

ACTUARIAL STAFF

- A. Should the actuarial department of a small company be responsible for the procedurized calculations not involving life contingencies such as policy loans, etc.?
- B. What methods have proved effective in obtaining actuarial students? What special aids are given to students to help them pass actuarial examinations? Is a temporary assignment in other departments an effective training aid for actuarial students?

MR. JOHN H. AMES said that if a company below the size of 100-250 million had an actuary, he might be responsible for almost anything except investments and sales. As the company grows, the actuary quite properly tends to become a staff man, retaining substantial responsibility as an auditor but little or no direct control over administrative units.

He felt that the actuary should be in pretty direct charge on a temporary basis only if the administrative staff was weak. Mr. Ames noted that personalities will have a greater influence on organization in a smaller company, but he said he believed that the actuary should divest himself of as many administrative responsibilities as he can as the company grows.

MR. GEOFFREY F. N. SMITH stated the actuarial department of a small company should be responsible for such calculations because the problems which arose requiring special cash values, consideration of unusual beneficiary situations, etc., can best be handled there. Also, the small number of people involved must be versatile and therefore of higher calibre, making them of value in special projects such as year-end work or ratebook calculations. Thirdly, combining these people with the policy change clerks in the actuarial department makes an operating section of more efficient size.

Mr. Smith said, in discussing section B, that in the Winnipeg area the problem of obtaining actuarial students could be solved by enrolling a sufficient number of qualified high school graduates for the Actuarial course at the University of Manitoba. He described the mathematics contest that has been given to high school students for the past two years with excellent response for the purpose of encouraging an interest in mathematical careers generally.

He stated that this year the Department of Actuarial Mathematics will send letters and pamphlets to the top 10% of the students for each of the last two examinations. Also, as many students as possible will be given tours of insurance offices, electronic installations, etc.

The students are given every opportunity to discuss their careers with the Head of the Department of Actuarial Mathematics. He said there had been an encouraging increase this year in the number of first year students in the Actuarial course.

Mr. Smith said the Sovereign Life gives students study time in the months prior to the examinations plus additional time on a flexible basis to compensate for the excessive overtime sometimes required.

Mr. Smith recommended temporary assignment in the Underwriting Department to help pass examinations, but doubted whether experience in other departments would help.