



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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**NCHS cont'd**

questionnaire revealed widespread misinformation about the risk of AIDS virus transmission through casual contact; however, knowledge steadily improved from August to December. For example, the percentage of adults who thought it definitely not possible to get AIDS or the AIDS virus from living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients increased from 33% in August to 45% in December. The "not possible" responses increased for other activities, including shaking hands with or touching someone with AIDS (up from 22 to 34 percent); working near someone with AIDS (from 18 to 31 percent); and attending school with a child who has AIDS (from 20 to 31 percent).

A similar AIDS questionnaire in the June 1988 National Health Interview Survey contains more detailed questions about the AIDS blood test and about affiliation with high-risk groups. NCHS constantly reevaluates data needs in this area and has already incorporated AIDS questions into other NCHS surveys on family growth and maternal and infant health.

**Data releases**

NCHS releases its data in public use electronic data files, publications, journal articles, and presentations at scientific conferences and symposia. Catalogs on publications and data tapes are available. Data tapes are released for all major surveys.

NCHS's major published reports include:

- "Health, United States" is the annual report to Congress on the nation's health. Prepared by NCHS with data from government and private sources, it presents trends in life expectancy and mortality, hospital use, health resources and expenditures, and other health determinants.
- "Vital and Health Statistics" reports, a series of more than 500 publications with information from major NCHS data collection efforts, include data from ongoing or periodic surveys, interpretive studies, and new statistical methodology. An example of a report in this series is "Health Promotion and Disease Prevention: United States, 1985," which presents data on progress in 12 health areas, including exercise, smoking, high blood pressure, and injury control.
- "Advance Data" reports are supplements to the series reports with accelerated release of data from NCHS

surveys. A recent Advance Data report is "Utilization of Short-stay Hospitals by Patients with AIDS: United States, 1984-86."

- The annual "Vital Statistics of the United States" contains life tables and the most detailed compilation of the country's vital statistics. "Monthly Vital Statistics Reports" summarizes current data on births, deaths, marriages, and divorces.
- "Decennial Life Tables" provides state-by-state and national life expectancy data based on the last U.S. census. A recent decennial publication is "U.S. Life Tables Eliminating Certain Causes of Death."

Readers are invited to contact NCHS for further information on its data, reports, or mailing lists. Write or call the Scientific and Technical Information Branch, 3700 East-West Highway, Room 1-57, Hyattsville, MD 20782, (301) 436-8500.

**Manning Feinleib, M.D., Dr. P.H.,** is director of the National Center for Health Statistics. He is not a member of the Society.

*(Ed. note: Robert J. Johansen, Chairperson of the Society's Committee on Government Statistics, has arranged for a series of articles by the heads of four federal statistical agencies on what their agencies produce, some of the problems they face, and sources of information on publications. This article by Manning Feinleib of NCHS will be followed by articles from Allan Young of BEA and Janet Norwood of BLS. An article by Jack Keane of the Census Bureau appeared in the September Actuary.)*

## Enter contest with obscure actuarial tables

The SOA Research Department is sponsoring a contest to find the most obscure, unusual and/or mysterious actuarial table or experience study. The contest will aid the SOA Library's efforts to catalog actuarial tables and experience studies.

So dust off those old books and let us know what you find.

Winners will be selected by the research staff from entries received by January 31, 1989. Winners will have the department's undying gratitude and whatever prize it comes up with. Entries should be sent to "Research Contest" at the Society office.

## 11th IACA Conference in Munich

by M. David R. Brown

The 11th Conference of the International Association of Consulting Actuaries (IACA) July 3 - 8 in Munich offered lively, informal discussions at business sessions and friendly, enjoyable social events. The Conference was attended by 167 members and 183 accompanying persons from 17 countries, including 24 Canadian and 39 U.S. members.

German members of IACA hosted an opening "Bavarian Get-together" in the famous Hofbrauhaus, complete with "oom-pah" music and Bavarian dancers. The first day's business sessions included panel discussions on the "The World of the Consulting Actuary" and Social Security. Dr. Eckart Windel, a board member of the West German Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, also addressed the group. That evening, the Bavarian State Government hosted a reception in the magnificent Kaisersaal of the Bavarian Royal Palace.

On the next day, delegates could choose among tours to Neuschwanstein Castle, Linderhof Castle and Herrenchiemsee Castle, all built for Prince Ludwig. The following two days of business sessions included discussions of national reports from each country represented, plus sessions on investments, pension rights on divorce, money purchase pension plans, actuarial consulting in insurance, AIDS, pension accounting standards, and taxation and surplus issues for pension plans.

At the closing business session, it was announced that Dudley Funnell of Canada will be Chairperson of the governing committee for the next two years, and Chris White of Australia will be Vice Chairperson. The next Conference will be in Auckland February 18 - 23, 1990.

Membership in IACA is open to Fellows of the SOA, CAS or CIA who are in full-time consulting practice. Further information can be obtained from the U.S. or Canadian members of the governing committee at their *Yearbook* addresses. The U.S. members are Charles Beardsley, Barnet Berin and Leroy Parks. The Canadian member is Frank Livsey.