



**SONAE SIERRA**

Lisbon, Portugal, February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010

Sonae Sierra reinforces its commitment to the “zero accidents” goal

## **Sonae Sierra obtains Safety & Health Certificate for 6 shopping centres in Portugal**

- Centro Colombo, Centro Vasco da Gama, NorteShopping, GaiaShopping, ArrábidaShopping and Estação Viana certified under the OHSAS 18001 standard,
- Certification enables a better control over the risks for visitors, tenants and employees
- Sonae Sierra was the first European company in the sector to be certified under the OHSAS 18001 standard

Sonae Sierra concluded in 2009 the Safety & Health certification, under the OHSAS 18001 standard, of 5 of its shopping centres in Portugal: Centro Vasco da Gama, NorteShopping, GaiaShopping, ArrábidaShopping and Estação Viana, thus joining Centro Colombo which obtained its certification in 2008. This certification, issued by TÜV Rheinland Portugal, a German multinational leader in the certification area, acknowledges the quality of the Safety & Health system implemented in the management of those centres.

OHSAS 18001 is a standard that validates a Management System (like ISO 9001 and ISO 14001) orientated towards Safety & Health at work, working as a tool which allows companies to manage and control its levels of performance in those areas, according to the objectives, policies, and action plans set by the company itself.

In practical terms, this certification ensures a greater control over the risks identified in the building (common and technical areas) which may threaten the physical integrity of visitors, employees, service providers and tenants. Through risk control - such as slippery surfaces, obstacles in the mall, fires, etc - incidents are prevented inside shopping centres.

With its bet on safety and prevention, Sonae Sierra reinforces its conviction that people are the most valuable asset, and their integrity must be protected. For the company, this attitude is a competitive edge and a differentiating factor regarding the competition. In 2008, the company record a 43% reduction in number of days lost due to work accidents or professional diseases, compared to the three previous years.

In 2008, Sonae Sierra became the first European company in the shopping centre sector to obtain certification for its corporate system. More recently, the company became the first in Europe to obtain the Safety & Health certification for the management of the construction of a shopping centre, LeiriaShopping, which is scheduled to open to the public on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Internationally, Sonae Sierra also has four certified centres in Spain, three in Brazil and one in Italy.

The issuing of this certification is the consequence of Sonae Sierra’s Safety & Health culture, which making employees, tenants, service providers and visitors aware of these issues, and has the objective of preventing and anticipating accidents, as well as protecting its employees, and everyone coming into contact with the company. One of the most visible aspects of this commitment towards Safety & Health was undoubtedly the PERSONÆ project, which has been worthy of international acclaim: in 2009, Sonae Sierra was awarded at the “European Risk Management Awards”, under the “Best Risk Training Programme” category, an initiative of British magazine “Strategic Risk”. The PERSONÆ project, which launched the bases of the current safety and health culture in Sonae Sierra, has already been distinguished with the “DuPont Safety Award for Visible Management

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Commitment”, in 2007, and the ECO Award, from the American Chamber of Commerce, in 2006.

#### **About Sonae Sierra**

*Sonae Sierra, <http://www.sonaesierra.com/>, is an international shopping centre specialist, with a passion for bringing innovation and excitement to the shopping centre industry. The Company owns 52 Shopping Centres in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece, Romania and Brazil, with a total Gross Lettable Area (GLA) of more than 2 million m<sup>2</sup>. Currently, Sonae Sierra has 2 projects under construction and 10 new projects in different phases of completion in Portugal, Italy, Germany, Greece, Romania and Brazil. In 2009 our Shopping Centres had more than 436 million visits.*