



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Columbia Ambassador's Report

by Luis Gabriel Caro

In Colombia there are currently two actuarial organizations: Asociación Colombiana de Actuarios and Asociación Nacional de Actuarios. Each association has approximately 60 members. A member of the Asociación Colombiana de Actuarios is required to be an ASA or to hold a Master's degree from a foreign university in actuarial science. The requirements for membership in the Asociación Nacional de Actuarios are less restrictive; it is enough to hold an equivalent of a bachelor's degree in actuarial science from a local university.

The Asociación Colombiana de Actuarios, being an older association, has wider recognition among insurance and banking regulators and private industry. It has served as a permanent reviewer of

insurance regulation. As a matter of fact, it is almost a standard procedure that the drafts of new regulation are sent to the association for analysis and comments. Most of the members work for insurance companies or are private consultants. A few focus their activities in the banking sector, mainly with work related to market risks evaluation.

Several of the members of the association are taking exams of the Society of Actuaries. A few currently hold the ASA designation, but it is expected that within the next few years more members will complete the requirements.

Earlier this year we participated in the Congreso Panamericano de Actuarios in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Several

meetings took place regarding different issues related to the profession. Colombia was designated as the host country for the congress in 1999. We plan to have it in Cartagena, and given Colombia's accessible location for every part of the continent, we expect a large number of participants. In a later release we will provide more information related to this event.

For more information regarding our associations and our market, please contact me at: lgcfinac@impsat.net.co

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Observations on a Trip to China June 20 to July 5, 1997

by Harold G. Ingraham, Jr.

As part of a Society of Actuaries (SOA) delegation to China, I recently visited with various academics and representatives from the insurance and banking industries. The primary purposes of the trip were to attend and participate in actuarial student graduation ceremonies at Nankai University (Tianjin) and Renmin University (Beijing). Some members of the SOA delegation also participated in a seminar in Shanghai underwritten by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (Met Life) and Fudan University, and also co-sponsored by Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SUFEC), The People's Insurance (Life) Company of China, Ltd./Shanghai Branch (PICC), and American International Assurance Company, Ltd./Shanghai Branch (AIA). Other schools visited were Southwestern University (Chengdu) and Joatong University (Shanghai).

The graduation ceremonies at Nankai University also involved graduates of the school's Risk Management program. Most of these graduates had also success-

fully completed the Life Office Management Association (LOMA) exams.

This report sets forth my observations and other information gleaned from various meetings and discussions with (or writings from) individuals that took place during this trip.

Actuarial Exams in China

By now, it is widely known that the performance of Chinese actuarial candidates on the SOA's Course 100 Associateship exams has been phenomenal. Combined results for five exam centers administering exams since November 1992 show an 81% overall pass ratio on these exams—almost double the comparable pass ratio on such exams taken during this period by all other candidates in the rest of the world! Indeed, by mid-1995, 19 Chinese actuaries had become SOA ASAs based on the pre-July 1995 standard for becoming ASAs.

However, the post-July 1995 SOA requirement that the four Course 200 Series exams also be passed to obtain the ASA designation has proven very difficult for the Chinese actuarial candidates (with

one notable exception). Only a 24% overall pass ratio has been achieved on post-100 Series exams taken during the past year. The one notable exception is Wei Mong Bo, an actuary with AIA, who achieved his Associateship this past May by passing the required Course 200 Series exams.

Much of the difficulty in passing post-100 Series exams for the Chinese actuarial candidates is attributable to their lack of facility in English.

Also, however, Chinese actuaries have to be examined on North American-specific topics under the existing SOA exam structure. While some of the actuarial principles common to the profession are beneficial to their development as fully qualified actuaries, many North American-specific topics find little relevance in the day-to-day work of Chinese actuaries.

In the current redesign of the SOA Education and Examination system, U.S. and Canadian nation-specific topics are

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