Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, Regulatory Board

Subject	Professional and Regulatory Support Helpdesk Annual Report 2024/2025
Meeting date	14 May 2025
Previous Steer/Approval	N/A – this is an annual noting report
Related horizon scan code	N/A
International issues considered?	Yes – the Helpdesk is a whole of membership service
Author(s)	Stephanie McGowan, Senior Regulatory Manager
Reviewer(s)	Ashley MacIntyre, Senior Regulatory Lawyer
Purpose	Noting

A: Executive summary

1. This noting report provides an annual update to the Regulatory Board (the Board) on the operation of the Professional and Regulatory Support Helpdesk (the Helpdesk) since its launch on 12 June 2024, to the end of the annual reporting period, 31 March 2025.

2. The report includes the activities of the Helpdesk during the relevant period, along with the activities of its predecessor, the Professional Support Service (PSS), between 1 April 2024 and 11 June 2024.

3. It also sets out details of the promotional activities that have taken place to raise awareness of the new Helpdesk and planned future activities.

B: Background

4. As a reminder for the Board, the Helpdesk is a free and confidential support service available to all IFoA Members and provides an opportunity for members to benefit from the views of experienced panel members on professional and technical matters.

5. The Helpdesk was launched on 12 June 2024 and replaced the previous support services, namely the Professional Support Service and the regulatory mailbox.

6. The Helpdesk responds to queries relating to ethical dilemmas Members may be facing in the course of their actuarial work, as well as questions on the interpretation and application of:

    - The Actuaries' Code;
    - Actuarial Profession Standards (APSs) and supporting guidance; and
    - Technical Actuarial Standards (TASs) issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

7. There are currently four volunteer panels supporting the Helpdesk: Professionalism, General Insurance, Life Insurance and Pensions.

8. Queries are submitted through an online enquiry form or through the Helpdesk's dedicated telephone service.

9. Queries are shared with the relevant panel based on the subject matter and the Executive draft a response based on the responses received from panel members.

10. Where a query does not require input from one of the panels, the Executive will provide a response to the enquirer.

C: Closure of the PSS and launch of the Helpdesk

11. The PSS formally closed on 12 June 2024, with the launch of the Helpdesk offering a more accessible and efficient service for members.

12. The webpages on the IFoA website were refreshed with information on the new service, including the publication of a blog to inform members about the Helpdesk, the changes that had been made and how the Helpdesk can be used by members.

13. A number of promotional articles were published to promote the Helpdesk, including in the Actuary magazine, in various newsletters and on the IFoA's Communities platform.

14. A Q&A session was also held on the Communities platform which allowed members the opportunity to hear more and ask questions about the Helpdesk.

D: Activities

15. The Helpdesk received 23 queries in the reporting period, along with one query coming through the PSS prior to the Helpdesk launching.

16. This sees an increase in the number of queries received for the first time in a number of years, with prior years showing a year-on-year reduction in queries (12 queries in 2023/24, 13 queries in 2022/23, 17 in 2021/22 and 22 in 2020/21).

17. A range of queries have been received across professionalism, pensions and life insurance, with no queries received relating to General Insurance and no particular recurring themes emerging.

18. 21 of the 24 queries were received from UK based Members, with three queries received from overseas members (Asia, Europe and Africa).

19. The Executive responded directly (without the need for Panel input) to eight queries during the period of this report, an increase from three in the previous year.

20. A detailed breakdown of the activities over the year is provided in **Appendix 1**.

E: Upcoming activities

21. A workshop is being held with Helpdesk panel members on 5 June to provide an update on how the Helpdesk is working and to gather feedback from our volunteers.

22. The workshop will also be used to provide panel members with an overview of the upcoming changes to the Code and guidance following the DEI consultation and answer any questions they might have to help them in their role supporting the Helpdesk.

23. Our marketing team will also be highlighting the Helpdesk service when the changes to the Code and guidance come into effect to ensure members are aware of the support available should they need guidance on the changes.

24. Work on raising awareness of the Helpdesk will continue over the coming months through the usual avenues, as well as a focus on volunteer recruitment to ensure the Helpdesk is fully supported.

F: Conclusions

25. The Board is asked to **note** this report and provide any comments on its contents.

G: Appendices

- **Appendix 1**, Helpdesk activity for 2024/2025