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**Admitted vs. Nonadmitted:
The Battle Continues**

**Western States Surplus Lines
Feel the Soft Market Slump**

**Lawsuit Filed Over
Auto Dealer Insurance Sales**

**Plus: Special Construction
Defect Market Report**

New Wholesale Brokerage Firm to Offer Professional Liability Products

Bucking the recent consolidation trend within the wholesale brokerage community, Patrick Hanley, former vice president of Swett & Crawford in San Francisco, has formed ECM Surplus Lines Brokers.



Patrick Hanley

The independently owned wholesale brokerage firm will provide expertise in the placement of directors' and officers', errors and omissions, employment practices liability and other related liability coverages.



Zulma Marquez

"Our new organization will allow us to better concentrate on our core products, as well as enable us to render superior service to our retail brokers," Hanley said. The company will also offer educational programs

and Internet services to clients.


Joining Hanley, who will serve as president, will be Zulma Marquez and Paul Lefcourt as senior vice presidents. Both previously worked with



Paul Lefcourt

Swett & Crawford.

ECM's home office will be located in San Francisco. Later in the year the company anticipates opening a Southern California branch office to capitalize on existing relationships in the region.


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Newsbriefs

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works. The renewed activity comes on the heels of a \$4 million investment by Benfield and Rea Investment Trust (BRIT), a London-based insurance investment trust. IBS' two networks, one for life and health and the other for property and casualty, will provide news and education to its subscribers. To date, IBS reports at least 40 subscribers. The programming includes a daily headline news segment and specials like "Managing Catastrophe Risk."

KILLER QUAKES: Mother Earth can be cruel. Yet another sizeable earthquake shook northern Iran last month, a region still recovering from a brutally seismic spring. In May, a 7.1-magnitude quake struck, killing at least 2,400 villagers. Only two and a half months earlier, a 6.1-magnitude temblor killed more than 3,000 people and left 40,000 more homeless. And California thinks it has it bad.

Washington also did its share of shaking last month, although fortunately not with the same results as Iran. On June 23, a 4.9-magnitude quake jolted a 100-mile area in western Washington, followed by a couple of smaller aftershocks the next day. 

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS



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