IRPC Group Limited Directors' report and financial statements 31 December 1999

IRPC GROUP LIMITED

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Directors' report and financial statements
For the 15 months to 31 December 1999
Registered number 3036264

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Directors' report and financial statements

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Directors' report

The directors present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the fifteen months ended 31 December 1999.

Principal activity

The groups' principal activities during the period continued to be the provision of a range of business advisory services, particularly in the fields of Personnel, Health & Safety and Taxation.

Results and dividends

The trading results for the period are set out on page 5. A stock dividend of £1,778,202 was paid on the ordinary shares on 22 July 1999. The directors do not recommend the payment of a final dividend on the ordinary shares (1998: £197,578). After payment of preferred ordinary dividends of £121,112 (1998: £136,213), preference dividends of £188,643 (1998: £150,667) and amortisation of the issue expenses of the preference shares of £6,939 (1998: £5,551) there is a deficit for the period of £772,617 (1998: retained profit of £674,777).

Business review

The directors consider the level of business to be satisfactory and anticipate that the current level of activity will be maintained in the coming year.

92.6% of the ordinary share capital and 100% of the preferred ordinary and cumulative redeemable preference share capital of the Company was acquired on 23 July 1999 by Wolters Kluwer (UK) plc. Wolters Kluwer (UK) plc acquired the remainder of the ordinary share capital on 16 August 1999.

Directors and directors' interests

The directors who held office during the period and their interests in the ordinary share capital of the company were:

		At 30 September 1998
		or subsequent date
	At 31 December 1999	of appointment
	10 pence ordinary shares	£1 ordinary shares
NAW Bacon (Resigned 23 July 1999)	-	-
DW Codd (Resigned 23 July 1999)	-	30,000
AR Edwards	~	50,250
IM Gilliat (Appointed 23 July 1999)	-	<u></u>
RJ Glover (Resigned 23 July 1999)	-	30,000
CP Holdridge	-	20,175
AR Knight (Resigned 23 July 1999)	-	31,000
HF Staal (Appointed 23 July 1999,	-	-
resigned 17 August 2000)		
JO Thijs (Appointed 23 July 1999)	-	-
JS Wilson (Resigned 23 July 1999)	-	21,500

AP Diggles was appointed a director on 17 August 2000 and CJD Ainsley was appointed a director on 14 September 2000.

Director's report

Employees

Employment of disabled persons

As part of its commitment to equal opportunities, the company recognises the rights of disabled persons in the pursuit of employment. As such it will not discriminate against disabled persons in terms of recruitment, training, promotion or dismissal and, where reasonable to do so, will make appropriate changes to the workplace.

Employment consultation and involvement

In recognising that its staff are its most important asset, the company is keen to involve such staff in the development of the business. To this end there are formal and informal channels of communication within the business and the concept of briefing meetings is key to this. Such meetings allow a two-way exchange of information and greater clarity about issues and the way in which they are dealt with.

Political and charitable donations

The company made no political contributions during the period (1998: Nil). Donations to charities amounted to £1,160 (1998:£1,765)

Creditor payment policy

It is company policy to settle all debts with its creditors on a timely basis, taking account of the credit period given by each supplier.

Auditors

During the period Ernst & Young resigned as auditors and KPMG were duly appointed.

KPMG have expressed their willingness to continue in office as auditors and a resolution proposing their reappointment will be submitted at the annual general meeting.

By order of the Board

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NJ Ziman Secretary

> Croner House London Road Kingston-upon-Thames Surrey KT2 6SR

> > 23 October 2000

Statement of directors' responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Auditors' report to the members of IRPC Group Limited

We have audited the financial statements on pages 5 to 18.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and, as described on page 3, the financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and accounting standards. Our responsibilities, as independent auditors, are established in the United Kingdom by statute, the Auditing Practices Board and by our profession's ethical guidance.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the directors' report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 1999 and its profit for the period then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

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KPMG Chartered Accountants Registered Auditors 31 October 2000

Profit and loss account

for the fifteen months ended 31 December

		15 months	12 months
	Note	1999	1998
		£000	£000
Turnover	1	21,320	14,850
Cost of sales		(19,271)	(13,055)
Operating profit		2,049	1,795
Income from investments		11	
Other interest receivable and similar income	5	164	166
Interest payable and similar charges	6	(214)	(198)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	2-6	2,010	1,763
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	7	(688)	(598)
Profit for the financial period		1,322	1,165
Dividends	8	(310)	(484)
Other appropriations: equity shares	8	(1,778)	-
Other appropriations: non equity shares	8	(7)	(6)
(Deficit) / Retained profit for the financial period		(773)	675

All the activities of the company in the current period and prior year are of a continuing nature.

There are no recognised gains or losses in either the current period or prior year other than those included in the profit and loss account.

There is no material difference between the results as disclosed by the profit and loss account and the results as given by an unmodified historical cost basis for the period and prior year.

Balance sheet

As at 31 December 1999					
	Note	1999		1998	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	9		2,035		2,196
Tangible assets	10		899		919
Investments	11		18		18
			2,952		3,133
Current assets					
Stocks	12	40		12	
Debtors	13	7,297		5,447	
Cash at bank and in hand		795		2,689	
		8,132	-	8,148	
Creditors: amounts falling					
due within one year	14	(6,310)		(6,734)	
Net current assets			1,822		1,414
Total assets less current liabilities			4,774		4,547
Creditors: amounts falling due					
after more than more one year	15		-		(755)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	16		-		(30)
Net assets			4,774		2 762
ivet assets			4,774		3,762
Capital and reserves					
Called up share capital	17		3,904		2,119
Profit and loss account	18		868		1,641
Capital redemption reserve			2		2
Shareholders' funds:					
Equity			2,846		1,841
Non-equity			1,928		1,921
Tion equity			1,720		1,574.1
Shareholders' funds			4,774		3,762

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors on 23 October 2000 and were signed on its behalf by:

A.R. Edwas

A R Edwards Director

Notes

(forming part of the financial statements)

1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the company's financial statements.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and under the historical cost accounting rules.

The company is exempt by virtue of s228 of the Companies Act 1985 from the requirement to prepare group accounts and to deliver them to the Registrar of Companies. Hence, the financial statements present information about IRPC Group Limited as an individual undertaking and not about its group.

Fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided by the company to write off the cost or valuation less the estimated residual value of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful economic lives as follows:

Leasehold improvements - over the lease term

Fixtures and fittings - 5 years Computer equipment - 3 years

Leases

Where the company enters into a lease which entails taking substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset, the lease is treated as a 'finance lease'. The asset is recorded in the balance sheet as a tangible fixed asset and is depreciated over its estimated useful life or the terms of the lease, whichever is shorter. Future instalments under such leases, net of finance charges, are included within creditors. Rentals payable are apportioned between the finance element, which is charged to the profit and loss account, and the capital element which reduces the outstanding obligation for future instalments.

All other leases are accounted for as 'operating leases' and the rental charges are charged to the profit and loss account on a straight line basis over the life of the lease. Where a lease contains a rent free period this is amortised on a straight line basis over the length of the lease.

Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the profit and loss account as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme.

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost includes all costs incurred in bringing each product to its present location and condition, as follows:

Raw materials and consumables – purchase cost on a first in, first out basis.

Net realisable value is based on estimated selling price less any further costs expected to be incurred to completion and disposal.

Taxation

The charge for taxation is based on the profit for the year and takes into account deferred tax arising from timing differences between the treatment of certain items for taxation and accounting purposes. Provision is made for deferred tax only to the extent that it is probable that an actual liability will crystallise.

Cash flow statement

The company is exempt from the requirements of FRS1 to prepare a cash flow statement because it is a wholly owned subsidiary undertaking of a parent undertaking which is established under the law of a member state of the European Community. The parent undertaking prepares consolidated accounts which include the subsidiary results and a cashflow statement.

Related parties

The company is not required to disclose transactions with other group entities or investees as 90% of the voting rights of this company are controlled within the group.

Turnover

Turnover represents the amounts excluding value added tax and trade discounts derived from the provision of goods and services to customers during the year.

All of the company's turnover is derived in the UK.

Goodwill

The excess of the cost of purchasing a business over the aggregate of the fair value of the identifiable assets and liabilities thereby acquired is recorded as goodwill and included in the balance sheet as an intangible asset. Goodwill is amortised on a straight-line basis over a period of 20 years which, in the directors opinion, represents a prudent estimate of the useful economic life of the goodwill acquired as part of that business. The value of goodwill is reviewed on an annual basis and provision is made for any impairment identified in its recoverable value below its carrying value.

2.	Profit on ordinary activities before taxation		
	·	15 months	12 months
		1999	1998
		£000	£000
	Profit on ordinary activities before		
	taxation is stated after charging:		
	Auditors remuneration:		
	Audit	18	12
	Other	7	6
	Depreciation and other amounts written		
	off tangible and intangible fixed assets (incl.		
	amortization of goodwill)	603	397
	Hire of other assets - operating leases	755	639
3.	Remuneration of directors		
		15 months	12 months
		1999	1998
		£000	£000
	Directors' emoluments	475	533
	Company contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	56	53
	Sums paid to third parties for directors services	10	13
		541	599
	The emoluments of the highest paid director were £113,500 (1998: £	98,666)	
		Number of	
		1999	1998
	Number of directors who are members of a defined		
	contribution pension scheme	2	6

4. Staff numbers and costs

The average number of persons employed by the Company (including directors) during the period, analysed by category, was as follows:

	Number of	employees
	15 months	12 months
	1999	1998
Full-time employees	215	198
Part-time employees	38	36
	253	234
The aggregate payroll costs of these persons were as follows:		
	15 months	12 months
	1999	1998
	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	6,969	5,222
Social security costs	758	457
Other pension costs	309	230
	8,036	5,909
5. Other interest receivable and similar income		
	15 months	12 months
	1999	1998
	£000	£000
From parent and fellow subsidiary undertakings	21	-
Other	143	166
	164	166
6. Interest payable and similar charges		
	15 months	12 months
	1999	1998
	£000	£000
Bank loans and overdrafts, and other loans wholly repayable		
within five years	79	104
Other finance charges	135	94
	214	198

7.	Taxation		
		15 months	12 months
		1999	1998
		£000	£000
	UK corporation tax at 30.4% (1998: 31%) on profit for the		
	period on ordinary activities	719	590
	Deferred taxation	(30)	18
		689	608
	Adjustment in respect of previous year	(1)	(10)
		688	598
8.	Dividends and other appropriations		
	11 1	15 months	12 months
		1999	1998
		£000	£000
	Equity dividends on ordinary shares:		
	Nil (1998: £1 per share)		197
	Non-equity dividends on preferred ordinary shares:		
	Interim paid	89	-
	Final proposed	32	136
		121	136
	Non-equity dividends on preference shares:		
	Interim paid	151	75
	Final proposed	38	76
	1 mar proposed		151
		310	484
		=	
	Other appropriations:		
	Equity shares		
	Scrip issue	1,778	-
	Non-equity shares		
	Amortisation of issue expenses	7	6

On 22 July 1999 17,782,020 ordinary shares were issued as fully paid at a price of 10 pence to shareholders who elected to take shares in lieu of cash in respect of an interim dividend in the period to 31 December 1999.

9. I	ntangible fixed assets				Go	odwill
						£000
\boldsymbol{C}	ost					
	t beginning of period					2,571
A	dditions					-
Δ.	t end of period					2,571
А	tend of period				***************************************	2,571
A	mortisation					
A	t beginning of period					375
C	harged in period					161
A	t end of period					536
N	et book value					
	t 31 December 1999					2,035
A	t 30 September 1998				 	2,196
10. T	angible fixed assets					
	-	Improvements				
		to leasehold	Lease	Computer	Fixtures &	
		buildings	premiums	equipment	Fittings	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
C	Cost					
A	t beginning of period	492	1	640	404	1,537
A	dditions	28	-	325	72	425
D:	isposals	-	-	(3)	(38)	(41)
A	t end of period	520	1	962	438	1,921
4.	ccumulated depreciation					
	t beginning of period	131	1	352	134	618
	harge for period	92	_	250	100	442
	n disposals	-	_	(1)	(37)	(38)
O.	ii disposais	-	-	(1)	(37)	(36)
A	t end of period	223	1	601	197	1,022
N	et book value					
	t 31 December 1999	297		361	241	899
			- 125141	- Control of the Cont		
A	s 30 September 1998	361	-	288	270	919

Shares in group

Notes (continued)

11. Fixed asset investments

					Undertakings £000
	Net book value At 31 December 1999 and 30 Sep	tember 1998			18
	Name of company	Country of registration and operation	Holding	Proportion of voting rights and shares held	Nature of Business
	Subsidiary undertakings IRPC Taxation Services Limited	Ireland	Ordinary shares	51%	Taxation Services
	Business Support Helpline Services Limited	England & Wales	Ordinary shares	100%	Dormant
	Help for Business Limited (formerly IRPC Vital Signs Limited)	England & Wales	Ordinary shares	100%	Dormant
12	2. Stocks				
				1999 £000	1998 £000
	Raw materials and consumables			40	12
13	3. Debtors				
				1999 £000	1998 £000
	Amounts falling due within one ye	ear:		4,882	4,693
	Amounts owed by parent and fell	ow subsidiary		1,002	1,020
	undertakings	-		1,497	-
	Other debtors			434	283
	Prepayments and accrued income			363	369
	Advance corporation tax			121	31
	.			7,297	5,376
	Due after more than one year:				
	Advance corporation tax				71
	•			7,297	5,447

14 Conditions amounts Ciling day within any				
14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	1999		1998	
	£000	£000	£000	£000
	2000	2000	2000	2000
Current instalments due on loans		51		265
Trade creditors		3,827		4,043
Other creditors including taxation				
and social security:				
Other creditors	547		658	
Corporation tax	475		515	
Advance corporation tax			102	
Other taxes and social security	<u>850</u>		388	
A compale out defended in a con-		1,872		1,663
Accruals and deferred income		490		354
Proposed final dividend		70		409
		6,310		6,734
15. Creditors: amounts falling due after one year				
15. Creditors, amounts faming due after one year		199	00	1998
		£00	J O	£000
Wholly repayable within five years:				
£60,000 (1998: £180,000) loan from Willis Corn	roon Grove ele			
repayable in annual instalments of £60,000 with		_		
on 2 November 2000.	next payment du			
			51	156
Nil (1998: £872,446) bank loan at 9.195% per at	nnum, repayable i	in		
quarterly instalments of £51,320.			-	864
			51 —	1,020
Less: included in creditors: amounts falling due w	ithin one year	(5	1)	(265)
			_	755
Amounts repayable:				
In one year or less, or on demand		5	51	265
Between one and two years			_	254
Between two and five years			-	510
		5	51	1,029
Less: unamortised issue expenses			_	(9)
			<u></u>	1,020
			<u> </u>	-,- -

Analysis of changes in loan financing during the current and previous years:

	1999	1998
	£000	£000
At beginning of period	1,020	1,271
Repayment of secured long term loan	(873)	(205)
Repayment of long term loan	(105)	(48)
Amortisastion of issue expenses	9	2
At end of period	51	1,020
16. Provision for liabilities and charges		
The amounts provided for deferred taxation are set out below:		
	1999	1998
	Provided	Provided
	£000	£000
Accelerated capital allowances	(7)	9
Other timing differences	(23)	21
	(30)	30
Deferred tax asset not recognised	30	
	-	30
The movements in the year in the provision for deferred taxation were	as follows:	
	1999	1998
	Provided	Provided
	£000	£000
At beginning of period	30	12
Charge for the period in the profit and loss account	(30)	18
At end of period	-	30

17.

		Authorised	r
	19	999	1998
	£	000	£000
	1,9	976	-
		-	200
		67	67
	1,8	883	1,883
	3,9	926	2,150
Al	lotted called up	o and fully p	aid
1999	1998	1999	1998
No.	No.	£000	£000
19,757,800	-	1,976	-
-	197,578	_	198
66,666	66,666	67	67
1,883,334	1,883,334	1,883	1,883
		3,926	2,148
	1999 No. 19,757,800 - 66,666	1,5 Allotted called up 1999 1998 No. No. 19,757,800 - 197,578 66,666 66,666	1999 £000 1,976 67 1,883 3,926 Allotted called up and fully p 1999 1998 1999 No. No. £000 19,757,800 - 1,976 - 197,578 - 66,666 66,666 67 1,883,334 1,883,334 1,883

The preference shares which were issued at par on 2 November 1995 and 13 December 1995, are redeemable as follows:

1 st October	2000	£233,334
1st October	2001	£250,000
1st October	2002	£280,000
1 st October	2003	£280,000
1st October	2004	£280,000
1 st October	2005	£280,000
1st October	2006	£280,000

The preference shares carry a dividend of 8% per annum, payable half yearly in arrears on 1 April and 1 October. The dividend rights are cumulative.

The preference shares carry no votes at meetings unless the dividend thereon is twelve months or more in arrears or the company fails to redeem the shares within twelve months of the redemption date or the business of the meeting includes a resolution for the winding up of the company or reducing its share capital, in which event each holder will be entitled to one vote on a show of hands or ten votes per share on a poll.

On a winding up of the company, the preference shareholders have a right to receive, in preference to any payments to the preferred ordinary or ordinary shareholders, £1 per share plus any accrued dividend.

The preferred ordinary shares carry a dividend of 5.5% of pre tax profit (as defined in the Company's Articles of Association). This dividend right is cumulative. In the event that a dividend in excess of 10% of the value paid up per share per annum is paid to the ordinary shareholders then any excess over this amount is payable pro-rata, as a dividend to the preferred ordinary and ordinary shareholders. The preferred ordinary shares carry votes at meetings on the basis of ten votes per share.

On a winding up of the company, the preferred ordinary shareholders have, after payment has been made to preference shareholders as specified above, a right to receive, in preference to any payments to the ordinary shareholders, £1 per share plus any accrued dividend pro-rata entitlement with ordinary shareholders to any surplus of assets.

On 15 December 1998 there was a share split on the ordinary shares and each £1 share was converted into ten 10 pence shares.

On 22 July 1999 17,782,020 ordinary shares were issued in a stock dividend.

18. Reserves

	Profit & loss Account £000
At beginning of period	1,641
Deficit for period	(773)
At end of period	868

19. Commitments

Annual commitments under operating leases are as follow:

	1999	1998	1999	1998
	Land &	Land &	Plant &	Plan &
	Buildings	Buildings	Machinery	Machinery
	£000	£000	£000	£000
In the first year In the second to fifth years inclusive In over five years	123	123 - 123	48 376 - 424	62 297 - 359

20. Pension Commitments

The group operates a defined contribution pension scheme, IRPC Group Limited Pension Fund, for its directors and employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the group in an independently administered fund. There were no unpaid contributions outstanding at the period end (1998: £nil).

21. Reconciliation of Shareholders funds and movement on reserves

	Share capital £000	Profit and loss account £000	Capital redemption reserve £000	Total Share- holders' funds £000
At 1 October 1998	2,119	1,641	2	3,762
Profit for period Dividends Other appropriations Share issue At 31 December 1999 Represented by:	7 1,778 3,904	1,322 (310) (7) (1,778) 868		1,322 (310) - - 4,774
Equity Non equity	1,976 1,928 3,904	868	2 - 2	2,846 1,928 4,774

22. Ultimate parent company and controlling party

The company is a wholly owned subsidiary undertaking of Wolters Kluwer (UK) plc, a company registered in England and Wales.

The ultimate parent company and largest group in which the results of the company are consolidated is that headed by Wolters Kluwer nv, a company incorporated in Holland. The consolidated accounts of Wolters Kluwer nv are available to the public and may be obtained from Croner House, 145 London Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 6SR.

No other group accounts include the results of the company.

The immediate controlling party is Wolters Kluwer (UK) plc.

The ultimate controlling party is Wolters Kluwer nv.