

## **B. SUMMARY OF FOREIGN LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Company is incorporated in the British Virgin Islands subject to the BVI Business Companies Act 2004 (as amended) (the “**BVI Companies Act**”) and, therefore, operates subject to British Virgin Islands law. Set out below is a summary of certain provisions of British Virgin Islands company law, although this does not purport to contain all applicable qualifications and exceptions or to be a complete review of all matters of British Virgin Islands company law and taxation, which may differ from equivalent provisions in jurisdictions with which interested parties may be more familiar:

### **The BVI Business Companies Act**

The Company is incorporated in the British Virgin Islands subject to the BVI Companies Act and, therefore, operates subject to British Virgin Islands law. Set out below is a summary of certain provisions of British Virgin Islands company law, although this does not purport to contain all applicable qualifications and exceptions or to be a complete review of all matters of British Virgin Islands company law and taxation, which may differ from equivalent provisions in jurisdictions with which interested parties may be more familiar:

#### *(a) Share Capital*

Under the BVI Companies Act there is no concept of authorised share capital. Companies registered under the BVI Companies Act may be authorised to issue a specific number of shares or the company’s memorandum of association may provide that the company is authorised to issue an unlimited number of shares. The BVI Companies Act also provides that, subject to the company’s memorandum and articles of association, shares may be issued with or without a par value and in any currency. The BVI Companies Act also permits the company to issue fractional shares.

Shares issued by the company will be the personal property of the shareholders and confer on the holder of a share:

- (i) the right to one vote at a meeting of the members of the company or on any resolution of the members of the company;
- (ii) the right to an equal share in any dividend paid in accordance with the BVI Companies Act; and
- (iii) the right to an equal share in the distribution of the surplus assets of the company.

Subject to any limitations or provisions to the contrary in the company’s memorandum or articles of association, unissued shares and treasury shares of the company are at the disposal of the directors who may, without limiting or affecting any rights previously conferred on the holders of any existing shares or class or series of shares, offer, allot or otherwise dispose of shares to such persons, at such times and upon such terms as the company may by resolution of directors determine.

Similarly, subject to the company's memorandum and articles of association, options to acquire shares in the company may be granted at any time, to any person and for such consideration as the directors may determine.

Subject to the company's memorandum and articles of association, a company may issue shares which are partly paid or nil-paid. Shares may also be issued for consideration in any form, including money, a promissory note, real property, personal property (including goodwill and know-how), services rendered or the provision of future services.

Subject to the company's memorandum and articles of association, a company may issue shares with or without voting rights or with different voting rights; common, preferred, limited or redeemable shares; options, warrants or similar rights to acquire any securities of the company; and securities convertible into or exchangeable for other securities or property of a company.

Subject to its memorandum and articles of association, a company may issue more than one class of shares. A statement of the classes of shares that the company is authorised to issue and, if the company is authorised to issue two or more classes of shares, the rights, privileges, restrictions and conditions attaching to each class of shares must be included in the company's memorandum of association. Subject to its memorandum and articles, a company may issue a class of shares in one or more series.

*(b) Financial assistance to purchase shares of a company or its holding company*

Subject to the BVI Companies Act, any other enactment and the company's memorandum and articles of association, a company has, irrespective of corporate benefit full capacity to carry on or undertake any business or activity, do any act or enter into any transaction including, among other things, the giving of financial assistance to any person in connection with the acquisition of its own shares.

*(c) Purchase of shares and warrants by a company and its subsidiaries*

A company may purchase, redeem or otherwise acquire its own shares in accordance with either the procedures set out in Sections 60, 61 and 62 of the BVI Companies Act or such other provisions for the purchase, redemption or acquisition of its own shares as may be specified in its memorandum and articles. Sections 60, 61 and 62 do not apply to a company to the extent that they are negated, modified or inconsistent with provisions for the purchase, redemption or acquisition of its own shares specified in the company's memorandum and articles. The Articles expressly provide that such provisions shall not apply to the Company.

Subject to its memorandum or articles of association, a company may purchase, redeem or otherwise acquire its own shares. The acquired shares may be cancelled or held as treasury shares. However, no such acquisition will be permitted unless the directors determine that immediately after the acquisition (i) the value of the company's assets will exceed its liabilities and (ii) the company

will be able to pay its debts as they fall due. A determination by the directors is, however, not required:

- (a) where shares are purchased, redeemed; or otherwise acquired pursuant to a right of a member to have his shares redeemed or to have his shares exchanged for money or other property of the company;
- (b) by virtue of the provisions of the BVI Companies Act in relation to the rights of dissenters under a redemption of minority shareholders, merger, consolidation, a disposition of assets, a compulsory redemption or an arrangement; or
- (c) pursuant to an order of the BVI court.

A company may hold shares that have been purchased, redeemed or otherwise acquired as treasury shares if (a) the memorandum or articles of the company do not prohibit it from holding treasury shares; (b) the directors resolve that shares to be purchased, redeemed or otherwise acquired shall be held as treasury shares; and (c) the number of shares purchased, redeemed or otherwise acquired, when aggregated with shares of the same class already held by the company as treasury shares, does not exceed 50% of the shares of that class previously issued by the company, excluding shares that have been cancelled.

All the rights and obligations attaching to a treasury share are suspended and shall not be exercised by or against the company while it holds the share as a treasury share. Treasury shares may be transferred by the company and the provisions of the BVI Companies Act, the memorandum and articles that apply to the issue of shares apply to the transfer of treasury shares.

Under BVI law, a subsidiary may hold shares in its holding company.

A company is not prohibited from purchasing and may purchase its own warrants subject to and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the relevant warrant instrument or certificate. There is no requirement under BVI law that a company's memorandum or articles contain a specific provision enabling such purchases and the directors of a company may rely upon the general power contained in its memorandum of association.

(d) *Protection of Minorities*

The BVI Companies Act contains various mechanism to protect minority shareholders, including:

- (i) **Restraining or Compliance Orders:** if a company or a director of a company engages in, proposes to engage in or has engaged in, conduct that contravenes the BVI Companies Act or the company's memorandum and articles of association, the court may, on the application of a member or a director of the company, make an order directing the company or its director to comply with, or restraining the company or director from engaging in conduct that contravenes,

the BVI Companies Act or the company's memorandum and articles of association;

(ii) **Derivative Actions:** the court may, on the application of a member of a company, grant leave to that member to:

(aa) bring proceedings in the name and on behalf of that company;  
or

(bb) intervene in proceedings to which the company is a party for the purpose of continuing, defending or discontinuing the proceedings on behalf of the company; and

(iii) **Unfair Prejudice Remedies:** a member of a company who considers that the affairs of the company have been, are being or are likely to be, conducted in a manner that is, or any acts of the company have been, or are, likely to be oppressive, unfairly discriminatory, or unfairly prejudicial to him, may apply to the court for an order and, if the court considers that it is just and equitable to do so, it may make such order as it thinks fit, including, without limitation, one or more of the following orders:

(aa) in the case of a shareholder, requiring the company or any other person to acquire the shareholder's shares;

(bb) requiring the company or any other person to pay compensation to the member;

(cc) regulating the future conduct of the company's affairs;

(dd) amending the memorandum or articles of association of the company;

(ee) appointing a receiver of the company;

(ff) appointing a liquidator of the company under section 159(1) of the Insolvency Act;

(gg) directing the rectification of the records of the company; and

(hh) setting aside any decision made or action taken by the company or its directors in breach of the BVI Companies Act or the company's memorandum and articles of association.

(iv) **Representative Actions:** a member is able to bring an action against the company for a breach of a duty owed by the company to member in his capacity as a member. Where a member brings such an action and other members have the same (or substantially the same) action against the company, the court may appoint the first member to represent all or some of the members having the same interest and may make an order:

- (aa) as to the control and conduct of the proceedings;
- (bb) as to the costs of the proceedings; and
- (cc) directing the distribution of any amount ordered to be paid by a defendant in the proceedings among the members represented.

The BVI Companies Act provides that any member of a company is entitled to payment of the fair value of his shares upon dissenting from any of the following:

- (i) a merger;
- (ii) a consolidation;
- (iii) any sale, transfer, lease, exchange or other disposition of more than 50% of the assets or business of the company if not made in the usual or regular course of the business carried on by the company but not including:
  - (aa) a disposition pursuant to an order of the court having jurisdiction in the matter;
  - (bb) a disposition for money on terms requiring all or substantially all net proceeds to be distributed to the members in accordance with their respective interests within one (1) year after the date of disposition; or
  - (cc) a transfer pursuant to the power of the directors to transfer assets for the protection thereof;
- (iv) a redemption of 10% or less of the issued shares of the company required by the holders of 90% or more of the shares of the company pursuant to the terms of the BVI Companies Act; and
- (v) an arrangement, if permitted by the court.

Generally any other claims against a company by its shareholders must be based on the general laws of contract or tort applicable in the BVI or their individual rights as shareholders as established by the company's memorandum and articles of association.

(e) *Dividends and distributions*

A company may declare and make a distribution (which term includes a dividend), provided that the directors are satisfied that immediately after the payment of the dividend, (i) the value of the company's assets will exceed its liabilities and (ii) the company will be able to pay its debts as they fall due.

A distribution may be a direct or indirect transfer of an asset (other than the company's own shares) or the incurring of a debt for the benefit of a member.

*(f) Management*

Subject to its memorandum and articles of association, the business and affairs of a company shall be managed by, or under the direction or supervision of, the directors of the company and the directors shall have all the powers necessary for managing, and for directing and supervising, the business and affairs of the company. The number of directors of a company may be fixed by, or in the manner provided in, the articles of association of a company.

The BVI Companies Act provides that, subject to any limitations or provisions to the contrary in its memorandum and articles of association, any sale, transfer, lease, exchange or other disposition, other than a mortgage, charge or other encumbrance of the enforcement thereof, of more than 50% of the assets of a company, if not made in the usual or regular course of business carried on by the company, must be approved by a resolution of members. The Articles expressly provide that notwithstanding the foregoing requirement of the BVI Companies Act, the directors may dispose of assets of the Company without the disposition being authorised by the members at a general meeting.

The BVI Companies Act contains no other specific restrictions on the power of directors to dispose of assets of a company.

The BVI Companies Act contains a statutory code of directors' duties. Each director of a company, in performing his functions, must do so honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the company and exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

*(g) Amendment of Constitutional Document*

The members of a company may, by resolution, amend the memorandum or articles of association of the company. The memorandum of a company may include a provision:

- (i) that specified provisions of the memorandum or articles of association may not be amended;
- (ii) that a resolution passed by a specified majority of members, greater than 50%, is required to amend the memorandum or articles of association or specified provisions of the memorandum or articles of association; and
- (iii) that the memorandum or articles of association, or specified provisions of the memorandum or articles of association, may be amended only if certain specified conditions are met.

The memorandum of association of a company may authorise the directors, by resolution, to amend the memorandum or articles of association of the company.

Where a resolution is passed to amend the memorandum or articles of association of a company, the company must file for registration:

- (i) a notice of amendment in the approved form; or
- (ii) a restated memorandum or articles incorporating the amendment made.

An amendment to the memorandum or articles of association has effect from the date that the notice of amendment, or restated memorandum or articles of association incorporating the amendment, is registered by the BVI Registrar of Corporate Affairs or from such other date as may be ordered by the court.

*(h) Accounting requirements*

A company must keep such accounts and records as are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and which will, at any time, enable the financial position of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy. There is generally no obligation to have financial statement audited, unless the company is operating as a certain type of fund regulated by the Mutual Funds Act, 1996.

*(i) Exchange control*

There are no exchange control regulations or currency restrictions in the BVI.

*(j) Loans to and transactions with directors*

There is no express provision in the BVI Companies Act prohibiting the making of loans by a company to any of its directors.

A director of a company shall, immediately after becoming aware of the fact that he is interested in a transaction entered into or to be entered into by the company, disclose the interest to the board of the company. If a director fails to make such a disclosure, he is liable, upon summary conviction, to a fine of US\$10,000.

A director of a company is not required to disclose the interest if:

- (i) the transaction or proposed transaction is between the director and the company; and
- (ii) the transaction or proposed transaction is or is to be entered into in the ordinary course of the company's business and on usual terms and conditions.

A disclosure to the board to the effect that a director is a member, director, officer or trustee of another named company or other person and is to be regarded as interested in any transaction which may, after the date of the entry or disclosure, be entered into with that company or person, is a sufficient disclosure of interest in relation to that transaction. It should be noted, however, that a

disclosure is not made to the board unless it is made or brought to the attention of every director on the board.

*(k) Taxation in the BVI*

A company incorporated under the BVI Companies Act is exempt from all provisions of the Income Tax Act (as amended) of the BVI (including with respect to all dividends, interests, rents, royalties, compensation and other amounts payable by the company to persons who are not persons resident in the BVI).

Capital gains realised with respect to any shares, debt obligations or other securities of a company by persons who are not persons resident in the BVI are also exempt from all provisions of the Income Tax Act of the BVI.

No estate, inheritance, succession or gift tax, rate, duty, levy or other charge is payable by persons who are not persons resident in the BVI with respect to any shares, debt obligations or other securities of the company, save for interest payable to or for the benefit of an individual resident in the European Union.

*(l) Stamp duty on transfer*

No stamp duty is payable in the BVI on a transfer of shares in a BVI company.

*(m) Inspection of corporate records*

Members of the general public, on a payment of a nominal fee, can inspect the public records of a company available at the office of the BVI Registrar of Corporate Affairs which will include, *inter alia*, the company's certificate of incorporation, its memorandum and articles of association (with any amendments) and the records of license fees paid to date.

A director may, on giving reasonable notice, inspect (and make copies of) the documents and records of a company without charge and at a reasonable time specified by the director.

A member of a company may, on giving written notice to a company, inspect the company's memorandum and articles of association, the register of members, the register of directors and the minutes of meetings and resolutions of members and of those classes of members of which he is a member.

Subject to any provision to the contrary in the company's memorandum and articles of association, the directors may, if they are satisfied that it would be contrary to the company's interests to allow a member to inspect any document, or part of a document, refuse to permit the member to inspect the document or limit the inspection of the document, including limiting the making of copies or the taking of extracts from the records. The directors shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, notify a member of any exercise of such powers. Where a company fails or refuses to permit a member to inspect a document or permits a member



to inspect a document subject to limitations, that member may apply to the BVI court for an order that he should be permitted to inspect the document or to inspect the document without limitation.

A company shall keep minutes of all meetings of directors, members, committees of directors and committees of members and copies of all resolutions consented to by directors, members, committees of directors and committees of members. The books, records and minutes required by the BVI Companies Act shall be kept at the office of the BVI registered agent of the company or at such other place as the directors determine.

A company is required to keep a register of members containing, *inter alia*, the names and addresses of the persons who hold registered shares in the company, the number of each class and series of registered shares held by each shareholder, the date on which the name of each member was entered in the register of members and the date on which any person ceased to be a member. The register of members may be in any form as the directors may approve but, if it is in magnetic, electronic or other data storage form, the company must be able to produce legible evidence of its contents and a copy of the share register commencing from the date of registration of the company shall be kept at the registered office of the company. The entry of the name of a person in the register of members as a holder of a share in a company is *prima facie* evidence that legal title in the shares vests in that person. Where a company keeps a copy of the register of members at its registered office, it shall within 15 days of any change in the register, notify the BVI registered agent of the company, in writing, of the change, and provide the BVI registered agent of the company with a written record of the physical address of the place or places at which the original register of members is kept.

A company is required to keep a register of directors containing, *inter alia*, the names and addresses of the persons who are directors and the date on which each person whose name is entered on the register was appointed and ceased to be a director. The register of directors may be in such form as the directors approve, but if it is in magnetic, electronic or other data storage form, the company must be able to produce legible evidence of its contents. A copy of the register of directors must be kept at the registered office and the register is *prima facie* evidence of any matters directed or authorised by the BVI Companies Act to be contained therein. A company shall file for registration by the BVI Registrar of Corporate Affairs a copy of its register of directors and it shall, within 30 days of any changes occurring, file the changes in the register by filing a copy of the register containing the changes.

(n) *Winding up*

The court has authority under the Insolvency Act 2003 of the BVI to order winding up in a number of specified circumstances including where it is, in the opinion of the court, just and equitable to do so.

A company may enter into voluntary liquidation under the BVI Companies Act if it has no liabilities or is able to pay its debts as they fall due and the value of its assets equals or exceeds its liabilities. Where it is proposed to appoint a voluntary liquidator, the directors of the company must:

- (i) make a declaration of solvency in the approved form stating that, in their opinion, the company is and will continue to be able to discharge, pay or provide for its debts as they fall due; and the value of its assets equals or exceeds its liabilities; and
- (ii) approve a liquidation plan specifying:
  - (aa) the reasons for the liquidation of the company;
  - (bb) their estimate of the time required to liquidate the company;
  - (cc) whether the liquidator is authorised to carry on the business of the company if he determines that to do so would be necessary or in the best interests of the creditors or members of the company;
  - (dd) the name and address of each individual to be appointed as liquidator and the remuneration proposed to be paid to each liquidator; and
  - (ee) whether the liquidator is required to send to all members a statement of account prepared or caused to be prepared by the liquidator in respect of his actions or transactions.

Subject to certain exceptions in the BVI Companies Act, a declaration of solvency is insufficient for the purposes of voluntary liquidation unless:

- (aa) it is made on a date no more than four weeks earlier than the date of the resolution to appoint a voluntary liquidator; and
- (bb) it has attached to it a statement of the company's assets and liabilities as at the latest practical date before the making of the declaration.

To be effective, a liquidation plan must be approved by the directors no more than six weeks prior to the date of the resolution to appoint a voluntary liquidator.

A director making a declaration of solvency without having reasonable grounds for the opinion that the company is and will continue to be able to discharge, pay or provide for its debts in full as they fall due, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of US\$10,000.

Subject to the provisions of the BVI Companies Act, a voluntary liquidator or two or more joint voluntary liquidators may be appointed in respect of a company:

- (i) by a resolution of the directors; or
- (ii) by a resolution of the members.

(o) *Reconstructions*

There are statutory provisions which facilitate arrangements which involve a plan of arrangement being approved by a resolution of directors of the company and application being made to the court for approval of the proposed arrangement. Upon approval by the court, the directors of the company are required to approve the plan of arrangement as approved by the court whether or not the court has directed any amendments to be made thereto and give notice to the persons whom the court requires notice to be given or submit the plan of arrangement to those person for such approval, if any, as the court order required.

(p) *Compulsory acquisition*

Subject to any limitations in the memorandum or articles of association of a company, members holding 90% of the votes of the outstanding shares entitled to vote on a merger or consolidation may give a written instruction to a company directing the company to redeem the shares held by the remaining members. Upon receipt of the written instruction, the company is required to redeem the shares and give written notice to each member whose shares are to be redeemed stating the redemption price and the manner in which the redemption is to be effected.

(q) *Indemnification*

BVI law does not limit the extent to which a company's articles of association may provide for indemnification of directors, officers and any other person, except to the extent any such provision may be held by the court to be contrary to public policy (e.g. for purporting to provide indemnification against the consequences of committing a crime.) provided that the indemnified person acted honestly and in good faith and in what he believed to be in the best interests of the company and, in the case of criminal proceedings, the person had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.