

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Broker	A person who negotiates insurance policies on behalf of the insurance company, receiving a commission from the insurance company for policies placed and other services rendered.
Casualty insurance	One of the three main groups of insurance products (the others are life insurance and property insurance). This type of insurance is primarily concerned with losses caused by injuries to others than the policyholder and the resulting legal liability imposed on the insured.
Catastrophe reinsurance	A policy purchased by a ceding company that indemnifies that company for the amount of loss in excess of a specified retention amount subject to a maximum specific limit from a covered catastrophic event.
Cede, Cedant, Ceding company	An insurance company that transfers some or all of the risks in active policies to another company cedes its business. The company transferring its risks is known as the cedant or ceding company.
Claims incurred	The totals for all claims paid and related claim expenses during a specific accounting period(s) plus the changes in IBNR reserve for the same period of time.
Combined ratio	A measure of total expenses (claims and administration) in relation to net premiums earned as determined in accordance with GAAP. If this ratio is below 100%, there was a profit from underwriting activities, while over 100% represents a loss from underwriting.
Facility Association	Participation in automobile risk-sharing pools whereby P&C insurance companies share resources to provide insurance coverage to high-risk individuals or businesses.
GAAP	Generally accepted accounting principles. These are defined in the handbook prepared by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.
Gross premiums written (GPW)	Total premiums, net of cancellations, on insurance underwritten during a specified period of time before deduction of reinsurance premiums ceded.
IBNR reserve	Abbreviation for “incurred but not reported.” A reserve that estimates claims that have been incurred by a policyholder but not reported to the insurance company. It also includes unknown future developments on claims that have been reported.
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards. These are global accounting standards issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), including interpretations of the International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee (IFRIC).
Loss ratio (Claims ratio)	Claims incurred net of reinsurance expressed as a percentage of net premiums earned for a specified period of time.
Minimum Capital Test (MCT)	A solvency ratio used by regulators to assess a company's financial strength. This ratio measures capital requirements in relation to the degree of risk undertaken by a particular company. The minimum amount required by this ratio, as determined by the regulators, is 1.5 or 150% of capital available over capital required.

Net premiums earned (NPE)	The portion of net premiums written that is recognized for accounting purposes as revenue during a period.
Net premiums written (NPW)	Gross premiums written for a given period of time less premiums ceded to reinsurers during such period.
Net risk ratio (NRR)	A ratio of net premiums written to equity. This ratio indicates the ability of a company's financial resources to withstand adverse underwriting results. The regulatory guideline is a ratio of 3.0 or lower.
Premium	The dollars that a policyholder pays today to insure a specific set of risk(s). In theory, this reflects the current value of the claims that a pool of policyholders can be expected to make in the future, as well as the costs of administering those potential claims.
Premium tax	A tax collected by insurance companies from policyholders and paid to various provincial and territorial governments. It is calculated as a percentage of gross premiums written.
Property insurance	One of the three main groups of insurance products (the others are life insurance and casualty insurance). This type of insurance provides coverage to a policyholder for an insurable interest in tangible property for property loss, damage or loss of use.
Prudent person	A common law standard against which those investing the money of others are judged against.
Redundancy & deficiency	Claims reserves are constantly re-evaluated. An increase in a reserve from the original estimate is a deficiency, while a decrease to the original reserve is called a redundancy.
Reinsurance	In its simplest form, insurance for an insurance company. It is an agreement where the reinsurer agrees to indemnify the ceding company against all or a portion of the insurance or reinsurance risk underwritten by the ceding company under one or more policies.
Reinsurer	A company that purchases the cedant risk in the reinsurance contract.
Underwriting	The process of reviewing applications submitted for insurance coverage, deciding whether to insure all or part of the coverage requested and calculating the related premium for the coverage offered.
Underwriting capacity	The maximum amount that a company can underwrite. It is based on retained earnings and investment capital held by the company. Using reinsurance allows a company to increase its underwriting capacity as it reduces the company's exposure to particular risks.
Underwriting profit/loss	The difference between net premiums earned and the sum of net claims incurred, commissions, premium taxes and all general and administrative expenses.
Unearned premiums	The difference between net premiums written and net premiums earned. It reflects the net premiums written for that portion of the term of its insurance policies that are deferred to subsequent accounting periods.