

## PRESS RELEASE – 5 AUGUST 2010

### Imperial Consolidated director jailed

**A former director of an investment firm, Imperial Consolidated Group, which managed over £250 million of investors' funds, was sentenced at Blackfriars Crown Court today for his part in a global fraud conspiracy. William "Bill" Godley, who admitted his involvement and whose extravagance with investors' money was "unbelievable" was sentenced to 3 ½ years' imprisonment.**

#### Outline

Mr Godley, together with three other company executives, was charged in 2006 with a single count of conspiracy to defraud in an internationally promoted scheme that attracted over £250 million from approximately 3,000 investors. Investors believed that their money would be used to finance a commercial loans business from which they would gain interest. The fraud operated from premises on a former RAF station at Binbrook in Lincolnshire and the investigation was conducted with Lincolnshire Police.

Mr Godley entered a plea of guilty ahead of trial and sentencing was adjourned until the conclusion of proceedings against all defendants. During the course of the first trial in 2008 and a retrial in 2010 the three other defendants were acquitted.

#### Outcome

William Godley was today sentenced to three years' and six months' imprisonment and disqualified from acting as a company director for six years.

Confiscation and compensation proceedings have been adjourned.

In passing sentence on Godley Mrs Justice Gloster said, *"On any basis this is a very serious fraud in which substantial sums of money have been lost by investors, many of whom have suffered considerable hardship"*.

She also said (in relation to sentence), *"Were it not for your guilty plea the starting point would have been seven years"* \*

\*(Note: before other mitigation).

Mrs Justice Gloster also made reference to his lavish lifestyle and extravagant expenditure paid for with investors' money. During one period of the fraud, Godley was paying himself up to £61,000 per month net of tax.

Some of the statements made by witnesses testify to Godley's extravagance.

#### Evidence from witnesses

An employee of Imperial Consolidated described Godley's expenditure at a meeting in the Bahamas as follows: *"We were entertained by Godley and taken to top quality restaurants. We were treated to expensive meals and wine, all paid for by the company on the company credit card...I recall him taking us to the Atlantis Hotel on Paradise Island with a casino and restaurant which went under the sea. Godley paid for everything...Everywhere that Godley went he was handing out \$20 tips."*

*"In my opinion he was unnecessarily spending a lot of company money on both the staff and himself"*

When challenged on a separate occasion about spending Godley replied *"Don't worry, I can put my hand in the till and take what I want"*.

A further witness stated that: *"Bill took his whole family and various members of the Bahamas office and some clients out to the most expensive restaurant in the Bahamas. Everything he spent in the Bahamas was put on his Imperial Consolidated credit card. Money was no object. His living expenses and those of his family were all paid by the company. His extravagance was unbelievable."*

**ENDS**