

## > Newsflash – 9 July 2007

### Corporate Law, Mergers & Acquisitions

#### **Modification of publication formalities for annual accounts as of 2 April 2007**

The National Bank of Belgium (NBB) has extended the possibility to file annual accounts electronically so that annual accounts can henceforth be filed through the Internet in the form of a new structured data file or a PDF document. Filing of annual accounts on diskette is no longer possible as of 2 April 2007.

##### **1. Filing annual accounts electronically**

As of 2 April 2007, annual accounts of companies complying with the technical requirements of the NBB can only be filed as follows:

- on paper, by mail or at the offices of the NBB; or
- electronically, exclusively through the Internet (in the form of a new structured data file or a PDF document). The filing of annual accounts on diskette is not considered as "electronic filing" and is no longer accepted as of 2 April 2007 as the diskette is seen as an outdated data holder.

However, consolidated annual accounts and annual accounts that are not prepared in accordance with the abbreviated or full model cannot be filed through the Internet as a structured data file, but only as a PDF document complying with specific technical requirements.

##### **2. New structured data files**

In order to simplify the electronic exchange of the data and to save costs by using a standardized structure for annual accounts, the NBB has modified the standardized structure of annual accounts prepared in accordance with the abbreviated or full model. Updated software is required to draw up an annual accounts file prepared in accordance with the technical requirements of the NBB. In concrete terms, the following software will have to be used:

- commercial software made available by the private sector; or
- software made available by the NBB itself: Sofista 2007. Sofista 2007 is a web application that can only be used through the Internet.

##### **3. Web application for filing annual accounts electronically**

To gain access to the web application made available by the NBB and to file annual accounts through the Internet, one must have a valid digital certificate. The digital certificate guarantees the identity of the person with whom electronic data is exchanged through the Internet. The following may be used as digital certificates:

- the authentication certificate found on the electronic identity card; or
- a qualified certificate from Certipost, Globalsign or Isabel. You can request such a certificate through the website of those certification authorities.

Laga has already obtained a valid digital certificate and can assist clients in ensuring electronic filing of their annual accounts within the legal deadlines.

##### **4. Substantial saving in costs for electronic filing**

For annual accounts that are filed electronically in the form of a new structured data file, you pay € 60.50 in total less than filing the annual accounts on paper (lowest filing charges).



> Lange Leenastraat 270 - 2018 Antwerpen - Tel. + 32 3 242 42 20 - Fax + 32 3 242 42 21  
Louizalaan 240 Avenue Louise - 1050 Brussels - Tel. + 32 2 800 70 70 - Fax + 32 2 800 70 71  
Pegasus Park - Berkenlaan 8a - 1831 Diegem - Tel. + 32 2 800 70 00 - Fax + 32 2 800 70 01  
President Kennedypark 8b - 8500 Kortrijk - Tel. + 32 56 59 43 00 - Fax + 32 56 59 43 01  
Chaussée de Liège 624 - 5100 Namur - Tel. + 32 81 32 22 00 - Fax + 32 81 32 22 01

In practice, annual accounts can also be filed electronically in a PDF document for which the filing charges are € 6.05 less than filing the annual accounts on paper.

*Petra Sobry, Advocaat-vennoot/Avocat-associé, Email: [psobry@laga.be](mailto:psobry@laga.be)  
Hilde Vanhoutte, Corporate Compliance Manager, Email: [hvanhoutte@laga.be](mailto:hvanhoutte@laga.be)*

© 2007 Laga — [www.laga.be](http://www.laga.be) — The content and lay out of this newflash are the copyright of the law firm Laga or its contributors, and are protected under copyright and other relevant intellectual property rights laws and regulations. No reproduction in any form or through any medium is allowed without the explicit consent of Laga or its contributors.

For further information, do not hesitate to contact your usual Laga correspondent or Fabienne Fonder ([ffonder@laga.be](mailto:ffonder@laga.be)). Although Laga verifies the reliability of the information given, such information is general and Laga may not be held responsible in any way for any possible error that might occur or for any use or interpretation that could be made of this information without the assistance of Laga.