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Letter From the Editor: Any Questions?

By Bruce D. Schobel

In the previous issue of this newsletter, I asked each of you to look back on your work during the past few years and try to find something that may be useful—or merely interesting—to other actuaries with interests similar to yours. I have received some great contributions from readers, and the request still stands. If you find something that you produced and have time to describe it in a few pages, please prepare a draft article and send it to me. You are unlikely to become a famous author, but you will be contributing to the vast body of knowledge that underlies actuarial science. The newsletter has some practical limits on article length, so if your contribution is long, please attempt to summarize it. Interested readers who have questions or need additional background material are always told how to contact authors. Those contacts sometimes lead to valuable collaborations.

And speaking of questions, this issue contains the fourth article in a series that I wrote in response to one. On a monthly section council conference call a couple of years ago, someone asked a question about Social Security coverage of state and local government employees. As often happens, the answer (from me) was much longer than the question and led to the revealing of a wealth of special rules and other considerations related to the topic. That, in turn, led to a suggestion that I write something that could serve as a reference for section members and other interested readers. That's a primary purpose of a section newsletter, of course, so I jumped at the opportunity. The subject also resides at the happy intersection of two groups that make up most of our section membership: (1) social insurance practitioners and (2) actuaries for public-sector (mostly state and local) pension plans. Thus, the subject should be of some interest to just about everyone who reads this newsletter.

The subject was too large for one brief article and would have taken too long to write for the next issue of the newsletter. Therefore, I broke it down into four smaller articles and wrote them one at a time. Later in this issue is the last article in the series, describing Social Security's two special benefit-computation provisions that apply to certain beneficiaries who also receive pensions based in whole or in part on noncovered employment. I hope that readers find (and have found) these articles informative and useful.



If readers have any questions about the professional areas of responsibility that fall within this section's purview, please send those questions to me or to any section council member. We may not be able to answer the question ourselves, but we probably know someone who can. And even more importantly, the fact that one person has asked a question implies that others may be wondering about the same thing. If so, then a newsletter article or an event, like a webcast or meeting session, could be of broad general interest. We have to get ideas from somewhere, and what better source could there be than questions from section members?

We are waiting to hear from you. Thank you in advance for your contributions to this newsletter, the SIPF Section, the Society of Actuaries (SOA) and the actuarial profession! ■



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