

I attended this week's SIAS meeting on the proposed framework for Technical Actuarial Standards and found both the presentation and the views from attendees very useful. Contrary to the majority of the views expressed at the meeting I think that the new framework represents an improvement to the existing structure.

A lot of the comments seemed to centre around the definition of "actuarial work" to be covered by the TASs. On reflection I think the key to considering this point is to start by thinking why the profession wants to have the TASs.

I think the key objectives of the TASs are:

- To give users of "actuarial work" the reassurance that they will receive work of a high quality and professional standard
- To maintain and enhance our profession's reputation / standing

Hence I can see an argument for all work carried out by an actuary to be required to comply with TASs - to ensure the profession's reputation is maintained. This position would be in line with the view that the standards in the TASs should not be viewed as being above and beyond the quality that should be expected from the actuary anyway - i.e. that they only ensure that work is of a standard as should be expected. From the views expressed at the meeting I see that the main challenge would be to make sure that the time / work required to demonstrate that TASs have been met should not be too onerous.

From the comments raised, a concern I had after the meeting was that a non-actuary attending such a meeting could think that there was a resistance to do work of an appropriate standard - i.e. that "non-actuarial" work should be allowed to be done to a "lower standard" to be able to complete non-actuaries. Certainly not a view we would want to develop.

However, I can see that actuaries working in non-actuarial roles may reasonably feel that this would be an "unnecessary" requirement and hence I think a reasonable definition of "actuarial work" would be to cover:

- All work provided and signed by an individual using FIA / FFA [If signed as an actuary should comply with actuarial TASs]
- All work provided by an actuarial company [If coming from an actuarial company should comply with actuarial TASs]
- Any work provided where the recipient of the advice is aware that the person is an actuary [If known to be an actuary the user may reasonably expect that work complies with actuarial TASs]

That said, where an actuary is completing work that could be carried out by a non-actuary, I think that such work may be stated as being "non-actuarial" and hence "has not been completed in line with TASs". This would be of particular use for an actuary working in a non-financial role. It would be up to individual to decide whether he wants to comply with TASs or state that the work is non-actuarial and so he has not in some of the financial areas raised in the discussions on the night. Personally I would want to comply with the TASs and say so to add value to the work I was providing.

One small comment I would have to the new framework is that whilst TAS100 could be an internal label for the TAS that such a term would not be meaningful to those receiving the advice (jargon). I also think terms like "basic TAS" / "fundamental TAS" / "the required

TAS" could suggest that in some way they were not meeting all TASs. I would therefore suggest that the framework is written in such away that work is stated to include the wording that "work has been completed meeting Technical Actuarial Standards" - with the framework making it clear that this means TAS100 and any Specific Standards required for relevant areas. This would provide a "strong" statement to those receiving the advice.

Finally, I think that all actuaries should be expected to read and be familiar with all of the new Specific TASs - not just those that apply to their area of work. This would help actuaries be aware of these requirements and consider whether this principles could be applied in other areas of work. Not too onerous to read these new TASs and can only improve standards.

I hope these comments are of help.

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