



This column is the first in a series of stories the *Update* will run throughout the year about Academy members working overseas. The articles will offer insights into the global actuarial profession.

International Activity Beck

SPOTLIGHT ON: AUSTRALIA

BY RADE MUSULIN

TWO YEARS AGO, I LEFT THE UNITED STATES TO ACCEPT A JOB IN AUSTRALIA. Actuaries are in high demand in many countries, including Australia, which allowed me to move my wife back to her native country and secure an excellent job. I was ready for a change after going through the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons as a senior executive of a Florida-based insurer. Australia was attractive for many reasons, including my family ties, a less extreme catastrophe environment, a free market approach to rate regulation, and its role as a center of excellence for insurance in the Asia-Pacific region.

Regulators in several countries in this part of the world are turning to actuaries to improve solvency protection. The Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority has implemented requirements for financial condition reports and independent peer review of valuations (similar to statements of actuarial opinion). The Malaysian regulator Bank Negara is implementing a risk-based capital framework requiring actuarial sign-off, leading the Actuarial Society of [Malaysia](#) to post an article on its website that notes, “More actuaries are urgently needed to ensure the successful implementation of the risk-based capital framework and other regulatory policies in the insurance industry.” Generally, insurance systems in much of the world are growing in complexity and require the type of skills actuaries have to offer.

My job in Australia has given me the opportunity to work in a department with



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well-trained actuaries from Australia, France, and Mexico; a student trained in Germany; and an intern from Thailand studying in the [Institute](#) of Actuaries of Australia’s program. I have also worked with actuaries from the [New Zealand](#) Society of Actuaries and the United Kingdom’s [Institute](#) of Actuaries, and I have been very impressed by the quality of the education process in these countries.

My colleagues have many reasons for coming to Australia. Generally, Australia

is experiencing a shortage of highly skilled workers, leading to a choice of good jobs and a manageable immigration process. The Australian lifestyle is excellent, and Sydney is a great place to live and raise a family. Also, many Australian insurers and reinsurers have global operations, offering an opportunity to work on projects in many countries.

The profession in most other countries is more united than in the U.S., as there are not separate qualification tracks for life and casualty actuaries. That leads to less special-

ons Actuaries Abroad

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Musulín enjoys the work and lifestyle Australia provides.

ization but more interaction among the various branches of the profession. Also, the same entity, the Institute of Actuaries of Australia, addresses both the education process and public policy issues, unlike in the U.S.

The Australian and U.K. institutes have strong codes of conduct and professional standards, including disciplinary processes similar to those of the Actuarial Board for Counseling and Discipline in the U.S. Similar to the Academy's continuing education requirement, both institutes require a significant amount of continuing professional development. I have attended meetings of the Society of Actuaries in New Zealand and the Australian institute and found the quality of the programs to be comparable to those of the Academy and Casualty Actuarial Society. Not surprisingly, the Australian institute, just like the Academy, has a strong committee system of volunteer members.

Section 6 of the Academy's strategic plan recognizes the growing importance of international initiatives. In coming years, the actuarial profession will become more global, following the trend of financial services generally. This will offer great opportunities for Academy members.

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