



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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# Letter From the Editor

by Jerry Enoch

**I** see my objective as editor as helping financial reporting actuaries by serving as an intermediary in order to present good, useful material to them. This standard is not particularly high—I'm looking for "good" material, not "great" material. I think we are better served by 10 good articles than by one great article. Furthermore, if we get 10 good articles, I think there's a good chance that one of them will be great, or close to it. One consequence of this is that I am attempting to publish articles for our readers, not keep articles out of publication. When someone submits an article, I look for something in it that will benefit our readers—not for a reason to claim that is unworthy of publication.

The word "useful" needs some explanation, as I use this word in two senses. In the first sense, useful means "practical." My bias is toward articles that are applicable in daily work, because I think that is what practicing actuaries want and need. But other articles are also important. It is also important to have articles that discuss the way things may be in the future in order to help the actuary prepare. Articles about international accounting standards provide a good example. I am also interested in articles that are purely theoretical, because these can help us keep our minds sharp, and they may lead to changes in practice.

In the second sense, I am looking for articles that are useful in that they are "easy to use." Although our readers are very intelligent and can extract meaning out of almost incomprehensible material, your time is very valuable, and you are best served by receiving material that is succinct and clear. Some articles can be effective only if they are long, but my bias here is toward short articles. I greatly admire

whoever first wrote, "I would have written a much shorter letter, but I didn't have enough time" (loosely quoting from memory). I could have said the same thing many times. An advantage of writing for a publication with wide readership like *The Financial Reporter* is that the effort of writing a shorter article is highly leveraged by the great number of readers that it benefits. "Easy to use" means more than being short and succinct. It also means well organized, easy to follow and clearly written. It is in this area that the editor may have his or her greatest opportunity to make a contribution to the process. I would like to encourage you to write us an article about a financial reporting topic that interests you. A few good paragraphs is really all it takes.

I would like to welcome Keith Terry, of Farmers New World Life Insurance Company as an associate editor of *The Financial Reporter*. Keith has provided some valuable assistance for this issue, and I look forward to working with him in the future. I would also like to recruit an additional associate editor. If we spread the work around, we will have better ideas about what to do and better quality in what we actually do. If you are interested, please contact me.

I also want to express thanks to three others who have helped with this issue in various ways, but whose names do not appear. They are Tom Nace of PolySystems, my predecessor as editor, John Yanko of Forethought Financial Services, and Barbara Gold of Prudential. You are appreciated! ☒

- Jerry



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