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Clearing Debris from the Paper Trail

Regis Greenwood, AAHP Parliamentarian

Over the years, the Academy’s trail of documentation has become tangled with once necessary/now outdated papers, redundant procedures, multiple formats, and other sins against the good order of paper lovers everywhere.

The Academy Executive Committee, at the strong urging of the president, has instituted a program to clear this debris from the paper trail.

Academy documents fall into a rather simple hierarchy headed by the Academy Charter. As this document is part of the incorporation papers, it is fairly well untouchable. This is followed by the By-laws of the American Academy of Health Physics. The By-laws are being reviewed to ensure that they are in accord with the Charter while providing sufficient flexibility to run the Academy. Making changes to this document requires that an amendment be approved by the Executive Committee and then submitted to the entire membership for balloting.

The next level of documents is the Standing Committee Charters. These authorize the committee and set forth the responsibilities of the committee. A charter is drafted by the committee and approved (with any necessary revisions) by the Executive Committee. At present not all committees have approved charters, and the existing charters are in several formats.

Following the committee charters are the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). These exist to tell the various committees, the officers, and the general membership how to do the various things authorized in the higher-level documents. Presently we have 18 SOPs. We also have redundancy, multiple formats, more than one SOP with the same number, conflicts with the By-laws, and at least one phantom SOP (authorized in Executive Committee minutes, but nowhere to be found).

We have recently introduced the lowest-tier document, called “Good Things To Know about my job” (GTTK). Since most positions change annually, these documents are intended to pass on tips and reminders and other useful tidbits to the incoming person. The GTTK documents will be written and modified each year by the departing incumbent of each position.

An ad hoc committee has been appointed by the Academy president to review our documents and to remedy these situations. The chairman of this committee is Jim Bogard; other members are Ken Eger, Kyle Kleinhans, Gary Kephart, Brian Methé, and Frazier Bronson. They have been hard at work and by the time you read this, they will have presented to the Executive Committee their recommended changes to the By-laws, Charters, and SOPs. It is a big and important task.

Professional Development Committee

Chris Donahue, Chair

The purpose of the Professional Development Committee of the American Academy of Health Physics is to promote certification and recertification by the American Board of Health Physics (ABHP). The Committee work includes expanding and enhanc-

ing the professional standards for ABHP certification and recertification and encouraging and assisting diplomats in improving their knowledge and understanding of health physics principles and practices. In addition, the Committee publicizes the benefits of

ABHP certification to health physicists and fosters recognition and acceptance of the importance of ABHP certification by other allied professionals, employers of health physicists, and the general public. The Committee members also host the ABHP booth at the midyear and annual Health Physics Society meetings.

The Committee is finalizing work on a Standards of Qualifications/Practice (SQ/P) for Healthcare Radiation Safety Officers (RSO) that employers can use to set minimum qualifications for RSO applicants. The SQ/P can also be used to evaluate potential candidates for open RSO positions. Additionally, the Committee is also

drafting a Guidance Document that health physicists could use if they are called as an "Expert Witness" during legal proceedings.

Christine Donahue is the current chair of the Professional Development Committee. Current members include Thomas Youngblood, Dave Bernhardt, Tosh Ushino, Kevin Buckley, and Jay Maisler. Jeff Kotsch and Cindy Bloom will join the Committee in 2006 and serve through 2008. If you are interested in becoming involved with this Committee through active participation or in support of a particular project, please contact current Committee Chair Christine Donahue (cadonahue@lbl.gov).

AAHP Session at HPS Spokane Meeting: "BEIR VII and Radiation Risk"

Tom Buhl, AAHP Past President

Since 1989, the American Academy of Health Physics has sponsored a session at the Health Physics Society annual meeting. The topic of this year's session was "BEIR VII and Radiation Risk." The well-attended session was held during the morning and afternoon of Tuesday, 12 July 2005, in Spokane.

The special sessions were instituted as a way for the AAHP to actively contribute to the annual meeting by presenting topics of general interest to health physicists. The AAHP is very grateful to the HPS for allowing it to host these sessions at the annual meeting.

The session this year focused on the results of the recently released BEIR VII report and the use of radiation risk estimates, including those of BEIR VII, in health physics. BEIR VII was developed by the Committee on the Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation (BEIR Committee), under the auspices of the National Academies' Board on Radiation Effects Research¹ (BRER).

The morning session featured presentations on the BEIR VII report itself by Drs. Evan Douple (BRER

director) (Richard Jostes, BRER, coauthor) on the BEIR VII process and the overall BRER program, James Cleaver (BEIR VII Committee vice chair) on the biology and genetics models used in BEIR VII, and Ethel Gilbert (BEIR VII Committee member) on the epidemiological information used in BEIR VII.

The afternoon session dealt with the use of radiation risk estimates in health physics. This included presentations by Bruce Napier (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory) on using the GENII computer code in estimating risk, Tony Brooks (Washington State University) on the risks of high-LET radiation, Jerry Puskin (US Environmental Protection Agency and the EPA's BEIR VII project manager) on the use of the BEIR VII results in EPA programs, and Tom Buhl (Los Alamos National Laboratory, retired) on the recent BRER committee report using radiation risk in evaluating implementation of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act.

I would again like to thank the other speakers for their excellent presentations and participation in the session. A special thanks goes to Evan Douple for cochairing the session and arranging for the BEIR VII Committee members to make presentations.

¹ BRER and the Board on Radioactive Waste Management merged in April to form the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board.