Title Chat

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What Happened to That Title Insurance Company?

If you are in the real estate business working in the title insurance/closing area, the lending area, or the real estate agent/broker area, you may come across a title insurance policy that a seller or mortgagor may have in his or her possession, but you do not recognize the name of the title insurance company--possibly because the policy was issued some time ago or you cannot now locate the company.

This is important for a variety of reasons such as: Are reissue credits available to reduce the cost of a new title insurance policy? Can the policy be used as a starter or title base to examine title going forward? What if you have to contact the title insurance company with a question on the policy? What if your customer says they had a policy for that company but cannot find the policy and now want to contact the company to get a replacement policy? Or, what if you need to notify the title insurance company of a claim?

You may not recognize the name of the title insurance company because it was acquired by another title insurance company through a merger, or the title insurance company went out of business and its claim liability was taken over by another title insurance company, or the title insurance company was acquired by another title insurance company and its base of operations was moved to an address different from that set forth in the policy.

Here are some suggestions on locating the title insurance company or its successor:

1. The ALTA web site contains a section under "Consumer Information" entitled "Title Insurer Mergers." You access this web site at www.alta.org.
2. We can add a few names to the list:

Builders Title Insurance Co.	Ticor Title
Berks Title Insurance Co.	Fidelity National
Industrial Valley Title Insurance	Commonwealth Land Title
Minnesota Title or Title Insurance Company of Mn.	Old Republic
Peninsular Title Insurance Co.	Commonwealth Land Title
Pioneer National Title Insurance Co.	Ticor Title
SAFECO Title Insurance Co.	Security Union
Security Title and Guaranty Co. (NY)	Fidelity National
Southeast Title Insurance Co.	Attorneys Title Insurance
The Title Guaranty Company of Baltimore	Chicago Title Insurance
TitleAmerica Insurance Corporation	North American Title Insurance Corporation

3. Call the insurance commissioner's office of the state where the title insurance company was created. The first page of the policy will usually contain this information
4. If these suggestions do not result in your getting the information you need, consider asking one of your good friends at the title insurance company you do business with who will probably be able to get you the information.

Title Chat is published monthly by North American Title Insurance Corporation, a member of the North American Title Group of companies for distribution to North American Title Group's employees and customers. Topics will include closing issues, title and title insurance issues and title insurance business issues; and are intended to make the reader aware of the issues discussed. It should not be construed as giving a legal opinion on the issues being discussed; but rather as addressing situations encountered in its business and sometimes offering solutions based upon applicable case or statutory law that the reader may be unaware of. North American Title Insurance Corporation assumes no liability for any incorrect statements made herein.

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