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Chairperson's Corner

By Mike Kaster

It's the middle of January as I write this article, and much of the United States and Canada has been frigidly cold now for over a month. Did someone say "global warming"? I know right now many of us would like to be in other parts of the globe where the weather is much warmer. And in today's world of reinsurance, that is something that is quite possible.

Not only do we have a global macro economy in 2018, we have a very global insurance economy. Many multinational insurers and reinsurers are actively looking for ways to grow and expand both locally and outside their own borders. Are the U.S. federal government and other regulators working to find ways to help, or are they just putting up new obstacles? For example, with changes to the rules for insurers in the United States and European Union to work together on reinsurance (the "Covered Agreement"), the intent is certainly to open up borders. However, with recent changes to the U.S. federal tax rules, companies may not have as much freedom as they have had in the past.

As I begin my year with the privilege of serving as the chair of the Reinsurance Section Council, I look forward to working with some amazing volunteers on these issues and many more. Next week, the Reinsurance Section Council will be gathering in New York City to contemplate our priorities for the upcoming year and working to find ways to continue to provide our members with the quality education and research they have been used to receiving from their membership in the section. The council members are just volunteers, but for many of them, supporting the continuing development of the reinsurance world is an ongoing passion. Three of those amazing individuals are moving on after completing three years on the section council. George Hrischenko did an outstanding job as our research coordinator, helping to advance our research agenda. Ronald Poon-Affat took on the role of newsletter editor, and has truly embraced this role with passion and enthusiasm. And of course the council would not have accomplished all of the great work we did in 2017 without the enthusiastic leadership provided by Mary Broesch as chair. We will miss all three of them, and hope that they continue to help us go forward as friends of the section council.

Of course, we get to welcome three new members this year. I'm looking forward to working with Kyle Bauer, Jean-Marc Fix and Laura Muse. Along with our other returning council



members (Jeremy Lane, Tim Paris, Emily Roman, Katrina Spillane and David Vnenchak), we all look forward to serving you, our membership.

I have already challenged the council to think more broadly, and not just focus on each individual role that they play as a member of the council. I believe the membership elected each of them to help bring their thought leadership to our efforts. With that in mind, there are two things we are working on right now to help broaden our view as a council. The first is to work together to identify and prioritize the most important "hot topics" of interest to our Reinsurance Section members. While we are still gathering input, these will likely include topics like:

- Principle-based reserves (PBR) and the impact to reinsurance
- U.S. federal tax reform
- Accelerated underwriting
- Regulatory changes—risk transfer, covered agreement
- Longevity, mortality and other issues

These are just a few topics we have already identified. Are there others? Please feel free to drop a note to any one of the section council members with your input, so that we can be sure to focus our efforts on addressing the topics that are most important to you, our members.

The second key initiative the council and friends are undertaking is specific outreach to other professional organizations, sections and special interest areas. For example, while the vast majority of the council members focus on U.S. life and annuity reinsurance, we need to make sure to still consider issues of concern for our Canadian members, our health insurance members and our International members, just to name a few. As such, one council member or friend will be charged with specifically overseeing the needs of each of these areas. Other areas where our council members will be addressing some special attention include several other sections, like Risk Management, Financial Reporting, Product Development and Smaller Insurance

Company. And there are a couple of non-actuarial organizations where we hope to establish a better working rapport, including Reinsurance Administration Professionals Association (RAPA) and Association of Home Office Underwriters (AHO). I'm sure there are other areas and organizations, and we would welcome your suggestions.

This is where you, as a reader of *Reinsurance News*, can play a part. Do you have an idea on a hot topic that you believe needs further research? Or do you have some suggestions or ideas for other services that the section council should be working on? I would welcome any of you dropping me a quick email. I promise I will respond to each of you individually if you drop me a note!

Finally, I hope you take the time to read the other educational and informative articles in this newsletter. The 2018 newsletters will be including some new features that we hope you will enjoy. For example, we will be including articles on property and casualty (P&C) in every edition. Swiss Re actuaries Jing Lang and Peter Liebwein have started off this series with a contribution

that explores the characteristics of natural catastrophes. We will also be including a three-part article that deals with a single topic in great depth. Readers will be treated to Kai Kaufhold discourse on survival analysis and predictive modelling in our three 2018 editions. Finally, we will also be extending the scope of the newsletter to look at reinsurance trends in global markets. In this edition, Neill Muller updates us on what's happening in Asia. A special thank you to the hard work and effort that our newsletter editor and new co-editor (Dirk Nieder) put in to create this outstanding publication.

It's a brand new year, and I'm thrilled for the opportunity that being chair of the section brings for me and our membership. ■



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