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REVIEW

The Law of Occupational Pension Schemes. BY N. INGLIS-JONES (Sweet & Maxwell) £90.00

This book is a loose-leaf manual on U.K. Occupational Pensions, to be updated regularly. It has been written by an eminent barrister in narrative style, and a great deal of work has clearly been put in. The presentation is clear and accessible, and there is a comprehensive index. I understand that this manual has been widely welcomed by its natural audience, namely qualified lawyers working in this field.

In the U.K., actuaries still do not have to learn even the rudiments of contract law, an omission I regret, let alone the differences between primary and secondary legislation. It has, therefore, frequently surprised me to encounter actuaries purporting to interpret contracts for clients, especially in relation to fast-moving negotiations over the pensions aspects of company sales and mergers. It would be fair to say that most actuaries may be familiar with, but are hardly knowledgeable of, the law.

In considering such a book, it should be borne in mind that the law is often contained in subsidiary regulations, rather than explicitly in the relevant Acts of Parliament, this being particularly the case for U.K. Occupational Pensions. While Mr Inglis-Jones by no means ignores the various sets of regulations, they are not reproduced in full.

This book may well be useful to actuarial students, studying the subject for the first time. For practitioners, however, who wish to maintain some familiarity with the law, it may well be more appropriate to consult the 'blue Butterworths'. I can see why the book is valuable to qualified lawyers, but it is probably not so for U.K. actuaries who have not been properly trained to make good use of it, more's the pity.

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