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U.K. Firm Will Make Lighting

By Derek Andersen

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British lighting equipment producer Abacus announced plans Wednesday for its Russian unit to build a plant in St. Petersburg next year as the country is pursuing numerous construction projects to prepare for the Olympics and an international Pacific summit.

Abacus is "looking at how we can support the Winter Olympics in Sochi," said Andrew Morris Richardson, chairman of the board of Abacus Russia and a board member of British Abacus. Sochi will host the games in 2014.

He added that the company, which manufactures lights and lighting structures for roads, parking lots, airports and sports facilities, is also looking at the market in Vladivostok, the venue for the 2012 APEC summit.

"We think that more emphasis will be placed on that part of Russia as the economy strengthens," Morris Richardson said of Vladivostok. "And we will be well placed to help the Russian government strengthen the infrastructure there."

The company promises to use Russian materials in its St. Petersburg plant, he said, adding that localization will contribute to cost efficiency. No cost estimate has been made for the plant yet, according to a Russian spokesman for the company.

Morris Richardson said the company sees its customer base "across the whole range," from state contractors to private construction companies.

Abacus Russia, wholly owned by the British Abacus, opened an office in St. Petersburg in March. It intends to open an office in Moscow in the first quarter of next year.

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