# **Business Bankruptcy: How Has BAPCPA Affected Key Issues**

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## Today's Agenda

- Discuss Key Employee Retention Programs (KERP) prior to the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 (BAPCPA)
- Review the KERP provisions of BAPCPA
- Compare the recent court rulings of Calpine Corporation and Dana Corporation
- Exclusivity Issues & Options

#### **KERP's Prior to BAPCPA**

## KERPs were generally approved prior to BAPCPA

- Significant risk that the Debtor would lose valued employees without such a program
- Programs were reasonably designed to achieve desired results without unduly burdening the estate
- The Debtor was capable of making such a "sound and rational business decision" based on good faith and the best interest of the Debtor

## **Perceptions About KERP's Prior to BAPCPA**

## Critics of KERPs maintained that they were:

- Senior executive focused top executives were afforded disproportionate distributions versus the larger employee base
- Too generous
- Had low performance hurdles of no performance hurdles

#### **BAPCPA Places Restrictions on KERPs**

503(c)1: A Debtor seeking approval for retention bonus program must prove:

- Employee in question has a bona fide job offer from another business as the same or greater rate of compensation
- Services provided by the person are essential to the survival of the business
- Retention paid does not exceed either (i) 10 times the mean amount of similar transfers paid to non-management employees for any purpose during the same calendar year, or (ii) if not payments are made to nonmanagement employees, then the amount paid to management can not be greater than 25% of the amount paid to such employees for similar reasons from the previous year

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#### **BAPCPA Places Restrictions on KERPs**

503(c)2: Debtor seeking approval for severance pay to an insider must prove:

- Payment is part of a program that is generally applicable to all full-time employees; and
- The amount is not greater than 10 times the amount of the mean severance pay given to non-management employees

#### *503(c)3: Prohibits:*

Other transfers or obligations that are outside the ordinary course of business and not justified by the facts and circumstances of the case, including transfers made to, or obligation incurred for the benefit of, officer, managers, or consultants hired after the date of filing the petition

## **Calpine and Dana**

Similarities existed in the structure of severance and performance bonuses

- Severance payment based on various standard termination scenarios
- Bonuses to be paid based on each Company's emergence from Chapter 11 bankruptcy
  - Common trigger is the Plan Effective Date
  - Variable payout based on the final "enterprise value" as defined in each plan

So why did the Court rule against Dana's request?

## **Dana's Court Ruling**

Dana's proposed compensation program

- Bore resemblance to a KERP rather than an incentive plan
- The (completion bonus) compensation scheme walks like, talks like and is a KERP
- This Court can not categorize the (completion bonus) of this size and form as an incentive bonus
- (Non-Compete) Payments offered to senior executives if they left the company were severance payments which are severely restricted by the new law

Comparing the Calpine ruling with the Dana ruling is not relevant because Calpine has sufficient evidence that their compensation structure was incentive based and such evidence was largely unrebutted

Incentive plans which may have some components that arguably have a retentive effect, don't necessarily violate 503(c)'s requirement

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## **Calpine's Compensation Plan**

Calpine's compensation plan was comprehensive because it included:

- Executive Compensation Plan covering two executives
- Emergence Incentive Plan covering 20 additional executives
- Management Incentive Plan covering 600 additional employees
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Calpine's plan also focused triggers on both operational short-term and intermediate targets, as well as Plan Emergence

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- Creditors felt comfortable that the holistic compensation plan was properly aligned for all constituencies with the overriding incentive of maximizing the value of the Estate
- Evidentiary support provided in the Motion proved all employees were compensated well below market averages (between 22% and 71%)
  - Need for the compensation structure to bring all employees back to market average in order to stop the employee drain Calpine experienced
- In the end, the court approved the uncontested motion based on its holistic approach and incentive based structure

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## **Comparison Between Plans**

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# of executives covered	6	2
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#### Notes:

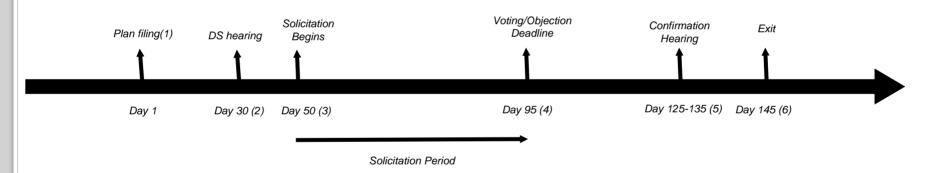
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## Restructuring and Emergence Process: Guiding Principles

- Until business plan and underlying metrics are further developed, precise emergence path and timing of emergence difficult to predict with certainty.
- In interim, guiding principles should be:
  - emergence is preferred sooner rather than later, but not at expense of reorganized Debtor's enterprise value or creditor recoveries;
  - optionality has inherent value (accordingly, avoid absolutes whenever possible); and
  - at outset of POR process, building consensus yields better results than unilateral, adversarial approach.
    - Although building consensus may take longer up front, it often results in a shorter confirmation process on the back end.

## Plan of Reorganization Illustrative Timeline

- Debtor in mega-case should budget at least five months from POR filing date until exit, assuming brisk pace, measured progress, and no material litigation/other delays.
- Mirant took twelve months from POR filing to confirmation.



- (1) Goal is to file POR with support of unsecured creditor's committee.
- (2) At least twenty-five days notice of disclosure statement hearing required.
- (3) At least ten days required to print and prepare ballots for mailing.
- (4) US Trustee / court normally requires at least forth-five day solicitation period; in some cases, sixty days may be required.
- (5) Likely at least thirty days needed after voting completed to prepare for contested confirmation hearing; May be a multi-week confirmation hearing.
- (6) Exit delayed at least ten days pending running of ten day appeal period.

Note: Timeline can be contracted and expanded to suit particular needs of case. However, dramatic contraction will require complete creditor acquiescence, which is unlikely in most large Chapter 11 cases.

Note: Possibility exists for complex, lengthy valuation fight with various (Equity, etc.) at confirmation.

#### **Path to Confirmation**

- Business plan development:
  - creditor due diligence; and
  - valuation/debt capacity discussions.
- Claims evaluation.
- Plan of reorganization:
  - distribution of value to stakeholders;
  - confirmation process; and
  - essential plan of reorganization components.

## **Business Plan Development: Creditor Due Diligence**

- Prior to commencing plan discussions, creditors and other stakeholders will want to understand, among other things:
  - Business Plan Assumptions
  - Liquidity Cushions and Break-even Points
  - Various Environment Scenarios (sensitivity analysis)

## **Business Plan Development: Valuation/Debt Capacity**

- In conjunction with business plan, company/debtor should develop its view on valuation and attempt to build consensus around that view.
  - Valuation will drive strategy and discussions with various stakeholders
  - Strategy needed to communicate views on valuation to stakeholders appropriately.
- Debtor must construct and stress-test debt capacity and leverage metrics.
  - Those metrics will drive exit financing needs.
- Debtor will formulate post-exit capital structure based on valuation and projected cash flows.

#### **Claims Evaluation**

- All stakeholders will need reasonable understanding of claims pool well in advance of claims adjudication process (including nature, amount, and level of priority).
- Size and priority of claims will drive creditor recoveries, as will identity of particular debtor. Need to evaluate and estimate both:
  - third party claims; and
  - intercompany claims.
- Parties will also require understanding of going-forward obligations between particular debtors (if applicable)
  - Creditors now will focus more on identity of obligor/obligee.

## Plan of Reorganization: Distribution of Value

Company must determine who will get what:

- Unsecureds: Will distributions include anything other than equity?
- Certain Creditors: How is value reallocated based on intercompany claims analysis?
- Equity: How much of a valuation fight will there be?

## Plan of Reorganization (POR): Confirmation Process

- POR is based on -- and thus must follow -- business plan.
- After negotiations with stakeholders, debtor files POR and disclosure statement.
  - Disclosure statement (like securities registration statement) describes case developments, elements of POR, and who will get what, when, and how.
  - No solicitation of POR acceptance without approved disclosure statement.
- Once disclosure statement approved, company solicits votes for POR.
  - Creditors divided into similarly-situated "classes" that vote separately pursuant to complex rules.

## **POR Confirmation Process (cont'd)**

- Once requisite creditors vote in favor, then bankruptcy court decides whether to "confirm" POR.
  - Confirmation is determined entity by entity absent substantive consolidation.
- Depending on objections and extent of consent,
  - potential for months of discovery and litigation; and
  - accordingly, confirmation hearing can range from one day to many months.
- After confirmation, POR goes "effective," allowing company to exit from Chapter 11.
  - On exit, restructuring transactions typically close.

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### **POR Confirmation Process: Consensus**

## Consensual Plan

- requires more time up front, but less time on back end;
- smoother confirmation process;
- less litigation; and
- control can be an issue.

## Non-consensual Plan

- requires less time up front, but more time on back end;
- higher legal burden;
- more adversarial process;
- requires flawless execution; and
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## Plan of Reorganization: Exclusivity Strategy

- Exclusivity ends within 18 month period
- <u>Best outcome</u>: file confirmable and consensual POR with sufficient advance stakeholder support assuming five month process
- Company must formulate alternative strategies if best outcome not possible.
  - Strategy should account for pressure from stakeholders to file sooner rather than later <u>and</u> vice versa.

## **Exclusivity: Alternatives other than best outcome**

- Don't file POR; develop alternatives to maintain control
  - Take risk that a few parties can legitimately file plans
    - Committee, 2nds, project lenders are likely suspects (if applicable)
  - Develop inclusive, transparent process that demonstrates Debtor's control and eliminates stakeholders' need to force issues
  - Request court approval of various case management structures ("informal exclusivity")
  - Allows Debtor to surface with POR at right time
  - Has its own risks, particularly criticisms for delay

## **Essential Plan Components**

- Treatment and classification of claims
- Implementation of restructuring
- Liquidation analysis
- Valuation analysis
- Feasibility

#### **Treatment and Classification of Claims**

- Claims tied directly to value under business plan.
- POR contains various classes of claims (e.g., DIP claims, secured, non-tax priority, multiple unsecured classes, subordinated classes, equity).
- Creditors' unique rights and settlements will determine separate classes and treatment.
- Claims in same class must receive same treatment.
- Plan proponent has great flexibility to classify claims.
  - Important to strategically formulate creditor classes.
  - Classification and treatment likely to be contested.

## Treatment and Classification of Claims (cont'd)

- Paramount concern: will intercompany claims analysis and litigation slow down exit process?
  - Creditors will "jockey" for position as creditors of most solvent debtors or use complexity to hold-up process.
- Possible solution: substantive consolidation.
  - Treats certain debtors as one and ignores intercompany issues.
  - Court generally asks whether:
    - creditors relied on separateness; and
    - debtors are hopelessly entangled.
  - Heavily fact specific; can bog down exit process even if a few creditors object.

## Implementation of Restructuring

- POR enumerates the transactions that make up the restructuring; each transaction likely will be scrutinized.
- Exit financing.
- Corporate issues:
  - cancellation of old securities and issuance of new securities;
  - re-listing of Debtor stock on national exchange (if applicable);
  - amended/reinstated corporate charter and bylaws;
  - restructuring transactions/elimination of shell entities; and
  - corporate governance and board/management composition.
- Creditor settlements.
- Tax restrictions to preserve NOLs.
- Discharge, release, exculpation, and indemnification clauses.

## **Feasibility**

- Plan must be feasible i.e., not likely to be followed by a liquidation or another reorganization.
- Feasibility dependent on Debtor's business plan and financial projections showing reasonable assurance of business' success going-forward.
- Stakeholders will expect "deep dive" review of Debtor's business plan to ensure feasibility.

## **Liquidation and Valuation Analyses**

- Court must find that POR is in "best interests" of creditors.
  - "Best interests" means that POR provides creditors with at least as much as they would receive under hypothetical chapter 7 liquidation.
  - Likely will require liquidation and valuation analysis by entity.
- Liquidation analysis estimates recovery to stakeholders under a chapter 7 liquidation.
  - Must include consolidated (easy) and non-consolidated (very complex) liquidation analysis.
- Valuation analysis estimates creditor recoveries under POR.
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## **Other Plan Components**

- Entity elimination and simplification;
- contract and lease assumption/rejection, including recharacterization and cross-default litigation;
- make-whole/no-call litigation;
- claims litigation and estimation;
- distribution mechanics;
- fresh start accounting; and
- avoidance action evaluation.

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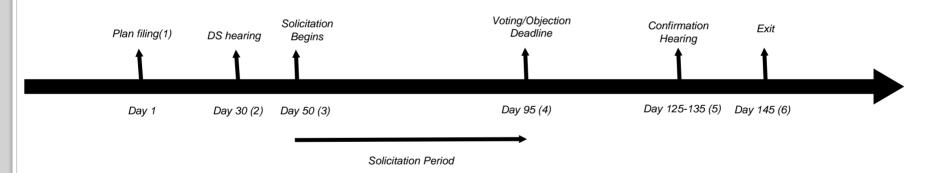
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