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PRESIDENT'S REPORT JUNE 1998

The Rest of the Iceberg

Given the Oscar winning and highly financially successful new version of the movie *Titanic*, it seemed appropriate to talk metaphorically in terms of the unsung hero of that movie, the iceberg. At the outset let me say that the Academy is no *Titanic*, but rather is more like the iceberg: most of it is submerged. Academy business is largely transacted in the meetings of its Executive Committee, so named instead of Board of Directors to avoid confusion with the American Board of Health Physics, which is the independent certifying arm of the Academy. It is the ABHP that determines through its rigorous examination procedures and other requirements the fitness of a health physicist to be certified; once certification (or, in the case of Associate Members, passage of Part I of the ABHP exam) has been achieved, the newly minted CHP is eligible for Plenary Membership in the Academy.

So, what does our Academy really do, besides collect the annual maintenance fee from its members? In a word, the answer is LOTS. Through the Standards of Professional Ethics, our Academy strives to maintain and ensure the ethical practice of our profession by our members. Our Academy evaluates

complaints against CHP's (and, regrettably there have been some) and decides and implements appropriate actions, which may range from no action warranted at one extreme to recommending revocation of certification to the ABHP at the other. Through the imposition of continuing education requirements, our Academy acts as quality assurance mechanism helping to ensure that CHP's remain up to date and professionally relevant. We support, financially and otherwise, such bodies as the NCRP, and work closely with other certifying bodies including the NRRPT and ABMP to maintain and enhance the value of our CHP status. Each year the Academy sponsors technical sessions at the annual scientific meeting of its sister society, the Health Physics Society (and, judging by what Past President Jerry Martin is putting together, the 1998 Academy technical program will be a lollapalooza) along with a special Academy awards luncheon. I hope to see you all at these events -- the lunch will feature a heart healthy and tasty entree and the verbiage from the head table will be mercifully brief (NB President-Elect Cember has indicated that I am limited to one SHORT joke).

These activities directly facilitate communication and improve the capabilities of Academy members to achieve our primary mission as health physicists: protection of people and the environment from the harmful effects of

radiation, while at the same time permitting and even promoting its use for the betterment of our world. Ultimately and indirectly, they translate into higher salaries, consulting fees and professional status.

With an eye towards the continued and future well being of our profession and to accomplishment of our primary goal as health physicists, the Executive Committee (which like all such bodies moves like an iceberg -- ponderous and slowly!) considers such things as licensure and title protection, accreditation of academic programs in health physics, and most importantly, invites the suggestions and ideas of the members as to where we should be going and how we should get there. As your President, I encourage you to share your ideas regarding the Academy and its programs with me or other members of the Executive Committee, and to fully participate in the activities of the Academy. To see what the rest of the iceberg looks like, I invite you all to attend the meetings of your elected Executive Committee; I'm planning for a big room in Minneapolis, but hope that so many members want to see the whole iceberg that I've got to get an even bigger one. See you all in Minneapolis in July.

*Ron Kathren, CHP
President, AAHP, 1998*

**From the Nominating
Committee: AAHP/ABHP
Looking for a Few Good
Workers**

Twice a year, the American Academy of Health Physics' Nominating Committee seeks nominations for positions on the Academy Executive Committee and the American Board of Health Physics. In the fall of each year, nominations are solicited for Academy officers and directors. Each of the positions serve for a period of three years on the Executive Committee. We plan to start this process soon after the HPS Annual Meeting and complete it before the Midyear.

Likewise, in the spring we begin looking for folks to serve on the ABHP. The existing Board provides input to the Nominating Committee on the areas of expertise they need on the Board and also makes nominations for those positions. Other nominations are also sought from the Academy membership at large. We prefer Board members to have Panel of Examiners experience in order to be familiar with the certification and examination processes, but this is not absolutely necessary. Once the Nominating Committee makes its recommendations to the Academy Executive Committee at the HPS Annual Meeting, the Committee decides on the new Board members.

Each year, it seems to get more and more difficult to obtain nominations and to find people willing to run for office or the Board. The Nominating Committee needs your help in finding those excellent candidates. We would appreciate your input and nominations any time of the year, but especially during the nominations processes.

If you need more information or would like to nominate someone for upcoming positions on the Executive Committee or Board, please contact:

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**Professional Development
Committee (PDC)**

Thomas H. Essig, CHP, Chair ('99)

The PDC is currently involved in several projects on behalf of the Academy. Among these efforts are: (1) seeking of outside accreditation of our certification program; (2) development and promulgation of Standards of Qualification/Practice (SQ/Ps) for certain professional-level health physics positions; (3) preparation of a professional-caliber folder with AAHP/ABHP logos which will serve as a conveyance vehicle for individuals seeking information re. our certification program; and (4) development of a set-up and staffing procedure for the AAHP/ABHP booth which is displayed at annual and mid-year meetings of the HPS.

1. Outside Accreditation:

Outside accreditation is being accomplished via ABHP membership in the Council on Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (otherwise known as the CESB). An update of related activities was provided in the March 1998 *CHP Corner*. Following our acceptance as a member of the CESB, work was begun (by the CESB) on a review of our certification program with an eye toward its accreditation. That review process is ongoing as you read this.

2. Standards of Qualification / Practice:

As reported in the June 1997 *CHP News* and the August 1997 *CHP Corner*, the PDC is undertaking the development of SQ/Ps as an AAHP project for the HP community at large. Based on responses to the August 1997 *CHP Corner* article, writing groups were formed in the fall of last year for separate SQ/Ps on University RSOs and Hospital RSOs. These SQ/Ps will address academic degree requirements, post-graduate training, and experience requirements, as well as other pertinent considerations. A total of ten expressions of interest were received, four of which were from CHPs.

A draft of the SQ/P for University RSOs has been submitted to the PDC for its review. The SQ/P for Hospital RSOs is being drafted. Writing Group memberships are as follows:

Hospital RSO SQ/P Writing Group:

Roger Broseus, PhD, CHP,
Chair (NIH)
Cynthia Jones, member (NRC)
Michelle Potter, member (SNL)
Bruce Thomadsen, CHP,
member [& liaison with PDC]
(U of Wis)

University RSO SQ/P Writing Group:

Eric Boelt, CHP, Chair
(Penn St U)
Leonard Porter, PhD, member
(Wash St U)
Brian Kelly, CHP, member
(IEM)
[Henry Kahnhauser, CHP, liaison
with PDC (BNL)]

3. AAHP Folder:

A professional-caliber folder with AAHP/ABHP logos, etc. is being developed to serve as a conveyance vehicle for information relative to HP certification. The folders would contain pockets for information which could be mailed or handed to persons interested in HP certification.

PDC - Continued:

4. AAHP Booth Staffing Activities:

A Standard Operating Procedure for booth set-up and staffing is under development. Although the principal reason for developing the SOP is to orchestrate the mechanics of booth set-up, the procedure will also address staffing procedures.

From the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee

The Professional Standards and Ethics Committee wants to remind you of a change in the recertification process being implemented in 1998. This change will complete a process started for all newly certified HPs in 1996 and 1997. All newly certified HPs in those years signed a statement that they would fulfill the Standards of Responsibility for CHPs that was published in the HPS Newsletter of October 1995.

All CHPs will be asked to sign this same statement as part of the recertification process starting in 1998. This statement proposed by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee and approved by the Board of Directors in 1996, is provided on the next page for your information.

Certification Renewal Packets have been distributed. If you believe you are due for recertification and have not received your notice, contact the Secretariat.

Emeritus Members of the Academy

Emeritus status may be granted by the American Board of Health Physics to a CHP in good standing who has retired from active professional practice because of age or health. This is commonly interpreted as working less than 25% of full time and does not, therefore, exclude part-time consulting. An Emeritus CHP is not required to renew certification, but enjoys all of the privileges of an active member, receives all of the publications of the AAHP, and is listed with an emeritus designation in the Academy section of the Health Physics Society Membership Directory.

From 1990 to the present, the proportion of Academy members holding emeritus status has remained relatively constant at about 15% of total "active" membership (187 emeritus members of 1235 active CHPs in 1997 statistics).

In conversations between the Board and Academy leadership, there has been concern expressed that a few CHPs may be perceived as using the Emeritus status to circumvent certification renewal/maintenance requirements.

Some of our colleagues may have expressed intentions to retire but have not been successful in carrying out those intentions. Occasionally this may result from a change in personal circumstances. Often it is because the profession continues to call upon their expertise and years of experience. A few have probably been driven back into the workplace by spouses who concluded they weren't ALARA (Adopting the Laid-back Attitude Retirement Allows).

The Board feels strongly that any emeritus member who finds himself/herself working > 25% of the time must either: 1) re-enter the certification renewal program as any other Active CHP, or 2) not make any representations that they are anything

other than a CHP Emeritus (e.g., refer to themselves as "CHP Emeritus" or as a "former Active CHP.") Any emeritus members who find themselves having resumed employment at >25% of full-time are asked to contact Nancy Johnson at the Secretariat and discuss their individual circumstances.

From the Editor

By now you should have had about a month to scrutinize the preliminary program for the Health Physics Society 43rd Annual Meeting in Minneapolis in July. Please make special note of the Tuesday, July 14th program sponsored by the Academy and featuring a summary of the Wingspread Conference. This unique conference, sponsored by the Council of Scientific Society Presidents and the Johnson Foundation, last summer in Wisconsin, might have been entitled "*Beyond the Linear-No-Threshold Debate*." According to the final report on the conference, issued in April, the conferees reached agreement on several points, including:

Continuation of epidemiological studies of key populations -- such as Japanese atomic bomb survivors and nuclear industry workers -- is critical.

Establishment of occupational and environmental radiation exposure limits should involve both the best available scientific information and policy judgements.

Past President Jerry Martin has lined up some of the most respected members of our profession to revisit these important questions underlying the creation of a national policy based on sound science.

I hope to see you all there.

This is your newsletter. If you have something of interest to the Academy membership, or better yet, something that will be controversial enough to generate colleague interest, please send it to Steve Rima or to me.

- Gary S. Kephart

As a final step in establishing my eligibility for (re)certification by the American Board of Health Physics, I wish to acknowledge my understanding and acceptance of the following statement of standards of professional responsibility for CHPs:

STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHPs:

These principles are the standards of professional responsibility for CHPs. By applying for and achieving certification, the Certified Health Physicist recognizes and assumes the following responsibilities:

The Certified Health Physicist (CHP) shall:

A. Support and Improve the Profession of Health Physics

1. The CHP shall support the purposes of the American Academy of Health Physics (the Academy).
2. The CHP shall endeavor to advance the Health Physics profession by sharing information and experience with others and by contributing to the work of professional associations, schools, and the professional, scientific, and technical press.
3. The CHP shall not act in a manner that may bring the profession or the Academy into disrepute.

B. Provide Technical Competence

1. The CHP shall remain active in the field, strive to improve his/her professional knowledge, and endeavor to be aware of contemporary scientific, technical, and regulatory developments.
2. The CHP shall practice only in areas of his/her expertise.
3. The CHP shall practice his/her profession following recognized scientific principles.
4. The CHP shall counsel affected parties factually regarding potential health risks and precautions necessary to avoid adverse health effects.
5. The CHP should accept opportunities to increase public understanding of radiation protection and the purposes of the Academy.

C. Act in the Public Interest

1. The CHP shall have due regard for the safety and health of the public and of individuals who may be affected by his/her work
2. The CHP shall not undertake any employment or consultation that is contrary to law.
3. The CHP shall not compromise public welfare and safety in favor of a private interest.

D. Maintain High Standards in Dealing with Others

1. The CHP shall maintain the highest standards of integrity and fairness in his/her professional interactions with employers, colleagues, workers, clients, government agencies, and the general public.
2. The CHP shall not attempt to falsely injure the reputation of any person.
3. The CHP shall protect the sources and content of confidential communications or other confidential personal or business information obtained in the course of his/her practice, provided that such protection is not itself unethical or illegal.
4. Without the knowledge and consent of his/her client, the CHP shall not accept or offer commissions, allowances, or finder's fees, directly or indirectly, from contractors or other parties dealing with the client.
5. The CHP shall avoid circumstances where a compromise of professional judgement or conflict of interest may arise.
6. The CHP shall not knowingly take credit for the work of others and shall give credit where it is due.

By signing this letter, I verify that as a Certified Health Physicist I will fulfill these responsibilities and, to provide additional assurance that I remain professionally competent, I agree to meet the requirements for continuing certification established by the Board. Should I not meet the requirements for recertification, I understand and agree that I shall then be classified as *Inactive* and no longer be included in published listings of Certified Health Physicists.

Signature _____ Date _____

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ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER - 1998

NOTE: Term expires at the end of the year indicated.

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