

SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Correspondence should be addressed:

The Actuary

P.O. Box 19253

Seattle, WA 98109

Tel: (206) 281-9151



Editor ...... C.L. TROWBRIDGE Associate Editors..... DEBORAH ADLER POPPEL DAVID S. WILLIAMS JOSEPH W.S. YAU

Competition Editor......CHARLES G. GROESCHELL

Editor Emeritus......ANDREW C. WEBSTER

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#### **ACTUARIAL RESEARCH**

The Society's traditional emphasis on Education and Examination, and its more recent emphasis on Continuing Education, may obscure the fact that the development of new knowledge, not only the passing on of what has already been learned, is the life blood of any profession. Actuaries have not been as interested, or as successful, when it comes to research, though there has been more attention of late.

The Society (and its predecessors) have long published the research efforts of individual actuaries in a refereed journal; and have collected, compiled, and published mortality and morbidity experience. Until 20 years ago, the *Transactions*, the *Reports Numbers*, and the journals of the Casualty Actuarial Society and the Conference of Actuaries in Public Practice, represented most of the profession's research output.

Early movement in the research direction came in the '60s with the organization of annual Actuarial Research Conferences at campus locations, followed by the publication of *ARCH*, both under the sponsorship of what was then known as the Research Committee, and is now called the Committee on Research on Theory and Applications. The 21st such Conference will be held this fall. Worthy as this effort has been, it has remained the domain of a small group of academically oriented actuaries. *ARCH* is probably too esoteric for the main body of practicing actuaries, with whom *ARCH* has never really caught on.

The notable research development of the '70s was the formation of the Actuarial Education and Research Fund, a profession-wide attempt to encourage the development of new actuarial knowledge. Although AERF clearly has potential, its progress has been slow. Some may be discouraged as to its actual accomplishments during the decade since it began. We are told that the Directors of AERF are searching for a better definition of its role.

In the early '80s the Society began to organize for a serious research effort, directed particularly toward the improvement of its experience studies. In the formal structure we now find (see pages 20-23 of the *Yearbook*) a Vice-President for Research and Studies, a Research Policy Committee, and no less than 15 other Committees or Sub-Committees under the Research and Studies label. The Society also has a full-time Research Director in its Itasca office. If sheer organization can get the research accomplished, the prognosis would seem to be good.

There are other encouraging signs. Some of the Society Sections are taking an interest, and there is a suggestion for a journal less formal than the *Transactions*.

For all that, the recent product of actuarial research is nothing to brag about. *Transactions* papers today scarcely exceed their number when the profession was much smaller. Few actuarial books are being published, and most of these are more education than research. Meanwhile expansion of non-actuarial fields seems to narrow the actuarial role. There is some suspicion that in developing new knowledge the profession has not kept pace.

Perhaps the greatest need is the identification of areas in which actuarial research is most urgently needed. Once an area is well identified, it should not prove too difficult to harness the problem-solving capabilities of actuaries, and to get important research done. C.L.T.

### **Mail Alert**

The Second Ballots for the Society's 1986 elections will be mailed to Fellows on July 29. To be valid, ballots must be returned to the Society office by Aug. 29.

### ACTEX STUDY MANUALS

ACTEX Study Manuals will be available for all November exams except parts 9 and EA-2. New editions for parts 1, 7, and 8. Particulars in your study note package, or from The Actuarial Book Store, P.O. Box 318, Abington, CT 06230, (203) 974-3540.

# SOLUTION MANUALS – PROBLEM WORKSHOP

Solution Manuals by Dr. Ralph Garfield are now available: Part 2 (Nov. '81 and May '82 exams) \$18. Part 3 (Nov. '84 exam) \$14; (Nov. '85 exam) \$14 (May '86 exam – available August) \$16 Part 4 (Nov. '84 exam and SOA practice exam) \$32; (Nov. '85 exam) \$16; (May '86 exam – available August) \$16. EA-2 (Nov. '84 and '85 exams) \$30.

Problem Workshop — An intensive  $2\frac{1}{2}$  day workshop for the EA-2 exam will be offered in New York City on Oct. 24, 25, 26.

For details, write to A.S.M. P.O. Box 522, Merrick, NY 11566.  $\Box$ 

## The Actuarial Profession: 100 Years Old in 1989

In celebration of the actuarial profession's 100th birthday, there will be a gala centennial celebration in Washington, D.C., on June 12-14, 1989. A Steering Committee, representing the North American actuarial organizations, is already hard at work to make this a truly outstanding event. Mark your calendar now, even though this celebration is still three years into the future.

Late in 1986 actuaries will be invited to prepare papers on topics selected by the Program Committee as relevant to the theme and content of the centennial program.