

January 2009, Issue No. 69

IN THIS ISSUE

Contest Results—Renaming
Our Newsletter!

Chairperson's Corner

Retirement 20/20: A Brief
History and an Update

We Want You!

Selecting Mortality Tables: A
Credibility Approach

What is the Cost of a
Pension Plan?

Become an ERM Expert

Return to Email Version

LINKS



Pension Section
Council



20 / 20 Web site



Contact the Editor

WE WANT YOU!

Marcus Robertson, FSA

Just as the U.S. Army implores recruits to “be all that they can be,” the Pension Section Council needs your help to ensure that the Pension Section is all that it can be.

The PSC provides two basic services to section members. First, it facilitates continuing education and the development of the practice of retirement actuaries. Second, it provides opportunities for members to develop, present and exchange ideas. In order to provide these services, the Section Council relies heavily on member volunteers and SOA Staff, including Andrew Peterson (Staff Fellow, Retirement Systems).

Member volunteers are active on several fronts, through the work of the Pension Section's Research, Continuing Education, and Communications teams as well as in other section-supported roles. The three core teams work to support the profession and section members by sponsoring research that is relevant to today's (and tomorrow's) practitioners, by ensuring that there are substantial continuing education opportunities for section members, and by communicating these efforts to section members.

Section members who volunteer benefit from their efforts by staying at the forefront of the actuarial profession, while developing relationships with actuaries from other firms and geographical areas and improving their own skills (communications, organization, leadership, project management, etc.). In addition, serving on the section's teams provides an introduction to PSC initiatives and often serves as a stepping stone to election to the PSC and other SOA leadership positions. Also, volunteer activities may count towards satisfying your continuing professional development requirements—depending of course on the specific nature of the activities.

So, what do the three core teams do?

The Research Team

- Identifies and oversees research projects of interest to retirement systems actuaries and other interested professionals,
- Develops and issues Requests for Proposals and/or Calls for Papers,
- Ensures that appropriate oversight mechanisms are in place so that research projects are completed on time and on schedule, that scope is managed appropriately, and that they provide the anticipated member value, and
- Supports section initiatives such as *Retirement 20/20*

In addition, the Research team is always looking for actuaries interested in joining a Project Oversight Group (POG) for a specific fixed-duration research project. The POGs work with the researcher, offer direction,

feedback and peer review, and eventually give their approval that the research has been completed satisfactorily.

For more information or to sign up, contact Ian Genno at ian.genno@towersperrin.com or 416.960.7420.

The Continuing Education Team

- Designs, plans, and implements continuing education events (meeting sessions, symposia, seminars, webcasts),
- Identifies and works with partnering organizations, recruits speakers for sessions, and
- Develops promotional materials to serve the educational needs of pension professionals

The team strives to ensure that the educational needs of the profession are met, by “filling the gaps” left by other organizations. For more information or to volunteer, contact Andy Peterson at apeterson@soa.org or 847.706.3591.

The Communications Team

- Plans and develops content, recruits authors and reviewers, and coordinates production of two publications: the Pension Section News (three issues per year) and the Pension Forum (generally one issue per year),
- Manages the content of the Pension Section pages of the SOA Web site and the *Retirement 20/20* Web site, and
- Identifies pension-related content that may be appropriate for other SOA publications, including the SOA News Today e-newsletter, the Actuary, and the North American Actuarial Journal

The Communications Team determines what needs to be communicated to section members and how best to deliver that information. For more information or to sign up, contact Josh Bank at josh.bank@hewitt.com or 646.434.2907.

There are other Pension Section groups that focus on Post-Retirement Needs and Risks (Anna Rappaport, Chair, anna@annarappaport.com), Pension Finance (Andy Peterson, apeterson@soa.org), and Social Security (Sam Gutterman, Chair, sam.gutterman@us.pwc.com). If you think you may be interested in one of these groups, don't hesitate to contact the Chair for more information on current initiatives.

In case you're concerned that volunteering within the Pension Section will eat up all of your spare time, you should remember that you alone control the time and effort you expend on volunteer activities. The teams function effectively because team members step up when they are able, and allow others to carry the weight when professional or personal commitments must take priority.

That being said, most groups meet by conference call (one hour) once per month. At the discretion of each team, there may be one or two face-to-face meetings per year. These are usually one-day meetings held in a major U.S. or Canadian business center convenient to the majority of team members. Team members generally serve three years, unless they become Chair. Terms for the Chair are no longer than two years.

For those who would like to become involved but want a shorter-term commitment, contact me at mrobertson@re-a.com. I will be compiling a list of individuals interested in helping out with Project Oversight Groups (generally a six to nine month commitment), *Retirement 20/20* special

projects (often a one-year commitment), support to the Section's Liaison to the Education Committee (helping to research and/or develop pension-related syllabus material), etc. We'll do our best to match you to a suitable opportunity within a reasonable timeframe. I can also help if you'd like to join one of the three core teams but aren't sure which one to pick.

Take some time to explore the Pension Section pages of the SOA Web site at <http://www.soa.org/professional-interests/pension/pen-pension-detail.aspx?s=12>, and decide where you want to participate.

Make sure the Pension Section is all that it can be!

Marcus Robertson, FSA, FCIA, is co-vice chair of the Pension Section Council for 2009. He is a consulting actuary based in Oakville, Ontario and can be reached at mrobertson@re-a.com.

[<< Previous Article](#) | [Next Article >>](#)

Actuaries
Risk is Opportunity.™