

## **GN11: Retirement Benefit Schemes - Transfer Values**

### ***Classification***

Practice Standard

**MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY MUST ALWAYS COMPLY WITH THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT STANDARDS (PCS) AND THAT GUIDANCE NOTES IMPOSE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS UNDER SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES**

### ***Application***

Any actuary responsible for the calculation of cash equivalents under the Regulations, other individual transfer values from all types of retirement benefit schemes and the assessment of benefits in such schemes in respect of incoming transfer payments and pension credits.

This Guidance Note may be used for purposes of the UK Listing Authority Rules, the Companies Act 1985 (see Appendix 4) and the Proceeds of Crime Act (Recovery from Pension Schemes) Regulations 2003.

### ***Legislation or Authority***

Pension Schemes Act 1993. (c.48).

Pensions Act 1995. (c.26).

Matrimonial Causes Act 1973. (c.18).

Family Law (Scotland) Act 1985. (c.37).

Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999. (c.30).

Financial Services Authority (the UK Listing Authority). *The listing rules* (as updated).

Companies Act 1985 (c6).

Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (C29).

Regulations set out in Appendices 1 (the 'Principal Regulations'), 2, 3 and 4.

Northern Ireland has its own body of law relating to pensions and to family law. In relation to Northern Ireland, references to the Great Britain legislation contained in this Guidance Note should be read as including references to the corresponding Northern Ireland legislation. The Northern Ireland Regulations corresponding to the Great Britain Regulations are included in Appendices 1, 2 and 3. Appendix 5 shows the Northern Ireland legislation corresponding to the Great Britain Acts mentioned in this Guidance Note.

**Author**

Pensions Board

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Approved under Due Process (Technical Amendment)

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**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 These guidelines apply to the basis of calculation of cash equivalents under the Regulations (including the treatment of pension debits and credits under pension sharing legislation, for the recovery of the proceeds of crime from pension schemes and to the assessment of benefits in retirement benefit schemes in respect of incoming transfer payments). The guidelines also apply under the listing rules to the calculation of directors' remuneration.
- 1.2 The guidelines relate to United Kingdom requirements and conditions.
- 1.3 The guidelines also apply to other individual transfer values from retirement benefit schemes where no cash equivalent, within the provisions of the Pension Schemes Act 1993, arises and in those cases reference in this Guidance Note to the Regulations should be ignored and references to "cash equivalent" should be read as references to "transfer value".
- 1.4 This Guidance Note is not intended to inhibit trustees from paying transfer values greater than cash equivalents.
- 1.5 The guidelines also apply to the calculation of pension costs for the purpose of disclosure in the annual report and accounts of companies in respect of directors

of certain UK companies. In such cases it may be necessary to calculate the value of accrued benefits in circumstances in which no entitlement to a transfer value exists. In such cases, the valuation must be consistent with the calculation of transfer values for the scheme concerned subject to paragraph 3.2 below; or (where no transfer values are payable from the scheme) for other schemes of the same employer. If benefits are payable from an overseas scheme, the calculation should be consistent with this Guidance Note, taking account of economic conditions in the country concerned.

- 1.6 The guidelines also apply to the calculation and verification of the value of benefits under a pension scheme for the purposes of divorce proceedings as specified in Regulations (Appendix 3). The calculation of cash equivalents for the purposes of this paragraph must be consistent with the calculation of cash equivalents for the purpose of paying transfer values where an actuarial basis exists for such calculations in the scheme concerned. References to 'deferred pensioners' and 'pensioners' should be taken as including 'pension credit members' and 'pension credit benefit members' respectively, as defined in Section 124(1) of the Pensions Act 1995 and Regulation 2 of the Occupational Pension Schemes (Minimum Funding Requirement and Actuarial Valuations) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1536). References to 'members' should be taken as including 'pension credit members' and 'pension credit benefit members'.

## **2 Purposes of the Guidelines**

- 2.1 The purposes of the guidelines are
- (a) to ensure that members of retirement benefit schemes exercising a right to a cash equivalent can be assured that it fairly reflects the benefits otherwise available (subject to the requirements of Section 4 below),
  - (b) to ensure that incoming transfers are dealt with consistently with outgoing cash equivalents,
  - (c) to facilitate consistency in the calculation of pension costs in respect of directors in companies' accounts, and
  - (d) to ensure that pension debits and credits are calculated in accordance with the pension sharing legislation.

## **3 Basis of Calculation**

- 3.1 It is a fundamental requirement, stemming from the legislation, that a cash equivalent should represent the actuarial value of the corresponding accrued benefits. Such actuarial value should represent the expected cost within the scheme of providing such benefits and should be assessed having regard to market rates of return on equities, gilts or other assets as appropriate.
- 3.2 Where a cash equivalent is to be calculated in respect of a member who has reached pension age, but whose benefits are not yet in payment, the benefit entitlement to be valued must be that which would apply if payment were to commence immediately. In such cases, and in respect of pensioners, market

rates of return may be based on a different asset class from that used for deferred pensioners if the actuary considers that to be appropriate.

- 3.3 Where a deferred pensioner has a right to exercise an option on terms which are specified in the scheme documentation and are financially disadvantageous to the scheme, account must be taken of the likely cost of such an option on the basis of the assumed probability of deferred pensioners generally exercising the option.
- 3.4 Guaranteed or statutory increases, both in deferment and after retirement, must be valued as part of the accrued benefit.
- 3.5 The actuary has to bear in mind that Regulation 8(2) of the Principal Regulations requires that the discretionary grant of additional benefits must be taken into account in certain circumstances unless the trustees direct otherwise. The actuary must therefore establish with the trustees the extent to which they consider it appropriate to make an addition for future discretionary increases to the accrued benefit or for any other benefits granted on a discretionary basis when calculating its value for transfer.
- 3.6 In calculating benefits in respect of pension credits or transfer values received by a retirement benefit scheme the actuary must use methods and assumptions which are reasonable and consistent with the methods and assumptions (including any allowance for future discretionary benefits) normally used for outgoing cash equivalents from that scheme. Appropriate adjustment would be required to take account of expected salary increases in cases where 'added years' are to be credited. In cases where the trustees, in accordance with paragraph 3.5, have given a general direction to the actuary that discretionary benefits should *not* be taken into account, then the same principles must be applied to the calculation of the benefits in respect of incoming transfer values and pension credits.
- 3.7 In the case of both incoming transfers and outgoing cash equivalents, allowance for expenses may be made where appropriate, e.g. to reflect administrative costs incurred, the saving in cost of paying pensions and any relevant costs of sale or purchase of investments.
- 3.8 A separate value should be quoted of the part of the cash equivalent which represents safeguarded rights or benefits in respect of service after 5 April 1997 (other than those relating to voluntary contributions or to the part of a transfer credit relating to a transfer from a personal pension which does not derive from protected rights). Where the payment is to an Appropriate Personal Pension Scheme or to a Contracted-out Money Purchase Scheme, separate values should be quoted of the part which represents Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMPs) under the transferring scheme. These values must be calculated consistently with the calculation of the total cash equivalents, in particular with a consistent assumption as to the expected annual statutory increases in the GMPs.

## **4 Departures from the Foregoing Basis of Calculation**

- 4.1 Where an age-related payment by the HM Revenue and Customs is outstanding, the cash equivalent must first be calculated on the basis of the benefits to which the member would have been entitled had the payment already been made. The cash equivalent must then be reduced by the amount of the age-related payment, where this is payable to the receiving scheme rather than to the transferring scheme.
- 4.2 The report referred to in regulation 8(4) of the Principal Regulations may be provided in conjunction with a valuation in accordance with Section 224 of the Pensions Act 2004 or at such other time as the trustees or managers may direct. The actuary must consider whether to discuss with the trustees or managers, in advance of producing the report, any of the matters in paragraphs 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 below. When a report is provided other than in conjunction with a formal valuation, it need not be based on audited accounts or on full membership data. If cash equivalents are reduced following provision of a report, a new report must be provided as at the same effective date as, and at the same time as, the next valuation in accordance with Section 224.
  - 4.2.1 This report must make clear that its scope is limited to the reduction permitted by Regulation 8(4) of the Principal Regulations.
  - 4.2.2 The report must set out the results of a comparison of the sum of the full cash equivalents of all members with the market value of the assets of the scheme or, exceptionally, such higher amount as the actuary considers more appropriate, less an allowance for the expenses of winding-up.
  - 4.2.3 The allowance for the expenses of winding-up shall be such amount as the actuary considers appropriate.
  - 4.2.4 The cash equivalents for members already in receipt of pension or over normal pension age must be the same as the cash equivalents of such members that would apply for the purposes of divorce proceedings (see paragraph 1.6). If a basis for such calculations has not been specified, the cash equivalents must be determined in a manner consistent with what the actuary would regard as appropriate if such a divorce case were to arise, having regard to the circumstances of the scheme.
  - 4.2.5 The actuary must consider to what extent and in what way the liabilities in the report should be subdivided into some or all of the elements receiving different orders of priority on a winding-up.
  - 4.2.6 The report must provide a comparison, for each of the separate classes of liability decided upon under 4.2.5 above, of the relevant assets with the relevant liabilities. For this purpose, the "relevant liabilities" for a given class is the sum for all members of the cash equivalent values falling into that class of the chosen priority order. The "relevant assets" for that class is the value of the scheme

assets, less the allowance specified in 4.2.3 and less the total of the "relevant liabilities" for all classes with greater priority under the chosen priority order.

- 4.3 If the immediate payment of a full cash equivalent or a cash equivalent reduced as a consequence of a report under 4.2 would reduce the security for the benefits of other members, the actuary should advise the trustees as to any reduced cash equivalent which would be appropriate having regard to the provisions of Regulation 8(4) and 8(4A) of the Principal Regulations. The actuary should also advise them that the member's interests might be better served by deferring the taking of a cash equivalent until a later date. Where no reduction is applied, the actuary should draw the implications of this to the trustees' attention. Where the cash equivalent resulting from the maximum reduction permitted under the Principal Regulations or the actual reduction proposed by the trustees would reduce the security for the remaining members, the actuary should draw the implications of this to the trustees' attention.
- 4.4 In cases where an outgoing cash equivalent is under consideration in respect of a member, in respect of whom a transfer value has previously been received, special care may be needed in the choice of the method of calculation - particularly where 'added years' have been credited - to ensure that the outgoing cash equivalent is, subject to paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, both equitable in relation to, and consistent with, the transfer value received. Except as described in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3, the cash equivalent must not be less than the value of the alternative accrued benefits.
- 4.5 Special considerations apply in cases where the circumstances of a previous transfer had been such that the assets transferred bore no direct relationship to the leaving service benefits under the previous scheme. Where such cases give rise to an entitlement to the member for a cash equivalent under Chapter IV of Part IV of the Pension Schemes Act 1993, then, for the purpose of paragraph 4.4, the cash equivalent must take account of the preserved benefit which would otherwise have been available had the member actually left service at the previous transfer date.
- 4.6 However, in cases where the former preserved benefit and/or the cash equivalent were augmented in connection with a full or partial dissolution of the former scheme (either in circumstances where the trustees were obliged to augment benefits in terms of the documents governing the scheme or alternatively at the discretion of the trustees or employer with the objective of enhancing the cash equivalents which would otherwise have been available for the purpose of buying out individual annuity contracts), then, for the purpose of paragraph 4.4, comparison must be made with such higher values.
- 4.7 If in the actuary's opinion an incoming transfer value would be insufficient to provide minimum statutory benefits (e.g. a Guaranteed Minimum Pension), the actuary should advise the trustees accordingly.

- 4.8 Regulation 8(8) of the Principal Regulations requires cash equivalents to be reduced in certain circumstances to less than those which would otherwise apply under this guidance. Such circumstances would include some 'Transfer Club' arrangements.

## **5 'Partial' Cash Equivalents**

- 5.1 Partial cash equivalents can occur when a transfer is made from a contracted-out a contracted-in scheme leaving the liability for GMP and post-5 April 1997 Contracted-out Salary Related rights behind. In that circumstance, the whole cash equivalent must be calculated in the normal way and an amount deducted which is calculated consistently in respect of the retained liability.

## **6 Money Purchase Schemes and Personal Pension Schemes**

- 6.1 Generally the above principles apply to transfers arising out of money purchase schemes and personal pension schemes where the cash equivalents depend on making estimates of the value of benefits. Where all or part of the member's benefits depend directly on the proceeds of an earmarked investment, the corresponding cash equivalents will be the realisable value of that investment, e.g. the amount of a building society deposit or the cash value of a policy of insurance earmarked for the member. Similarly, if all or part of an incoming transfer value is to be applied to an earmarked investment, the benefit to be granted will depend on the proceeds of the investment.
- 6.2 In respect of personal pension schemes and other money purchase schemes these guidelines do not apply where cash equivalents depend on rights which do not fall to be valued in a manner which involves making estimates of the value of benefits, since the relevant Regulations make specific rules regarding the calculation of such cash equivalents.

## **7 Presentation**

- 7.1 It is not necessary for each cash equivalent to be authorised separately by the actuary. The actuary may supply tables, instructions, computer files or computer programs, for use by the trustees and administrators, for calculating the amount of any cash equivalent payable and the pensionable service or other benefits to be credited for an incoming payment or pension credit. The actuary should specify the circumstances (e.g. changes in investment conditions or cases involving previous receipt of a transfer value) in which adjustments should be made.
- 7.2 The actuary is required to certify to the trustees that the method and assumptions adopted for the calculation of a cash equivalent are consistent with the legislation. A specimen certificate for this purpose is provided in Appendix A. This should be amended as necessary to make it appropriate for the scheme concerned.

## Appendix A

To the Trustees of the [ ] Pension Scheme:

I certify that the methods and assumptions underlying the calculation of cash equivalents under the [ ] Pension Scheme as specified in the tables and instructions dated [ ] are consistent with:

- (i) the requirements of Chapter IV of Part IV and Chapter II of Part IVA of the Pension Schemes Act 1993;
- (ii) *Retirement Benefit Schemes - Transfer values (GN11)* as adopted and amended by the Board for Actuarial Standards;<sup>1</sup> and
- (iii) the methods currently adopted and assumptions currently made in calculating the benefits to which entitlement arises under the Rules of the Scheme for a person who is acquiring transfer credits under those Rules

[I also certify that the methods and assumptions underlying the calculation of the rights conferred within the scheme on a person entitled to a pension credit are consistent with:

- (i) *Retirement Benefit Schemes – Transfer values (GN11)* as adopted and amended by the Board for Actuarial Standards;<sup>1</sup> and
- (ii) the methods currently adopted and assumptions currently made when transfers of other pension rights are received by the Scheme.]

Signed: .....Date: .....

Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries or  
Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries

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<sup>1</sup> Amended in v9.3



| <b>Appendix 1: Principal Regulations *</b>  | <b>GB Reference</b> | <b>NI Reference</b> |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations 1996 as amended                                      | SI 1996/1847        | SR 1996 No 619      |
| <b>Appendix 2: Other Pensions Regulations *</b>   |                     |                     |
| The Occupational Pension Schemes (Contracted-Out Protected Rights Premiums) Regulations 1987 as amended             | SI 1987/1103        | SR 1987 No 281      |
| The Personal Pension Schemes (Personal Pension Protected Rights Premiums) Regulations 1987 as amended               | SI 1987/1111        | SR 1987 No 289      |
| The Personal Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) Regulations 1987 as amended  | SI 1987/1112        | SR 1987 No 290      |
| The Protected Rights (Transfer Payment) Regulations 1996 as amended   | SI 1996/1461        | SR 1996 No 509      |
| The Contracting-out (Transfer and Transfer Payment) Regulations 1996 as amended                                     | SI 1996/1462        | SR 1996 No 618      |
| The Occupational Pension Schemes (Minimum Funding Requirement and Actuarial Valuations) Regulations 1996 as amended | SI 1996/1536        | SR 1996 No 570      |
| The Personal and Occupational Pension Schemes (Protected Rights) Regulations 1996 as amended                        | SI 1996/1537        | SR 1997 No 56       |
| The Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) Regulations 1996 as amended                            | SI 1996/1655        | SR 1997 No 98       |

\* The title of the Northern Ireland Regulations are identical to those for Great Britain save for the insertion of '(Northern Ireland)' after the word 'Regulations' and in some instances where the year may be different this will be indicated by the NI Reference.

| <b>Appendix 3: Family Law Regulations*</b>  | GB Reference        | NI Reference   |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| The Divorce etc (Pensions) Regulations 1996 as amended                                      | SI 1996/1676        | SR 1996 No 296 |
| The Divorce etc (Pensions) (Scotland) Regulations 1996 as amended                           | SI 1996/1901(S.153) |                |
| The Pensions on Divorce etc (Provision of Information) Regulations 2000 as amended          | SI 2000 No 1048     | SR 2000/142    |
| The Pension Sharing (Valuation) Regulations 2000 as amended                                 | SI 2000 No 1052     | SR 2000/144    |
| The Pension Sharing (Implementation and Discharge of Liability) Regulations 2000 as amended | SI 2000 No 1053     | SR 2000/145    |
| The Pension Sharing (Pension Credit Benefit) Regulations 2000 as amended                    | SI 2000 No 1054     | SR 2000/146    |

\* The title of the Northern Ireland Regulations are identical to those for Great Britain save for the insertion of '(Northern Ireland)' after the word 'Regulations' and in some instances where the year may be different this will be indicated by the NI Reference.

#### **Appendix 4: UK Listing Authority Rules and DTI and Home Office Regulations**

Financial Services Authority (the UK Listing Authority). *The listing rules* (as updated).

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| The Directors' Remuneration Report Regulations 2002.**                     | S.I. 2002 No 1986 |
| The Proceeds of Crime Act (Recovery from Pension Schemes) Regulations 2003 | S.I. 2003 No 291  |

\*\* At the time of publishing this Guidance Note, the Regulations refer to GN11 Version 8.1.

## **Appendix 5: Northern Ireland Legislation Corresponding to Great Britain Acts**

### **GB Provision**

### **NI Provision**

Pension Schemes Act 1993 (c.48)

Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993 (c.49)

Pensions Act 1995 (c.26)

Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (SI 1995/3213 (NI 22))

Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 (c.18)

Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 (SI 1978/1045 (NI 15))

Welfare Reform and Pensions Act 1999 (c. 30)

Welfare Reform and Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (SI 1999/3147 NI 11))

Section (of Act)

Article (of Order) or Section (of Act)

Companies Act 1985

Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (SI1986/1032 NI6)