

FAIRFAX *News Release*

Stock Symbol: FFH (TSX and NYSE)

TORONTO, May 18, 2004

FAIRFAX COMPLETES SECONDARY OFFERING OF NORTHBRIDGE FINANCIAL

Fairfax Financial Holdings Limited (“Fairfax”) and Northbridge Financial Corporation (“Northbridge”) announce that Fairfax has today completed its previously announced sale of 6,000,000 common shares of Northbridge at a price of Cdn\$25.60 per common share. The sale was effected through a syndicate of underwriters led by BMO Nesbitt Burns Inc. and Scotia Capital Inc. As a result of the sale, Fairfax received aggregate net proceeds of approximately Cdn\$146,000,000 and reduced its ownership position in Northbridge from approximately 71% to approximately 59%. Northbridge did not receive any proceeds from this sale.

The securities sold have not been registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and may not be offered or sold in the United States or to U.S. persons absent registration or an applicable exemption from the registration requirements. This press release shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of the securities in any State in which such offer, solicitation or sale would be unlawful.

Fairfax is a financial services holding company which, through its subsidiaries, is engaged in property, casualty and life insurance and reinsurance, investment management and insurance claims management.

Northbridge, which through its subsidiaries provides property and casualty insurance products primarily in the Canadian market as well as in selected U.S. and international markets, is one of the largest commercial property and casualty insurers in Canada based on gross premiums written.

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