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July 14, 2009

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ICW Group Insurance Named One of Ward's Top 50 US Carriers

***Super-regional insurance carrier's outstanding financial performance
recognized over five year period***

SAN DIEGO, Calif.—ICW Group Insurance Companies has been named to the prestigious Ward Group's Top 50 performing insurance companies for 2009. The Ward Group is an operational consulting firm and leading provider of benchmarking and best practices services to the insurance industry.

The announcement by the Ward Group ranks ICW Group Insurance among the elite property-casualty insurance companies in the United States. Annually, Ward Group analyzes the financial performance of over 3,000 property-casualty insurance companies based in the United States.

"Being recognized as a top tier performer is a great honor for us," said Kevin Prior, president and chief executive officer at ICW Group. "But the credit goes to our company's team members, whose hard work and dedication fueled our success and underlies this achievement. As we continue our strong performance and deliver on our unique brand value proposition of elevating our agents in the eyes of their clients, I am confident in our ability to achieve this prestigious recognition for years to come. "

ICW Group was recognized by Ward for achieving outstanding financial results in the areas of safety, consistency and performance over the past five years.

"We look for companies that outperform the industry," said Jeffrey Rieder, president of The Ward Group during the firm's formal announcement on July 9th.



ICW Group has operated as an insurance carrier for more than 35 years. It specializes in workers' compensation, surety, earthquake, and personal/business auto. Partnering with more than 3,800 agents and brokers across the United States, ICW Group continues to be recognized as a leader in the insurance industry.

Insurance companies must meet the following criteria to be considered for Ward's 50. In safety and consistency, ICW Group met or surpassed:

- Surplus and premiums of at least \$50 million for each of the five years analyzed
- Net income in at least four of the last five years
- Risk-based capital ratio of at least 100% for each of the five years analyzed
- Compound annual growth in the premiums between -10% and +40%

In performance measurement, ICW Group met or surpassed:

- Five year average return on Average Equity, Average Assets and Total Revenue
- Five year growth in Revenue
- Five year improvement in surplus to Written Premiums
- Five year average Combined Ratio

ABOUT ICW GROUP

Privately held ICW Group represents a group of multi-line property and casualty insurance carriers providing workers' compensation, surety, earthquake and personal and business auto insurance. Its member companies consist of Insurance Company of the West, Explorer Insurance Company and Independence Casualty and Surety. Based in San Diego, ICW Group continues to transform itself into an insurance industry leader dedicated to meeting the needs of its Agents and Brokers and the people and companies they insure. More information is available at www.icwgroup.com.

ABOUT WARD GROUP

Ward Group is a consulting firm specializing in the insurance industry and the leading provider of industry benchmarking and best practices services, with expertise in staffing level analysis and expense management. We help companies measure results, optimize performance and be more profitable. For more information about Ward Group, visit www.wardinc.com.

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