

#### GAIM CAYMAN 2009

# Taking a Global Look at Risk Control – What are the Internal and External Structures That Need to Be in Place?

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- Credit Risk Control Too Big to Fail?
- Operational Risk Front/Middle/Back Office Segregation
- Financial Reporting Risk Valuation Independence
- Auditor Risk Large & Slow, Small & Fast
- Jurisdictional Risk "COMI" Centre of Main Interest
- Taxation Risk COMI Implications
- Marketing Risk Agency and Regulator Issues
- Product Risk Fully Understood?

#### **Summary & Implications for Cayman Islands**



# **Introduction**

#### 1. Regular fund sector collapses

- Asia 1997
- Russia 1998
- Dot-com 2001
- Sub-prime 2007
- Madoff et al., 2008

#### 2. Global War against Risk - is anyone winning?

- Investors? "Safe Haven" to Dante's Inferno!!!
- Governments? G20 & Black-lists
- Regulators & Law Enforcement? Headless chickens....
- Rating Agencies? Above redress?
- Managers? Crushed by overheads and reporting...
- Support Service Providers? Pay-as-you-go, yes please....



# Risk Categories - Investment / Trading Risk

- 1. Are risks fully understood Front Office, Middle Office, Back Office, different perspectives?
- 2. Who monitors leverage and liquidity?
- 3. Cross Default and Umbrella Clauses?
- 4). Rating Risk Are ratings worth the paper they are written on?
- 5). Stress testing the investment portfolio



# Risk Categories - Credit Risk Control

- 1. Counterparty risk too big to fail?
- 2. Ratings (again..) downgrades when it is too late!!
- 3. Segregated vs Co-mingled accounts



## Risk Categories - Operational Risk

- 1. Are Front Office, Middle Office, Back Office truly independent?
- 2. Are Front Office, Middle Office, Back Office truly co-ordinated?
- 3. Are Service providers on the same page as the Fund?



## Risk Categories - Financial Reporting Risk

- 1. Who really compiles the NAV?
- 2. "Look-back" audit risk time delay from NAV to audit
- 3. Securities pricing independent, or possible?
- 4. Reported Performance subject to shock external risks, e.g. rating downgrades (again..)



## Risk Categories - Auditor Risk

- 1. Large & Slow, Small & Fast
  - Big name provides respectability/recognition, but slow!!!
  - Small firms can move quicker, but concerns re. name recognition! (N.B. Madoff situation...)
- 2. Now over-caution could lead to bigger delays, NAV backlogs etc..



## Risk Categories - Jurisdictional Risk

- 1. How to keep offshore funds offshore?
  - Ten Commandments
  - Centre of Main Interest ("COMI") is where?
- 2. US Treasury Secretary pragmatism relaxed rules August 1997, President Clinton's Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997
- 3. Shortage of skilled personnel US/EEC depth CITCO, HSBC/Bank of Bermuda set up in the USA
- 4. USA rulings Bear Stears, Basis, where was COMI?



## Risk Categories - Taxation Risk

- 1. Now the taxman is hungry, there are deficits to feed...
- 2. If a judge can't establish a COMI offshore, then why should the IRS??
- 3. G20 initiatives to bash off-shore financial centres, easy to win votes with the disaffected populus
- 4. "if it moves tax it!!!"
  - New York State and NBA basketball games
  - Wembley 2010 and European Champions League
  - Liechtenstein



### Risk Categories - Marketing Risk

- 1. Are your marketers able to fully present on investment risk?
  - Does the Manager fully explains risks to marketers?
  - Can the marketers understand the risks enough to explain them
- 2. How are marketers kept honest? Churn vs burn..
  - "I sell the fund to earn a Sales Charge, not identify risks"
- 3. Can regulator's help? simple, standardised statements
  - Wouldn't this save time, money and resources??
- 4. Investors focus on returns, not risks...
  - Greed blinds all!!
  - Coloured charts vs boring legal disclaimers
- 5. Eligible vs Knowledgeable investors !!
  - "A fool and his money are soon parted.."



### Risk Categories - Product Risk

- 1. Structure of Product fully understood?
  - What exactly am I investing in?
  - And what assumptions provide for the investment case?
- 2. Mechanics of fund invest/redeem/suspend
  - How does the fund work in practice?
  - Can I rely on the administrator?
- 3. Stress-testing the fund innocuous clauses
  - Illiquidity issues
  - Leverage changes and response
  - Cash management in what?
- 4. Shareholder Rights
  - Can we take control, can we vote?
  - What rights do I actually have?



# **Summary**

- 1. The World is now re-examining risk!!
- 2. Previous assumptions have been challenged
- 3. The Fund Industry will be hampered for years
- 4. Smart Managers will always attract Smart Money
- 5. Regulators need to work with, not punish the industry!!



#### **Implications for Cayman Islands**

- 1. Need to market/promote role as global team player
  - Image vs reality
  - Keep up to date on global risk developments
- 2. Attract and facilitate residency of experienced expats
  - Switzerland vs Cayman
  - "Go it alone" → "Going backwards.."
  - Risk paradigm shifts start elsewhere..
- 3. Recognise two-facedness of governments
  - Off-shore financial centres are easy prey
  - Compliance risk vs return
- 4. Encourage "10 Commandments"
  - Transactional management, investments reviewed/executed locally
  - Directors (non-boiler-plate..) with global experience
  - Local Board meetings, shareholder communications, bank accounts
  - Local service providers