

# The Thales UK Pension Scheme (Section 1)

Dear Member

## 2010 SUMMARY FUNDING STATEMENT

It is part of the Trustee's responsibility to ensure that a full actuarial valuation of Section 1 of the Thales UK Pension Scheme ("the Section") is carried out within one year of its commencement and then every 3 years. In addition, the Trustee will provide you with an annual statement of how the Section is funded and remind you of the results of the last valuation. This is the first such statement for the Section.

### How is my pension funded?

Thales UK Limited and the other participating employers in the Section ("the Employers"), pay contributions so that the Section can pay pensions and other benefits to members. You also make contributions to help pay for your benefits.

The first formal valuation of the Section was carried out at an effective date of 31 December 2008.

### Results of the Formal Valuation

The first formal valuation of the Section showed that on 31 December 2008 the funding position was as follows:

Assets	£956m
Amount assessed as needed to provide benefits ("Liabilities")	£1,483m
Surplus / (Deficit)	(£527m)
Funding level	64%

As a result of the formal valuation the Employers' contributions to the Section were amended. The Employers will pay the following contributions from 1 April 2010:

11.9% of Pensionable Salaries, which are expected to meet the cost of future service benefits; and in addition;

£44 million per annum, which is calculated to eliminate the deficit by 31 December 2022.

Employer contributions will be reviewed as part of the next formal actuarial valuation due as at 31 December 2011.

The Trustee also obtain regular funding updates from the Scheme Actuary, which provide an estimate of the assets needed today to meet the payment of benefits allowing for future investment returns.

A funding update was carried out as at 31 December 2009.

### Results of the Funding Update

A funding update of the Section showed that on 31 December 2009 the funding position was as follows:

Assets	£1,081m
Amount assessed as needed to provide benefits ("Liabilities")	£1,538m
Surplus / (Deficit)	(£457m)
Funding level	70%

### Change in funding position

The improvement in the funding level over the year to 31 December 2009 arose because of better than anticipated investment performance and extra contributions paid by the Employers to address the deficit. These positive factors were partly offset by changes to investment market factors which increased the value placed on the Section's liabilities.

You should be aware that the factors affecting the funding level are very changeable, particularly stock market performance, interest rates and life expectancy. This means that the funding level can go up or down in the future.

Under the scheme funding regime, the method and assumptions used to value the liabilities have been chosen prudently and allowance has been made where appropriate for a suitable margin against adverse deviation from the assumptions. This does not represent the cost, though, of fully buying insurance policies to meet the liabilities (known as “full solvency”). This amount has been estimated as part of the actuarial valuation as at 31 December 2008.

### **The importance of the Employers’ support**

The Trustee’s objective is to have enough money in the Section to pay pensions now and in the future. However, this relies on the Employers continuing in business and supporting the Section because:

- Assets can go down as well as up, and when there is a shortfall, the Employers will usually need to put in more money; and
- The cost of benefits may increase so that the Employers will need to put in more money.

Only if the Section had more than enough money to buy-out the benefits in full could a refund be paid to the Employers.

### **What would happen if the Section started to wind up?**

We are obliged by law to provide with you information regarding what would happen in the event that the Section were to wind up.

If the Section were to wind up, the Employers would be required to pay enough into the Section to enable your benefits to be completely secured with an insurance company. As at 31 December 2008, we estimate that the Section would have been 42% funded on an insurance company buy-out basis and the Employers would therefore have been required to pay an additional £1,318 million into the Section to fully secure the benefits with an insurance company. Please note that this is provided for information purposes - it does not imply that the Employer is thinking of winding-up the Section.

In the event of a wind up, it may be the case that the Employers are unable to pay the full amount required by the insurance company. The Pension Protection Fund (PPF) has been set up by the government to help protect members’ pensions where a company becomes insolvent, although it does not guarantee to pay full benefits. If the Employers became insolvent and the Section entered the PPF, the PPF would take over the Section and pay compensation to members. Further information and guidance is available on the PPF’s website at [www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk](http://www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk). Or you can write to the Pension Protection Fund at Knollys House, 17 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 6SR.

### **What is the Section invested in?**

The Trustee’s policy is to invest in a broad range of assets to get the best return possible while taking account of the liabilities of the Section, and the risks of having too much money in any one type of investment. As at 31 December 2009 the Section assets were invested in the following broad proportions:

Shares in UK and overseas companies (equities)	42%
Bonds	51%
Cash/other	7%

### **Where can I get further information?**

If you have any other questions, or would like any more information about the Scheme or the Section, please contact us at the address below.

Please note that if you are considering leaving the Section, we suggest that you consult an appropriate financial adviser before taking any action.

Yours sincerely  
Thales Pension Trustees (Section 1) Limited

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