

Backchat Insider's Market matrix

ONE STEP FORWARD

All in a tangle

Solvency II, stress tests ... what fresh tasks will the FSA and its Euro counterparts find to fill insurers' days? "There's only so much fun you can have with your regulator," ABI financial regulation director Peter Vipond quipped as he contemplated the lengthening list of demands at a conference last week.



Jolly green giants

Congratulations to eco-friendly insurers Aviva and RSA. Aviva has the lowest greenhouse gas emissions out of Europe's 300 biggest companies, according to the Environmental Investment Organisation. RSA also made it into the top 10 for low emissions.



Theft cut down to size

Ecclesiastical's crackdown on the theft of lead from church roofs has clearly been effective - now the thieves are turning to smaller prey, stealing lead from a building in Merrivale Model Village, Great Yarmouth.



Living on the edge

Life as a professional indemnity broker can be hard - but that's not why Simon Lovat of United Insurance Brokers will be staring down the side of Canary Wharf in a couple of weeks. He's abseiling down the building to raise money for London Air Ambulance - let's just hope he doesn't need to call on its services himself.



TAXI!



Silence in the back!

At the Barbican music event *Live in the City* last week, a packed bar full of braying brokers were repeatedly told to be quiet so the musicians could play in peace. Suffice to say, being admonished like naughty school children went down like a lead balloon.

Champing at the bit

Brokers are entrepreneurs by nature. Show them a three-day working week and they will see an opportunity for an 11-day holiday. One broker enjoying a well-earned break is Ian Gosden of Higos, who has been up in Scotland cheering on his racehorse, Nick's Delight, at the Perth races. Tally ho!

CHEERS!

Skål and skål again

MCE Insurance owners Mike and Julian Edwards are keeping the flag flying for the UK. On a recent business trip to Denmark, the host insisted on keeping the drinks flowing into the early hours. Of course, they didn't fail in their duties, despite having an early flight the next day. Ouch!



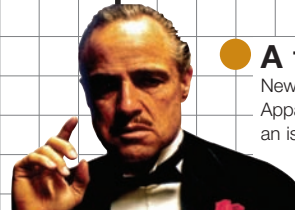
Off the meter

You can always rely on a London taxi driver for some straight-talking, own-brand wisdom. I hear Aviva's Sam Hudson was in the back of a cab recently when the driver revealed his secret for getting great motor insurance deals every time - by lying on his application form.



A family affair

News reaches me of this year's Aviva lovefest. Apparently, it won't be on a boat this year, but an island - none other than Sicily. Now let me guess: Mark Hodges will be making brokers an offer they can't refuse?



TWO STEPS BACK



020 7618 (extension number)

firstname.surname@insurancetimes.co.uk

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firstname.surname@newsquestspecialistmedia.com

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