

CHAMBERS HARRAP  
PRESS STATEMENT

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

- Consultations with staff and the NUJ have begun over the proposed closure of the Edinburgh office of Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd
- Proposals for the transfer of responsibility for Harrap titles to Larousse in Paris are under discussion
- It is proposed that responsibility for Chambers titles will move to London to be managed by Hodder Education.

Staff at Chambers Harrap have been informed today of the proposed closure of their offices in Edinburgh. The staff were told that alternative arrangements have been sought, including the sale of Chambers, but that no buyer was forthcoming.

It is proposed that the two reference publishing businesses, Chambers, which publishes a wide range of reference titles, including English dictionaries, the Brewer's list and crossword and subject reference dictionaries, and Harrap, which publishes bilingual dictionaries and language learning materials for UK and Europe, will be separated.

Both imprints have been affected by the steep decline in the sales of dictionaries and reference books as people move away from print to go online where they can get their information, for the most part, free of charge. Under the proposals, responsibility for Chambers, which has been particularly hit by the fall in sales of English dictionaries, would move to Hodder Education in London, and Harrap, whose sales are almost all concentrated in continental Europe where the market is also shrinking, would move to Paris to be managed directly by Larousse.

It is anticipated that all 27 jobs at the Edinburgh offices will be affected.

A spokesman for Hachette UK, which is managing the transition on behalf of Larousse said:

“We have enormous respect for the reputation of both imprints. Chambers has a distinguished history in reference publishing and Harrap, from its base in Edinburgh, is a major force in dictionary publishing in

France. The skill and experience of the staff in both imprints is admired throughout the industry.

“The market for dictionaries and reference books in print has been in decline for some years and we have looked long and hard for solutions, investigating many options, including trying to find a buyer for Chambers either in Scotland or elsewhere in publishing before ultimately, and very reluctantly, concluding there was no option other than to propose the closure of the Edinburgh offices.

“The digital revolution is changing the way readers consume news and search for information. People are moving away from printed reference books and going online where, generally, they expect to get their information for free. This migration affects newspapers and book publishers alike and it is a sad fact that what may be good for the consumer has a major impact on people who earn their living in publishing and journalism.”

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Contact Clare Harington, Group Communications Director Hachette UK on 0207 873 6108 [clare.harington@hachette.co.uk](mailto:clare.harington@hachette.co.uk)

#### Notes to Editors:

Chambers Harrap Publishers Limited's (CHPL) business falls into two principal parts, Chambers and Harrap. CHPL has 27 employees.

Chambers produces monolingual English dictionaries and other English subject and language reference publications, including Brewer's. Most sales of Chambers titles are in or from the UK

Harrap produces bilingual dictionaries and other bilingual publications, including a successful range of language learning materials. The vast majority of Harrap sales (around 90%) are in or from France where Larousse already acts as its distributor.

The Chambers publishing business was established in 1819, Harrap Limited was formed in 1901.

In 1992, W & R Chambers Limited was acquired by Groupe de la Cité and was owned by and reported through Larousse.

Groupe de la Cité acquired Harrap Limited in 1992 and merged it with W & R Chambers to form the company that is now known as Chambers Harrap Publishers Limited.

In 2000, Larousse and CHPL became part of Vivendi Universal Publishing as a result of the merger of Groupe de la Cité and Seagram's.

In 2004, Hachette Livre (part of Lagardère) acquired Larousse and, therefore, CHPL from Vivendi. In the same year Hachette also acquired Hodder Headline to form what is now Hachette UK Limited.

In 2006, Hachette UK began to manage CHPL, on behalf of Larousse.

Hachette UK is owned by Hachette Livre a wholly owned subsidiary of Lagardère, a leading company on the Paris stock exchange.