# Reports & Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2007

London & European Title Insurance Services Limited

Company Registration No: 4459633

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#### **COMPANY INFORMATION**

**DIRECTORS:** 

G M P Avenel

F M D Du Mourgues

C M Taylor C E Carter P F Garnier C Bearman D Godet

SECRETARY:

D Godet

**COMPANY NUMBER:** 

4459633

**REGISTERED OFFICE:** 

3rd Floor

5 - 10 Bury Street

London EC3A 5AT

**AUDITORS:** 

Mazars LLP

Tower Bridge House St Katharine's Way

LONDON E1W 1DD

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#### **DIRECTORS' REPORT**

The directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2007.

#### STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year 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 United Kingdom 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 maintaining 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 are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **REVIEW OF THE BUSINESS**

The principal activities of the company during the period were those of financial and insurance consultancy.

London & European faced numerous challenges throughout 2007, not least the impact of the sub-prime crisis in the second half of the year. This has led to a decrease in overall volumes towards the end of the year despite this, as can be seen in the Table 1 below, the company has managed to maintain the level of title insurance policies issued and titlesolv continues to grow in a very satisfactory manner.

% increase in cases	2007	2006
Title Insurance	0%	43%
Panel Management	-16%	92%
titlesolv	88%	130%

Table 1

Even though 2007 was a difficult year the total net income in the year increased by 8% as London & European managed to increase its margins in all areas of activity.

London & European invested in various activities during 2007. A new branch in the Republic of Ireland was set up and is expected to start bringing in income at the start of 2008. A new Complete Conveyancing system has been developed throughout 2007 and is also expected to go live in the 1st Quarter of 2008, this is a new web based property transaction management service for lenders and intermediaries. It is the only system to set target completion dates upon instruction for each and every case and real time connectivity between lenders, brokers and solicitors with innovative PDF mass document transfer technology

#### **DIRECTORS' REPORT (continued)**

Operating costs have risen significantly in 2007 but this has been well controlled and was under the budgeted figures.

An agreement was made on 19<sup>th</sup> April to issue 98,298 class B £1 shares to two directors. L&E Title Group Limited has written a put option over the shares which enables the managers to sell back the shares to L&E Title Group Limited at a transfer price based on a formula set out in the agreement. The result is that this event should be treated according to FRS20. The 98,298 shares issued are treated as a liability rather than equity and the grant fair value has been calculated based on the formula in the share purchase agreement.

The company has no research and development activities.

Both the level of business and the year end financial position were satisfactory.

Since 14 January 2005, the company has been authorised by the FSA as an insurance intermediary.

There are no important events affecting the company which have occurred since the end of the financial year 2007.

#### **FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The Company's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including the effects of foreign currency exchange rates and interest rates. The Company overall risk management policy focuses on monitoring potential adverse effects where considered material.

The Company accepts a certain degree of interest rate risk and other market price risks and continues to monitor these on an on-going basis. Prudent cash management is used to reduce any exposure to liquidity risk. The Company is monitoring its credit risk and has implemented new procedures to improve its cash management. It has professional indemnity insurance cover against any legal liability to compensate a third party.

#### **DIVIDENDS**

The directors recommended and paid an interim dividend of £800,000 (2006. £1,108,605).

#### **OWN SHARES**

The company does not hold any of its own shares: No loan has been taken on the company's shares

#### **DIRECTORS' INDEMNITY**

The company's articles of association do not provide an indemnity for directors of the company in respect of liabilities they may incur in the discharge of their duties or in the exercise of their powers

However, appropriate directors' liability insurance cover is in place in respect of all the company's directors

#### **DIRECTORS' REPORT (continued)**

#### **DIRECTORS**

The directors set out in the table below have held office during the whole of the period from 1 January 2007 to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

C M Taylor GMP Avenel C E Carter P F Garnier F M D De Mourgues C Bearman D Godet

#### **DIRECTORS' SHARE INTERESTS**

According to the Register of Directors' interests

- C Taylor holds 70,227 class B shares of £1
- C Bearman holds 28,071 class B shares of £1

No other director holding office on 31 December 2007 had any interests in the shares of the company or any other group company incorporated in Great Britain.

Mr Garnier is also a director of the immediate parent company.

#### STATEMENTS AS TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

The directors have taken all the necessary steps to make us aware, as directors, of any relevant information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information. As far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant information of which the company's auditors are unaware.

#### **AUDITORS**

Mazars LLP continued as the independent auditor to the company during the year.

Mazars LLP have signified their willingness to continue in office and a resolution will be proposed at the forthcoming annual general meeting

Approved by the Board on and signed on its behalf by

2008

Director

# INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBER OF LONDON & EUROPEAN TITLE INSURANCE SERVICES LIMITED

We have audited the financial statements of London & European Title Insurance Company Limited for the year ended 31 December 2007 which comprise the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheet and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 235 of the Companies Act 1985. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

#### Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

As described in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities the company's directors are responsible for the preparation of financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, whether the financial statements are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and whether the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements. We also report to you if, in our opinion, 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.

We read the Directors' Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatement.

#### **Basis of audit opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) 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.

#### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBER OF **LONDON & EUROPEAN TITLE INSURANCE SERVICES LIMITED (continued)**

#### **Opinion**

#### In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2007 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985; and
- the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Mazars LLP

Chartered Accountants

and Registered Auditors

Tower Bridge House

St Katharine's Way E1W 1DD

13 May 2008

# PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT For the year ended 31 December 2007

	Note	2007 £	2006 £
TURNOVER Cost of sales	1	9,203,473 (4,045,312)	9,690,304 (4,956,401)
GROSS PROFIT		5,158,161	4,733,903
Administrative expenses		(4,437,038)	(2,977,570)
OPERATING PROFIT	2	721,123	1,756,333
Other income Other interest receivable and similar income		865 137,439	63,918 81,549
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION		859,427	1,901,800
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	3	(165,327)	(490,082)
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTER TAXATION	12	694,100	£1,411,718

The company's turnover and expenses all relate to continuing operations

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those passing through the profit and loss account.

#### **BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2007**

	Note	2007 £	, £	2006 £	5 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	6		519,722		277,073
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors and prepayments Cash at bank and in hand	7	1,224,482 3,674,244		1,307,579 4,081,506	
		4,898,726		5,389,085	
CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	8	(3,212,192)		(3,850,485)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			1,686,534		1,538,600
CREDITORS AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	9		(98,298)		
NET ASSETS			£2,107,958		£1,815,673
CAPITAL AND RESERVES					
Called up share capital Profit and loss account Capital Contribution	11 13 13		603,955 1,105,818 398,185		603,955 1,211,718 ————
EQUITY SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS	12		£2,107,958		£1,815,673

The financial statements were approved by the board and authorised for issue on 12th May 2008. They were signed on its behalf by

Director

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 31 December 2007

#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### (a) Basis of accounting

#### • Accounting Convention

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

#### • Exemptions Applied

London and European Title Insurance Services Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of L&E Title Group Limited — It is not therefore required to prepare a cash flow statement or to disclose details of transactions with entities belonging to the group.

#### (b) Turnover

Turnover includes commission due on premiums written on behalf of accepting insurers and fees receivable from clients in respect of conveyancing and related services. The gross value of premiums written in the year was £8,783,012 (2006: £8,185,363)

#### (c) Cost of sales

Cost of sales represents fees payable by the company in respect of the conveyancing and related services it provides to its clients

#### (d) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and office equipment Computer equipment

- 20% straight line per annum
- 33% straight line per annum

#### (e) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease

#### (f) Taxation and deferred tax

Current tax is provided at amounts expected to be paid (or recovered) using the rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet data.

Deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed at the balance sheet date.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 31 December 2007 (continued)

#### 2. OPERATING PROFIT

Current tax charge

3.

Operating profit is stated after charging:	2007 £	2006 £
Depreciation on owned assets Hire of other assets – operating leases Auditors' fees	78,781 29,641	113,090 22,759
<ul> <li>for audit services</li> <li>for non-audit services</li> <li>Loss on sale of tangible assets</li> </ul>	27,200 26,642 108	14,568 15,432 107
TAX ON PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES		
Paged on the profit for the year	2007 £	2006 £
Based on the profit for the year Corporation tax @ 30% Adjustments in respect of prior periods	206,460 70,792	597,172 (107,090) -
Deferred Tax	277,252 (111,492)	490,082
	£165,327	£490,082
	2007 £	2006 £
Profit on ordinary activities before tax	859,427 	1,901,800
Profit on ordinary activities multiplied by standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 30% Effects of:	257,828	570,540
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes Capital allowances in excess of depreciation Other timing differences	15,192 (17,892) (48,668)	26,632 - -
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	70,792	(107,090)

£277,252

£490,082

#### 4. STAFF COSTS

		2007 £	2006 £
	Wages and salaries Social security costs	1,896,699 306,946	1,261,938 144,371
		£2,203,645	£1,406,309
	The average number of persons, including executive Directors, employed by the Company during the year was	2007 Number	2006 Number
	Management Administration	6 24 30	6 17 23
5.	DIRECTORS' EMOLUMENTS		
		2007 £	2006 £
	Total emoluments other than relating to pensions Amounts relating to pensions	708,837 52,500	504,193 48,404
	Total Remuneration	761,337	552,597
	The above emoluments include the following amounts paid	to the highest p	aid director:
	Emoluments other than relating to pensions Amounts relating to pensions	366,268 30,000	254,553 27,404
	Total Remuneration	396,268	281,957

#### 6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures, fittings and office equipment £
COST At 1 January 2007 Additions Disposals	480,194 321,429 (38,419)
At 31 December 2007	763,204
DEPRECIATION At 1 January 2007 Charge for the period Disposals	203,120 78,781 (38,419)
At 31 December 2007	243,482
NET BOOK VALUES At 31 December 2007	£5 <u>19,722</u>
At 31 December 2006	£277,073

#### 7. DEBTORS: DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2007 £	2006 £
Trade debtors Amounts owed by group undertakings Other debtors Prepayments Deferred Tax Asset	845,898 15,401 135,563 116,128 111,492	1,078,332 589 118,431 110,227
	£1,224,482	£1,307,579

#### 8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2007 £	2006 £
Trade creditors Corporation tax Other taxation and social security costs Other creditors Accruals and deferred income Amounts owed to group undertakings	1,805,946 120,417 - 1,030,643 255,186	2,283,677 74,795 167,385 686,509 412,937 225,182
CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER O	£3,212,192  ONE YEAR	£3,850,485

#### 9.

	2007 £	2006 £
Share based payment liability at fair value	98,298	0

#### 10. **DIVIDENDS**

	2007 £	2006 £
Interim dividends paid of £1.32 per share (2006: £1.84)	£800,000	£1,108,605

#### 11. **SHARE CAPITAL**

			Allotted	, issued and
	Authorised			fully paid
	2007	2006	2007	2006
	£	£	£	£
Ordinary shares of £1 each	£603,955	£603,955	£603,955	£603,955

#### 12. RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS

	2007 £	2006 £
Profit for the financial year Capital contribution (see note 13) Dividends paid (see note 10)	694,100 398,185 (800,000)	1,411,718 - (1,108,605)
Net addition to shareholders' funds	292,285	303,113
Opening shareholders' funds	1,815,673	1,512,560
Closing shareholders' funds	2,107,958 ———	1,815,673

#### 13. RESERVES

	Capital Contribution £	Profit and loss Account £
At 1 January 2007 Movements in the year	398,185	1,211,718 (105,900)
At 31 December 2007	398,185	£1,105,818

The capital contribution represents the grant fair value of the put option written by L&E Title Group Limited.

#### 14. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 December 2007 and 2006 respectively the company was committed to making the following payments under non-cancellable operating leases other than in respect of land and buildings.

	2007	2006
	£	£
Operating leases which expire:		
Within 1 year	2,659	25,353
Within 2 to 5 years	46,117	20,414
Over 5 years	, <u>-</u>	-
•	<del></del>	

On 30 August 2005, the company entered into a 5 year lease in respect of office premises

#### 15. PARENT UNDERTAKING AND CONTROLLING PARTY

The directors regard April Group, a company incorporated in France as the Company's ultimate holding company and controlling party.

The immediate parent company is L&E Title Group Limited