Executive Committee evaluates how to maintain pool stability

By Ann Bennett & Tina Smith

The Executive Committee’s September 2013 retreat was an opportunity for the Committee to evaluate the overall life cycle of the pool. WCIA can either sustain its current position, lead by example into the future or risk a potential drop as the leading risk pool among its constituents.

The committee and management staff reviewed the pool’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (S.W.O.T) to begin the process of goal setting. The Committee identified as clear strengths the COMPACT, Pre-defense review, extensive training programs, sponsorship of member staff for professional development and the pool’s ability to provide insurance while understanding governmental entities. The analysis also included a discussion of the changing diversity of membership through the creation of new interlocal entities, litigation exposures, the continuing fiscal austerity for members and the changing political environment overall as challenges.

From this discussion, goals were drafted and will be presented to the Full Board at the November meeting. Among the goals was a commitment to maintain the recommended actuarial target fund balance to ensure appropriate funding, and communicating to the membership about the need for WCIA’s undesignated reserve balance. The goals also include conveying to the membership the value of WCIA risk management services, developing a risk reduction grant program and acknowledging members who successfully control their losses and utilize innovative risk management strategies.

The Executive Committee also included a goal tasking staff to develop a Membership Improvement Plan (MIP) to assist members in improving their loss profile. This plan would provide targeted solutions to minimize members’ losses by identifying causes of loss with recommended solutions, trainings, policies and procedures.

The 2014 goals ensure that WCIA will continue in its mission to provide professional risk management and stable risk financing that is responsive to the members’ needs.
The chill is on!
By Lisa Knapton

Our beautiful summer has officially come to an end and with winter quickly approaching, members should not wait until it hits to begin taking risk management steps to prevent premise liability commonly occurring during inclement weather.

Many members have significant numbers of visitors to their premises and have employees who enter and exit their buildings. The risk of slip and fall injuries increase during wintertime due to an accumulation of water, especially in building entry ways. Regular inspection and maintenance of walkways, steps, ramps, parking garages and exterior parking lots becomes more critical during bad weather conditions.

Monitoring weather forecasts can assist members with implementing anti-icing or de-icing operations, making snow and ice removal easier. Members should create a list of priority areas for snow and ice removal and review it annually to ensure priorities have not changed. Members should arrange to have snow and ice removed from walkways surrounding their facilities as soon as it is safe to do so.

Where feasible, parking lots should be plowed and de-icing material applied prior to allowing vehicles to park, preventing ice patches from accumulating between vehicles. Main entrances should have materials that are slip resistant such as quality matting, inlaid carpet tiles or permanent carpet tiles with beveled edges provided that extend 15 to 20 feet giving visitors enough room to wipe their shoes. Mats and carpet tiles should be regularly inspected for signs of wear and tear. Caution or wet floor signs should be placed warning visitors that the floor is slippery when wet. Pooling water should be removed as soon as possible.

Snow, ice and rain can add tremendous weight to roofs putting them at risk for collapse. Roofs should be inspected for significant accumulation of water, ice or snow. Drains, gutters and downspouts should be cleaned at least quarterly.

Outdoor lighting should be regularly inspected and any outages remediated as soon as possible.

The above operations should be documented and the records retained in accordance with the Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE).

Some members may choose to hire independent contractors to remove snow and ice from the walkways and parking lots surrounding their premises. The contractor should sign a contract containing proper indemnification language and adequate insurance requirements and should provide a Certificate of Insurance evidencing that coverage.

Your WCIA Risk Management Representative would be happy to assist you with reviewing the contract’s insurance requirements and indemnification language.
Mark Khan, Senior Vice President, Bowering Marsh and Neil Chapman, Active Underwriter-Property of Argo International met with WCIA staff in September. Chapman is the underwriter for the lead syndicate that provides insurance for WCIA at Lloyd's of London. Lloyd’s of London provides 40 percent of the coverage for the WCIA property program. The property program covers $5.6 billion in values of members' property. Khan is with the London insurance brokerage used by WCIA to access insurance from Lloyd's of London.

Lloyd’s is home to 87 syndicates and is the world’s leading specialist insurance market. Twelve syndicates are involved in placing property coverage to WCIA. Due to our member’s exposures to natural disasters such as flood and earthquake, only a handful of insurance carriers worldwide are willing to underwrite our property risks. The Lloyd’s syndicates involved with WCIA each underwrite small portions of the program to minimize their overall risks of loss.

For the visit, WCIA asked if the City of Tukwila Police Department could make available the Valley SWAT BearCat armored car and Mobile Command Unit as examples of what we insure for the membership. The Lloyd’s underwriter was very impressed with the demonstration and tour of the police vehicles that was organized on his behalf. It may not lower our property program premiums from Lloyd’s, but it did help us build on our good relationship and make a memorable experience with these key players who insure our property program.

A great deal of thanks goes the City of Tukwila and their Police Department for making the Londoners’ visit one they will always remember.

Above: The BearCat, SWAT vehicle.

Left: Posing in front of the BearCat, Eric Larson, WCIA Deputy Director, Neil Chapman of Argo International, Tukwila Officer Chris Daugherty, Mark Khan of Bowering Marsh and Tiffany Woods, WCIA Programs Assistant.
The Mobile Command Unit is part of the Valley SWAT Team, which is comprised of Kent Valley city entities. Approximately six officers from each jurisdiction comprise the entire SWAT team. The team was recently involved in a raid on several hotels in conjunction with Federal law enforcement agencies and the IRS.

The Command Unit is worth $600,000. The unit was built from the ground up and contains two generators, links to satellite, internet and cell service. In the event everything “electronic” goes down, the team is able to pull up to a Century Link tower and hard plug into the telephone lines. The unit has enough stations to hold 14 people working on laptop computers.
The Executive Committee has authorized travel reimbursements to assist members in attending the November Full Board meeting. Members are encouraged to attend the November meeting, even if they have already met their COMPACT attendance requirement. The board will discuss and vote on the 2014 goals, selection of a new Executive Director and will hear details about the recent Target Fund Balance study of WCIA's reserves.

The reimbursement application will be distributed next month via email to all delegates and alternates, as well as posted on the WCIA website. To be considered for a travel reimbursement, applications must be received by Oct. 28, 2013.

Members may request reimbursement for mileage and/or hotel costs. WCIA has rooms reserved at the Courtyard Marriott in Tukwila, just next door to the meeting location at Embassy Suites.

All applications will be considered, but due to limited funding not all may be approved. Applicants qualifying for travel reimbursement will be notified a week before the board meeting.

For more information regarding board meeting travel reimbursements, contact Board Secretary Tina Smith at TinaS@wciapool.org.
Membership
News In Brief

Submit your nominations for WCIA officers and Executive Committee members

Members of WCIA are tasked with electing new officers and at least two new members of the Executive Committee for 2014.

An initial call for nominations was issued in September, but additional nominations can be given from the floor of the Full Board meeting on November 8. In accordance with the Bylaws, nominations for President and Vice President will be closed at the November meeting, but will remain open for the Executive Committee positions until the annual meeting in January.

Only delegates and alternates to the WCIA Board can serve on a committee. Members interested in serving on the Executive Committee are encouraged to begin by serving on one of the WCIA sub-committees. The nomination form can also be used to indicate an interest to serve on a sub-committee. It is available on our website at http://www.wciapool.org/communications/news-article/105 (please note you must be logged in to view the form). WCIA delegates or alternates who express interest in serving on these committees will be reviewed and appointed by the President.

Having trouble accessing the WCIA website?

As more members utilize the new WCIA website to register for training or access their training transcripts, many are finding they may need to create or reset their password to complete their personal profile. The link on the home page will generate an email with a link to reset your password. However, if members find they are not receiving this email through their security filters, they can contact Member Services Assistant Katie Madsen for help. You can reach Katie at 206-687-7897 or at KatieM@wciapool.org.

Congratulations Maria!

Member Services Coordinator Maria Orozco was recently awarded Planner of the Year by the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals in recognition of her hard work and dedication to fostering growth and education in the chapter. Her voluntary coordination of the 2013 silent auction, which raises scholarship funds for the National Education Conference, was invaluable to the overall continuing success of the chapter.

Has your email address changed?

If your entity has changed their email address, be sure to update your profile on the WCIA website rather than create a new user login. You can log into the website with your previous email address and under the welcome greeting you will find the “Update My Profile” link. This will allow you make changes to your email, job title, department or preferred name without losing your training transcript history.

WCIA staff is available to assist with any of your website questions or concerns. Don’t hesitate to call!

Calendar of Events

October 11, 2013
Executive Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

November 8, 2013
Training Session - 9:00 AM;
Full Board Meeting - 10:15 AM
Executive Committee Meeting - following the board meeting
Embassy Suites, Tukwila

December 5, 2013
Loss Control Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

December 13, 2013
Executive Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

January 17, 2014
Training Session - 9:00 AM;
Full Board Meeting - 10:15 AM
Museum of Flight, Seattle