CHP Corner

American Academy of Health Physics
American Board of Health Physics
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AAHP Appeals Committee

Penny A. Shamblin, CHP, Chair

Any health physicist denied certification or certification renewal by the American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) may appeal that decision through a formal process developed by the American Academy of Health Physics (AAHP). The appeal process is prescribed in the *Bylaws of the American Academy of Health Physics* (January 2006) and complies with the requirements of the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB), of which the ABHP is an accredited Member Board.

Per Section 6.3.3 of the Bylaws, certification or certification renewal decisions by the ABHP are final unless a health physicist who has been denied certification or certification renewal requests the Appeals Committee to review that decision. The Appeals Committee is a standing committee of the AAHP that consists of three plenary members, excluding current members of the ABHP or the Examination Panels. The members of the Appeals Committee for 2011 are Jason Marsden, Nicholas Panzarino, and Penny Shamblin. Review of a decision by the Appeals Committee is limited to a determination of whether the policies and procedures of the ABHP were properly followed. Note that the actual grade on an examination is not appealable; only flaws in following the ABHP policies and procedures are appealable.

The procedural process for an appeal is addressed in Section 7.10 of the Bylaws and in the AAHP Standard Operating Procedure 2.1.1, rev. 1 (January 2006). An appellant initiates review by filing an appeal with the Executive Secretary within six months of notification of the ABHP decision. A prospective appellant should fully document how he or she believes that the ABHP deviated from its policies and procedures. Electronic versions of the ABHP Policies and Procedures are available from the Executive Secretary upon request.

The appeal is referred to the Appeals Committee for review to evaluate whether the policies and procedures of the ABHP were properly followed. The Appeals Committee reports the results of its review to the appellant, the AAHP president, the ABHP chair, and the AAHP program director. If the Appeals Committee finds evidence of failure to comply with a policy or procedure, the AAHP president refers the Appeals Committee's report with recommendations to the ABHP chair for resolution.

Although the Appeals Committee plays an important role in maintaining the integrity of the certification process, it does not make the decision about the appeal. That is the duty and responsibility of the ABHP chair. The Appeals Committee studies the appeal as the appellant presents it and provides the written results of its review and recommendation to the AAHP president, who may add his or her own comments and recommendation before forwarding the package to the ABHP chair for final disposition.

Part I Panel of Examiners Activities

Jackson Ellis, CHP, Chair

Every November, the Part I Examination Panel meets for two days near Washington, DC, to discuss the performance of the current year's exam and prepare a new exam for the following year. The panel met in 2010 on 21-22 November. During the meeting, members submit a number of questions for panel review within their area of expertise. The proposed new questions are reviewed and, if approved by the panel, are added to a bank of existing questions for possible use on future exams.

Existing questions are also reviewed for past performance, clarity, and appropriateness and may be modified or removed from the bank. Throughout the year, members prepare new questions, analyze performance data on old questions, edit draft and final versions of the exam, and wait for the results of the current year's exam performance.

The panel is comprised of 12 certified health physicists from locations throughout the United States with expertise in different areas, including academic/research applications, accelerators, dosimetry, environmental and fundamental health physics, fuel cycle/waste management, power reactors, and regulations. Members are appointed by the American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) for a four-year term.

If you would like to make a significant contribution to our profession and enjoy working in a collegial atmosphere with fellow CHPs with a wide range of expertise, please indicate your interest in serving on the Part I Examination Panel when you submit your ABHP annual dues. You can also contact the panel chair or vice chair at any time. Work on the panel is voluntary and can be very rewarding. Besides frequent review of many areas of health physics, understanding of and providing input on the examination-preparation process is always interesting. Although not a requirement for membership, Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses are always welcome.

Photo from 2009 Part I Panel meeting, left to right, Beth Hilt, Nicolas Bates, Jim Willison, 2010 Part I Panel Chair Jackson Ellis, Cindy Flannery, Scott Nickelson, Karen Brown, Cheryl Antonio, William Rhodes, 2010 Part I Panel Past Chair Mike Stabin, and 2010 Part I Panel Vice-Chair Jay Tarzia

Professional Standards and Ethics Committee

Ruth E. McBurney, CHP, Chair

The Academy's Professional Standards and Ethics Committee is charged with defining the Standards of Professional Responsibility for certified health physicists (CHPs) and reviewing all complaints about unethical practice referred to the Committee by the Executive Committee. The Standards of Professional Responsibility are in place and they have been reviewed.

The Professional Standards and Ethics Committee is a standing committee of the American Academy of Health Physics composed of five members of the Academy. Serving on the committee in 2011 in addition to the chair are Jack Fix, Nancy Kirner, Paul Rohwer, and Tim Taulbee.

It appears that all CHPs are continuing to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner as no complaints have been referred to the committee in the recent past. The committee also serves as a clearinghouse for professional standards and ethics questions from CHPs and others in the profession of health physics.

Another responsibility of the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee is the establishment of procedures for selecting, awarding, and announcing the Joyce P. Davis Award winners. Those procedures are in place. They have been reviewed and a call has been issued for nominations for the 2011 Joyce P. Davis Memorial Award. The information regarding the nomination process can be found in the December edition of the *CHP News*.