

Accelerated Policy Development

The Policy Committee sent the final batch of HERA and final-rules-related proposals to the community for review on February 28, with comments due on March 21. The batch development schedule for the 2007 *Common Manual* update was accelerated due to the number of proposals related to the final rules published August 9 and November 1, 2006. In total, the Committee published nearly 40 proposals in the last four batches, covering a broad range of topics it considered “priority” for inclusion in the July 2007 *Common Manual*. To ensure that the Committee met its own deadlines and time lines, the Committee met twice each week via conference call and exchanged hundreds of emails to expedite policy development for this critical phase. The Policy Committee appreciates the community’s responsiveness on the policies in these batches, and the careful and insightful review and commentary on each policy, despite the amended publication and comment schedule.

The Committee is currently finalizing the comment responses on batch 140, and will begin the comment response development for policies in batch 141 as soon as the comment period for that batch closes next week. Both batches 140 and 141 will be on the Governing Board agenda for its April 19 meeting. The April Board meeting is the last meeting in which the Board can approve policies to meet the July publication goal.

Spring Meeting Plans Begun

The Policy Committee meets regularly via conference call and twice each year in person. The fall meeting is generally scheduled in conjunction with NCHLP’s Fall Training Conference. The Committee’s spring meeting is not generally tied to other community functions, and the Committee is currently planning for the upcoming meeting, likely in late May or early June. The tentative agenda includes an analysis of pending regulatory issues and development of a work plan to incorporate them into common policy text, member training and development, and a restructuring of administrative duties.

New Policy Committee Members

The Policy Committee will soon send nomination notifications to all guarantors, requesting the nomination of new Committee members or the renomination of seated members whose terms expire July 31, 2007. The Committee asks that every guarantor who does not currently support a Policy Committee member give careful consideration to nominating one of its staff for membership. Successful members need not come solely from the guarantor’s policy shop, but may also be found in operations areas, in compliance, or communications, any area of the guarantor operation that requires a strong, broad working knowledge of FFELP policy. New members would begin their 2-year term August 1.

History Appendix

The Committee is developing language to update the *Common Manual*’s history appendix with the changes that were effective through December 31, 2006, and will bring those changes to the Board for its consideration at the April Governing Board meeting as well.

The Committee reminds the FFELP community of the wonderful resource that the appendix represents, containing entries on the substantive policy changes to the FFELP since long before it was called the “FFELP.” The extensive historic references to the publication of new regulations, important DCLs, and changes in the law assist in research for and responses to program reviews and audits, and responding to student and borrower inquiries regarding loans that have been outstanding for a long time and administered under several sets of FFELP rules.

The appendix is organized chronologically, and then within each date entries are categorized and sorted by topic. There is a list of topics at the start of the appendix, and a quick review of that list may assist the user in constructing a quick “search” for pertinent references.

Policy Committee Communications

All correspondence related to the Policy Committee’s activities should be sent to Co-Chairs Dan Tryon or Carolyn Small at tryond@michigan.gov or carolyn.small@iowa.gov, respectively. If you have questions about the Committee’s activities, policies in development, or out for community review, please contact Carolyn at 515.725.3413 or Dan at 517.383.4981, or by email at the addresses provided above.

Information regarding the *Common Manual*, including the current and historic versions of the manual may be accessed on the *Common Manual* website at www.commonmanual.org.