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## PRESS RELEASE

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION APPROVES ACQUISITION

PaperlinX today received confirmation that the European Commission has approved its acquisition of Buhrmann's Paper Merchating Division for the countries over which it has jurisdiction, including the UK and Ireland where there is overlap between Buhrmann's Paper Merchating Division and PaperlinX's existing merchating operations. Approval has also been received from the Czech Republic Authorities. Approval is still to be received from the relevant authority in Slovakia.

Buhrmann's shareholders approved the transaction at their EGM on October 8, 2003.

Commenting on the approvals, PaperlinX Managing Director, Ian Wightwick, said, "It is extremely pleasing that this significant milestone in the acquisition process has been passed, with the approval by the European Commission. We are looking forward to a smooth integration upon completion."

Assuming the remaining procedural matters continue on schedule, as previously advised, the acquisition of Buhrmann's Paper Merchating Division is planned to be completed during the fourth quarter of calendar 2003.

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#### Editors Note:

PaperlinX is a leading international paper merchant, with businesses in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, North America, the United Kingdom and Ireland. Through its Australian Paper division, it is also the only Australasian producer of high quality communication papers, and a major producer of high performance packaging and industrial papers.