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Seventh Day Adventist, General Conference

Communication

- Talk about the steps your denomination took to communicate the 403(b) regulations to your congregations, employer groups. What has the response been? What areas seem to cause the most confusion?
- **We have only about 150 employer payroll groups. We sent by email copies of letters required to set up our selected Retirement Manager tool, asking them to return them signed and scanned. Response has been poor. The two letters required are similar so they want to send one or the other.**
- Did you use this opportunity to try to convince those offering multiple providers to use your plan as the only provider? How successful were you? Is it your impression that most groups are cutting down on the number of providers?
- **We did not. I believe many will cut back without our marketing such a change.**
- Did your denomination try and gather information about what providers each employer/congregation would offer in 2009. How do you plan to use that information?
- **We did so primarily for the purpose of seeing how big a job we had. We can now use that to make sure that all employers are sending in their letters.**
- Are you planning any on-going communication to employers/congregations about the 403(b) rules to make sure they continue to be in compliance?
- **Yes, but haven't worked out the details yet.**
- Have some employers decided to terminate their plans rather than face the task of compliance.
- **No. That is not an option in our organization.**
- Do you feel confident that your employers have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding orphan contracts and Information Sharing Agreements?
- **No.**

Plan doc

- If you have employers using vendors other than your plan, are you viewing all of those vendor relationships as being under one employer plan, or as separate plans? Are you offering a plan document solution to them? If so, how are you doing that?
- **No. Our plan document will specify that some employers have other vendors and they are not part of our plan.**
- Among churches, some of these employers are actually reviewing plan documents for the first-time (no longer serving as a contribution remitting agent alone). What "other issues" are being raised as a result of their becoming more involved in their retirement plan offering?
- **None.**
- Are colleges and universities dropping their church-plan relationship in favor of or limiting their retirement plan offering to TIAA-CREF alone?
- **No. This is not an option in our plan.**

Benefit options

- Have you made any benefit changes because of the regulations, like dropping loans or modifying your stance on hardship distributions?
- **We actually considered dropping loans and hardship withdrawals. We did a partial survey and employers appear to be of the mind to keep both, even with the hassles of the new regulations.**

Procedures

- What procedures do you follow to confirm that a hardship distribution can be made?
- **We are using AIG Retirement's Retirement Manager tool. This process requires the employee to seek certification online prior to applying for the hardship distribution. The tool scans participating employers for conflicts.**
- What procedures have you put into place to communicate with employers when someone asks for a distribution?
- **The AIG Retirement's Retirement Manager tool.**
- Have your plan members encountered delays or non-action in their requests for rollovers, transfers, or exchanges from a 403(b) provider that is not included in their employer's 403(b) plan? If yes, how are you assisting your members?
- **So far, haven't heard of any.**

Compliance

- What are 403(b) providers saying or doing that conflicts with your understanding of the regulations, and how are you responding?
- **We are discovering a number of alternate vendors that have poor mechanisms for communicating with them. No fax, no email, no name. We believe many will simply not be able to work with us on the appropriate platform. At that point, we'll have to deal with employers whose alternate vendors cannot sign up with the 'tool'.**
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