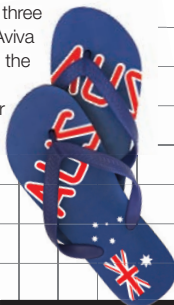


Backchat Insider's Market matrix

ONE STEP FORWARD

● Slow start south

And how long is Aviva UK's new chief executive expected to remain in post? Just a few months ago, when Trevor Matthews' current employer Friends Provident announced that he was stepping down as chief executive of the life insurer, he said that he was planning to return to his native Australia within the next three years. Maybe Aviva has persuaded the keen surfer to stick around for a little longer.



● It's a goal

Amanda Blanc could get up to £1.5m from the Towergate flotation, but it wasn't enough to keep her at the consolidator. Bearing that in mind, I wonder how much former Aviva UK boss Mark Hodges stands to make if he takes Towergate to a successful listing? Who knows, the avid Norwich City fan might even outdo friend and Towergate founder Peter Cullum, and buy the team.



● Sight for sore Ellis

After months of training, Grant Ellis is getting stuck into his charity bike ride in Africa. The Broker Network chairman is pedalling across the dirt tracks in Zambia, desperately trying to avoid saddle sores. He found time to pose with his favourite mag, *Insurance Times* (see pic), in front of Victoria Falls. Go to goo.gl/ldzTv to read Grant's blog and donate at www.justgiving.com/grantellis



● With altitude

Congratulations to Hiscox chief operating officer Alan Millard, who fought his way to the top of Mount Everest last month. Standing on the roof of the world, Alan took some photographs to capture the moment, including some photos of the Hiscox logo. You can take the man out of insurance, but you can't take insurance out of the man.

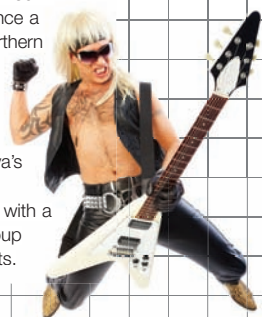


TAXI!

CHEERS!

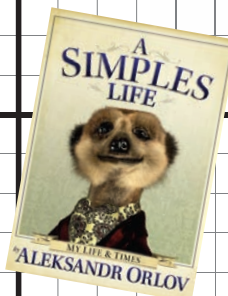
● Let's hear it

What is it about insurance and rock? First we learn LV= managing director John O'Roarke was once a member of a Northern punk band, and now it transpires that John McFarlane, touted to be Aviva's new chairman, began his career with a Scottish rock group called The Sekrets.



● Compare this

Teenager Adam Catherick's encounter with a cute meerkat, inspired by the CompareTheMarket TV ad campaign, ended up costing him a £1,000 fine and a 60-day suspended prison sentence. The meerkat, which the 19-year-old removed from a wildlife park in Kent, was even more unlucky: after escaping from a dog cage at Catherick's home, it was run over by a car and killed, then dumped in a bin.



● Letter of the law

I'm not the only one baffled by solicitors' acronyms. The Solicitors Regulation Authority changed the Law Society's proposals for an extended renewal period (ERP) to EPP (for extended policy period). This, says Law Society head of regulation Elliott Vigar, is because even his mate at the SRA couldn't remember what it was called.



TWO STEPS BACK



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