

Task Force on Mortality

Motivation

Increasing international attention has been placed on improving the understanding of mortality and longevity. These topics are important issues with wide-ranging impacts on both the public interest and on actuarial practice. Societal issues include such wide ranging areas as nutritional guidelines, public funding for long term benefits such as social insurance, employee benefits, life insurance and health care systems. Actuaries' interests are directly affected, as they are involved in costing and pricing of insurance contracts and retirement and health care programs, measuring liabilities and assessing the financial condition of financial institutions,

It is important to note that actuaries are not the only professionals who are interested and affected by this topic. Demographers, epidemiologists, statisticians and economists are also interested in this topic. Moreover, mortality is also studied by many international organisations like the World Bank, the OECD, the UN, etc.

Because of its central role in actuarial practice, there is a need for an active and professional facilitation of research and sharing of knowledge on this topic, both in terms of the study of historical experience and projection of mortality experience. Actuaries and the IAA have the competence to take on this role, while at the same time providing an opportunity to raise awareness of the role that actuaries are currently playing and to enhance their involvement in this area.

Within the IAA, mortality is an important cross-cutting issue that has relevance for many of its Sections (especially the PBSS and Life Sections) and Committees (including the Pensions and Employee Benefits Committee, the Insurance Accounting Committee, the Social Security Committee and the Solvency Subcommittee). To develop plans to coordinate and expand current efforts in this area within the international actuarial profession, it is appropriate for the IAA to take a leading role by establishing a task force on mortality.

Therefore, it is proposed that the IAA set up a task force on mortality, consisting of, amongst others, representatives from relevant IAA Sections and Committees. The first part of the work of the task force would be to understand what is currently being done within the profession and to facilitate and expand upon the role of actuaries in this area and enhance international actuarial cooperation. Although primarily focused on the actuarial profession, work by others should also be considered. It might consider undertaking or facilitating the expansion of data collection and analyzing current efforts. The second part of the proposed task would be to recommend steps that either it or others should take to establish a leading role for actuaries in this area and initiate and coordinate relevant and meaningful actuarial and other studies. At a later point in time, a more permanent structure to address this topic might be established.