



Companies Act 1948

1948 CHAPTER 38 11 and 12 Geo 6

PART V

WINDING UP.

(II) WINDING UP BY THE COURT

Liquidators.

237 Power of court to appoint liquidators.

For the purpose of conducting the proceedings in winding up a company and performing such duties in reference thereto as the court may impose, the court may appoint a liquidator or liquidators.

238 Appointment and powers of provisional liquidator.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the court may appoint a liquidator provisionally at any time after the presentation of a winding-up petition.
- (2) Where the proceedings are in England, the appointment of a provisional liquidator may be made at any time before the making of a winding-up order, and either the official receiver or any other fit person may be appointed.
- (3) Where the proceedings are in Scotland, the appointment of a provisional liquidator may be made at any time before the first appointment of liquidators.
- (4) Where a liquidator is provisionally appointed by the court, the court may limit and restrict his powers by the order appointing him.

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239 Appointment, style, &c, of liquidators in England.

The following provisions with respect to liquidators shall have effect on a winding-up order being made in England:—

- (a) the official receiver shall by virtue of his office become the provisional liquidator and shall continue to act as such until he or another person becomes liquidator and is capable of acting as such;
- (b) the official receiver shall summon separate meetings of the creditors and contributories of the company for the purpose of determining whether or not an application is to be made to the court for appointing a liquidator in the place of the official receiver;
- (c) the court may make any appointment and order required to give effect to any such determination and, if there is a difference between the determinations, of the meetings of the creditors and contributories in respect of the matter aforesaid, the court shall decide the difference and make such order thereon as the court may think fit;
- (d) in a case where a liquidator is not appointed by the court, the official receiver shall be the liquidator of the company;
- (e) the official receiver shall by virtue of his office be the liquidator during any vacancy;
- (f) a liquidator shall be described, where a person other than the official receiver is liquidator, by the style of “the liquidator”, and, where the official receiver is liquidator, by the style of “the official receiver and liquidator”, of the particular company in respect of which he is appointed and not by his individual name.

240 Provisions where person other than official receiver is appointed liquidator.

Where, in the winding up of a company by the court in England, a person other than the official receiver is appointed liquidator, that person—

- (a) shall not be capable of acting as liquidator until he has notified his appointment to the registrar of companies and given security in the prescribed manner to the satisfaction of the Board of Trade;
- (b) shall give the official receiver such information and such access to and facilities for inspecting the books and documents of the company and generally such aid as may be requisite for enabling that officer to perform his duties under this Act.

241 Provisions as to liquidators in Scotland.

The following provisions with respect to the liquidators shall have effect in a winding up by the court in Scotland:—

- (a) the court may determine whether any and what security is to be given by a liquidator on his appointment;
- (b) a liquidator shall be described by the style of “the official liquidator” of the particular company in respect of which he is appointed and not by his individual name;
- (c) where an order has been made for winding up a company subject to supervision and an order is afterwards made for winding up by the court, the court may by the last-mentioned or by any subsequent order appoint any person who is then liquidator, either provisionally or permanently, and either

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with or without any other person, to be liquidator in the winding up by the court.

242 General provisions as to liquidators.

- (1) A liquidator appointed by the court may resign or, on cause shown, be removed by the court.
- (2) Where a person other than the official receiver is appointed liquidator, he shall receive such salary or remuneration by way of percentage or otherwise as the court may direct, and, if more such persons than one are appointed liquidators, their remuneration shall be distributed among them in such proportions as the court directs.
- (3) A vacancy in the office of a liquidator appointed by the court shall be filled by the court.
- (4) If more than one liquidator is appointed by the court, the court shall declare whether any act by this Act required or authorised to be done by the liquidator is to be done by all or any one or more of the persons appointed.
- (5) Subject to the provisions of section three hundred and thirty-five of this Act, the acts of a liquidator shall be valid notwithstanding any defects that may afterwards be discovered in his appointment or qualification.

243 Custody of company's property.

- (1) Where a winding-up order has been made or where a provisional liquidator has been appointed, the liquidator or the provisional liquidator, as the case may be, shall take into his custody or under his control all the property and things in action to which the company is or appears to be entitled.
- (2) In a winding up by the court in Scotland, if and so long as there is no liquidator, all the property of the company shall be deemed to be in the custody of the court.

244 Vesting of property of company in liquidator.

Where a company is being wound up by the court, the court may on the application of the liquidator by order direct that all or any part of the property of whatsoever description belonging to the company or held by trustees on its behalf shall vest in the liquidator by his official name, and thereupon the property to which the order relates shall vest accordingly, and the liquidator may, after giving such indemnity, if any, as the court may direct, bring or defend in his official name any action or other, legal proceeding which relates to that property or which it is necessary to bring or defend for the purpose of effectually winding up the company and recovering its property.

245 Powers of liquidator.

- (1) The liquidator in a winding up by the court shall have power, with the sanction either of the court or of the committee of inspection,—
 - (a) to bring or defend any action or other legal proceeding in the name and on behalf of the company;
 - (b) to carry on the business-of the company so far as may be necessary for the beneficial winding up thereof;

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- (c) to appoint a solicitor to assist him in the performance of his duties;
 - (d) to pay any classes of creditors in full;
 - (e) to make any compromise or arrangement with creditors or persons claiming to be creditors, or having or alleging themselves to have any claim, present or future, certain or contingent, ascertained or sounding only in damages against the company, or whereby the company may be rendered liable;
 - (f) to compromise all calls and liabilities to calls, debts and liabilities capable of resulting in debts, and all claims, present or future, certain or contingent, ascertained or sounding only in damages, subsisting or supposed to subsist between the company and a contributory or alleged contributory or other debtor or person apprehending liability to the company, and all questions in any way relating to or affecting the assets or the winding up of the company, on such terms as may be agreed, and take any security for the discharge of any such call, debt, liability or claim and give a complete discharge in respect thereof.
- (2) The liquidator in a winding up by the court shall have power—
- (a) to sell the real and personal property and things in action of the company by public auction or private contract, with power to transfer the whole thereof to any person or company or to sell the same in parcels;
 - (b) to do all acts and to execute, in the name and on behalf of the company, all deeds, receipts and other documents, and for that purpose to use, when necessary, the company's seal;
 - (c) to prove, rank and claim in the bankruptcy, insolvency or sequestration of any contributory for any balance against his estate, and to receive dividends in the bankruptcy, insolvency or sequestration in respect of that balance, as a separate debt due from the bankrupt or insolvent, and rateably with the other separate creditors;
 - (d) to draw, accept, make and indorse any bill of exchange or promissory note in the name and on behalf of the company, with the same effect with respect to the liability of the company as if the bill or note had been drawn, accepted, made or indorsed by or on behalf of the company in the course of its business ;
 - (e) to raise on the security of the assets of the company any money requisite;
 - (f) to take out in his official name letters of administration to any deceased contributory, and to do in his official name any other act necessary for obtaining payment of any money due from a contributory or his estate which cannot be conveniently done in the name of the company, and in all such cases the money due shall, for the purpose of enabling the liquidator to take out the letters of administration or recover the money, be deemed to be due to the liquidator himself;
 - (g) to appoint an agent to do any business which the liquidator is unable to do himself;
 - (h) to do all such other things as may be necessary for winding up the affairs of the company and distributing its assets.
- (3) The exercise by the liquidator in a winding up by the court of the powers conferred by this section shall be subject to the control of the court, and any creditor or contributory may apply to the court with respect to any exercise or proposed exercise of any of those powers.
- (4) In the case of a winding up in Scotland, the court may provide by any order that the liquidator may, where there is no committee of inspection, exercise any of the powers

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mentioned in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section without the sanction or intervention of the court.

- (5) In a winding up by the court in Scotland, the liquidator shall, subject to general rules, have the same powers as a trustee on a bankrupt estate.

246 Exercise and control of liquidator's powers in England.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England shall, in the administration of the assets of the company and in the distribution thereof among its creditors, have regard to any directions that may be given by resolution of the creditors or contributories at any general meeting or by the committee of inspection, and any directions given by the creditors or contributories at any general meeting shall in case of conflict be deemed to override any directions given by the committee of inspection.
- (2) The liquidator may summon general meetings of the creditors or contributories for the purpose of ascertaining their wishes, and it shall be his duty to summon meetings .at such times as the creditors or contributories, by resolution, either at the meeting appointing the liquidator or otherwise, may direct, or whenever requested in writing to do so by one tenth in value of the creditors or contributories as the case may be.
- (3) The liquidator may apply to the court in manner prescribed for directions in relation to any particular matter arising under the winding up.
- (4) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the liquidator shall use his own discretion in the management of the estate and its distribution among the creditors.
- (5) If any person is aggrieved by any act or decision of the liquidator, that person may apply to the court, and the court may confirm, reverse or modify the act or decision complained of, and make such order in the premises as it thinks just.

247 Books to be kept by liquidator in England.

Every liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England shall keep, in manner prescribed, proper books in which he shall cause to be made entries or minutes of proceedings at meetings, and of such other matters as may be prescribed, and any creditor or contributory may, subject to the control of the court, personally or by his agent inspect any such books.

248 Payments of liquidator in England into bank.

- (1) Every liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England shall, in such manner and at such times as the Board of Trade, with the concurrence of the Treasury, direct, pay the money received by him to the Companies Liquidation Account at the Bank of England, and the Board shall furnish him with a certificate of receipt of the money so paid:

Provided that, if the committee of inspection satisfy the Board of Trade that for the purpose of carrying on the business of the company or of obtaining advances, or for any other reason, it is for the advantage of the creditors or contributories that the liquidator should have an account with any other bank, the Board shall, on the application of the committee of inspection, authorise the liquidator to make his

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payments into and out of such other bank as the committee may select, and thereupon those payments shall be made in the prescribed manner.

- (2) If any such liquidator at any time retains for more than ten days a sum exceeding fifty pounds or such other amount as the Board of Trade in any particular case authorise him to retain, then, unless he explains the retention to the satisfaction of the Board, he shall pay interest on the amount so retained in excess at the rate of twenty per cent. per annum, and shall be liable to disallowance of all or such part of his remuneration as the Board may think just, and to be removed from his office by the Board, and shall be liable to pay any expenses occasioned' by reason of his default.
- (3) A liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England shall not pay any sums received by him as liquidator into his private banking account.

249 Audit of liquidator's accounts in England.

- (1) Every liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England shall, at such times as may be prescribed but not less than twice in each year during his tenure of office, send to the Board of Trade, or as they direct, an account of his receipts and payments as liquidator.
- (2) The account shall be in a prescribed form, shall be made in duplicate, and shall be verified by a statutory declaration in the prescribed form.
- (3) The Board shall cause the account to be audited, and for the purpose of the audit the liquidator shall furnish the Board with such vouchers and information as the Board may require, and the Board may at any time require the production of and inspect any books or accounts kept by the liquidator.
- (4) When the account has been audited, one copy thereof shall be filed and kept by the Board, and the other copy shall be delivered to the court for filing, and each copy shall be open to the inspection of any person on payment of the prescribed fee.
- (5) The liquidator shall cause the account when audited or a summary thereof to be printed, and shall send a printed copy of the account or summary by post to every creditor and contributory:

Provided that the Board may in any case dispense with compliance with this subsection.

250 Control of Board of Trade over liquidators in England.

- (1) The Board of Trade shall take cognizance of the conduct of liquidators of companies which are being wound up by the court in England, and, if a liquidator does not faithfully perform his duties and duly observe all the requirements imposed on him by statute, rules or otherwise with respect to the performance of his duties or if any complaint is made to the Board by any creditor or contributory in regard thereto, the Board shall inquire into the matter, and take such action thereon as they may think expedient.
- (2) The Board may at any time require any liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England to answer any inquiry in relation to any winding up in which he is engaged, and may, if the Board think fit, apply to the court to examine him or any other person on oath concerning the winding up.

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- (3) The Board may also direct a local investigation to be made of the books and vouchers of the liquidator.

251 Release of liquidators in England.

- (1) When the liquidator of a company which is being wound up by the court in England has realised all the property of the company, or so much thereof as can, in his opinion, be realised without needlessly protracting the liquidation, and has distributed a final dividend, if any, to the creditors, and adjusted the rights of the contributories among themselves, and made a final return, if any, to the contributories, or has resigned, or has been removed from his office, the Board of Trade shall, on his application, cause a report on his accounts to be prepared, and, on his complying with all the requirements of the Board, shall take into consideration the report and any objection which may be urged by any creditor or contributory or person interested against the release of the liquidator, and shall either grant or withhold the release accordingly, subject nevertheless to an appeal to the High Court.
- (2) Where the release of a liquidator is withheld, the court may, on the application of any creditor or contributory or person interested, make such order as it thinks just, charging the liquidator with the consequences of any act or default which he may have done or made contrary to his duty.
- (3) An order of the Board of Trade releasing the liquidator shall discharge him from all liability in respect of any act done or default made by him in the administration of the affairs of the company or otherwise in relation to his conduct as liquidator, but any such order may be revoked on proof that it was obtained by fraud or by suppression or concealment of any material fact.
- (4) Where the liquidator has not previously resigned or been removed, his release shall operate as a removal of him from his office.