

BOOK REVIEWS

1. "WORLD INSURANCE 1986" FINANCIAL TIMES INTERNATIONAL YEAR BOOKS LONGMAN GROUP £57

It is always difficult to review a year book of this variety as so much of the content is really an address book. The best test of a reference book is of course to refer to it and accordingly World Insurance has lived on my desk for some weeks. During that time I have come both to like it and discover its shortcomings. All is subjective and it is therefore necessary to examine usage and requirements to reach a balanced judgement.

The Book which is some 600 pages is split into several sections but all are coloured white. I found difficulty in persuading my volume to open regularly at the right section and came to the conclusion that the page edge at least should be in different colours denoting the Sections the principal of which are:

Companies listed on a country by country basis (alphabetically within it), a Classes written index and Company Index. Each of the Country entries commences with a well written and highly informative synopsis of the material position under the three main heads of National Statistics, Chamber of Commerce, Insurance Law and Regulation. Interesting as the first two is the third section which is probably the most useful as it is one of the best simple synopses that I have seen of the Insurance Law and Regulation within a territory. I would venture to suggest that the Year Book is almost worth buying solely for those notes. The content varies from country to country as does the insurance law, for some there is a lengthy format, for others a short and for some nothing – causing me to speculate whether there is any law.

The Company entries give the usual information but not necessarily all that one wants. A few times when I have needed to check a UK insurer I found the necessity to consult "the little green book" which lives by my desk. However criticism does not mean that the book is not worthwhile, far from it, for it is a concise World Handbook which cannot really be expected to compete with a purely local one.

There is also a very useful section entitled "Associations" and here on territory by territory basis we find the details of the leading associations (naturally including BILA). These entries contain sufficient information to

decide which body one requires by detailing the objectives as well as the address and details of the Officers.

This volume has certainly found a place with my quick reference books at the side of my desk.

M.A.C.

2. "REINSURANCE LAW"

BY JOHN BUTLER AND ROBERT MERKIN

If there is one area of insurance law in England which has seen a significant increase in activity over the past decade it is reinsurance. Case after case comes before the Commercial Court, some go to appeal and the odd one, like the recent *South Carolina v. Seven Provinces* case, even finds its way into the House of Lords.

Reflecting this development there has been an equivalent increase in the number of articles published and even conferences organised dealing with reinsurance law problems. Practitioners have therefore has a fair amount of information to go on and reference could always be made to the chapters dedicated to reinsurance law in the standard works of Professor Carter and, although more from the German point of view, Dr. Klaus Gerathewohl. What has been lacking, however, is an up to date work which deals extensively and clearly with all aspects of reinsurance law from the English point of view. For this reason the publication of "Reinsurance Law" in October 1986 is to be warmly welcomed.

John Butler, the senior author, is already well-known as the legal correspondent of "Reinsurance" and he has been joined by Robert Merkin, Director of Research at Richards Butler and Visiting Lecturer at the Centre for Commercial Law Studies at London University's Queen Mary College, to produce a work which, with its intended continuing flow of supplements, should quickly establish itself as a valuable addition to the bookshelves of both reinsurance underwriters and their legal advisers.

The format chosen by Kluwer, the publishers, is that which they used for their 2-volume work "Regulation of Insurance in the United Kingdom and Ireland", namely a loose-leaf hard back volume clearly broken down into quickly identifiable sections.

Part A is headed "Principles of Reinsurance Law" and covers such basic matters as the different forms of reinsurance, how reinsurance has developed