

MATERIAL CONTRACTS

On May 4, 2007 Reed Elsevier Group plc entered into a sale and purchase agreement with Pearson plc for the sale of its Harcourt Assessment and Harcourt Education International businesses. The sale completed in stages as regulatory approvals were received in each jurisdiction, with the final completion on January 30, 2008.

On July 16, 2007 Reed Elsevier Group plc entered into a sale and purchase agreement with Houghton Mifflin Riverdeep Group for the sale of its Harcourt US Schools Education business. Following receipt of regulatory approvals, the transaction closed on December 12, 2007.

On September 19, 2008 Reed Elsevier Group plc completed the acquisition by merger of ChoicePoint, Inc. ("ChoicePoint"), a Georgia corporation that provides data, analytics, software and other business information services to insurance companies and other background screening and authentication services, pursuant to an Agreement and Plan of Merger dated February 20, 2008.

Copies of the respective sales and purchase agreements and merger agreement are incorporated by reference from the 2007 Annual Report on Form 20-F filed with the SEC on March 20, 2008 – see "Item 19: Exhibits" on page S-1.

EXCHANGE CONTROLS

There is currently no UK or Dutch legislation restricting the import or export of capital or affecting the remittance of dividends or other payments to holders of, respectively, Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares who are non-residents of the United Kingdom and Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares who are non-residents of the Netherlands.

There are no limitations relating only to non-residents of the United Kingdom under UK law or Reed Elsevier PLC's Memorandum and Articles of Association on the right to be a holder of, and to vote, Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares, or to non-residents of the Netherlands under Dutch law or Reed Elsevier NV's Articles of Association on the right to be a holder of, and to vote, Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares.

TAXATION

The following discussion is a summary under present law and tax authority practice of the material UK, Dutch and US federal income tax considerations relevant to the purchase, ownership and disposal of Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares or ADSs and Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares or ADSs. This discussion applies to you only if you are a US holder, you hold your ordinary shares or ADSs as capital assets and you use the US dollar as your functional currency. It does not address the tax treatment of US holders subject to special rules, such as banks, dealers or traders in securities or currencies, insurance companies, tax-exempt entities, partnerships or other pass-through entities for US federal income tax purposes, holders of 10% or more of Reed Elsevier PLC or Reed Elsevier NV voting shares, persons holding ordinary shares or ADSs as part of a hedging, straddle, conversion or constructive sale transaction, persons that are resident or ordinarily resident in the UK (or who have ceased to be resident or ordinarily resident within the past five years of assessment) and persons that are resident in the Netherlands. The summary also does not discuss the US federal alternative minimum tax or the tax laws of particular states or localities in the US.

This summary does not consider your particular circumstances. It is not a substitute for tax advice. **We urge you to consult your own independent tax advisors about the income, capital gains and/or transfer tax consequences to you in light of your particular circumstances of purchasing, holding and disposing of ordinary shares or ADSs.**

As used in this discussion, "US holder" means a beneficial owner of ordinary shares or ADSs that is for US federal income tax purposes: (i) an individual US citizen or resident, (ii) a corporation, partnership or other business entity created or organised under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia, (iii) a trust (a) that is subject to the control of one or more US persons and the primary supervision of a US court, or (b) that has a valid election in effect under US Treasury regulations to be treated as a US person or (iv) an estate the income of which is subject to US federal income taxation regardless of its source.

UK Taxation

Dividends

Under current UK taxation legislation, no tax is required to be withheld at source from dividends paid on the Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares or ADSs.

Capital Gains

You may be liable for UK taxation on capital gains realised on the disposal of your Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares or ADSs if at the time of the disposal you carry on a trade, profession or vocation in the United Kingdom through a branch or agency, or in the case of a company a permanent establishment, and such ordinary shares or ADSs are or have been used, held or acquired for the purposes of such trade, profession, vocation, branch, agency or permanent establishment.

UK Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax

Under current UK law (subject to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) case mentioned below), UK stamp duty reserve tax (SDRT) or UK stamp duty is payable upon the transfer or issue of Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares to the depositary in exchange for Reed Elsevier PLC ADSs evidenced by ADRs. For this purpose, the current rate of stamp duty and SDRT of 1.5% would be applied, in each case, to: (i) the issue price when the ordinary shares are issued; (ii) the amount or value of the consideration where shares are transferred for consideration in money or money's worth; or (iii) the value of the ordinary shares in any other case. However, a recent decision of the ECJ in the case of *HSBC Holdings plc v HMRC* held that the 1.5% charge on issuing UK shares into clearance services within the European Union is unlawful. It is not clear to what extent this decision impacts on the lawfulness of the 1.5% charge on issuing or transferring shares into a depositary receipt service and, if so, whether this charge would be unlawful where the depositary receipt service is outside the European Union. In light of this, it is possible that the rules regarding the 1.5% charge may be contrary to European Union law or may change in the future. Accordingly specific professional advice should be sought before paying the 1.5 per cent charge.

Provided that the relevant instrument of transfer is not executed in the UK and remains outside the UK, no UK stamp duty will be payable on the acquisition or subsequent transfer of Reed Elsevier PLC ADSs. Under current law, an agreement to transfer Reed Elsevier PLC ADSs will not give rise to a liability to SDRT.

A transfer of Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares by the depositary to an ADS holder where there is no transfer of beneficial ownership will be exempt from UK stamp duty.

Purchases of Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares, as opposed to ADSs, will generally give rise to UK stamp duty or SDRT at the time of transfer or agreement to transfer, normally at the rate of 0.5% of the amount payable for the ordinary shares. SDRT and UK stamp duty are usually paid by the purchaser. If the ordinary shares are later transferred to the depositary, additional UK stamp duty or SDRT will normally be payable as described above.

Dutch Taxation

Withholding tax

Dividends distributed to you by Reed Elsevier NV are normally subject to a withholding tax imposed by the Netherlands at a rate of 15%, which rate equals the rate of tax that the Netherlands is generally allowed to levy under the US-Netherlands income tax treaty. As a consequence, no administrative procedures for a partial relief at source from or a refund of Dutch dividend withholding tax need be complied with in respect of dividend distributions by Reed Elsevier NV. Dividends include, among other things, stock dividends unless the dividend is distributed out of recognised paid-in share premium for Dutch tax purposes.

Taxation of dividends and capital gains

You will not be subject to any Dutch taxes on dividends distributed by Reed Elsevier NV (other than the withholding tax described above) or any capital gain realised on the disposal of Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares or ADSs provided that (i) the Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares or ADSs are not attributable to an enterprise or an interest in an enterprise that you carry on, in whole or part through a permanent establishment or a permanent representative in the Netherlands, (ii) you do not have a substantial interest or a deemed substantial interest in Reed Elsevier NV (generally, 5% or more of either the total issued and outstanding capital or the issued and outstanding capital of any class of shares) or, if you have such an interest, it forms part of the assets of an enterprise, and (iii) if you are an individual, such dividend or capital gain from your Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares or ADSs does not form benefits from miscellaneous activities ("*resultaat uit overige werkzaamheden*") in the Netherlands. Benefits from miscellaneous activities in the Netherlands include income and gains derived from the holding, whether directly or indirectly, of (a combination of) shares, debt claims or other rights (together, a "lucrative interest") that the holder thereof has acquired under such circumstances that such income and gains are intended to be remuneration for work or services performed by such holder (or a related person) in the Netherlands, whether within or outside an employment relation, where such lucrative interest provides the holder thereof, economically speaking, with certain benefits that have a relation to the relevant work or services.

US Federal Income Taxation

Holders of the ADSs generally will be treated for US federal income tax purposes as owners of the ordinary shares represented by the ADSs. Accordingly deposits or withdrawals of ordinary shares for ADSs will not be subject to US federal income tax.

Dividends

Dividends on Reed Elsevier PLC ordinary shares or ADSs or Reed Elsevier NV ordinary shares or ADSs (including any Dutch tax withheld) will generally be included in your gross income as ordinary income from foreign sources. The dollar amount recognised on receiving a dividend in pounds sterling or euros will be based on the exchange rate in effect on the date the depositary receives the dividend, or in the case of ordinary shares on the date you receive the dividend, as the case may be, whether or not the payment is converted into US dollars at that time. Any gain or loss recognised on a subsequent conversion of

pounds sterling or euros for a different amount will be US source ordinary income or loss. Dividends received will not be eligible for the dividends-received deduction available to corporations.

With respect to US holders who are individuals, certain dividends received before January 1, 2011 from a qualified foreign corporation may be subject to reduced rates of taxation. A qualified foreign corporation includes a foreign corporation that is eligible for the benefits of certain comprehensive income tax treaties with the United States. United States Treasury Department guidance indicates that the United Kingdom is a country with which the United States has a treaty in force that meets these requirements, and Reed Elsevier PLC believes it is eligible for the benefits of this treaty. Additionally, the same guidance indicates that the Netherlands is also a country with which the United States has a treaty in force that meets the above requirements, and Reed Elsevier NV believes it is eligible for the benefits of this treaty. Individuals that do not meet a minimum holding period requirement during which they are not protected from the risk of loss or that elect to treat the dividend income as "investment income" pursuant to section 163(d)(4) of the US Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, will not be eligible for the reduced rates of taxation. In addition, the rate reduction will not apply to dividends if the recipient of a dividend is obligated to make related payments with respect to positions in substantially similar or related property. This disallowance applies even if the minimum holding period has been met. US holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of these rules given their particular circumstances.

Subject to certain conditions and limitations, foreign withholding taxes on dividends withheld at the appropriate rate may be treated as foreign taxes eligible for credit against your US federal income tax liability. For purposes of calculating the foreign tax credit, dividends paid on the ordinary shares or ADSs will be treated as income from sources outside the US and will generally constitute passive category income. Further, in certain circumstances, if you have held the ordinary shares or ADSs for less than a specified minimum period during which you are not protected from risk of loss, or are obligated to make payments related to the dividends, you will not be allowed a foreign tax credit for foreign taxes imposed on the dividends on the ordinary shares or ADSs. The rules governing the foreign tax credit are complex. You are urged to consult your tax advisors regarding the availability of the foreign tax credit under your particular circumstances. Individuals that elect to treat the dividend income as 'investment income' pursuant to section 163(d)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code may take into account for foreign tax credit limitation purposes only the portion of the dividend effectively taxed at the highest applicable marginal rate.

Dispositions

You will recognise a gain or loss on the sale or other disposition of ordinary shares or ADSs in an amount equal to the difference between your basis in the ordinary shares or ADSs and the amount realised. The gain or loss generally will be capital gain or loss. It will be long term capital gain or loss if you have held the ordinary shares or ADSs for more than one year at the time of sale or other disposition. Long term capital gains of individuals are eligible for reduced rates of taxation. Deductions for capital losses are subject to limitations. Any gain or loss you recognise generally will be treated as income from US sources for foreign tax credit limitation purposes.

If you receive pounds sterling or euros on the sale or other disposition of your ordinary shares or ADSs, you will realise an amount equal to the US dollar value of the pounds sterling or euros on the date of sale or other disposition (or in the case of cash basis and electing accrual basis taxpayers, if the ordinary shares or ADSs are traded on an established securities market, the settlement date for the sale or other disposition). You will have a tax basis in the pounds sterling or the euros that you receive equal to the US dollar amount received. Any gain or loss realised by a US holder on a subsequent conversion of pounds sterling or euros into US dollars will be US source ordinary income or loss.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding Tax

Dividends from ordinary shares or ADSs and proceeds from the sale of the ordinary shares or ADSs may be reported to the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") unless the shareholder is a corporation or other exempt recipient. A backup withholding tax may apply to such amounts unless the shareholder (i) is a corporation, (ii) provides an accurate taxpayer identification number and otherwise complies with applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules, or (iii) otherwise establishes a basis for exemption. The amount of any backup withholding tax will be allowed as a credit against the holder's US federal income tax liability and may entitle the holder to a refund, provided the required information is furnished to the IRS.

Proposed legislation recently introduced in the US Congress, if enacted in its current form, would require certain individual US holders (or certain entities formed by or for US holders) to report information with respect to their investment in the ordinary shares or ADSs to the IRS effective for taxable years beginning after the year of enactment. Investors who fail to report required information could become subject to substantial penalties. Investors are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisors regarding the possible implications of this proposed legislation on their investment in the ordinary shares or ADSs.

DOCUMENTS ON DISPLAY

You may read and copy documents referred to in this annual report that have been filed with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room located at 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549-2521. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference rooms and their copy charges.