

Allied World Assurance Co Holdings, AG

Form 10-K

March 01, 2011

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**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549**

Form 10-K

(Mark One)

- ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**
For the fiscal year ended **December 31, 2010**
- TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**
For the transition period from to

Commission file number: 001-32938

ALLIED WORLD ASSURANCE COMPANY HOLDINGS, AG
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Switzerland
*(State or Other Jurisdiction of
Incorporation or Organization)*

98-0681223
*(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)*

Lindenstrasse 8, 6340 Baar, Zug, Switzerland
(Address of Principal Executive Offices and Zip Code)

41-41-768-1080
(Registrant's Telephone Number, Including Area Code)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Each Class	Name of Each Exchange on Which Registered
Common Shares, par value CHF 15.00 per share	New York Stock Exchange, Inc.

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None

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Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of the registrant's knowledge, in the definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company
(Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). Yes No

The aggregate market value of voting and non-voting common shares held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of June 30, 2010 (the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter) was approximately \$2.3 billion based on the closing sale price of the registrant's common shares on the New York Stock Exchange on that date.

As of February 21, 2011, 38,020,802 common shares were outstanding.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The registrant's definitive proxy statement to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Regulation 14A with respect to the annual general meeting of the shareholders of the registrant scheduled to be held on May 5, 2011 is incorporated in Part III of this Form 10-K.

ALLIED WORLD ASSURANCE COMPANY HOLDINGS, AG

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PART I

References in this Annual Report on Form 10-K to the terms we, us, our, the company or other similar terms mean consolidated operations of Allied World Assurance Company Holdings, AG, a Swiss holding company, and our consolidated subsidiaries, unless the context requires otherwise. References in this Form 10-K to the terms Allied World Switzerland or Holdings means only Allied World Assurance Company Holdings, AG. References to our insurance subsidiaries may include our reinsurance subsidiaries. References in this Form 10-K to \$ are to the lawful currency of the United States and to CHF are to the lawful currency of Switzerland. References in this Form 10-K to Holdings common shares means its registered voting shares and non-voting participation certificates. For your convenience, we have included a glossary beginning on page 53 of selected insurance and reinsurance terms.

Item 1. Business.

Overview

We are a Swiss-based specialty insurance and reinsurance company that underwrites a diversified portfolio of property and casualty lines of business through offices located in Bermuda, Hong Kong, Ireland, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. For the year ended December 31, 2010, our U.S. insurance, international insurance and reinsurance segments accounted for 41.5%, 28.7% and 29.8%, respectively, of our total gross premiums written of \$1,758.4 million. As of December 31, 2010, we had \$10,427.6 million of total assets and \$3,075.8 million of shareholders' equity.

We were formed in Bermuda in November 2001. On December 1, 2010, Holdings became the ultimate parent company of Allied World Assurance Company Holdings, Ltd, the former publicly-traded Bermuda holding company (Allied World Bermuda), and its subsidiaries as a result of a redomestication effected pursuant to a scheme of arrangement under Bermuda law (the Redomestication).

Since our formation, we have focused primarily on the direct insurance markets. We offer our clients and producers significant capacity in both the direct property and casualty insurance markets as well as the reinsurance market.

Internationally, we first established a presence in Europe when Allied World Assurance Company (Europe) Limited was approved to carry on business in the European Union (EU) from its office in Ireland in October 2002 and from a branch office in London in May 2003. Allied World Assurance Company (Reinsurance) Limited was approved to write reinsurance in the EU from its office in Ireland in July 2003 and from a branch office in London, England in August 2004. In October 2008, we expanded our European presence when Allied World Assurance Company (Reinsurance) Limited opened a branch office in Zug, Switzerland to further penetrate the European market.

In July 2002, we established a presence in the United States when we acquired two insurance companies, Allied World Assurance Company (U.S.) Inc. and Allied World National Assurance Company. In recent years we have made substantial investments to expand our North American business, which has grown significantly since 2009 and which we expect will continue to grow in size and importance in the coming years. In February 2008, we acquired a U.S. reinsurance company we subsequently renamed Allied World Reinsurance Company, and we write our U.S. reinsurance business through this company. In October 2008, we acquired Darwin Professional Underwriters, Inc. and its subsidiaries (collectively, Darwin) to further expand our U.S. insurance platform. We currently have nine offices in the United States and we have recently become licensed in Canada.

In early 2010, we received approval from Lloyd's of London (Lloyd's) to establish a syndicate at Lloyd's. Our new Lloyd's syndicate, Syndicate 2232, commenced underwriting in June 2010. Syndicate 2232 is managed by Capita Managing Agency Limited, a subsidiary of The Capita Group PLC, which is authorized by the Financial Services Authority in the United Kingdom (the FSA). In July 2010, we received approval from the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Lloyd's Asia to register and operate a service company, Capita 2232 Services Pte. Ltd. As part of the Lloyd's Asia platform, the service company underwrites exclusively on behalf of Syndicate 2232. Syndicate 2232, via the service company, offers a broad range of insurance and reinsurance treaty products from

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Singapore, including property, casualty and specialty lines, to clients in the Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa regions.

Our corporate expansion continued into Asia when Allied World Assurance Company, Ltd opened branch offices in Hong Kong in March 2009 and in Singapore in December 2009. We have undergone significant corporate expansion since our formation, and we now have 15 offices located in seven different countries.

Available Information

We maintain a website at www.awac.com. The information on our website is not incorporated by reference in this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

We make available, free of charge through our website, our financial information, including the information contained in our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish such material to, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC). We also make available, free of charge through our website, our Audit Committee Charter, Compensation Committee Charter, Investment Committee Charter, Nominating & Corporate Governance Committee Charter, Enterprise Risk Committee Charter, Corporate Governance Guidelines, Code of Ethics for CEO and Senior Financial Officers and Code of Business Conduct and Ethics. Such information is also available in print for any shareholder who sends a request to Allied World Assurance Company Holdings, AG, Lindenstrasse 8, 6340 Baar, Zug, Switzerland, attention: Wesley D. Dupont, Corporate Secretary, or via e-mail to secretary@awac.com. Reports and other information we file with the SEC may also be viewed at the SEC's website at www.sec.gov or viewed or obtained at the SEC Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20549. Information on the operation of the SEC Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330.

Our Strategy

Our business objective is to generate attractive returns on equity and book value per share growth for our shareholders. We seek to achieve this objective by executing the following strategies:

Capitalize on profitable underwriting opportunities. Our experienced management and underwriting teams are positioned to locate and identify business with attractive risk/reward characteristics. We pursue a strategy that emphasizes profitability, not market share. Key elements of this strategy are prudent risk selection, appropriate pricing and adjusting our business mix to remain flexible and opportunistic. We seek ways to take advantage of underwriting opportunities that we believe will be profitable.

Exercise underwriting and risk management discipline. We believe we exercise underwriting and risk management discipline by: (i) maintaining a diverse spread of risk in our books of business across product lines and geographic zones; (ii) managing our aggregate property catastrophe exposure through the application of sophisticated modeling tools; (iii) monitoring our exposures on non-property catastrophe coverages; (iv) adhering to underwriting guidelines across our business lines; and (v) fostering a culture that focuses on enterprise risk management and strong internal controls.

Maintain a conservative investment strategy. We believe that we follow a conservative investment strategy designed to emphasize the preservation of our capital and provide adequate liquidity for the prompt payment of claims. Our investment portfolio consists primarily of investment-grade, fixed-maturity securities of short- to medium-term duration.

Our premium revenues are generated by operations conducted from our corporate headquarters in Switzerland and our other offices in Bermuda, Europe, Hong Kong, Singapore and the United States. For information concerning our gross premiums written by geographic location of underwriting office, see Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Results of Operations Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009 and Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2009 and 2008.

Table of Contents**Our Operating Segments**

We have three business segments: U.S. insurance, international insurance and reinsurance. These segments and their respective lines of business and products may, at times, be subject to different underwriting cycles. We modify our product strategy as market conditions change and new opportunities emerge by developing new products, targeting new industry classes or de-emphasizing existing lines. Our diverse underwriting skills and flexibility allow us to concentrate on the business lines where we expect to generate the greatest returns. Financial data relating to our three segments is included in Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and in our consolidated financial statements included in this report.

The gross premiums written in each segment for the years ended December 31, 2010, 2009 and 2008 were as follows:

Operating Segments	Year Ended December 31, 2010		Year Ended December 31, 2009		Year Ended December 31, 2008	
	Gross Premiums Written		Gross Premiums Written		Gross Premiums Written	
	\$ (In millions)	% of Total	\$ (In millions)	% of Total	\$ (In millions)	% of Total
U.S. insurance	\$ 729.3	41.5	\$ 674.8	39.8	\$ 320.0	22.2
International insurance	504.9	28.7	555.9	32.8	695.5	48.1
Reinsurance	524.2	29.8	465.6	27.4	430.1	29.7
Total	\$ 1,758.4	100.0%	\$ 1,696.3	100.0%	\$ 1,445.6	100.0%

U.S. Insurance Segment***General***

The U.S. insurance segment includes our direct insurance operations in the United States. Within this segment we provide an increasingly diverse range of specialty liability products, with a particular emphasis on coverages for healthcare and professional liability risks. Additionally, we offer a selection of direct general casualty insurance and general property insurance products. We generally target small and middle-market, non-Fortune 1000 accounts domiciled in North America, including public entities, private companies and non-profit organizations. Over the past few years, we have enhanced our U.S. insurance operating platform, principally through hiring underwriting talent, through an expanded network of branch offices located in strategically important locations across the country and through upgrades to our information technology platform to accommodate our increasing business demands. We believe improvements to our operating platform have allowed us to assume and maintain a leading role as a writer of primary professional liability and other specialty liability coverage for small firms. We will continue to seek attractive opportunities in the U.S. market.

The chart below illustrates the breakdown of the company's U.S. direct insurance gross premiums written by line of business for the year ended December 31, 2010.

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Products and Customer Base

Our casualty operations in the United States focus on insurance products providing coverage for specialty type risks, such as professional liability, environmental liability, product liability and healthcare liability risks, and we offer commercial general liability products as well. Professional liability products include policies covering directors and officers, employment practices and fiduciary liability insurance. We also offer a diverse mix of errors and omissions liability coverages for a variety of service providers, including law firms, technology companies, insurance companies, insurance agents and brokers, and municipalities. We regularly assess our product mix, and we evaluate new products and markets where we believe our underwriting and service will allow us to differentiate our offerings. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our professional liability business accounted for 28.9%, or \$211.1 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

We also provide both primary and excess liability and other casualty coverages to the healthcare industry, including hospitals and hospital systems, managed care organizations and medical facilities such as home care providers, specialized surgery and rehabilitation centers, and outpatient clinics. Our healthcare operations in the U.S. targets small and middle-market accounts. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our healthcare business accounted for 24.5%, or \$179.8 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

In late 2009, we commenced writing environmental liability business by offering a line of environmental casualty products covering the pollution and related liability exposures of general contractors, tank installers, remediation contractors and others. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our environmental casualty business accounted for approximately 1.8%, or \$13.4 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

With respect to general casualty products, we provide both primary and excess liability coverage, and our focus is on complex risks in a variety of industries including construction, real estate, public entities, retailers, manufacturing, transportation, and finance and insurance services. We also offer comprehensive workers compensation insurance to employees working outside of the United States on contracts for agencies of the U.S. government of foreign operations of U.S. companies. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our general casualty business accounted for 20.0%, or \$145.7 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

Our U.S. property insurance operations provide direct coverage of physical property and business interruption coverage for commercial property risks. We write solely commercial coverages and concentrate our efforts on primary risk layers of insurance (as opposed to excess layers), offering meaningful but limited capacity in these layers. This means that we are typically part of the first group of insurers that cover a loss up to a specified limit. Our underwriters are spread among our locations in the United States because we believe it is important to be physically present in the major insurance markets where we compete for business.

We offer general property products from our underwriting platforms in the United States, and cover risks for retail chains, real estate, manufacturers, hotels and casinos, and municipalities. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our general property business accounted for 10.2%, or \$73.7 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

We currently have a total of nine insurance programs in the United States, offering a variety of products including professional liability, excess casualty and primary general liability. We retain responsibility for administration of claims, although we may opt to outsource claims in selected situations. Before we enter into a program administration relationship, we analyze historic loss data associated with the program business and perform a diligence review of the administrator's underwriting, financial condition and information technology. In selecting program administrators, we consider the integrity, experience and reputation of the program administrator, the availability of reinsurance and the potential profitability of the business. In order to assure the continuing integrity of the underwriting and related

business operations in our program business, we conduct additional reviews and audits of the program administrator on an ongoing basis. To help align our interests with those of our program administrators, we seek to include profit incentives based on long-term underwriting results as a component of their fees. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our program business accounted for 14.6%, or \$105.7 million, of our total gross premiums written in the U.S. insurance segment.

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For more information concerning our gross premiums written by line of business in our U.S. insurance segment, see Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Results of Operations U.S. Insurance Segment Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009 and Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2009 and 2008.

Distribution

Within our U.S. insurance segment, insurance policies are placed through a network of over 200 insurance intermediaries, including excess and surplus lines wholesalers and regional and national retail brokerage firms. A subset of these intermediaries also access certain of our U.S. casualty products via our proprietary *i-bind* platform that allows for accelerated quote and bind capabilities through the Internet. Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc. (Marsh) accounted for approximately 10% of gross premiums written in this segment during 2010.

International Insurance Segment

General

The international insurance segment includes our established direct insurance operations outside of the United States. It includes our operations in Bermuda, Europe and Asia. Our Bermuda operations underwrite primarily larger, Fortune 1000 casualty and property risks for accounts domiciled in North America, and have entered into a relationship with Latin American Underwriters to offer trade credit and political risk coverages primarily for clients doing business in Latin America and the Caribbean. Our insurance operations in Europe, with offices in Dublin and London, have focused on mid-sized to large European and multi-national companies domiciled outside of North America, and we are also diversifying towards smaller and middle-market accounts. In addition, Syndicate 2232 offers select product lines including international property, general casualty and professional liability, targeted at key territories such as countries in Latin America and the Asia Pacific region. The international insurance segment also encompasses our offices in Asia that were opened in 2009, including our Hong Kong office, which underwrites a variety of primary and excess professional liability lines and general casualty and healthcare insurance products. Our staff in the international insurance segment is spread among our locations in Bermuda, Europe and Asia because we believe it is important that our underwriters be physically present in the major insurance markets around the world where we compete for business.

The chart below illustrates the breakdown of the company's international insurance gross premiums written by line of business for the year ended December 31, 2010.

Products and Customer Base

The casualty business within our international insurance segment focuses primarily on insuring excess layers, with a median attachment point of \$79 million for the large and Fortune 1000 accounts that constitute our core casualty accounts in this segment. Our international insurance segment utilizes significant gross limit capacity. Our focus with respect to general casualty products is on complex risks in a variety of industries, including manufacturing, energy, chemicals, transportation, real estate, consumer products, medical and healthcare services and

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construction. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our general casualty business accounted for 26.2%, or \$132.3 million, of our total gross premiums written in the international insurance segment.

We provide professional liability products such as directors and officers, employment practices, fiduciary and errors and omissions liability insurance. We offer a diverse mix of coverages for a number of industries including law firms, technology companies, financial institutions, insurance companies and brokers, municipalities, media organizations and engineering and construction firms. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our professional liability business accounted for 31.8%, or \$160.7 million, of our total gross premiums written in the international insurance segment.

Our healthcare underwriters provide risk transfer products to numerous healthcare institutions, such as hospitals, managed care organizations and healthcare systems. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our healthcare business accounted for 11.7%, or \$59.3 million, of our total gross premiums written in the international insurance segment.

We offer general property products from our underwriting platforms in Bermuda and Europe. Our international property insurance operations provide direct coverage of physical property and business interruption coverage for commercial property risks. We write solely commercial coverages and focus on the insurance of the primary risk layer. The types of commercial property risks we cover include retail chains, real estate, manufacturers, hotels and casinos. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our general property business (including energy lines) accounted for 30.3%, or \$152.6 million, of our total gross premiums written in the international insurance segment.

Because of the large limits we often deploy for casualty and property business written in the international insurance segment, we utilize both facultative and treaty reinsurance to reduce our net exposure. For more information on the reinsurance we purchase for the property and casualty business written in international insurance segment, see Item 7.

Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Critical Accounting Policies Ceded Reinsurance. For more information on our gross premiums written by line of business in our international insurance segment, see Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Results of Operations International Insurance Segment Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009 and Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2009 and 2008.

Distribution

With regard to our international insurance segment, we utilize our relationships with insurance intermediaries as our principal method for obtaining business. Our international insurance segment maintains significant relationships with Marsh, Aon Corporation (Aon) and Willis Group Holdings (Willis), which accounted for 30%, 24% and 10%, respectively, of our gross premiums written in this segment during 2010.

Reinsurance Segment

General

Our reinsurance segment includes the reinsurance of property, general casualty, professional liability, specialty lines and property catastrophe coverages written by other insurance companies. In order to diversify our portfolio and complement our direct insurance business, we target the overall contribution from reinsurance to be approximately 30% of our total annual gross premiums written.

We presently write reinsurance on both a treaty and a facultative basis, targeting several niche markets including professional liability lines, specialty casualty, property for U.S. regional insurers, accident and health and to a lesser extent marine and aviation. Overall, we strive to diversify our reinsurance portfolio through the appropriate

combination of business lines, ceding source, geography and contract configuration. Our primary customer focus is on highly-rated carriers with proven underwriting skills and dependable operating models.

We determine appropriate pricing either by using pricing models built or approved by our actuarial staff or by relying on established pricing set by one of our pricing actuaries for a specific treaty. Pricing models are generally used for facultative reinsurance, property catastrophe reinsurance, property per risk reinsurance and workers

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compensation and personal accident catastrophe reinsurance. Other types of reinsurance rely on actuarially-established pricing. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our reinsurance segment generated gross premiums written of \$524.2 million. On a written basis, our business mix is more heavily weighted to reinsurance during the first three months of the year. Our reinsurance segment operates from our offices in Bermuda, London, New York, Singapore and Switzerland.

The chart below illustrates the breakdown of the company's reinsurance gross premiums written by line of business for the year ended December 31, 2010.

Product Lines and Customer Base

Property, general casualty and professional liability treaty reinsurance is the principal source of revenue for this segment. The insurers we reinsure range from single state to nationwide insurers in the United States as well as specialty carriers or the specialty divisions of standard lines carriers located there. For our international treaty unit, our clients include multi-national insurers, single territory insurers, niche carriers and Lloyd's syndicates. We focus on niche programs and coverages, frequently sourced from excess and surplus lines insurers. We established an international treaty unit and began writing non-U.S. accounts in 2003, which spread the segment's exposure beyond our original North American focus. In October 2008, we expanded our international reach by opening a branch office in Switzerland that offers property, general casualty and professional liability products throughout Europe. Syndicate 2232 also offers international treaty reinsurance. During 2009, we expanded our reinsurance operations both in Asia, where we opened a branch office in Singapore that serves as the company's hub for all classes of treaty reinsurance business for the region, and in the United States, where we added a property underwriting team to our reinsurance platform. In December 2010, we launched a marine and specialty division that will offer reinsurance for marine, aviation, satellite and crop risks on a global basis. We target a portfolio of well-rated companies that are highly knowledgeable in their product lines, have the financial resources to execute their business plans and are committed to underwriting discipline throughout the underwriting cycle.

Our North American property reinsurance treaties protect insurers who write residential, commercial and industrial accounts where the exposure to loss is chiefly North American. We emphasize monoline, per risk accounts, which are structured as either quota share or excess-of-loss reinsurance. Monoline reinsurance applies to one kind of coverage, and per risk reinsurance coverage applies to a particular risk (for example a building and its contents), rather than on a per accident, event or aggregate basis. Where possible, coverage is provided on a losses occurring basis. We selectively write industry loss warranties where we believe market opportunities justify the risks. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our property treaty business accounted for 25.5%, or \$133.8 million of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

Our North American general casualty treaties cover working layer, intermediate layer and catastrophe exposures. We sell both quota share and excess-of-loss reinsurance. We principally underwrite general liability, auto liability and commercial excess and umbrella liability for both admitted and non-admitted companies. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our North American general casualty treaty business accounted for 30.6%, or \$160.2 million, of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

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Our North American professional liability treaties cover several products, primarily directors and officers liability, but also attorneys malpractice, medical malpractice, miscellaneous professional classes and transactional risk liability. The complex exposures undertaken by this unit demand highly technical underwriting and pricing modeling analysis. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our professional liability treaty business accounted for 14.9%, or \$78.0 million, of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

Our international treaty unit's portfolio protects U.K. insurers, including Lloyd's of London syndicates and Continental European companies. While we continue to concentrate on Euro-centric business, we are now writing and will increasingly expand our capabilities outside of Europe. During the year ended December 31, 2010, the international treaty unit accounted for 20.8%, or \$109.0 million, of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

For our specialty reinsurance business, we underwrite accident and health business, emphasizing catastrophe personal accident programs and workers compensation catastrophe business. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our specialty reinsurance business accounted for 5.5%, or \$28.8 million, of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

Facultative casualty business principally comprises lower-attachment, individual-risk reinsurance covering automobile liability, general liability and workers compensation risks for many of the largest U.S. property-casualty and surplus lines insurers. During the year ended December 31, 2010, our facultative reinsurance business accounted for 2.7%, or \$14.4 million, of our total gross premiums written in the reinsurance segment.

For more information on our gross premiums written by line of business in our reinsurance segment, see Item 7.

Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Results of Operations Reinsurance Segment Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009 and Comparison of Years Ended December 31, 2009 and 2008.

Distribution

Due to a number of factors, including transactional size and complexity, the distribution infrastructure of the reinsurance marketplace is characterized by relatively few intermediary firms. As a result, we have close business relationships with a small number of reinsurance intermediaries, and our reinsurance segment business during 2010 was primarily with affiliates of Marsh, Aon and Willis accounting for 38%, 32% and 11%, respectively, of total gross premiums written in this segment during 2010. Due to the substantial percentages of premiums produced in our U.S. insurance, internal insurance and reinsurance segments by the top three intermediaries, the loss of business from any one of them could have a material adverse effect on our business.

Security Arrangements

Allied World Assurance Company, Ltd, our Bermuda insurance and reinsurance company, is not admitted as an insurer nor is it accredited as a reinsurer in any jurisdiction in the United States. As a result, it is generally required to post collateral security with respect to any reinsurance liabilities it assumes from ceding insurers domiciled in the United States in order for U.S. ceding companies to obtain credit on their U.S. statutory financial statements with respect to insurance liabilities ceded by them. Under applicable statutory provisions, the security arrangements may be in the form of letters of credit, reinsurance trusts maintained by trustees or funds-withheld arrangements where assets are held by the ceding company. For a description of the security arrangements used by us, see Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Liquidity and Capital Resources Restrictions and Specific Requirements.

Enterprise Risk Management

General

While the assumption of risk is inherent in our business, we believe we have developed a strong risk management culture that is fostered and maintained by our senior management. Our enterprise risk management (ERM) consists of numerous processes and controls that have been designed by our senior management, with oversight by our Board of Directors, including through its Enterprise Risk Committee, and implemented by

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employees across our organization. One key element of our ERM is our economic capital model. Utilizing this modeling framework, we review the relative interaction between risks impacting us from underwriting through investment risks. Our ERM supports our firm-wide decision making process by aiming to provide reliable and timely risk information. Our primary ERM objectives are to:

protect our capital position,

ensure that our assumed risks (individually and in the aggregate) are within our firm-wide risk appetite,

maximize our risk-adjusted returns on capital, and

manage our earnings volatility.

We have identified the following six major categories of risk within our business:

Underwriting risk: Encompasses risks associated with entering into insurance and reinsurance transactions and includes frequency and severity assessments, pricing adequacy issues and exposures posed by new products. For more information concerning our management of underwriting risk, see *Underwriting Risk Management* below.

Catastrophe and Aggregate Accumulation risk: Addresses the organization's exposure to natural catastrophes, such as windstorms or floods, particularly with regard to managing the concentration of exposed insurance limits within coastal or other areas that are more prone to severe catastrophic events. For more information concerning our management of catastrophe risk, see *Underwriting Risk Management* below.

Reserving risk: The risks associated with overestimating or underestimating required reserves is a significant risk for any company that writes long-tailed casualty business. For companies like ours with a shorter operating history, there is less statistical experience upon which to base reserve estimates for long-tail business and the risks associated with over-reserving or under-reserving are therefore commensurately higher.

Investment risk: Addresses risks of market volatility and losses associated with individual investments and investment classes, as well as overall portfolio risk associated with decisions as to asset mix, geographic risk, duration and liquidity.

Reinsurance risk: The ceding of policies we write to other reinsurers is a principal risk management activity, and it requires careful monitoring of the concentration of our reinsured exposures and the creditworthiness of the reinsurers to which we cede business.

Operational risk: Encompasses a wide range of risks related to our operations, including: corporate governance, claims settlement processes, regulatory compliance, employment practices and IT exposures (including disaster recovery and business continuity planning).

Our risk governance structure includes committees comprised of senior underwriting, actuarial, finance, legal, investment and operations staff that identify, monitor and help manage each of these risks. Our management-based Risk Management Committee, chaired by our Chief Risk Officer, focuses primarily on identifying correlations among our primary categories of risk, developing metrics to assess our overall risk position, performing an annual risk assessment and reviewing continually factors that may impact our organizational risk. This risk governance structure is complemented by our internal audit department, which assesses the adequacy and effectiveness of our internal control systems and coordinates risk-based audits and compliance reviews and other specific initiatives to evaluate and address risk within targeted areas of our business. Our ERM is a dynamic process, with periodic updates being

made to reflect organizational processes and the recalibration of our models, as well as staying current with changes within our industry and the global economic environment.

Our management's internal ERM efforts are overseen by our Board of Directors, primarily through its Enterprise Risk Committee. This committee, comprised of independent directors, is charged with reviewing and recommending to the Board of Directors our overall firm-wide risk appetite as well as overseeing management's compliance therewith. Our Enterprise Risk Committee reviews our risk management methodologies, standards, tolerances and risk strategies, and assesses whether management is addressing risk issues in a timely and appropriate manner. This committee also works in consultation with our Audit Committee, Investment Committee

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and Compensation Committee to oversee financial, investment and compensation risks, respectively. Internal controls and ERM can provide a reasonable but not absolute assurance that our control objectives will be met. The possibility of material financial loss remains in spite of our ERM efforts.

Underwriting Risk Management

Underwriting insurance and reinsurance coverage, which is our primary business activity, entails the assumption of risk. Therefore, protecting corporate assets from an unexpected level of loss related to underwriting activities is a major area of focus. We emphasize careful risk selection by evaluating a potential insured's risk management practices, loss history and adequacy of retention. Other factors that go into the effective management of underwriting risk may differ depending on the line of business involved and the type of account being insured or reinsured.

In our direct insurance casualty products, we strive to write diverse books of business across a variety of product lines and industry classes, and we review business concentrations on a regular basis with the objective of creating balanced portfolios. By maintaining a balanced casualty portfolio, we believe we are less vulnerable to adverse market changes in any one product or industry. In addition, because of the large limits we often deploy for casualty business written in the U.S. insurance segment and the international insurance segment, we utilize both facultative and treaty reinsurance to reduce our net exposure. For more information on the reinsurance we purchase for the casualty business written in the U.S. insurance and international insurance segments, see Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Critical Accounting Policies Ceded Reinsurance.

In our direct insurance property products, we have historically managed our property catastrophe exposure by closely monitoring our policy limits in addition to utilizing complex risk models that analyze the locations covered by each insurance policy enabling us to obtain a more accurate assessment of our property catastrophe exposure. In addition to our continued focus on aggregate limits and modeled probable maximum loss, we have implemented a gross exposed policy limits approach that focuses on exposures in catastrophe-prone geographic zones and takes into consideration flood severity, demand surge and business interruption exposures for each critical area. We closely monitor our gross accumulations in each zone and restrict our gross exposed policy limits in each critical property catastrophe zone to an amount consistent with our probable maximum loss. Subsequent to a catastrophic event, we reassess our risk appetite and risk tolerances to ensure they are aligned with our capital preservation targets. Additionally, for our direct property, workers compensation, accident and health catastrophe and property reinsurance business, we seek to manage our risk exposure so that our probable maximum losses for a single catastrophe event, after all applicable reinsurance, in any one-in-250-year event does not exceed approximately 20% of our total capital.

Before we review the specifics of any proposal in our reinsurance segment, we consider the attributes of the client, including the experience and reputation of its management and its risk management strategy. We also examine the level of shareholders' equity, industry ratings, length of incorporation, duration of business model, portfolio profitability, types of exposures and the extent of its liabilities. To identify, manage and monitor accumulations of exposures from potential property catastrophes, we employ industry-recognized software. Our underwriters, actuaries and claims personnel collaborate throughout the reinsurance underwriting process. For property proposals, we also obtain information on the nature of the perils to be included and the policy information on all locations to be covered under the reinsurance contract. If a program meets our underwriting criteria, we then assess the adequacy of its proposed pricing, terms and conditions, and its potential impact on our profit targets and risk objectives.

Competition

The insurance and reinsurance industry is highly competitive. Insurance and reinsurance companies compete on the basis of many factors, including premium rates, general reputation and perceived financial strength, the terms and conditions of the products offered, ratings assigned by independent rating agencies, speed of claims payments and

reputation and experience in risks underwritten.

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We compete with major U.S. and non-U.S. insurers and reinsurers, many of which have greater financial, marketing and management resources than we do. Some of these companies have more capital than our company. In our direct insurance business, we compete with insurers that provide property and casualty-based lines of insurance such as: ACE Limited, Arch Capital Group Ltd., Axis Capital Holdings Limited, Chartis Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of American International Group, Inc. (AIG)), The Chubb Corporation (Chubb), Endurance Specialty Holdings Ltd., Factory Mutual Insurance Company, HCC Insurance Holdings, Inc., Ironshore Inc., Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, Lloyd's, Markel Insurance Company, Munich Re Group, The Navigators Group, Inc., OneBeacon Insurance Group, Ltd, Swiss Reinsurance Company, W.R. Berkeley Corporation, XL Capital Ltd and Zurich Financial Services. In our reinsurance business, we compete with reinsurers that provide property and casualty-based lines of reinsurance such as: ACE Limited, Alterra Capital Holdings, Ltd, Arch Capital Group Ltd., Berkshire Hathaway, Inc., Everest Re Group, Ltd., Lloyd's of London, Montpelier Re Holdings Ltd., Munich Re Group, PartnerRe Ltd., Platinum Underwriters Holdings, Ltd., RenaissanceRe Holdings Ltd., Swiss Reinsurance Company, Transatlantic Holdings, Inc. and XL Capital Ltd.

In addition, risk-linked securities and derivative and other non-traditional risk transfer mechanisms and vehicles are being developed and offered by other parties, including entities other than insurance and reinsurance companies. The availability of these non-traditional products could reduce the demand for traditional insurance and reinsurance.

Our Financial Strength Ratings

Ratings are an important factor in establishing the competitive position of insurance and reinsurance companies. A.M. Best, Moody's and Standard & Poor's have each developed a rating system to provide an opinion of an insurer's or reinsurer's financial strength and ability to meet ongoing obligations to its policyholders. Each rating reflects the rating agency's opinion of the capitalization, management and sponsorship of the entity to which it relates, and is neither an evaluation directed to investors in our common shares nor a recommendation to buy, sell or hold our common shares. A.M. Best ratings currently range from A+ (Superior) to F (In Liquidation) and include 16 separate ratings categories. Moody's maintains a letter scale rating from Aaa (Exceptional) to NP (Not Prime) and includes 21 separate ratings categories. Standard & Poor's maintains a letter scale rating system ranging from AAA (Extremely Strong) to R (under regulatory supervision) and includes 21 separate ratings categories. Our principal operating subsidiaries and their respective ratings from A.M. Best, Moody's and Standard & Poor's are provided in the table below.

Subsidiary	Rated A (Excellent) from A.M. Best(1)	Rated A2 (Good) from Moody's(2)	Rated A- (Strong) from Standard & Poor's(3)
Allied World Assurance Company, Ltd	X		