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**EUROPEAN STANDARD OF ACTUARIAL PRACTICE 3
(ESAP3)**

Actuarial practice in relation to the ORSA process under Solvency II

**Approved as a model standard by the General Assembly of the
ACTUARIAL ASSOCIATION OF EUROPE
on 2 August 2017**

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Preface

This European Standard of Actuarial Practice (ESAP) is a model for actuarial standard-setting bodies to consider.

The Actuarial Association of Europe ([AAE](#)) encourages relevant actuarial standard-setting bodies to maintain a standard or set of standards that is substantially consistent with this ESAP to the extent that the content of this ESAP is appropriate for [actuaries](#) in their jurisdiction. This can be achieved in many ways, including:

- adopting this ESAP as a standard with only the modifications in the Drafting Notes;
- customising this ESAP by revising the text of the ESAP to the extent deemed appropriate by the standard-setting body, while ensuring that the resulting standard or set of standards is substantially consistent with this ESAP;
- endorsing this ESAP by declaring that this ESAP is appropriate for use in certain clearly defined circumstances;
- modifying existing standards to obtain substantial consistency with this ESAP; or
- confirming that existing standards are already substantially consistent with this ESAP.

A standard or set of standards that is promulgated by a standard-setting body is considered to be substantially consistent with this ESAP if:

- there are no material gaps in the standard(s) in respect of the principles set out in this ESAP; and
- the standard or set of standards does not contradict this ESAP.

If an actuarial standard-setting body wishes to adopt or endorse this ESAP, it is essential to ensure that existing standards are substantially consistent with ESAP1 as this ESAP relies upon ESAP1 in many respects. Likewise, any customisation of this ESAP, or modification of existing standards to obtain substantial consistency with this ESAP, should recognise the important fact that this ESAP relies upon ESAP1 in many respects.

If this ESAP is translated for the purposes of adoption, the adopting body should select three verbs that embody the concepts of “must”, “should”, and “may”, as described in paragraph 1.5.1 Language of this ESAP, even if such verbs are not the literal translation of “must”, “should”, and “may”.

This ESAP uses various terms whose specific meanings are defined in the document “Glossary of defined terms used in European Standards of Actuarial Practice” (the [AAE](#) Glossary).

This ESAP is binding upon an [actuary](#) only if so directed by the [actuary](#)’s standard-setting body or if the [actuary](#) states that some or all of the [work](#) has been performed in compliance with this ESAP (e.g. if the [actuary](#) is directed by the [principal](#) to comply with this ESAP).

This ESAP was originally adopted by the [AAE](#) General Assembly on 2 August 2017. This revision was adopted by the [AAE](#) General Assembly on 6 October 2023.

[Drafting Notes: when an actuarial standard-setting organisation adopts this standard it should:

- 1. Replace “ESAP” throughout the document with the local standard name, if applicable;*
- 2. Modify references to ESAP1 in paragraphs 1.3, 1.3.1 and 1.4.1 to point to the local standard(s) that are substantially consistent with ESAP1, rather than referring to ESAP1 directly, if appropriate;*
- 3. Choose the appropriate date for insertion in paragraph 1.6.1;*
- 4. Review this standard for, and resolve, any conflicts with the local law and code of professional conduct; and*
- 5. Delete this preface (including these drafting notes and the reference in the Table of Contents) and the footnote associated with paragraph 1.6.1.]*

Section 1. General

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This ESAP provides guidance to [actuaries](#) who have a [material](#) involvement in or responsibility for the design or performance of the [ORSA process](#), in order to give [intended users](#) confidence that:
- [actuarial services](#) are carried out professionally and with due care in compliance with the Solvency II framework;
 - the results are relevant to [intended users](#)' needs, are presented clearly and understandably, and are sufficient in the context of the Solvency II framework; and
 - the assumptions and methodology (including, but not limited to, [models](#) and modelling techniques) are appropriate, and are used appropriately.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This ESAP applies only to [actuarial services](#) performed by an [actuary](#) in relation to the [ORSA process](#), insofar as the [actuary](#) has a [material](#) involvement in or responsibility for the design or performance of the [ORSA process](#), and to the extent relevant to the [actuary's](#) involvement and responsibilities. Wider adoption of this ESAP is encouraged, particularly amongst those [actuaries](#) who provide [actuarial services](#) in support of those [actuaries](#) to whom this standard applies.
- 1.2.2 It is recognised that [undertakings](#) have adopted a variety of approaches for complying with the [ORSA](#) requirements. These include carrying out an identifiable set of activities specifically developed or amended to constitute the [ORSA process](#) (as envisaged in this ESAP) as well as identifying and linking specified practices and calculations, that are embedded in the [undertaking's](#) management processes, which collectively satisfy the [ORSA](#) requirements.
- Whilst the requirements set out in this ESAP are expressed in relation to the former approach, this does not mean that the latter approach does not comply with [ORSA](#) requirements.
- However, when performing [ORSA](#)-related [actuarial services](#) for an [undertaking](#) that does not undertake a separate, explicit [ORSA process](#), any [actuary](#) who has a [material](#) involvement in or responsibility for these [ORSA](#)-related [actuarial services](#) should ensure that the substance of the requirements of this ESAP are adhered to as appropriate in his or her [work](#).
- 1.2.3 It is envisaged that non-[actuaries](#) may also consider where appropriate following the principles set out in this ESAP, in order to support a consistent application of the [ORSA](#)

requirements across member states, [undertakings](#), groups and individual functions within [undertakings](#).

1.3 Relationship to ESAP1

- 1.3.1 Insofar as possible, this ESAP does not repeat guidance already provided in ESAP1. Any [actuary](#) who asserts compliance with this ESAP (as a model standard) must also comply with ESAP1. References in ESAP1 to “this ESAP” should be interpreted as applying equally to this ESAP3, where appropriate.
- 1.3.2 A failure to follow the principles in this standard need not be considered a departure if it does not have a [material](#) effect. The contents of this standard should be read in that context, even where the term [material](#) is not explicitly used or where the word “must” is used.

1.4 Language

- 1.4.1 Some of the language used in all ESAPs is intended to be interpreted in a very specific way in the context of a decision of the [actuary](#). In particular, the following words are to be understood to have the meanings indicated:
- a. “must” means that the indicated action is mandatory and failure to follow the indicated action will constitute a failure to comply with this ESAP, unless the departure is due to a conflict with [law](#) (ESAP1 1.3.1) or code of professional conduct (ESAP1 1.3.2).
 - b. “should” (or “shall”) means that, under normal circumstances, the [actuary](#) is expected to follow the indicated action, unless the departure is due to a conflict with [law](#) (ESAP1 1.3.1) or code of professional conduct (ESAP1 1.3.2). However, in all other cases, if following the indicated action would produce a result that would be inappropriate or would potentially mislead the [intended users](#) of the [actuarial services](#), the [actuary](#) should depart from that guidance and disclose that fact and provide the reason for not following the indicated action as described in ESAP1 1.3.3.
 - c. “may” means that the indicated action is not required, nor even necessarily expected, but in certain circumstances is an appropriate activity, possibly among other alternatives. Note that “might” is not used as a synonym for “may”, but rather with its normal meaning.
 - d. “any” (as in e.g. “any report”) means all such items if they exist, while acknowledging they may not exist. Such a reference does not give rise to a requirement to create such an item.
- 1.4.2 This ESAP uses various terms whose specific meanings are defined in the [AAE](#) Glossary.

These terms are highlighted in the text with a dashed underscore and in blue (e.g. [actuary](#)).

1.5 Cross-references

- 1.5.1 This ESAP refers to the content of the [Solvency II Directive](#) and the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/35 supplementing the [Solvency II Directive](#), both as amended as per the approval date of this ESAP. If the [Solvency II Directive](#) or the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/35 is subsequently amended, restated, revoked, or replaced after this date, the [actuary](#) should apply the principles in this ESAP to the extent they remain relevant.

1.6 Effective Date

- 1.6.1 This standard applies to [actuarial services](#) relating to the design or performance of the [ORSA process](#) performed after [Date¹].

¹ Date to be inserted by standard-setter adopting or endorsing this ESAP

Section 2. Appropriate Practices

2.1 Design of the ORSA process

Where the [actuary](#) has [material](#) involvement in, or responsibility for, the design of the [ORSA process](#), it is envisaged that the scope of his or her [work](#) will cover each of the sub-sections within 2.1.

Where the [actuary](#) has [material](#) involvement in, or responsibility for, the design of parts of the [ORSA process](#), but not all of it, the [actuary](#) should confirm with his or her [principal](#) (ideally as early in the process as possible or practical) the extent to which the scope of his or her [work](#) includes the topics addressed within the sub-sections within 2.1 and, in the case of sub-section 2.1.1, which of the areas mentioned in the bullet points fall within the scope of the [work](#).

2.1.1 Establishing a structured approach to uncertainty

2.1.1.1 The [actuary](#) must take reasonable steps, to the extent relevant to his or her involvement and responsibilities, to ensure that the [ORSA process](#) follows an appropriately structured approach to [uncertainty](#).

2.1.1.2 In considering whether the [ORSA process](#) follows an appropriately structured approach to [uncertainty](#), the [actuary](#) should take into account whether it:

- facilitates sufficient understanding and effective management and [communication](#) of areas of [uncertainty](#) (“risks”), of evolving [exposures](#) to risks, and of the [ORSA process](#);
- facilitates the coherent identification and quantification or, if appropriate, qualitative assessment of all [material](#) risks relevant to the [ORSA](#), taking account of the [undertaking](#)’s risk appetite and risk profile, and how the latter may change over the time period considered under the [ORSA](#);
- facilitates the identification of sustainability risks of which the impacts could only become [material](#) beyond the [undertaking](#)’s projection period used for business planning purposes;
- provides appropriate clarity around which [material](#) risks are subject to qualitative assessment and which to quantitative assessment and that, in both cases, appropriate mechanisms and resources are in place in order that the assessment should be fit for purpose;
- enables emerging and sustainability risks, and approaches to risk, to be incorporated as they are identified;
- enables understanding of the interaction between risks and [exposures](#)

- as they evolve;
- enables the assumption-setting process to take account of relevant business developments planned by management;
- ensures appropriate scenario testing and stress testing is carried out, including reverse stress testing, considering also relevant management actions;
- ensures appropriate back testing is carried out of past assumptions in light of actual experience and that the results are properly incorporated into assumption-setting for the current [ORSA cycle](#);
- ensures appropriate ongoing review and updating of the [ORSA process](#);
- facilitates the effective triggering and performance of an [ORSA run](#) within a periodic, annual or more frequent [ORSA cycle](#), and as a result of an appropriately-defined [ORSA-triggering event](#); and
- enables coherent integration of the [ORSA process](#) within the [undertaking](#)'s wider business units and processes, and within the relevant decision-making of its [AMSB](#).

2.1.1.3 The [actuary](#) must be in a position to explain and justify the approach he or she has taken to his or her considerations, if reasonably requested to do so.

2.1.2 Deviation from Solvency II balance sheet approach and methodology

2.1.2.1 Where the [ORSA process](#) involves an approach to any aspect of balance sheet asset or liability measurement and/or risk quantification that deviates significantly from that used by the [undertaking](#) for its supervisory reporting of solvency capital requirement coverage, the [actuary](#) must document the extent of that difference, the rationale for it and its potential consequences.

2.1.2.2 In considering the significance of any such deviation, the [actuary](#) should take into account:

- the extent to which the approach is consistent with, or deviates from, the principles and rules of Solvency II;
- the likely consequences of any such deviation, with particular attention paid to the extent to which the financial projections included in the [ORSA](#) will facilitate the identification of any [material](#) risks to the ability of the [undertaking](#) to cover its SCR during the projection period chosen;
- the extent to which the [ORSA](#) is suitable for its intended business use; and

- the extent to which the [ORSA](#) takes reasonable account of any such deviation having regard to its intended use.

2.1.2.3 The [actuary](#) must take reasonable steps to ensure that any such deviation and its implications are communicated appropriately to those directly reliant upon the [ORSA](#) for the purposes of exercising significant decision-making responsibility.

2.1.3 The time period considered under the ORSA

2.1.3.1 The [actuary](#) must take reasonable steps to ensure that the period considered under the [ORSA process](#) is appropriate for its intended use.

2.1.3.2 In determining the appropriateness of the time period considered under the [ORSA](#), the [actuary](#) should consider the projection period used for business planning purposes and the evolving risk profile of the [undertaking](#), including:

- the possible future run-off of existing business;
- the nature and possible run-off of any new business acquired in the future;
- expected changes to business practices, such as changes in [underwriting](#) and claims processes;
- changes in the economic environment which are considered likely to happen;
- changes in the economic environment which are considered possible and plausible, but currently not considered likely; and
- changes in sustainability factors, including climate changes and their physical and transition risks that may play out over a period beyond the [undertaking's](#) projection period used for business planning purposes.

2.1.3.3 The [actuary](#) must be in a position to explain and justify the selection of the time period considered under the [ORSA](#), if reasonably requested to do so.

2.1.4 Inconsistency with the undertaking's risk management approach

2.1.4.1 Where the [actuary](#) has reasonable grounds for believing that there is [material](#) inconsistency between the [ORSA process](#) and the [undertaking's](#) approach to other parts of risk management, the [actuary](#) must ensure that such inconsistency is appropriately communicated.

2.2 Performance of the ORSA process

2.2.1 Quantitative risk assessment and financial projections

2.2.1.1 The [actuary](#) must take reasonable steps to ensure that the risk quantifications and financial projections used in the [ORSA process](#) are appropriate for its intended use.

2.2.1.2 In considering whether the quantifications and projections are appropriate, the [actuary](#) should take into account the extent to which:

- any calculation simplifications or approximations adopted (relative to the approach taken for published financial results) might result in an inappropriate indication of the significance of a [material](#) risk driver or risk;
- assumptions used are appropriate, with sufficient clarity over their derivation; and
- scenario testing, stress testing and sensitivity testing included are sufficient to indicate the significance of [material](#) risk drivers and risks.

2.2.1.3 The [actuary](#) must be in a position to explain and justify the approach he or she has taken to his or her consideration of appropriateness, if reasonably requested to do so.

2.2.1.4 Where the [actuary](#) has reasonable grounds for believing that there is a [material](#) shortcoming in the quantifications or projections that renders the [ORSA](#) unsuitable for its purpose, then the [actuary](#) must ensure that such shortcoming is appropriately communicated.

2.2.2 Qualitative risk assessment

2.2.2.1 The [actuary](#) must take reasonable steps, to the extent relevant to his or her involvement and responsibilities, to ensure that the qualitative risk assessments used in the [ORSA process](#) are appropriate for its intended use.

2.2.2.2 In considering whether the qualitative risk assessments are appropriate, the [actuary](#) should take into account the extent to which the assessments:

- make use of relevant past [data](#) both from within the [undertaking](#)

and from other appropriate sources;

- take into account an appropriately-wide range of relevant scenarios;
- analyse the [uncertainty](#) on timing and impact of the identified risks, particularly in case of sustainability risks; and
- have been subject to a sufficiently rigorous internal review process.

2.2.2.3 The [actuary](#) must be in a position to explain and justify the approach he or she has taken to his or her consideration of appropriateness, if reasonably requested to do so.

2.2.2.4 Where the [actuary](#) has reasonable grounds for believing that there is a [material](#) shortcoming in the qualitative risk assessments that renders the [ORSA](#) unsuitable for its purpose, then the [actuary](#) must ensure that such shortcoming is appropriately communicated.

2.2.3 Missing ORSA-triggering events

2.2.3.1 Where the [actuary](#) has reasonable grounds for believing that the outcome of the [ORSA process](#) is missing [ORSA-triggering events](#), the [actuary](#) must ensure that his or her concern is appropriately documented and communicated to the [AMSB](#) in a timely fashion.