DRAFT
ACTUARY'S FISCAL NOTE

RESPONDING AGENCY:	CODE:	DATE:	PROPOSAL [NAME or Z-NUMBER]:
Office of the State Actuary	**035**	**12/07/09**	**LEOFF 2 Annuity Purchase**

WHAT THE READER SHOULD KNOW

The Office of the State Actuary ("we") prepared this draft fiscal note based on our understanding of the proposal as of the date shown above. We intend this draft fiscal note to be used by the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF) Plan 2 Board throughout the 2009 Interim only. If a legislator introduces this proposal as a bill during the next Legislative Session, we will prepare a final fiscal note based on that bill language. The actuarial results shown in this draft fiscal note may change when we prepare our final version for the Legislature.

We advise readers of this draft fiscal note to seek professional guidance as to its content and interpretation, and not to rely upon this communication without such guidance. Please read the analysis shown in this draft fiscal note as a whole. Distribution of, or reliance on, only parts of this draft fiscal note could result in its misuse, and may mislead others.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

This proposal would authorize the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) to provide optional actuarially equivalent annuity purchases from the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' (LEOFF) Plan 2 retirement fund to LEOFF Plan 2 members and survivors.

This proposal does not impact the expected actuarial funding of the system. Please see the body of this draft fiscal note for a detailed explanation.

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED CHANGE?

Summary Of Change

This proposal impacts the LEOFF Plan 2 by authorizing DRS to provide optional actuarially equivalent annuity purchases from the LEOFF Plan 2 retirement fund to LEOFF Plan 2 members and survivors. The proposal allows members to purchase annuities prior to retirement. DRS would develop the life annuity benefit schedules no later than December 31, 2010.

Assumed Effective Date: 90 days after session.

What Is The Current Situation?

Plan 3 members may purchase a similar annuity with contributions invested in the Total Allocation Portfolio of the Washington State Investment Board (WSIB) investment program, but only at the time of retirement. LEOFF Plan 2 members may purchase up to five years of additional service by paying the full actuarial value of the service at the time of retirement.

Who Is Impacted And How?

We estimate this proposal could affect all 16,626 active members of LEOFF Plan 2 with the option of improved benefits.

We estimate this proposal will increase the benefits for a typical member by providing the option to annuitize their retirement savings. Annuitizing their money provides a member security against outliving their assets. In addition, the annuity offered to them through DRS will cost far less than an annuity bought from a private insurer. A private insurer calculates annuities based on a lower interest rate to account for risk and profit.

For example, a private insurer will provide the annuity based on an interest rate of about 4 percent, whereas DRS will provide the annuity based on an interest rate of about 8 percent. For a member age 55 buying a $10,000 life annuity, this would mean they would pay a private company about $165,000, whereas they would pay DRS about $110,000.

WHY THIS PROPOSAL DOES NOT HAVE A COST

Why This Proposal Does Not Have A Cost

This proposal does not have an expected cost because the member is paying the full actuarial value.

Who Will Pay For These Costs/Savings If They Arise?

The member will pay the actuarially equivalent value of the annuity.

However, as the experience of the system emerges, if the payment is more or less than the actual value of the annuity, then LEOFF Plan 2 contribution rates will increase or decrease accordingly.

HOW WE VALUED THESE COSTS

Assumptions We Made

We assumed that the payments made by the members will equal the full actuarial value of the annuity. We would need to make several assumptions to determine the purchase price of the annuity:

- Expected rate of investment return.
- Expected rate of mortality for the annuitant.
- The annuity start date – the member's retirement date (if purchased prior to retirement).

As with any actuarial calculation that involves estimating future events, actual experience may differ from the underlying assumptions made. When actual experience differs from what we assumed would occur, the system experiences an actuarial gain or loss. An actuarial gain would decrease plan liabilities (or increase assets); whereas, an actuarial loss would increase plan liabilities (or decrease assets). Therefore, we cannot say with certainty that this proposal will not impact plan liabilities in the future.

If the members who purchase annuities, on average, live shorter/longer than assumed, the system will experience actuarial gains/losses in the future. If the actual rate of investment return is more/less than the assumed rate, the system will experience actuarial gains/losses from this assumption as well. For these two assumptions, we will not know whether a gain or loss has occurred until DRS has made all payments under the annuity contract.

The assumed annuity start date, or member's retirement date, will also produce a source of actuarial gain or loss for members who purchase annuities prior to their retirement date. For this particular assumption, we can determine whether an actuarial gain or loss has occurred at the time of retirement. DRS may have the option to adjust the purchase price or adjust the annuity amount (a "true up") at the time of retirement to eliminate this source of gain/loss. Without such an adjustment, the potential for significant actuarial gain/loss, on an individual member basis, exists for this particular assumption.

Otherwise, we developed these costs using the same assumptions as disclosed in the 2008 Actuarial Valuation Report.

HOW THE RESULTS CHANGE WHEN THE ASSUMPTIONS CHANGE

To determine the sensitivity of the actuarial results to the best-estimate assumptions selected for this pricing we varied the following assumptions:

- **Mortality rate** – We determined the cost to the system if the annuity amount was calculated based on higher mortality rates than what actually occurs over time (people lived longer than assumed). For this sensitivity we used 100 percent of scale AA mortality improvement rather than the assumed 50 percent.
- **Investment returns** – We determined the cost to the system if the annuity amount was calculated based on a higher investment returns than what actually occurs over time (investments pay less than assumed). For this sensitivity we used a 7.5 percent investment return rather than the assumed 8 percent.
- **Annuity start date** – We determined the cost to the system if the annuity amount was calculated based on a later retirement date than what actually occurs over time (people start collecting the annuity earlier than assumed). For this sensitivity we used a start age of 53 rather than an assumed age of 55.
- **All of the above** – We determined the cost to the system if all three of the assumptions are incorrect, as described above, at the same time.

The table below shows the expected results versus the four sensitivity runs outlined above. The example outlines the impact due to one member currently age 40 who purchases an annuity with $100,000. When all three occur at once, the liability is larger than the sum of each of the three individually because of the interaction of these assumptions.

Sensitivity Example – 40-Year- Old Male Purchases Retirement Annuity With $100,000			
Scenario	Cash Paid From Member To Plan	Present Value of Plan Annuity	Cost to the System
1) Expected	$100,000	$100,000	$0
2) Lower Mortality Than Expected	$100,000	$102,549	$2,549
3) Lower Asset Returns Than Expected	$100,000	$112,980	$12,980
4) Earlier Retirement Age Than Expected	$100,000	$120,794	$20,794
5) Scenarios 2, 3, and 4	$100,000	$138,777	$38,777

Assumes annuity calculation based on 3% COLA, and 90%/10% male/female mortality blend.

ACTUARY'S CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that:

1. The actuarial cost methods are appropriate for the purposes of this pricing exercise.
2. The actuarial assumptions used are appropriate for the purposes of this pricing exercise.
3. The data on which this draft fiscal note is based are sufficient and reliable for the purposes of this pricing exercise.
4. Use of another set of methods and assumptions may also be reasonable, and might produce different results.
5. This draft fiscal note has been prepared for the Law Enforcement Officers' and Fire Fighters' Retirement System Plan 2 Board.
6. This draft fiscal note has been prepared, and opinions given, in accordance with Washington State law and accepted actuarial standards of practice as of the date shown on page one of this draft fiscal note.

This draft fiscal note is a preliminary actuarial communication and the results shown may change. While this draft fiscal note is meant to be complete, the undersigned is available to provide extra advice and explanations as needed.

Matthew M. Smith, FCA, EA, MAAA
State Actuary

GLOSSARY OF ACTUARIAL TERMS

Actuarial Accrued Liability: Computed differently under different funding methods, the actuarial accrued liability generally represents the portion of the present value of fully projected benefits attributable to service credit that has been earned (or accrued) as of the valuation date.

Actuarial Present Value: The value of an amount or series of amounts payable or receivable at various times, determined as of a given date by the application of a particular set of actuarial assumptions (i.e. interest rate, rate of salary increases, mortality, etc.).

Aggregate Funding Method: The Aggregate Funding Method is a standard actuarial funding method. The annual cost of benefits under the Aggregate Method is equal to the normal cost. The method does not produce an unfunded liability. The normal cost is determined for the entire group rather than on an individual basis.

Entry Age Normal Cost Method (EANC): The EANC method is a standard actuarial funding method. The annual cost of benefits under EANC is comprised of two components:

- Normal cost.
- Amortization of the unfunded liability.

The normal cost is determined on an individual basis, from a member's age at plan entry, and is designed to be a level percentage of pay throughout a member's career.

Normal Cost: Computed differently under different funding methods, the normal cost generally represents the portion of the cost of projected benefits allocated to the current plan year.

Projected Unit Credit (PUC) Liability: The portion of the Actuarial Present Value of future benefits attributable to service credit that has been earned to date (past service).

Projected Benefits: Pension benefit amounts which are expected to be paid in the future taking into account such items as the effect of advancement in age as well as past and anticipated future compensation and service credits.

Unfunded PUC Liability: The excess, if any, of the Present Value of Benefits calculated under the PUC cost method over the Valuation Assets. This is the portion of all benefits earned to date that are not covered by plan assets.

Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL): The excess, if any, of the actuarial accrued liability over the actuarial value of assets. In other words, the present value of benefits earned to date that are not covered by plan assets.