

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BEFORE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of

**LINDE AG,**  
a corporation, and

**THE BOC GROUP PLC,**  
a corporation.

File No. 061-0114

**AGREEMENT CONTAINING CONSENT ORDERS**

The Federal Trade Commission (“Commission”) having initiated an investigation of the proposed acquisition of The BOC Group plc (hereinafter referred to as “Respondent BOC”) by Linde AG, (hereinafter referred to as “Respondent Linde”) (collectively “Proposed Respondents”) and it now appearing that Proposed Respondents are willing to enter into this Agreement Containing Consent Orders (“Consent Agreement”) to divest certain assets and providing for other relief:

**IT IS HEREBY AGREED** by and between Proposed Respondents, by their duly authorized officers and attorneys, and counsel for the Commission that:

1. Respondent Linde AG is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the Federal Republic of Germany, with its office and principal place of business located at Abraham-Lincoln-Straße 21, 65030 Wiesbaden, Germany.
2. Respondent BOC is a corporation organized, existing, and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of England whose registered principal office is located at Chertsey Road Windlesham, Surrey GU206HJ, England.
3. Proposed Respondents admit all the jurisdictional facts set forth in the draft of Complaint here attached.
4. Proposed Respondents waive:
  - a. any further procedural steps;
  - b. the requirement that the Commission’s Decision and Order, Order to Maintain Assets and Hold Separate and Order to Maintain Assets, all of which are attached

hereto and made a part hereof, contain a statement of findings of fact and conclusions of law;

- c. all rights to seek judicial review or otherwise challenge or contest the validity of the Decision and Order, Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets or Order to Maintain Assets entered pursuant to this Consent Agreement; and
  - d. any claim under the Equal Access to Justice Act.
5. Because there may be interim competitive harm, the Commission may issue its Complaint and the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and Order to Maintain Assets in this matter at any time after it accepts the Consent Agreement for public comment.
6. The Proposed Respondents shall submit an initial report, pursuant to Section 2.33 of the Commission's Rules, 16 C.F.R. § 2.33, within fifteen (15) days of the date on which it executes this Consent Agreement and every thirty (30) days thereafter until the Decision and Order becomes final or the divestitures required pursuant to Paragraphs II. and III. of the Decision and Order are accomplished, whichever is earlier. Each such report shall be signed by the Proposed Respondents and shall set forth in detail the manner in which the Proposed Respondents have to date complied or have prepared to comply, are complying, and will comply with the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets, Order to Maintain Assets and the Decision and Order. Such reports will not become part of the public record unless and until the Consent Agreement and Decision and Order are accepted by the Commission for public comment.
7. This Consent Agreement shall not become part of the public record of the proceeding unless and until it is accepted by the Commission. If this Consent Agreement is accepted by the Commission, it, together with the draft of Complaint contemplated thereby, will be placed on the public record for a period of thirty (30) days and information in respect thereto publicly released. The Commission thereafter may either withdraw its acceptance of this Consent Agreement and so notify Proposed Respondents, in which event it will take such action as it may consider appropriate, or issue or amend its Complaint (in such form as the circumstances may require) and issue its Decision and Order, in disposition of the proceeding.
8. This Consent Agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by Proposed Respondents that the law has been violated as alleged in the draft of Complaint here attached, or that the facts as alleged in the draft of Complaint, other than jurisdictional facts, are true.
9. This Consent Agreement contemplates that, if it is accepted by the Commission, the Commission may (a) issue and serve its Complaint corresponding in form and substance with the draft of Complaint here attached, (b) issue and serve its Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets, (c) issue and serve its Order to Maintain Assets, and (d) make information public with respect thereto. If such acceptance is not subsequently

withdrawn by the Commission pursuant to the provisions of Commission Rule 2.34, 16 C.F.R. § 2.34, the Commission may, without further notice to the Proposed Respondents, issue the attached Decision and Order containing an order to divest and providing for other relief in disposition of the proceeding.

10. When final, the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets shall have the same force and effect and may be altered, modified or set aside in the same manner and within the same time provided by statute for other orders. The Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets shall become final upon service. Delivery of the Complaint, the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets to Proposed Respondents by any means provided in Commission Rule 4.4(a), 16 C.F.R. § 4.4(a), shall constitute service. Proposed Respondents waive any right they may have to any other manner of service. Proposed Respondents also waive any right they may otherwise have to service of any Appendices incorporated by reference into the Decision and Order, and agree that they are bound to comply with and will comply with the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets to the same extent as if they had been served with copies of the Appendices, where Proposed Respondents are already in possession of copies of such Appendices.
11. The Complaint may be used in construing the terms of the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets, and no agreement, understanding, representation, or interpretation not contained in the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets, or the Consent Agreement may be used to vary or contradict the terms of the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets or the Order to Maintain Assets.
12. By signing this Consent Agreement, Proposed Respondents represent and warrant that they can accomplish the full relief contemplated by the attached Decision and Order, Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets (including effectuating all required divestitures, assignments, and transfers and obtaining all necessary approvals from governmental authorities, leaseholders, and other third parties to effectuate the divestitures, assignments, and transfers) and that all parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, and successors necessary to effectuate the full relief contemplated by this Consent Agreement are parties to this Consent Agreement and are bound thereby as if they had signed this Consent Agreement and were made parties to this proceeding and to the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets, and the Order to Maintain Assets.
13. By signing this Consent Agreement, Proposed Respondents represent and warrant that the Helium Divestiture Agreements, as defined in the Decision and Order, require Proposed Respondents to divest all assets required to be divested pursuant to the Decision and Order and require Proposed Respondents to comply with Paragraph III. of the Decision

and Order and Paragraphs II. and III. of the Order to Maintain Assets.

14. Proposed Respondents have read the draft of the Complaint, the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets contemplated hereby. Proposed Respondents understand that once the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets have been issued, they will be required to file one or more compliance reports showing that they have fully complied with the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets. Proposed Respondents agree to comply with the terms of the proposed Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and the Order to Maintain Assets from the date they sign this Consent Agreement. Proposed Respondents further understand that they may be liable for civil penalties in the amount provided by law for each violation of the Decision and Order, the Order to Hold Separate and Maintain Assets and of the Order to Maintain Assets after they become final.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

**LINDE AG**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lothar Dressel  
General Counsel and Vice President  
Linde AG

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leon B. Greenfield  
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr  
LLP  
Counsel for Linde AG

**THE BOC GROUP PLC**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Deeming  
Group Legal Director  
The BOC Group plc

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Kenneth S. Prince  
Shearman and Sterling LLP  
Counsel for the The BOC Group plc

**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**APPROVED:**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Assistant Director  
Bureau of Competition

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