Pre-pack Schemes

Singapore

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Agenda

- ► Introduction to pre-pack schemes
- ► Evolution of pre-pack schemes in Singapore
- Lessons learned

What is a pre-pack?

General definition

"Pre-packs refer to a restructuring that is pre-negotiated and pre-agreed with the key stakeholders and implemented through a Court insolvency process"

Various forms of pre-packs across jurisdictions

- Not one size fits all
- United States: Chapter 11 pre-pack
- United Kingdom: Pre-pack Administration
- ▶ Other countries: Australia and India, amongst others

Singapore – Legal regime

Background

- ► Introduced as part of amendments to the Companies Act ("CA") and came into effect on 23 May 2017 (under Section 211I CA)
- ▶ Incorporated into Insolvency, Restructuring and Dissolution Act 2018 ("IRDA") and came into effect on 30 July 2020 (under Section 71 IRDA)

<u>IRDA</u>

➤ Section 71(1) IRDA: Mechanism allows for a Court to sanction a scheme of arrangement even though no meeting of creditors has been ordered by the Court (i.e. instead of two applications to Court – one for leave to convene creditors meeting and one for sanction, only one application for sanction)

Singapore – Legal regime

IRDA – Legal requirements for sanction of pre-pack scheme

- ▶ Information: Provide each creditor meant to be bound by the arrangement with a statement setting out information for the creditors to make an informed decision (Sections 71(3a) and 71(6) IRDA).
- ► Information: Includes the following:
 - Information concerning the company's property, assets, business activities, financial condition and prospects
 - ▶ Information on the manner in which the terms of the arrangement will, if it takes effect, affect the rights of the creditor
 - ► Such other information as is necessary to enable the creditor to make an informed decision whether to agree to the arrangement
 - Any material interests of the directors of the company
 - ► The effect that the compromise or arrangement has on those interests, insofar as that effect is different from the effect that the arrangement has on the like interests of other persons (including an Explanatory statement of the scheme)

Singapore – Legal regime

IRDA – Legal requirements for sanction of pre-pack scheme

- ▶ **Notice:** Publish a notice of application for pre-pack scheme in the *Gazette*, at least one English local daily newspaper and send a copy of the notice to the Registrar of Companies and to each creditor meant to be bound by the arrangement (Sections 71(3b) and 71(3c) IRDA)
- ► Creditor support: Court must be satisfied that had a meeting of the creditors been convened, a majority of the creditors, representing no less than three-quarters in value of debts owed, would have approved the scheme (Section 71(3d) IRDA read with Sections 210(3AB)(a) and (b) of CA)

Singapore – Legal regime

IRDA – Stages for a pre-pack scheme

Stage 1

 Dispatch scheme documents and publish notices

Stage 2

 Reach out to creditors to garner support for the pre-pack scheme (likely this would initially have been done predispatch of scheme)

Stage 3

- Application to Court for sanction of the scheme after creditor approval is obtained
- Ballot forms used as evidence to demonstrate creditor support

Stage 4

- Lodge a copy of the Court order with ACRA
- Completion of conditions precedent (if applicable e.g. shareholder approval)

Singapore – Legal regime

IRDA – Simplified Debt Restructuring Programme

- Overseen by the Ministry of Law
- Specific qualification criteria to be eligible for SDRP
- Protection from creditors via a moratorium and temporary restriction on ipso facto clauses
- Pre-pack scheme concept
 - Company to obtain evidence to satisfy the Court that there is sufficient creditor support
 - Lower voting threshold Majority in number of at least 2/3rd in value of creditors or class of creditors (Section 72M(3)(d) IRDA)

Evolution of pre-pack schemes in Singapore

Overview of scheme terms and key features

CA

January 2018



Hoe Leong Corporation Ltd (SGX: H20)

- Moratorium granted
- Scheme involved (i) restructuring of part of bank debt and maintained on balance sheet and (ii) residual bank debt and shareholder debt converted to equity

IRDA

January 2021

January 2021

May 2021







iflix Pte Ltd

- New Board appointment
- Distressed M&A transaction (Tencent)
- Scheme involved cash. distribution funded from sale proceeds and other assets
- Parallel CVA in Malaysia

PT MNC Investama Tbk (IDX: BHIT)

- Moratorium granted. Substantial connection via US\$231 million Notes listed on SGX
- Scheme involved exchange of Notes into new shares of BHIT or new Notes

Viking Offshore & Marine Ltd (SGX: 1Y1)

- Moratorium granted
- New white knight investor
- Senior lender debt settlement
- Scheme involved (i) cash distribution and (ii) new shares of 1Y1

Notes:

- 1. DHC Capital advised on pre-pack schemes for iflix Pte Ltd and Viking Offshore & Marine Ltd
- 2. Sycamore Tree and Laurel Tree pre-pack schemes were excluded as the schemes did not restructure any debt

Evolution of pre-pack schemes in Singapore

Overview of scheme terms and key features

June 2021

August 2021

January 2022

February 2022

October 2022











Capital World Ltd (SGX: 1D5)

- Moratorium granted
- Scheme involved full debt for equity conversion

PT Modernland Realty Tbk (IDX: MDLN)

- Moratorium granted. Substantial connection via Notes listed on SGX
- Scheme restructured New York law governed Notes

PT Pan Brothers Tbk (IDX: PBRX)

- Moratorium granted in Singapore. Indonesian Court rejected PKPU petition filed by bank
- Scheme obtained US Chapter 15 recognition

Brightoil Petroleum (S'pore) Pte Ltd

- Moratorium granted
- Use of lock up agreements does not fracture creditor class provided (i) the benefit must not be so sizeable. (ii) must be made available to all creditors and (iii) done bona fide

Alpha DX Group Ltd (SGX: VVL)

Scheme involved (i) cash distribution over 5 tranches and (ii) conversion of debt to new shares of VVL

Evolution of pre-pack schemes in Singapore

Overview of scheme terms and key features

March 2023

May 2023

June 2023

July 2023









Zipmex Group of Companies

- Moratorium granted
- Creation of an "administrative convenience class" for customers of the cryptoexchanges whose debts do not exceed US\$5,000
- Scheme not completed at date of this report

Tee International Ltd (SGX: M1Z)

- Moratorium granted
- Scheme involved (i) cash distribution over 2 payments and from sale proceeds of a subsidiary and (ii) issuance of new shares of M1Z

Axis Group Asia Pte Ltd

- First pre-pack under **SDRP**
- Financial creditors only. Trade creditors excluded

Century Sunshine Group (HKEX: 509)

- Pre-pack scheme in Singapore to restructure S\$101.75 million 7% Notes due 2020
- Parallel scheme with Hong Kong
- HK and Singapore prepack scheme effective on 31 August 2023

Notes:

- 1. DHC Capital advised on pre-pack scheme for Axis Group Asia Pte Ltd
- 2. DHC Capital advised the informal steering committee of Noteholders in the restructuring of \$\$101.75 million 7% Notes

Lessons learned

1

Speed and Certainty

- ► Faster scheme process saves time and costs (21 days to submit claims; no scheme meeting; 3 months overall timeframe)
- ► Certainty of completion via creditor lock up agreements (Brightoil case) and use of administrative class (Zipmex case)
- ▶ Preserves going concern value

Moratorium and Recognition

- ► Enhanced moratorium to provide "breathing space" holding company/related companies; "in-personam" extra-territorial effect; foreign companies with "substantial connection" (MNC and Modernland cases)
- ► Foreign acknowledgement of moratorium (Pan Brothers case) and recognition of sanction order (Pan Brothers Chapter 15)

3

Flexible Tool

▶ Deals can be structured in combination with other corporate actions – senior debt restructuring (Viking case), equity capital raise (Viking case), distressed M&A (iflix case), new Board / CRO / Interim management appointments (iflix case), parallel procedures (iflix and Century Sunshine case), super priority rescue financing and litigation funding

Lessons learned

4

Creditor Support

- ▶ Use of informal and formal creditor discussions / meetings to solicit creditor support
- ▶ Use of ballot forms to demonstrate creditor support and statutory threshold met
- ► Alternatives include lock up agreements or restructuring support agreements

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Disclosure Requirements

► Re DSG Asia Holdings Pte Ltd [2021] SGHC 209: Court observed that "material information" to be disclosed. Court observed that "material information" is information that enables creditors to assess "whether the allocation of loss and the division of benefits is fair and in their commercial interests"

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Proper Creditor Classification

► Re DSG Asia Holdings Pte Ltd [2021] SGHC 209: Factors considered in classifying creditors include (i) creditors rights and (ii) if the statutory thresholds are met, whether the creditors whose votes were solicited were fairly representative of the class of creditors taking into regard the creditors' private interests

Lessons learned

Bona Fides and Deed Poll

- ▶ Re DSG Asia Holdings Pte Ltd [2021] SGHC 209:
 - ▶ Pre-pack scheme be made *bona fide* and not to skirt around opposition
 - ▶ Pre-pack scheme use of deed poll structure to consolidate or pool liabilities into one entity was acceptable if commercially necessary (Gategroup structure)

Limitations on Use of **Cram Downs**

► Cross-class cram down (vertical cram down) provisions under Section 70 IRDA are not available in a pre-pack scheme under Section 71 IRDA

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