

# American Board Of Health Physics

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## AMERICAN BOARD OF HEALTH PHYSICS NEWSLETTER -- SPRING 1984

Dear Colleague:

This Newsletter summarizes Board activities through the end of 1983 which should be of interest to Certified Health Physicists. Specific areas discussed are:

1. Continuing re-appraisal of the certification exam
2. Results of the 1983 exams
3. Candidates certified in October 1983
4. Continuing education credit
5. Change in maintenance fee
6. Academy of Certified Health Physicists
7. Certification renewal
8. Analysis of previous certification examinations
9. 1984 ABHP budget
10. Items to come before the Board in June 1984
11. Preliminary results of AAHP survey
12. ABHP appointment

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth R. Kase

1. Re-appraisal of the certification exam

The Board continues to review Part II of the certification exam and is in the process of considering some changes in format. The Board has also asked Professional Examination Service to assist it in a validation process for Part II. When this is completed the certification process should be more legally defensible than it currently is.

The Board decided at its October meeting that in the future a candidate must pass Part I of the certification exam before becoming eligible for the oral exam option.

2. Results of 1983 exams

Part I of the 1983 exam was taken by 166 candidates; 72 passed, 43.4%. This is considerably lower than 1982 when 58% passed.

67 candidates took Part II of the comprehensive examination and 23 passed, 34.3%. Again, the passing percentage is well below that in 1982 when 55% passed. Of the 44 candidates who failed Part II of the exam, 23 are eligible for the oral examination option.

20 candidates attempted Part II of the power reactor specialty examination. Of these, 7 passed, 35%, which again is significantly lower than the 1982 results when 45% passed. Of the 13 who failed Part II, 6 are eligible for the oral examination option.

3. Candidates certified in October 1983

Following are those individuals who were granted certification by the Board in October 1983:

Power Reactor Health Physics

John Albers  
Brian Colby  
Patrick W. Hughes  
Bernard Quinn

Frederick Borst  
Regis Greenwood  
John R. Lovell  
Robert E. Sorber

Leon E. Brown  
William R. Hoey  
Ron Nimitz  
Thomas L. Sowden

Comprehensive Certification

Carol Berger  
Bruce Boecker  
Arthur Desrosiers  
Bernard Graham  
Raymond Johnson, Jr.  
James Mecozzi  
Wayne Scoggins  
William A. Sommers

David Bernhardt  
Steven H. Brown  
Dale Gergely  
Russell Gray  
John Keklak  
Bruce Meyer  
Dillard Shipler  
Frederick Straccia

Leldon Blue  
Myu Campbell  
Patrick Glennon  
Sharon Hoots  
Andrew Maxim  
Paul Prevo  
Henry Siegrist  
Gerald Trimble

#### 4. Continuing education credit

The Board has granted continuing education credit at the rate of 1 credit per day of attendance to a maximum of 3 credits for the annual meetings of the following organizations:

American Association of Physicists in Medicine  
American Nuclear Society  
Society of Nuclear Medicine  
Radiation Research Society  
National Council for Radiation Protection and Measurements

A good idea: Bob Alexander of NRL periodically puts on a series of excellent seminars to help the NRC Certified Health Physicists acquire continuing education credits. Those other organizations or geographical areas with an appreciable concentration of CHP's might adopt this idea as an aid to their Health Physicists.

#### 5. Change in maintenance fee

At its October meeting the Board decided that effective 1 January 1984 the maintenance fee for emeritus CHP members be set at \$10.00.

#### 6. Academy of Certified Health Physicists

A proposal for the formation of an academy of Certified Health Physicists is being mailed to all CHP's with a ballot so that individuals can indicate their preference for the formation and structure of such an Academy. All ballots should be returned prior to the June meeting of the Health Physics Society so that the results can be tabulated for reporting at that time. It is expected that another meeting of Certified Health Physicists will occur in New Orleans, at which time further action on the formation of an Academy will be taken.

#### 7. Certification renewal

As you will note in the listing in the HPS handbook, the list of active Certified Health Physicists is substantially shorter than in the past. If your name does not appear it probably means that we did not receive a certification renewal application (note that the converse does not necessarily hold). Of course, there is always that very small possibility that we goofed. Because of the timing of the printing of the handbook, those whose renewal is due in December have about a six month grace period, but don't count on it. We do try to send reminder letters to everyone coming due, but again, given gremlins in computer procedures, don't count on it.  
(L. Slaback)

8. Analysis of previous certification examinations

Analysis of Part II of the certification examination:

Each Part II question since 1974 has been analyzed in regard to differences in performance by persons who passed the exam vs. those who failed, in regard to differences in question popularity, and how the type of question related to these factors. How performance on Part II correlated with that on Part I has also been examined.

Parts of this analysis and tabulation of each year's Part II results have assisted the Board in its review and certification of the Part II examination results. A complete statistical analysis of Part I is performed on contract by Professional Examination Service.

A summary of some of this information is given in the table below starting with 1975, which was the first time the 16-question format was used.

Year	All Candidates Who Took Part II (including those who too Part I in a previous year)			Candidates Who Took Park I and II <u>Together</u>			
	<u>No. of Candidates</u>	<u>% Passing *</u>		<u>No.</u>	<u>% Passing *</u>		<u>% Failing Part I but Passing Part II</u>
		<u>Part II</u>	<u>O/A Exam</u>		<u>Part II</u>	<u>O/A Exam</u>	
1975	51	49	41	43	44	35	9
1976	39	56	33	35	54	29	26 **
1977	52	29	25	50	28	24	4
1978	46	41	33	39	36	26	10
1979	44	32	30	31	26	23	3
1980	44	64	59	26	50	42	8
1981	69	39	38	53	32	30	2
1982	60	58	58	30	60	60	0
1983	67	34	34	29	35	35	0

\* Passing outright. Does not include orals.

\*\* Most of those who failed Part I qualified for the oral exam.

Several trends are apparent:

- Passing performance on Part II does not seem to be much different for those who do it alone or with Part I

- Those who fail Part I also don't do well on Part II. (However, the converse does not hold. Passing Part I is no assurance that Part II will be passed.) In effect, Part I is a very useful screening exam for the candidate.

- With the exception of 1980 and 1982 the passing percentage is reasonably constant.

Interesting observations:

- Internal dose calculation questions are very popular and they tend to have a good separation of passes and fails.
- Questions relating to power reactors are unpopular despite that they are usually written very generally with no power reactor specific information.
- Accelerator questions are very unpopular - like the proverbial plague.
- Fundamental interaction questions, particularly those relating to neutrons are unpopular.
- Computational questions tend to demonstrate the most difference between those who ultimately pass the exam and those who don't.

9. 1984 ABHP budget

Following is the 1984 budget adopted by the Board at its October meeting.

Receipts

Exam fees	\$37,500
Maintenance fees	13,750
Preparation Guide sales	500
Interest	2,500
Health Physics Society grant	1,000
Total	<u>\$55,250</u>

Disbursements

Secretariat fee	\$25,500
Professional Examination Service	12,500
Printing	3,000
Postage	2,000
Plaques & certificates	400
Telephone	600
Legal fees and audit	500
Board travel	2,500
Board support	500
Panel travel	1,200
Panel support	300
Insurance	3,200
Computer	400
Exhibit booth	250
Mailing service	200
Xerox	600
Miscellaneous	200
Proctors	150
Refunds	1,000
Total	<u>\$55,000</u>

#### 10. Items to come before the Board in June 1984

Among various items that will be on the ABHP agenda for the summer meeting are the following:

1) Newly certified diplomats be required to submit ten Part I questions and two Part II questions as a final step in the certification process; i.e., before their plaque is released to them.

2) As part of the certification renewal process, diplomats be required to submit ten Part I questions and two Part II questions.

3) At its June 1983 meeting the Board approved a motion to require the submission of a written report as part of the application for Part II of the certification examination. At its 1984 meeting the Board will review criteria for accepting such a radiation protection evaluation report. This criteria will concentrate wholly upon two elements: (1) that the applicant is the author or had primary responsibility for the report, and (2) that the report is a substantive, professional level, comprehensive effort relating to an area in which the ABHP certifies expertise.

The Board would appreciate reactions to these proposals prior to its June meeting.

#### 11. Preliminary results of AAHP survey

Results as of May 3 are: No Change: 51, Option I: 62, Option II: 31, Other: 9 (mostly for Option I or II). Many people noted the misordering of the pages where page 5 to the end of Option I should be exchanged with the corresponding pages of Option II. The main issues raised in the comments were the need for a new organization, increased costs, elitism, independence of the ABHP, control of the ABHP, clarification of the bylaws, relationship with HPS, etc. The ad hoc committee will hold a meeting in New Orleans; check your schedule when you arrive. (Summary by L. Slaback)

#### 12. ABHP appointment

At the request of the Board, the Council of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD) submitted nominees for appointment to the ABHP. From the list of nominees Robert Quillen has been appointed to the ABHP as a representative of the CRCPD.