

Opening Statement by Mr. Michael Garvey, Chief Executive Officer, IPB Insurance to Oireachtas Joint Committee on Rural & Community Development

Wednesday 15th May 2019

I would like to thank the Chair, Deputy Carey and the Members of the Committee for inviting IPB Insurance (IPB) to participate in discussions on the topic of “Indemnity and participants including volunteers in various State and EU funded schemes”.

I am accompanied by our Director of Underwriting, Mr. Matt Rafferty and our Head of Claims, Mr. Michael Whelehan and we look forward to engaging with the Committee and hope that we can be of assistance in this morning’s discussion.

Introduction

By way of introduction to those of you who may not be familiar with IPB Insurance, I would like to take this opportunity to give you a brief history and background to the company. The name IPB is an acronym for Irish Public Bodies stemming from our position as the mutual insurer of public bodies and local authorities in Ireland. Today IPB is the only wholly Irish-owned mutual insurer in the market.

The story of IPB’s origins and early development is inextricably bound-up in the challenge that faced the first government of the Irish Free State in the 1920s. The rationale for the creation of Irish Public Bodies was the realisation by the State that profits generated from the premiums paid by a large number of Irish public bodies were resulting in net capital outflows from the State.

IPB was therefore established in 1926 to protect the insurable interests of its’ Members who have evolved over time and now consist of the State’s local authorities, Education & Training Boards, Regional Assemblies and the HSE. We also protect a range of State, semi-state and public service related organisations.

As a mutual, our ethos and business model means that we are not motivated by growth or profit. Our motivation is to protect the insurable interests of our Members and related stakeholders in a responsible and sustainable manner for their mutual benefit.

We are a specialist insurer within the liability insurance market. Our risk appetite is reflective of our Member’s risk profile and similar risks closely aligned to our Members activities. We operate in niche markets within our stated risk appetite including State and semi-state organisations and agencies, health, education, sport, community-focused services and other areas of service to the public.

Added Value Insurance Offering

IPB provides a wide range of products designed to protect Members’ such as Public Liability, Employers Liability, Property and Motor Fleet. We also provide additional covers to address new and emerging risks such as Cyber & Data Security and Environmental Impairment protection. A key feature of our approach is that we continuously evolve our product and risk management solutions to reflect the changing risk profile of our Members and to ensure we have the capacity to transfer all their insurance risk and exposure from their balance sheet to ours.

We also provide a range of additional services to Members free of charge including risk management solutions through our dedicated Risk Management team. We provide ongoing training to Members and non-Members through nationwide risk conferences, risk remediation supports and insurance clinics. We also provide a contractor insurance advisory service as well as other features and benefits including risk guides and risk training videos. Over the past 6 years we have delivered risk management seminars and conferences to in excess of 10,000 delegates from Member and client organisations.

IPB Involvement with State/EU funded Schemes

In relation to the topic for discussion this morning, IPB Insurance provides a range of insurance covers for State/EU funded schemes including Community Employment Schemes (CES), the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and Tús, the community work placement scheme.

With specific regard to employment schemes such as the RSS and Tús, IPB has been insuring these schemes since 2014. We acquired this business through a competitive process within the insurance market by an appointed insurance broker. IPB provides Public Liability, Employers Liability, Personal Accident, Property and Motor Special Types insurance cover to these schemes.

Since 2017, IPB has been insuring a number of the Community Employment schemes, which again was secured following a competitive process through an insurance broker. We provide Employers Liability, Public Liability, Fidelity Guarantee Insurance, Professional Indemnity and Employers Practices Liability Insurance to these schemes.

We insure approximately 17,000 individuals participating across all three schemes, which are broadly involved in the same type of community-based work activities which include;

- Clerical, shop assistant, care/creche assistance type work.
- Services to the community & elderly including house/attic insulation, light repairs, DIY, day care and meals-on-wheels.
- Community projects including, tidy towns, care and maintenance of community centres and sports clubs, upkeep of common community areas canal/river walks, hedge cutting, wall building among others.
- Light construction projects around heritage or community owned properties.

Supporting Communities

Our Mutual ethos is centred around our Members and we understand the important role we play in protecting our Members to provide them with peace of mind and the freedom to focus on delivering for their local communities. We are also actively involved in supporting social and community initiative through Government and Member partnerships. We are currently co-funding a €1.6m programme with the Department of Rural & Community Development to support social enterprises nationwide working with our Local Authority Members.

To conclude, I wish again to thank you for the opportunity to attend and we look forward to assisting this morning's discussion and addressing any questions you may have.

ENDS.