



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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NTM FACES CHALLENGES/ OPPORTUNITIES WITH SOA RESTRUCTURING

I am pleased and honored to be taking over the role of chairperson of the Nontraditional Marketing Section Council. It has been a pleasure to serve on the council for two years already, and I look forward to the coming year of planning and activities!

The new year greets us at a time of significant change. The Society of Actuaries is undergoing an organizational facelift, an occurrence that will provide the Nontraditional Marketing Section with new opportunities. Under the Society's new structure, sections will have the chance to take on additional responsibilities and tap into additional Society staffing resources to implement section activities and projects.

The organizational changes taking place in the Society include the redeployment of the practice areas. The Board of Governors remains, but with increased ability to focus on its vision for the future of the Society and the profession. The remainder of the new structure is split into the four themes that comprise the SOA's strategic plan: membership value, knowledge management, marketplace relevance and professional community advancement. Each theme is represented by a Strategic Action Team (SAT) to be outfitted with six to eight volunteers. It is expected that every level of the new structure, from the board and SATs on through to the sections and individual members will facilitate the ongoing activities of the Society by scanning the environment (an activity actuaries already do every day), finding in advance the issues on which the various levels of the Society need to focus. An additional committee, the Issues Advisory Council (IAC), will act as an informational conduit for these issues and direct them to the most appropriate SOA group or groups for response.

Justification for changes in Society structure can be found in results from various member surveys, where it was discovered that Society members feel section-level work is home to significant grassroots passion. It is hoped that the new structure will better allow Society activities to tap into this energy, and that the Society's simpler design will free up staff resources, making them available as needed to facilitate section work. An addi-

tional desired result of the changes is a focus on outcome-oriented activities, meaning energy will be expended where there is a specific goal to be attained.

As part of the new structure, it is expected that Sections will split their efforts among 13 key activities (to varying degrees, depending on the section):

- Providing a sense of community for an area of interest
- Environmental scanning
- Creating a publishing plan for section issues
- Setting section objectives and priorities
- Communicating and advocating with the Board of Governors with respect to Section priorities
- Identifying and developing content for continuing education programs
- Providing input into basic education
- Identifying and overseeing research initiatives
- Influencing experience studies
- Advocating externally for actuaries who share industries/employer types/interests
- Establishing and maintaining external relationships with other non-actuarial organizations
- Implementing requests from the Board of Governors/IAC/SATs
- Providing thought leadership

Several of these items are already central in NTM activities; others will challenge the section to think beyond what has traditionally been its focus.

In simplest terms, the potential scope of NTM activities has broadened significantly. The structural changes within the Society of Actuaries will challenge NTM to respond with appropriate changes in the way our section is organized and in the way it functions. For section members, this provides renewed opportunity to get involved in section activities via soon-to-be-formed council subcommittees. The outcome of the successful transition to this new paradigm, will, in the long run, benefit our section via additional member benefits and greater influence on the future direction of the Society and our profession. In the near term, the NTM Section Council will need your input to make sure this transition starts off down the right path.

Anyone wishing to volunteer for a role in NTM planning as we react to these changes is welcome to contact me via e-mail: rob.stone@oneamerica.com. ■



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