At the start of this New Year, and thanks to the invaluable assistance of our Information Management Centre, we wanted to take a retrospective look at all the events we considered most significant for each market segment in 2004. We preferred not to rank these events in order of importance because we feel that the list presented below gives a good reflection of the day-to-day life of our industry. Indeed, life insurance companies must pay attention simultaneously to:

- Changes in policyholders’ needs, yet demand for the different life & accident insurance and reinsurance products has never been so strong and seems destined for what will continue to be substantial growth over the next few years.
- Changes in the regulatory environment: adoption of European directives (for example, the directive against rate differentiation according to gender in 2004), the opening up of the Chinese market, more stringent regulation in the USA, etc.
- Restructuring movements within our industry.

In this context, only reinsurance companies enjoying a high degree of technical expertise, a close and trusting relationship with their cedents, and sufficient financial muscle will be in a position to provide their customers with the best possible service. I consider that SCOR VIE is already in this position and I invite you in this respect to read the detailed analysis of SCOR VIE published by Standard & Poor’s in December last year.

I hope that you will find this newsletter both instructive and enjoyable to read, and invite you to contact your usual SCOR Vie correspondent should you require further information about any of the events mentioned below.

Romain Durand, CEO SCOR Vie

### January

**Japan**

Manulife Financial with its affiliate Manulife Life Ins. and The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, agree to enter into a strategic alliance in individual annuity insurance product development and sales.

Skandia announces the sale of its Japanese operation Skandia Life Ins. (Japan) to Millea Holdings for $195 million signalling a further scaling back of global ambitions.

Sales of cancer insurance policies are stalling, with the number of policyholders totalling 17.51m at the end of Sept. 2003, up only 0.1% from a year before, according to the Life Insurance Association of Japan.

**France**

BNP Paribas groups its insurance activities together within BNP Assurances. The Cardif, Natio Vie and Natio Assurance brands will remain in use.

**Spain**

Liberty Mutual finalizes the acquisition by its Spanish subsidiary, Liberty Ins, of MetLife’s Spanish operations, including its non-life subsidiary, Genesis Seguros Generales, and its life subsidiary, Seguros Genesis.

Aegon creates a joint venture with Caja de Ahorros del Mediterraneo; the subsidiary, Mediterraneo Vida, projects developments in life and pensions in Spain.

**UK**

L&G agrees to offer life cover to the 11 million regular customers of supermarket chain J. Sainsbury.

### February

**China**

Chinese top insurance regulator says that two Chinese major insurance companies, New China Life Ins. and China Ping An Ins., will be listed on the stock market within the year.

Eagle Star Insurance Group has announced plans to rebrand all its life and general insurance business in Hong Kong to ‘Zurich’ to capitalize on the strength of the Zurich brand globally.

**Switzerland**

Swiss Life and the consortium including UniCredito Italiano, Swissfirst Bank and private investors have abandoned their exclusive negotiations on the sale of Banca del Gottardo.
March

**Asia**

S&P revises the outlooks to stable from negative on its financial strength and long-term counterparty credit ratings on Tokio Marine & Nichido Life Ins. (AA-/Stable/--), Sompo Japan Himawari Life Ins. (A+/Stable/--), and Prudential Life Ins. (AA-/Stable/--).

Prudential wins a third life license in Suzhou, China.

**France**

Axa, Groupama and Swiss Life France decide to launch experiments with a view to gathering certain medical data hitherto held exclusively by the mandatory health insurance schemes. They must submit a draft to the CNIL French data protection watchdog authority, which will decide how long, and under what conditions, the information may be stored.

Ageing: the French Economic and Social Council sounded the alarm in a report about the consequences of demographic trends in France, and recommended measures to realign the age pyramid by the year 2050.

**Germany**

The government plans to strengthen regulation of insurers with a law requiring life and health insurers to contribute to a fund for insolvency protection, finance ministry State Secretary B. Hendricks said.

ZFS sells all of its health insurance business in Germany to DKV Deutsche Krankenversicherung as part of its refocusing drive. It is also selling the 45% stake it owns through its unit Deutscher Herold in Globale Krankenversicherungs.

April

**Asia**

Allianz prepares to roll out life and health insurance branches in China, according to its top executives.

La Mondiale reports strong growth in the company’s total volume of premiums in 2003, up 31% to a total of € 3.8bn. The mutual insurance company attempts to diversify its distribution networks by signing a partnership with the banking arm of the Auchan Group.

CNP and the Casino retailing group announce that the insurance company will develop and distribute its accident & life insurance products in the area of income and loan protection as well as that of savings and retirement planning.

**France**

Publication on April 21, 2004 of the decrees related to the popular retirement savings plan, and the naming of the savings plan and the savings group created pursuant to article 108 of the act of August 21, 2003 initiating pension reform.

French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin announces a reform of life insurance contracts chiefly invested in equities, and asks the Finance Minister to introduce measures to channel savings more efficiently towards research and innovation.

May

**France**

According to the Moody’s rating agency, the life insurance industry should benefit from retirement reforms and the upturn in the stock market.


**Germany**

Certain tax exemptions on life insurance policy payouts in Germany will likely be dropped in 2005, according to the Ministry of Finance, a move that German insurers say will likely dampen consumers’ interest in life insurance products as a long-term investment vehicle.

June

**China**

Citigroup has won initial approval to set up a life insurance venture with Shanghai Alliance Inv. by early 2005.

**France**

The number of individuals in long-term care will increase by 43% by 2040. A joint National Assembly-Senate committee examines a bill related to the autonomy of elderly and handicapped individuals.

**UK**

RSA says it is in talks to sell its UK life insurance operations, Resolution Life, set up by the former chief executive of GE Insurance Holdings Europe, Clive Cowdery, could buy it. On the other hand RSA announces it is selling Danish Codan Life to SEB Trygg Liv.

**USA**

A new raft of life reinsurers are expected in the US market as companies seek to take advantage of very strong pricing conditions, according to S&P. The global life insurance industry is poised to take back its position at the top of the growth ladder according to research by Mercer Oliver Wyman.
### July

**Europe**

Solvency II standard could hurt life reinsurers, according to Rick Hodgdon, executive managing director of Transamerica International Reinsurance Ireland.

The OECD publishes new recommendations concerning regulations covering both the management of pension fund assets and the protection of their future beneficiaries.

**France**

Generali France, MMA-Maaf and Azur-GMF announce a cooperation agreement covering all their business activities in life insurance.

The reform of health insurance adopted by the authorities allows the supplementary health insurance bodies to become fully-fledged partners of the health system.

**Switzerland**

La Mutualité and CNP announce a partnership agreement whereby they will develop a joint insurance-guarantee offering. Their solution combines security for a maximum of €200,000 for up to 25 years and comprehensive loan protection insurance covering death, total and irreversible loss of autonomy, temporary total working disability, and loss of employment.

**Spain**

Médéric exercises its option to acquire 10% of Adeslas, the front-ranking Spanish health insurance company, for €60.3m.

**France**

The FFSA observes an upward trend for life insurance contracts expressed in units of account thanks to greater stock market stability since the beginning of 2004. New life funds have risen by 46% compared with the same period in 2003.

### August

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**USA**

A significant majority — 81% — of North American life insurance company CFO believes that the United States and Canada will eventually join with Europe in adopting a global accounting standard for insurance within the next 10 years, according to the latest CFO survey by the Tillinghast Towers Perrin.

### September

**China**

ING wants to open a life insurance branch in Beijing.

**France**

In the hit parade of reinsurers in France ranked in terms of 2003 life premiums published by Argus, SCOR Vie comes in 1st position with premiums worth a total of €320m followed, in the following order, by Hannover Re, Swiss Re, Mutré/UNPMF, General Cologne Re, Munich Re, CCR, GE Frankona, Prévoyance Re, Partner Re, XL Re and Converium.

According to Mercer, the growth potential enjoyed by life insurance over the next 10 years will create value estimated at $1,600bn; France boasts a potential of new value creation of €110bn.

### October

**Europe**

The Ministers of Social Affairs reach a political agreement forbidding all discrimination based on gender in the supply of goods and services while granting a dispensation to insurers in certain segments. As a result, life insurers can continue to distinguish between men and women for the calculation of life insurance premiums in cases where “gender can be shown to be a decisive factor in assessing risk”.

**Germany**

Allianz wants to reinforce the centralization of its principal insurance subsidiaries: activities related to life insurance, pension schemes and property insurance will be brought together within a single division.

**UK**

UK pensions commission releases its first report (Turner report) which examines the adequacy of pension provision and saving.
**November**

Prudential Life completes acquisition of Aoba Life Insurance Co. for Y20 billion.

Sampo Japan forms an alliance with Ping An Life Ins. of China to offer life and non-life products in China. China has become one of the world’s fastest-growing life insurance markets over the past decade, showing annual growth rates of about 30%; it should exceed $100bn by 2008. For the time being, more than 90% of the market is still in the hands of three domestic insurers: China Life Insurance, Ping An Insurance and China Pacific Life Insurance (Financial Times).

The China Insurance Regulatory Commission approves of setting up 13 insurance companies in Shanghai this year.

Standard & Poor’s confirms the stable outlook attributed to the French life-insurance market.

Réunica and Bayard organize their merger, creating the largest supplementary pension group (Arrco and Agirc) in France.

Mondial Assistance wants to reinforce its Health division. The group intends to invest €15m in this business, and has set itself a 3-year turnover target of €100m. The Health and Finance Ministers ask the Director General of Health and his counterpart in the French Treasury to provide a progress report about the Belorgey agreement (related to substandard risks). The appropriateness of setting up a guarantee fund will be examined.

Life insurance companies will be forced to pay into a new €500 million policy guarantee fund over the next five years under legislation passed by Germany’s parliament on Friday.

CNP holds talks with Capitallia about the acquisition of its life-insurance subsidiary, Fineco Vita.

Spitzer files lawsuit against San Diego-based Universal Life Resources, accused of inflating the cost of employee benefits coverage.

Prudential expands in US with the €200m purchase of Life Insurance Co. of Georgia, an ING subsidiary.

**December**

Aegon said that AEGON-CNOOC Life Insurance Co., the 50/50 joint venture of Aegon and National Offshore Oil Corp., received a licence from the regulatory authorities to start life insurance activities in Beijing.

Carlyle acquires about 25% of China Pacific Life for up to $400m in the biggest-ever private equity deal in China.

South African Old Mutual confirms its interest for Asia: it opened a representative office in Beijing in May and announces it is looking for a Chinese partner to create a life joint venture shortly. Old Mutual is already operating in Asia, with a joint venture in India, which registered US $35m in 2003.

ING Life Insurance Korea plans to offer new products, including mortgage loans, and increase its sales force next year in its bid to increase its presence in Korea, chief executive Ron van Oijen says.

AGF acquires the French life insurance company Assurance Vie et Prévoyance from Dresdner Bank.

8% growth in premium income during the first three quarters of 2004 according to FFSA.

A.M. Best affirms “B++” ratings for SCOR and its core subsidiaries and assigns a “bbb+” Issuer Credit Rating. At the same time, AM Best assigns a “B++” rating to SCOR Vie. The outlook for these ratings is positive.

S & P’s assigns BBB+ Financial Strength Rating to SCOR Vie; outlook positive.

Friends Provident plans to raise €540m in capital to expand its life and pensions business in the U.K. by turning its new business cash flows into bonds.

Swiss Life sells its UK life insurance business for $396 million to Resolution Life Group.

Financial group HHG sells its life insurance business, including Pearl, National Provident Life and London Life, for £1.025bn to Life Company Investor Gp, and plans to return $875m of the proceeds to shareholders.

THE UK’s mutual life insurance industry must adopt a raft of corporate governance standards similar to the