

# Case Study:



## CHUBB GROUP OF INSURANCE COMPANIES

### About Chubb

**Established more than 125 years**

**Insurance services to individuals  
and businesses across the world**

**Chubb is a worldwide network of  
120 offices in 27 countries staffed  
by 10,400 employees**

**Wholly US owned company -  
according to Fortune magazine,  
Chubb is the 203rd largest  
US-based corporation**

**Forbes listed Chubb as one of  
America's 400 Best Big Companies**

[www.chubb.com](http://www.chubb.com)

**Ian Hutchinson**  
NED, Chubb Insurance



Chubb Insurance Company of Europe SE is wholly owned by the US company, Chubb Inc: part of a global network that spans 32 countries, supplying an extensive range of insurance cover for individuals and businesses.

Chubb Europe relocated from Brussels to London in 2008 as over 50% of its business was UK based. Chubb and the FSA agreed it would be more appropriate for the business to be UK based and regulated by UK guidelines. At this point, Chubb was also advised to appoint two Non-Executive Directors to its board, primarily for corporate governance and to comply with UK government guidelines and those of the FSA.

The CFO of Chubb, Kevin O'Sheil met First Flight MD, Chris Spencer-Phillips at a networking event. First Flight specialises in introducing Non-Executive Directors and works hard to match candidates and clients for an ideal fit. Often Non-Execs are sought for investment, experience or their wealth of contacts. For Chubb, the specification was for 2 independent directors to join the Board to challenge, oversee procedures and take on a traditional corporate governance role.

The first Non-Executive Director provided by First Flight was selected from an initial list of 25 candidates produced within 2 weeks - of which just 5 were interviewed. The Non-Exec was delighted to be appointed to the role that complements his long history in the insurance world together with a consultancy business that he runs alongside his Non-Exec position. "The Non-Exec role is quite specific - you have to accept that the day to day management isn't your responsibility" he commented "Sometimes you have to step back in order to fulfil what is required of you. As a Non-Exec you have to learn to approach things in a different way."

Chubb's experience with First Flight has been very positive. Lower fees and a faster turnaround than anticipated led Chubb to ask First Flight to find a second Non-Exec a year later.

The second Non-Executive Director, Ian Hutchinson, was also selected from an initial 'long-list' that was filtered down to just 4 interviewees. His background includes a long spell at Royal & Sun Alliance in a financial capacity specialising in capital management, contrasting with the first Non-Exec who has business experience with some of the major insurance and banking institutions.





Chubb operates a rigorous interview process and puts its Non-Execs through the same procedures as its staff, including full verification of CVs, a 2-stage interview process and Lloyd's & FSA regulatory approval.

Both Non-Execs bring direct experience, a full market understanding, a willingness to challenge and encourage best practice together with an independence that sets them apart from the executive directors. Having worked in executive capacities, they also understand the issues faced by the rest of the Board.

Both positions were satisfied by First Flight through a mix of its own extensive contacts, through executive search plus selective advertising and referrals. Such an open process with the aim of finding truly independent directors is an increasingly popular way for larger companies to appoint. Indeed most of the larger organisations in the UK have started to operate in this way, shunning the 'old school tie network' and 'jobs for the boys' in light of increased scrutiny and the need to show transparency and true impartiality, especially in a sensitive, financially regulated market like insurance.

Ian Hutchinson heard about the role as he was a candidate on the First Flight database. He believes that by drawing from a larger pool, a company will get the best level of candidate, suggesting that many businesses don't adopt this approach. The insurance world is quite small so it is easily possible to have a conflict of interest when appointing for this role.

The First Flight database has 4,500 high calibre Non-Execs distilled from 35,000 submitted CVs. The First Flight team are in constant touch with their candidates and take the time to get to know them, their strengths and weaknesses so they are in a good position to match candidates with clients' requirements in a short time frame.

"I was very happy with the service I received from First Flight, they produced an excellent 'long list' of CVs in a very short time and the service was professional, straightforward and the bench strength of the candidates they provided was impressive. Their approach makes the process easy and transparent. The Non-Executive Directors they have introduced to Chubb are working out well" summarised Kevin O'Sheil, CFO of Chubb.



First Flight has worked with all manner of businesses across all sectors to help strengthen their Boards from start-ups to exits by providing clients with the right Chair and Non-Execs.

First Flight has recently placed 4 candidates in Lloyd's Insurance companies and has very strong contacts in this sector.

## About First Flight

**UK company specialising in:**

- **Non-Executive Directors**
- **Investing Non-Executive Directors**
- **Management Buy-Ins and company acquisitions**

**Largest active candidate database with entrepreneurs and ex directors of blue chip companies, many of whom want to invest**

**100 Non-Exec placements, some of whom have invested, totalling £4m**

**MBI successes total over £15m in the last 18 months**

**First Flight's service provides clients with Non-Exec Directors which significantly strengthen a company's board providing good Corporate Governance, contacts and strategic input**

**Chris Spencer-Phillips  
MD, First Flight**

