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2008 ABHP Activities

Jim Tarpinian, 2008 ABHP Chair

I am pleased to report that the American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) had a successful year due to the continued efforts and hard work of the Board, as well as the Part I and Part II panels. I will summarize the Board's activities throughout 2008. The ABHP held its fall Board Meeting in McLean, VA, on November 21 and 22, 2008. The following is a summary of significant issues and actions addressed by the Board at the fall Meeting and in the latter half of 2008.

2008 ABHP Certification Exam

The primary mission of the Board is to steward the preparation and administration of the certification exam each year. This extraordinary task is only accomplished through the dedication of the Part I and Part II panel chairs and members. The Board gratefully thanks Anthony Huffert (Part I Chair) and Pat LaFrate (Part II chair) for their exceptional efforts in developing a fair and challenging exam.

The 2008 Certification Exam was administered on July 14, 2008, at several locations including the Health Physics Society's Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh, PA. One hundred and seventy six candidates sat for one or both parts of the exam this year, slightly less than the average of 184 candidates over the previous seven years. The ABHP granted 52 additional certifications in 2008.

One hundred and six candidates took the Part I exam, compared to 121 in 2007. Part I of the 2008 exam was passed by 41 candidates, yielding a passing rate of 39% (compared to the passing rates of 49% in 2007 and 43% in 2006). The average pass rate over the last 5 years is 44%. Review of exam performance indicated that it was not necessary to drop or rescore any questions.

Eighty-eight candidates took the ABHP Part II exam this year. Fifty-two candidates scored greater than the passing threshold of 469 points resulting in a 59% passing rate (as compared to 32% in 2007 and 39% in 2006). The grading process continues to be fairly smooth with overall consistency in grading evident. Exam questions covered all the domains of practice. None of the questions were ignored by the candidates. The questions, in general, appeared to adequately discriminate between passing and failing candidates. Overall, the consistency between graders was very good. The results of the exam represent a fair and accurate assessment of the candidates.

10 CFR 35 Rulemaking

The ABHP received a letter from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in October notifying us that they are considering a rulemaking that would grandfather certain ABHP certified persons as medical RSOs. This rulemaking is being considered after reviewing last year's AAPM's Petition for Rulemaking that the ABHP supported. In order to develop a technical basis for the rulemaking the NRC requested us to provide them with the number and percentage of our currently active diplomates that are not currently grandfathered under 10 CFR 35 that would otherwise be eligible. The ABHP conducted a survey of actively Certified Health Physicists to determine how many would be positively impacted by the

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proposed rulemaking. Our survey received 573 valid responses, representing a 44% response rate, which is excellent. Based on the survey results we estimated that the range of those who would be positively impacted by a grandfathering rule is between 376 and 882 representing 29% and 68%, of the membership, respectively.

Board Accreditation Efforts

The ABHP board continued efforts to prepare for accreditation of our certification under the ANSI Standard ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024 "Accreditation of Bodies Operating Certification of Persons." Jim Tarpinian and Frazier Bronson attended a training class offered by ANSI that helped us to understand the application process and how to describe our conformance to the elements in the standard. As Board Chair, Jim appointed an ad hoc committee on accreditation and the members are Jim Tarpinian, Frazier Bronson, and Nancy Kirner. The tasks ahead include verifying the gap analysis, taking actions to address non conformances, completing and submitting the application and scheduling the ANSI assessment. It is expected that the process will take up to three year to complete.

Policy and Procedures Manual Changes

Proposed changes will include a better definition for "closely related area of study" when evaluating an exam candidate's academic credentials, defining a three year period for considering a candidate's nomination for the McAdams award and removing the explanatory note in Appendix 3 regarding the renewal period for recertification. The changes will be recommended to the AAHP Executive Committee during their midyear meeting in San Antonio.

Ongoing

Shawn Googins is serving as Chair of an *ad hoc* committee to develop a procedure for reciprocity with other certifications. If anyone is interested in this project or would like to review the draft procedure they should contact Shawn. The ABHP is also developing scenarios and remedies to ensure continuity of operations following specific postulated events.

Initiatives

2008 Fall Board Meeting

During the fall 2008 Board meeting the Board reviewed the results of the 2008 certification exam, evaluated exam performance, and confirmed the results of the 2008 exam. The board reviewed and discussed requirements for ISO/ANSI accreditation and established an ad hoc committee to recommend changes to policies and procedures to conform to the standard leading to the preparation of an application for accreditation.

The Board also discussed changes to the prospectus, the policy and procedures manuals, and the examination preparation guide. Also, Jim Willison demonstrated proposed changes to the webpages for the ABHP.



2008/2009 ABHP Members and Chairs of the Panels of Examiners from left to right: Jerry Hiatt (member), Andy Miller (2009 Part 1 Panel Chair), Jack Higginbotham (member), Kent Lambert (2008 Vice Chair), Trish Milligan (2008 Secretary and 2009 Vice Chair), Nora Nicholson (2009 Secretary), Anthony Huffert (2008 Part 1 Panel Chair), Cheryl Olson (2008 Parliamentarian and 2009 Chair), Jim Tarpinian (2008 Chair).