



RULES & REGULATIONS

A First Year of Success

by Lance Ewing

RIMS' External Affairs Team has been in existence for one year. During that time, it has addressed myriad issues for the benefit of the Society and its members. And the year's success lies in one word: T-E-A-M.

A successful team begins with leadership. A leader must possess "change mastery" to drive innovation when necessary and respond positively to developments that are beyond control. With little direct authority, a leader must solicit assistance from volunteers, willing and unwilling. But a team must also have technically and interpersonally competent members who are capable of resolving the many conflicts that arise when diverse personalities converge.

This leads to the next quality of a successful team: unified commitment. The team must be brought together to focus on supporting one another for the project at hand, without finger-pointing or blame-casting. A clear and challenging, but attainable list of goals encourages this mentality. Clearly defined roles, a rapid decision-making process and an efficient communications program create a structure that gets results.

The External Affairs Team was created with this model in mind and the results of our first year demonstrate our success.

Communication with membership is the heart of any government action program. The External Affairs Team used every medium RIMS provides to reach members with legislative, regulatory and policy information. In 1998, the External Affairs Team launched "Capital Spotlight," a bimonthly supplement to the Society newsletter, *RIMSCOPE*. The insert reviews current public policy trends and federal legislation affecting the risk management profession. In addition, External Affairs Team members contribute regularly to *Risk Management*. In some cases, these pieces have become the basis for RIMS position statements. More extensive government affairs information is also available on the "Capital Alerts" section of RIMS' Web site, covering state and provincial legislative news.

Due to the last-minute nature of most politicians' schedules, actually getting members in front of legislators and regulators can be difficult. So the External Affairs Team has taken part in local chapter efforts to meet and speak with public officials. In the past 12 months, Team members testified on commercial lines deregulation and managed care in front of the National Conference of Insurance Legislators and were present at a lobbying trip to Springfield, Illinois; an industrial

commission hearing in North Carolina; meetings with the immediate past president and current vice president of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners; and an Indiana hearing on commercial lines deregulation legislation. The Society also signed a partnering charter with OSHA this year and was named to their stakeholder list.

In addition, the RIMS position paper process has been revived. The consensus statements are developed by the Team and then sent to the Executive Council for comment before being published. This year's subjects include health information privacy, broker consolidation and compensation, and managed care reform. Additional papers are in the drafting process.

The External Affairs Team knows the value of affiliating with other groups with similar concerns. In the past year, RIMS has worked with the Self Insurance Institute of America in a coalition for medical records privacy, provided a risk manager representative on ISO's Commercial Lines Industry

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Liaison Panel and partnered with the American Society of Safety Engineers on a survey of violence in the workplace. The Team is also exploring involvement with the Policyholder Disaster Protection Coalition.

The last component of the External Affairs Team success is training. A majority of the Team attended "RIMS on the Hill" this past March. This was RIMS' first fly-in event—a legislative conference that trained members to be advocates for their businesses and for RIMS. Members came to the U.S. Capitol for 24 hours of intense advocacy training and one-on-one meetings with legislators and staff. However, the main purpose of the meeting was not necessarily to have an impact on the Hill. The success of "RIMS on the Hill" was that members came away with a better understanding of what the External Affairs Team is doing for them and how they can play a part in the process.

