Smith & Wesson Begins Shipping 9mm Military & Police (M&P) Polymer Pistols

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SPRINGFIELD, Mass., May 2, 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, today announced that it has begun shipping the 9mm version of the Company's new Military & Police (M&P) Series of advanced design polymer pistols. Company officials indicated that initial shipments of the 9mm M&P are being sent to a law enforcement agency.

The M&P9 is the newest addition to the Company's M&P Series of advanced-design polymer pistols, a product line launched in December 2005. The M&P series offers performance, safety, and durability features engineered to the exacting standards of global law enforcement and military personnel.

The M&P9 is currently available in a full-size model, with a compact model scheduled to follow. The full-size polymer pistol is chambered for 9mm ammunition and features a capacity of 17 rounds in the magazine plus one round in the chamber. Future products in the M&P Pistol Series are scheduled to include the M&P357.

"Since we began shipping the M&P40, the first pistol in the M&P Series, we have received tremendous feedback on its superior level of performance, reliability and accuracy," said Tom Taylor, Smith & Wesson's Vice President of Marketing. "The M&P9 provides both law enforcement officers and shooting sports enthusiasts a new option in the growing family of M&P products. This product is important because 9mm is the caliber of choice for most international law enforcement and military agencies as well as the approved NATO handgun caliber. M&P9's are currently in test and evaluation in a number of significant agencies throughout the world. The 9mm round is also the caliber of choice for U.S. law enforcement agencies in many large metropolitan cities. Whether the need is an international duty weapon or a pistol for shooting sports applications, the M&P9 will fulfill a wide variety of needs."

The M&P Pistol Series offers a number of distinctive features that provide durability, safety and versatility. These features include a Zytel polymer frame reinforced with a ridged stainless steel chassis and a thru-hardened black melonite stainless steel barrel and slide for durability; a passive trigger safety to prevent the pistol from firing if dropped; and a sear lever release that eliminates the need to press the trigger in order to disassemble the firearm. A loaded chamber indicator is located on top of the slide, and an internal lock system is optional for military and law enforcement users. The pistol's innovative ergonomic design is enhanced with three interchangeable grip sizes, allowing the user to customize grips in a matter of seconds. The firearm also features an ambidextrous slide stop and a reversible magazine release, as well as an enlarged trigger guard designed to accommodate gloves. A universal Picatinny style equipment rail allows the addition of tactical lights and lasers.

About Smith & Wesson

Smith & Wesson 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, durability, features, capabilities and performance of the M&P series of pistols; the Company's plans to develop and manufacture a compact version of the M&P9 pistol and to develop and manufacture an M&P357 pistol; and the competitive advantages of the M&P pistol series in various markets. 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 pistol series by military and law enforcement personnel and other customers; the performance, capabilities, and reliability of the M&P pistol series in actual use; the Company's ability to produce M&P pistols 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.

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