



# A Keane Eye Toward Minimizing Risk, Maximizing Value

Mark Sweatman, President of Keane Retirement Services

**PS: Can you provide an overview of the types of services Keane offers to the defined contribution and defined benefit marketplace?**

**Mark:** At Keane, we offer a variety of specialty compliance and risk management services that help plan sponsors, recordkeepers, and TPAs deal with problematic situations within a plan. We assist these groups analyze and mitigate risks in their books of business in many areas, including optimizing participant data, locating and communicating with missing participants, closing out terminated and abandoned plans, conducting mortality analysis, and resolving uncashed check populations.

Additionally, we provide continuous, annual solutions for defined contribution and defined benefit plans, as well as event-driven services, including cleaning up a backlog of uncashed checks identified through an internal audit, ensuring participant data accuracy prior to a merger or acquisition, and distributing plan assets appropriately in a bankruptcy situation.

**PS: What benefits can a plan expect from hiring Keane to deal with these plan challenges versus handling them on their own?**

**Mark:** I believe the challenges all retirement plans face are related to unnecessary costs or increased fiduciary risk. To deal with these challenges effectively requires expertise or specialized resources that most plan administrators or service providers don't have in place. As a risk and compliance company, we assess the nuances of each situation, develop the appropriate solution to reduce costs, minimize risk, and provide a clear audit trail as evidence that proper due diligence has been performed.

Our accountability for great results, in-depth knowledge of Department of Labor regulations, and compliance guidelines provides clients with the peace of mind that their data and participants are in good hands. We have the expertise to quickly and efficiently manage these issues so that our clients can put solutions into place while staying focused on the day-to-day aspects of their business.

For example, a third party administrator (TPA) we recently worked

with had been trying to help a sponsor complete a complicated plan termination for six years. Each year that they were unsuccessful translated into additional administrative costs and headaches. However, using our CLOSURE™ plan termination service, we were able to close the plan in three months. We corrected inaccuracies in the data, communicated with 78% of the missing participants, and completed the distribution of the plan assets in an efficient and compliant manner. Taking into consideration the annual audit costs, the company could have saved a considerable amount of time and money by outsourcing the termination to Keane in the beginning.

**PS: How has the turbulence in the markets affected Keane's business?**

**Mark:** I think I can safely say that it has increased everyone's awareness and sensitivity to fiduciary risk. We have seen a rise in the number of plan sponsors coming to us to help them identify and manage areas of risk that they've never addressed before. Like most businesses, the market and economic unrest has definitely affected the plan sponsors and service providers we work with. We are finding that our clients now, more than ever, want to safeguard themselves from potential participant lawsuits. For instance, participants who are former employees may be improperly informed about the plan or may not have received timely distributions because their employer doesn't have their current address. This is preventable risk – and where our expertise comes in. Keane can locate participants, conduct an educational outreach campaign, and motivate participants to take the necessary steps to resolve the issue as efficiently as possible.

**PS: What do you credit Keane's success to over the past 60 years and what does the future hold for the firm?**

**Mark:** I believe that our success can be traced to the flexibility, performance, and customer service we have provided to *Fortune* 1000 companies, financial services firms and mutual funds. We are well-positioned for the future given the evolving regulatory environment. Plan sponsors, recordkeepers, and TPAs need an advocate that can help them measure, manage, and monitor risks. They need a partner that understands and can adapt to the administrative and fiduciary responsibilities they face—a partner like Keane. ■