

**Hill Insurance Company Limited (In Compulsory Liquidation)**

**Liquidator's Progress Report to Creditors**

**31 July 2021**

## Hill Insurance Company Limited (In Compulsory Liquidation)

### Liquidator's Report to Creditors

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## **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 On 24 January 2013 the Supreme Court of Gibraltar ordered the winding up of Hill Insurance Company Limited and appointed me as liquidator. The Court also permitted me to disclaim all contracts of insurance and all contracts of reinsurance under which the Company was or may have been liable, which I did by written notice of disclaimer signed before the Court on 24 January 2013.
- 1.2 Paragraph 10 of the Court's Order provided that "the liquidator is to report to the Court within 8 weeks of the date of this Order with a recommendation as to the constitution of a Committee of Inspection to be appointed by the court, having regard to the provisions of section 13(2) of the Reorganisation Act, and (if the liquidator's recommendation is that such Committee should be appointed) is to fix an appointment for the Court to consider the recommendation and, if thought fit, appoint a Committee of Inspection."
- 1.3 On 20 March 2013 I reported to the Court that no creditors had expressed interest in participating in such a Committee and, given the fact that nearly all insurance creditors were based in Italy, that it was not feasible to recommend the appointment of a Committee of Inspection. Instead, I proposed that I would report to the Company's creditors bi-annually on the conduct of the liquidation by publishing a report on the website and making it available in hard copy upon request.
- 1.4 In my biannual reports (available for download from [www.hillinsurance.eu](http://www.hillinsurance.eu)) I set out the strategy and actions taken so far since my appointment.
- 1.5 This is my seventeenth report to creditors covering the period to 31 July 2021 including an account of Receipts and Payments to that same date.

## **2. Liquidation Strategy**

- 2.1 The background to the Company's collapse and insolvency is that there appears to have been significant fraud from the outset in that no share capital was ever paid into the Company and the purported capital on which the Company relied for regulatory and trading purposes did not exist.
- 2.2 The liquidation strategy has been to pursue the remaining assets which comprise – litigation recoveries, cash and collateral pledged to the company as counter-indemnities, broker funds and reinsurance assets due to the company and premiums written in the name of Hill but diverted.

- 2.3 All the above actions have been completed. Our focus is now on updating and verifying creditors details so that I can proceed to pay a dividend to creditors. There are over 4,000 creditors including those due a return of premium

### **3. Notices and Advertisement**

- 3.1 My appointment as Liquidator of the Company and the Notice of Disclaimer of Contracts of Insurance have been advertised in Gibraltar, in the Gibraltar Gazette, The Chronicle and The Panorama and in Italy in La Stampa and Corriere della Sera.
- 3.2 The opening of the winding up proceedings has also been published in the Official Journal of the European Union.
- 3.3 I have sent out Notices in English and in Italian to the addresses of all those who, it appeared from the records available to me, are or may be policyholders or beneficiaries under contracts of insurance issued by the company, or otherwise a creditor of the Company. In summary, Notices have been sent to 3,320 policyholders and 1,916 beneficiaries. A further 164 Notices have been sent to brokers, and to others who are believed to be creditors of the Company.
- 3.4 I have also continued to make documents relevant to the liquidation of the Company available on the website [www.hillinsurance.eu](http://www.hillinsurance.eu) and have drawn attention to this website in the Notices.
- 3.5 Notices for creditors to submit their final claims by 4 March 2019 were advertised in the Gibraltar Gazette, Gibraltar Chronicle, Gazzetta Ufficiale in Italy and Corriere della Sera.

### **4. Company's premises and staff**

- 4.1 The company's office premises were surrendered on 15 February 2013 when the Company's computer servers and physical records were transferred to Deloitte's offices in Gibraltar.
- 4.2 At 24 January 2013 the Company had four full time employees. By 15 February 2013 staff numbers were reduced from four to two full-time employees who have been retained to assist with the liquidation. By 31 July 2014 this was reduced to one full time employee and, on 1 November 2018, the employee was transferred onto a part time contract.

## **5. Claims handling and Legal Service Providers**

- 5.1 All insurance claims are being handled by the Milan office of Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP (“Curtis Mallet”) which I have also retained to advise me on all matters of Italian Law, including assisting with the recovery of debts due from Italian brokers and the recovery of cash and collateral provided by policyholders as counterindemnities.
- 5.2 In Gibraltar I engaged Isolas (“Isolas”) as my solicitors to assist with insurance, insolvency, litigation and general legal issues.
- 5.3 Isolas have instructed Jonathan Adkin QC and Ruth Den Besten of Serle Court Chambers, London to assist and advise in relation to the various proceedings which have all now been successfully settled.
- 5.4 Hogan Lovells assisted with our claim against our reinsurers.

## **6. Investigations and Proceedings**

- 6.1 My team and I have undertaken a comprehensive investigation into the affairs of the Company. The number and complexity of the issues surrounding the collapse of the Company is extensive and they are being given due and careful consideration. These investigations have uncovered a large amount of evidence which I have processed and collated, and passed on to my legal teams for advice with a view to pursuing claims against third parties. I have previously been advised by my legal team that there are strong prospects of success for these claims. Following the above approach and with the sanction of the Supreme Court we have secured and recovered over €1,574,096 from diverted insurance premiums, €3,264,133 from former service providers, and €418,157 from counter indemnities.

## **7. Broker debts**

- 7.1 All broker accounts have been reconciled and all amounts that we had been hoping to recover have been recovered.

## **8. Reinsurance**

- 8.1 I have reached agreement with the Company’s reinsurers with a view to settling all reinsurance claims and claims for return of premium on inward policies which the reinsurer had also placed with Hill. The settlement terms agreed are for the payment by the reinsurer of €250,000 to Hill and the waiver of return of premium due by Hill to the reinsurer on inward policies amounting to €873,859.

## 9. Disclaimer

- 9.1 With the consent of the Court, on 24 January 2013 I signed a notice of disclaimer by which I disclaimed all contracts of insurance and all contracts of reinsurance under which the Company was or might be liable. The Disclaimer does not affect claims which had arisen under a contract of insurance prior to 24 January 2013, the date of the winding up. Beneficiaries should report any such claims to me at 63 The Anchorage, Rosia Road, Gibraltar or by email to [liquidatore@hillinsurance.eu](mailto:liquidatore@hillinsurance.eu)
- 9.2 As a result of the Disclaimer, beneficiaries will not be able to claim under their policy for an insured event or claim arising on or after 24 January 2013. Those policyholders with an unexpired period of a contract of insurance as at that date will have a pro rata claim for return of the premium which they have paid (unless the liquidator agrees or the Court directs that they are entitled to prove in the liquidation for a different amount). I am permitted to admit such return of premium claims without requiring a formal proof, and I hope to be writing in the near future informing policyholders with such claims of the figure to which I have calculated they are entitled.

## 10. Creditors

### *Insurance Creditors*

- 10.1 Under Gibraltar legislation, insurance creditors have priority over non-insurance creditors. These include:
- 10.2 All insurance claims under a policy of insurance issued by the Company arising before 24 January 2013 and approved by me as liquidator. Notified and admitted insurance claims at 31 July 2021 amount to €10,301,191. In addition there are claims amounting to €109,200 which are presently being disputed.
- 10.3 Claims for return of premium for the unexpired terms of policies cancelled on 24 January 2013 by the Notice of Disclaimer. These are estimated to amount to €4,484,685.

### *Other Creditors*

- 10.4 The current level of insurance claims indicates that such claims will not be met in full and therefore there is at present no prospect of any distribution from the estate to anyone other than insurance creditors.

## 11. Liquidation Dividend

Having completed the recovery of all known assets of the estate, I intend to pay a first and final dividend to insurance creditors only, which I currently estimate to be approximately 35% of the total amount due to insurance creditors.

I am currently contacting all the beneficiaries to make arrangements for the payments to be made. The timing of such payments cannot at present be predicted as we have a large number of beneficiaries to contact.

## **12. Receipts and Payments Account**

12.1 I attach a copy of the Liquidation Receipts and Payments from 24 January 2013, being the date of my appointment as Liquidator, to 31 July 2021. Additional notes to the accounts follow:

- a) Staff numbers were decreased from four, at the time of my appointment, to one effective 30 June 2014. The employee I have retained on a part time contract basis has good knowledge of the Company's history, systems and processes and are an invaluable resource for the liquidation.
- b) Liquidation fees paid cover the period to 31 December 2020. Fees have been computed on the basis of time spent by team members at our standard charge out rates (as per the Schedule of charge out rates annexed to the Order by which I was appointed) and have been approved for payment by the Registrar of the Supreme Court.
- c) The Company's office premises were surrendered on 15 February 2013.
- d) Bank balances are held predominantly in Euros, being the base currency in which the Company operated. Interest rates over the period have been at historically low levels giving rise to a nominal sum of bank interest received. My team monitors interest rates offered by different international banks on a monthly basis to ensure the Company earns an appropriate level of bank interest without exposing the funds to counterparty, liquidity or currency risk.

This Report is intended to cover the major steps in the liquidation of the Company up to 31 July 2021. I have taken account of subsequent developments where I consider it relevant to do so.



**JOSEPH CARUANA Esq**  
**Liquidator**  
**Hill Insurance Company Limited**

**27 August 2021**

**Hill Insurance Company Limited**  
**Liquidator's Receipts and Payments Account**  
**For The Period 24 January 2013 to 31 July 2021**

		€
<b>Receipts</b>		
Bank balances taken over from Provisional Liquidation		3,766,968
Premiums collected from brokers		1,574,096
Counter Indemnities recoveries		418,157
Compensation payments from third parties		3,264,134
Proceeds from commutation of reinsurance treaties		250,000
Proceeds from sale of company's office furniture and equipment		17,619
Bank interest		33,301
Office insurance refund		164
Exchange profit on revaluation of GBP bank accounts		23,911
		<hr/> <b>9,348,350</b> <hr/>
<b>Payments</b>		
Staff salaries & employment costs		(209,461)
Legal fees – Gibraltar & UK counsel		(1,347,986)
Legal fees – Italian counsel		(669,190)
Regulatory licence fees		(72,336)
Translation fees		(8,989)
Liquidator's fees		(940,978)
Professional fees		(102,615)
Office and store rent		(11,943)
Computer & software expenses		(58,337)
Telephone		(9,864)
Internet		(1,327)
Couriers		(15,184)
Office expenses		(5,350)
Travel expenses		(4,089)
Bank charges		(9,869)
Bank Interest		(38,289)
		<hr/> <b>(3,505,807)</b> <hr/>
<b>Bank balances at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021</b>		<hr/> <b>5,842,543</b> <hr/>
 <b><u>Breakdown of Accounts by Currencies</u></b>		
	<b>£</b>	<b>€</b>
Euros		5,703,741
GBP Sterling (@1.13)	118,634	138,802
		<hr/> <b>5,842,543</b> <hr/>