversion[1] ratio (cash flow from operating activities - continuing operations as a percentage of underlying EBITDA) for FY2017 was a notable 108.8 percent.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

OPERATING PERFORMANCE BY REGIONAL SEGMENT

Australia

		2017	2016	% Change
Net sales revenue	$000	201,816	210,975	(4.3)
Profit before interest and tax [(2)]	$000	1,533	3,804	(59.7)
Underlying EBIT [(1)] [(2)]	$000	2,345	4,235	(44.6)
Underlying EBIT/sales revenue [(1)] [(2)]	%	1.2	2.0	(80) bpts
Expense/sales revenue	%	21.2	20.9	30 bpts
Net working capital [(1)]	$000	55,387	58,934	(6.0)
Average working capital/sales revenue [(1)]	%	27.4	28.9	(150) bpts

Australian sales revenue for FY2017 was down 4.3 percent on pcp, primarily due to declining volumes and tough trading conditions in the commercial print category. Strong growth in other revenue streams, particularly Sign & Display, partly offset this structural decline.

Underlying EBIT[(1)] was 44.6 percent lower than pcp[(2)], largely due to the structural decline and challenging trading conditions in the commercial print market.

While FY2017 trading expenses were down on pcp, expenses as a percentage of sales were marginally higher than pcp due to the overall decline in sales revenue. Against a backdrop of ongoing structural decline in the commercial print category, restructuring and rationalisation of some activities in the Australian business was announced on 26 June 2017, reducing operating costs going into FY2018. Tight control of trading expenses will continue to be a management focus in FY2018.

Net working capital[(1)] levels were lower than pcp, due to movements in creditor balances, and with inventory quality improved via reductions in aged stock levels. A 150 basis points reduction in the average working capital/sales ratio[(1)] was a notable achievement given the overall decline in sales revenue.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2
(2) Restated – refer Appendix 2

New Zealand

		2017	2016	% Change
Net sales revenue	NZD 000	106,940	106,762	0.2
Profit before interest and tax (2)	NZD 000	7,283	7,411	(1.7)
Underlying EBIT (1) (2)	NZD 000	7,912	7,529	5.1
Underlying EBIT/sales revenue (1) (2)	%	7.4	7.1	30 bpts
Expense/sales revenue	%	17.0	17.3	(30) bpts
Net working capital (1)	NZD 000	18,148	19,346	(6.2)
Average working capital/sales revenue (1)	%	19.5	19.9	(40) bpts

The New Zealand business delivered another strong result in FY2017.

Sales revenue was marginally up on pcp. Net sales revenue in the commercial print category declined due to changes in sales mix resulting in a lower average selling price. This decline was offset by solid growth in Sign & Display revenue streams.

FY2017 underlying EBIT(1) was 5.1 percent up on pcp(2), delivering an underlying EBIT(1) margin for the period of 7.4 percent. This was achieved via a combination of growth in revenues and profits from the Sign & Display category and tight control of profit margins and expenses in the commercial print category.

Expenses as a percentage of sales were marginally down on pcp, illustrating ongoing tight control of operating costs.

Net working capital(1) levels and the average working capital/sales ratio(1) were lower than pcp, primarily due to movements in creditor balances.

The acquisition of Sign Technology Limited was completed on 3 July 2017. This is expected to deliver additional sales revenue of NZ$1.3m per annum and to be immediately earnings accretive.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2
(2) Restated – refer Appendix 2

Asia

		2017	2016	% Change
Net sales revenue	SGD 000	81,882	84,889	(3.5)
Profit before interest and tax [(2)]	SGD 000	1,670	1,429	16.9
Underlying EBIT [(1) (2)]	SGD 000	1,942	1,534	26.6
Underlying EBIT/sales revenue [(1) (2)]	%	2.4	1.8	60 bpts
Expense/sales revenue	%	9.5	9.7	(20) bpts
Net working capital [(1)]	SGD 000	21,082	20,980	0.5
Average working capital/sales revenue [(1)]	%	26.2	26.2	0 bpts

The Asian region reported an overall improvement in profitability in FY2017, continuing recent trends.

Sales revenue was down 3.5 percent on pcp. This was primarily due to changes in sales mix between territories, with sales revenue growth in Malaysia offset by revenue declines in other territories.

Underlying EBIT[(1)] was 26.6 percent higher than pcp[(2)]. This significant improvement was primarily due to strong management of profit margins across all territories and sales channels.

Reductions in trading expenses, primarily due to lease rental savings in Malaysia, also contributed to the improvement in underlying EBIT[(1)]. The expense to sales ratio was 20 basis points lower than pcp, off a lower sales revenue base.

Net working capital[(1)] levels and the average working capital/sales ratio[(1)] were consistent with the pcp.

Discontinued

		2017	2016
Net sales revenue	$000	-	30,120
Profit before interest and tax	$000	1,260	3,673
Profit after interest and tax	$000	1,305	3,799

A profit from discontinued operations in FY2017 arose mainly from the settlement of obligations related to the Group's previous operation in Germany during the period (as announced on 16 November 2016 in the ASX Release 'Germany Obligations Settled'). The final settlement amount was significantly less than the provision value held to cover these obligations, which resulted in a non-cash profit being recorded on settlement.

In the pcp, net sales revenue and one-off profit results from discontinued operations also primarily related to the previous operation in Germany, which entered insolvency proceedings in October 2015.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2
(2) Restated – refer Appendix 2

FINANCIAL POSITION

Consolidated Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet		As at 30 June 2017	As at 30 June 2016
Current assets	$000	195,801	186,598
Non-current assets	$000	37,746	39,359
Total assets	$000	233,547	225,957
Current liabilities	$000	99,052	85,508
Non-current liabilities	$000	571	704
Total liabilities	$000	99,623	86,212
Shareholders' equity	**$000**	**133,924**	**139,745**
Net cash	$000	31,841	30,688
Funds employed (net assets - net cash)	$000	102,083	109,057

Shareholders' equity / net assets of $133.9 million at June 2017 was $5.8 million less than at June 2016 due to a combination of the recording of the costs of the transaction to simplify Spicers' capital structure directly in equity and the net impact of a stronger Australian dollar on translation of foreign operations offsetting the net profit result.

Funds employed were also lower due to similar reasons.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

Cash Flow and Working Capital

Cash flow	Continu-ing $000	Discont-inued $000	2017 $000	2016 $000
Operating receipts and payments (excluding working capital movement and restructuring)	**6,363**	**(477)**	**5,886**	**460**
Working capital movement	3,799	74	3,873	(7,840)
Restructuring	(860)	-	(860)	(2,398)
Net interest paid	(480)	13	(467)	(1,047)
Income taxes paid	(2,145)	-	(2,145)	(2,764)
Net cash flow from operating activities	**6,677**	**(390)**	**6,287**	**(13,589)**
Capital expenditure	(877)	-	(877)	(1,922)
Net proceeds/(payments) from sale of assets & businesses	19	(302)	(283)	3,983
Net cash flow before financing activities	**5,819**	**(692)**	**5,127**	**(11,528)**

FY2017 Cash flow - Continuing	2H 2017 $000	1H 2017 $000	2017 $000
Operating receipts and payments (excluding working capital movement and restructuring)	**2,319**	**4,044**	**6,363**
Working capital movement	5,314	(1,515)	3,799
Restructuring	(543)	(317)	(860)
Net interest paid	(178)	(302)	(480)
Income taxes paid	(673)	(1,472)	(2,145)
Net cash flow from operating activities	**6,239**	**438**	**6,677**
Capital expenditure	(576)	(301)	(877)
Net proceeds from sale of assets & businesses	19	-	19
Net cash flow before financing activities	**5,682**	**137**	**5,819**

Net cash inflow from operating activities for FY2017 was $6.3 million compared to an outflow of $(13.6) million for the pcp. The prior year included an outflow of $(9.0) million from discontinued operations, primarily in Germany.

Net cash inflow from operating activities for continuing operations was $6.7 million in FY2017 versus an outflow of $(4.6) million in the prior year. The majority of this improvement was delivered by the Australian business.

A sharp management focus on cash and working capital contributed to this positive outcome. Movements in creditor terms reduced net working capital balances, and inventory quality was improved via reductions in aged stock levels.

Typical seasonal trends in cash flows were reflected in this outcome, with most of the full-year net cash inflow delivered in the second half of FY2017 due to factors such as strong subsequent debtor collections from higher sales in the months leading up to the 31 December 2016 end to the first half.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

Debt and Interest

Cash / (Debt)		As at 30 June 2017	As at 30 June 2016	% Change
Gross debt	$000	(2,042)	(4,893)	(58.3)
Cash and cash equivalents	$000	29,928	31,626	(5.4)
Short term deposits	$000	3,955	3,955	-
Net Cash	**$000**	**31,841**	**30,688**	**3.8**

Interest expense		2017	2016	% Change
Net interest - continuing	$000	355	937	(62.1)
Net interest - discontinued	$000	1	129	(99.2)
Net interest expense	**$000**	**356**	**1,066**	**(66.6)**

Spicers reported a 'net cash' position of $31.8 million at 30 June 2017, up 3.8 percent on June 2016. Gross debt drawn at 30 June 2017 was only $2.0 million, down 58.3 percent on June 2016.

Typically, 30 June represents one of the highest points in the Company's annual cash cycle, due to factors such as strong debtor collections in the run up to year-end. Mid-month cash usage is also often significantly higher than end of month positions, due to timings through the month of customer receipts and supplier payments, with the net cash position typically lower than end of month net cash balances.

Continuing interest expense for FY2017 was 62.1 percent lower than the pcp, reflecting significantly lower average daily gross debt drawn positions than the prior year.

Funding update

The Group's primary financing facilities are in Australia and New Zealand. The Asian operations have cash on hand and make limited use of available debt funding facilities.

Spicers NZ secured a new overdraft and revolving bills financing facility with Bank of New Zealand ('BNZ') during FY2017 to replace its previous receivables backed financing facility. The new BNZ facility is for an initial three-year period to October 2019, with improved terms.

Spicers' Australian financing facility expires in March 2018. Activities to replace this facility with a new financier are well advanced, with terms largely agreed and credit approval in place. However, due to restrictions placed on entering into major new contracts until after the completion of the ongoing board renewal process, this cannot be finalised until after the upcoming Extraordinary General Meeting to elect new Spicers Directors on 6 September 2017.

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

Dividends

There was no dividend paid or declared on the Spicers Ordinary Shares for the year ended 30 June 2017.

Conclusion

FY2017 saw Spicers deliver a group underlying EBIT(1) result of $4.9 million, 8.1 percent ahead of pcp. Good performances from New Zealand and Asia offset weakness in the Australian result. Corporate costs fell, as activities and costs continue to be rationalised as legacy issues are resolved.

Consistent management focus on cash and working capital throughout FY2017 saw the Company deliver a net cash inflow from operating activities of $6.3 million, with the Australian business contributing the majority of a turnaround of $11.3 million in operating cash flows from continuing operations.

One of the Group's primary funding facilities, in New Zealand, was refinanced on improved terms during the period, with activities to replace the other main financing facility in Australia well advanced.

The Company's current strategy remains focussed upon maximising returns and 'free' cash flows in Print and Packaging categories, while seeking to vigorously grow Sign & Display and other diversified revenue streams.

-ends-

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2

APPENDIX 1

The following table shows statutory earnings in Australian dollars.

For the year ended 30 June	2017 $000	2016 $000
Group revenue	**380,666**	**422,802**
Profit before interest, tax and significant items: [2]		
Australia	2,345	4,235
New Zealand	7,477	6,906
Asia	1,851	1,517
Corporate / eliminations	(6,793)	(8,143)
Total continuing operations	4,880	4,515
Discontinued operations	(938)	(4,456)
Profit before interest, tax and significant items	**3,942**	**59**
Significant items (pre-tax)	140	7,726
Profit before interest and tax	**4,082**	**7,785**
Net interest	(356)	(1,066)
Profit before tax	3,726	6,719
Tax relating to pre-significant items	(2,206)	(1,455)
Tax relating to significant items	172	32
Tax expense	(2,034)	(1,423)
Statutory profit for the period	**1,692**	**5,296**

The following table is a reconciliation of underlying EBIT[1].

For the year ended 30 June	2017 $000	2016 $000
Statutory profit for the period, after tax	**1,692**	**5,296**
Adjust for following (gains)/losses included in statutory profit:		
Profit after tax - discontinued	(1,305)	(3,799)
Tax expense - continuing	2,080	1,678
Net interest - continuing	355	937
Earnings before interest and tax - continuing	**2,822**	**4,112**
Adjust for continuing significant items:		
Restructuring costs	2,058	403
Underlying EBIT [1]	**4,880**	**4,515**

(1) Non-IFRS measure – refer Appendix 2
(2) Restated – refer Appendix 2

Spicers

APPENDIX 2

Non-IFRS information

Spicers financial results are reported under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The tables and analysis provided in this document also include certain non-IFRS measures, including underlying Earnings Before Interest and Tax (EBIT). These measures are presented to enable understanding of the underlying performance of the Company without non-trading items. Non-IFRS measures have not been subject to audit or review.

The non-IFRS measures used throughout this document are defined as:

- Underlying Earnings Before Interest and Tax (EBIT): statutory profit/(loss) before interest, tax, impairment of non-current assets, restructuring, and results from discontinued operations.
- Net Working Capital: comprises of the sum of trading operations receivables and inventories less payables as at the relevant date.
- Average Working Capital: comprises an average value calculated from monthly Net Working Capital balances in the relevant reporting period.
- Average Working Capital/Sales Revenue: comprises Average Working Capital divided by an annualised sales revenue value extrapolated from sales revenue for the relevant reporting period.
- Cash conversion – continuing percentage: Net cash flow from Operating Activities - continuing operations expressed as a percentage of Underlying Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA).

Restated comparative data

Relevant prior corresponding period (pcp) data has been re-presented to reflect:

- The reclassification of foreign exchange gains and losses in relation to inventory purchases from “net finance costs” to “cost of goods sold” to more accurately reflect the nature of these gains and losses.