Smith & Wesson Enters Long-Gun Market with M&P15 Rifles

January 18, 2006

Company Expands Military & Police Series With Rifles Designed for Law Enforcement, Military, and Sporting Shooters

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Jan 18, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation (Amex: SWB), parent company of Smith & Wesson Corp., the legendary, 154-year old, global provider of products and services for safety, security, protection and sport, announced its initial entry into the market for tactical rifles and will begin shipments in early February of the Smith & Wesson M&P15 Rifle and the Smith & Wesson M&P15T Rifle. These tactical rifles are additions to the Company's Military & Police (M&P) series of firearms specifically engineered to meet the needs of global military and police personnel, as well as sporting shooters.

Michael F. Golden, Smith & Wesson's President and CEO, said, "We are entering the $1 billion market for long guns with products that provide the exceptional functionality and reliability that Smith & Wesson customers have come to expect. We believe the features of these tactical rifles make them strong contenders in the military and law enforcement markets. We also believe that our M&P rifle series fills a tremendous gap in the marketplace by delivering high-quality, feature-rich tactical rifles that will be readily available in commercial channels. As a company that stands for safety, security, protection and sport, the Smith & Wesson brand and reputation have earned a position for us in that market. The M&P15 rifle series is produced entirely in the United States under manufacturing alliances with several American companies."

The M&P rifle series is based upon a combat-proven design and incorporates a full set of standard features currently unmatched in other AR-15-type tactical rifles. Both the M&P15 and the M&P15T (with its high-end accessory package) are rugged, lightweight, semi-automatic rifles. Both are chambered in 5.56mm NATO ammunition and are built to perform under a diverse range of conditions. Reliability features of the gas-operated rifles include a chrome-lined gas key, bolt carrier and barrel. Both the M&P15 and the M&P15T are designed to accommodate a variety of shooters and shooting positions through the use of a six-position adjustable stock.

The M&P15 incorporates a traditional AR-15 design featuring a removable carry-handle and adjustable rear and front post sights, allowing for quick target acquisition and convenient handling. The black anodized rifle measures 35 inches in length when fully extended and has an unloaded weight of 6.74 pounds.

The M&P15T, with its high-end accessory package, features folding front and rear battle sights and a four-sided equipment rail system that allows the addition of accessories, such as lights, laser-aiming devices, and vertical grips. The rifle measures 35 inches in length when fully extended and has an unloaded weight of 6.85 pounds.

The M&P15 and M&P15T join a comprehensive family of Smith & Wesson products designed and manufactured to meet the needs of law enforcement professionals. Other products include a full-line of Smith & Wesson's world-renowned revolvers used for primary duty and backup side arms, the recently announced M&P series of polymer pistols designed specifically for law enforcement and military use, and a wide range of handcuffs, restraint products and tactical vision devices.

Both the M&P15 and the M&P15T will be unveiled at SHOT Show 2006, February 9-12 at the Las Vegas, Nevada Convention Center. The Company expects that editorial coverage in multiple industry publications will occur beginning with that event. Initial shipments of both rifles are expected to begin concurrent with SHOT Show and will be distributed initially to law enforcement agencies for test and evaluation and to the sporting goods distribution channel. The M&P15 will carry a suggested retail price of $1,200, while the M&P15T will retail for $1,700.

About Smith & Wesson

The Company is a global provider of products and services for the safety, security, protection and sport markets. The Company manufactures firearms and handcuffs and is home to America's longest-running firearms training facilities for America's public servants. The Company also markets a variety of products for sport shooters, including firearm safety/security devices, shooter protective gear, knives, apparel, footwear and other accessory lines. The Company is based in Springfield, Mass., with manufacturing facilities in Springfield and Houlton, Maine. Contact (800) 331-0852 or log on to www.smith-wesson.com.

Certain statements contained in this document may be deemed to be forward- looking statements under federal securities laws, and Smith & Wesson intends that such forward-looking statements be subject to the safe-harbor created thereby. Forward-looking statements include the engineering, functionality, reliability, features, capabilities and performance of the M&P series of rifles; the Company's plans to begin shipments of its new rifles in February 2006; the competitive advantages of the M&P rifle series in various markets; the unmatched feature set of the M&P rifle series; the availability of the M&P rifles series in commercial markets; and expected media coverage regarding the M&P rifles series in industry publications. The Company cautions that these statements are qualified by important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those reflected by the forward-looking statements contained herein. Such factors include the acceptance of the M&P rifle series by military and police personnel and other customers; the performance, capabilities, and reliability of the M&P rifle series in actual use; reviews of the M&P rifle series by the media and industry publications; the Company's ability to produce M&P rifles in accordance with their intended features and performance; as well as other risks as identified from time to time in the Company's SEC reports, including Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K, and Annual Reports on Form 10-K.

SOURCE Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation

Liz Sharp, VP Investor Relations of Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation,
+1-480-949-9700, ext. 115, lsharp@smith-wesson.com; or Industry, Gary Giudice of Blue
Heron Communications, +1-800-654-3766, gary@blueheroncomm.com, for Smith & Wesson
Holding Corporation