

*Proposed International Public Sector Accounting  
Standard*

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# Employee Benefits



**International Federation  
of Accountants**

## REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

The International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board, an independent standard-setting body within the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), approved this Exposure Draft, *Employee Benefits*, for publication in October 2006. This proposed International Public Sector Accounting Standard may be modified in light of comments received before being issued in final form.

Please submit your comments, preferably by email, so that they will be received by **February 28, 2007**. All comments will be considered a matter of public record. Comments should be addressed to:

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International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board  
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New York, New York 10017 USA

Email responses should be sent to: [publicsectorpubs@ifac.org](mailto:publicsectorpubs@ifac.org)

Copies of this exposure draft may be downloaded free-of-charge from the IFAC website at <http://www.ifac.org>.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Exposure Draft of an International Public Sector Accounting Standard is drawn primarily from International Accounting Standard IAS 19 (2004), "Employee Benefits" published by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). Extracts from IAS 19 are reproduced in this publication of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board of the International Federation of Accountants with the permission of the International Accounting Standards Committee Foundation (IASCF).

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTING STANDARDS**

The International Federation of Accountants' International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) develops accounting standards for public sector entities referred to as International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs). The IPSASB recognizes the significant benefits of achieving consistent and comparable financial information across jurisdictions and it believes that the IPSASs play a key role in enabling these benefits to be realized. The IPSASB strongly encourages governments and national standard-setters to engage in the development of its Standards by commenting on the proposals set out in these Exposure Drafts.

The IPSASB issues IPSASs dealing with financial reporting under the cash basis of accounting and the accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis IPSASs are based on the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), where the requirements of those Standards are applicable to the public sector. They also deal with public sector specific financial reporting issues that are not dealt with in IFRSs.

The adoption of IPSASs by governments will improve both the quality and comparability of financial information reported by public sector entities around the world. The IPSASB recognizes the right of governments and national standard-setters to establish accounting standards and guidelines for financial reporting in their jurisdictions. The IPSASB encourages the adoption of IPSASs and the harmonization of national requirements with IPSASs. Financial statements should be described as complying with IPSASs only if they comply with all the requirements of each applicable IPSAS.

### **Due Process and Timetable**

An important part of the process of developing IPSASs is for the IPSASB to receive comments on the proposals set out in Exposure Drafts from governments, public sector entities, auditors, standard-setters and other parties with an interest in public sector financial reporting. Accordingly, each proposed IPSAS is first released as an Exposure Draft, inviting interested parties to provide their comments. Exposure Drafts will usually have a comment period of four months, although longer periods may be used for certain Exposure Drafts. Upon the closure of the comment period, the IPSASB will consider the comments received on the Exposure Draft and may modify the proposed IPSAS in the light of the comments received before proceeding to issue a final Standard.

### **Background**

For very many public sector entities a significant proportion of their annual operating costs are accounted for by employee benefits. Expenses and liabilities arising from post-employment benefits are also highly significant for many public sector entities and can have a material impact on both financial performance and financial position. In addition

termination benefits and other long-term benefits are also likely to be significant for many public sector entities. The IPSASB considers it important that accounting for employee benefits is transparent and on a consistent basis and that disclosures provide relevant information for users.

### **Purpose of the Exposure Draft**

This Exposure Draft proposes requirements for accounting for employee benefits, including short-term benefits, post-retirement benefits, other long-term benefits and termination benefits.

### **Request for Comments**

Comments are invited on any proposals in the Exposure Draft by February 28, 2007. The IPSASB would prefer that respondents express a clear overall opinion on whether the Exposure Draft in general is supported and that this opinion be supplemented by detailed comments, whether supportive or critical, on the specific issues in the Exposure Draft. Respondents are also invited to address any or all of the specific matters for comment outlined below and to provide detailed comments on any other aspects of the Exposure Draft (including materials and examples contained in the implementation guidance) indicating the specific paragraph number or groups of paragraphs to which they relate. It would be helpful to the IPSASB if these comments clearly explained the issue and suggested alternative wording, with supporting reasoning, where this is appropriate.

### **Specific Matters for Comment**

The IPSASB would particularly value comment on whether you agree that:

1. This Standard should have within its scope short-term employee benefits, as well as post-employment benefits, other long-term benefits and termination benefits. If you think that short-term benefits should be dealt with in a separate Standard please give your reasons.
2. The definition of composite social security programs in paragraph 10 is appropriate. If you do not agree that the definition is appropriate can you suggest an alternative definition?
3. The accounting requirements for composite social security programs in paragraphs 46-48 are appropriate. Under the proposed accounting requirements reporting entities are required to account for obligations under composite social security programs, which relate to consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees and former employees of the reporting entity, in the same way as for multi-employer plans. If you do not think that these requirements are appropriate can you suggest what the requirements for composite social security programs should be?
4. The risk-free discount rate used to discount post-employment benefit obligations should be determined by reference to:

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Market yields at the reporting date on government bonds consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations; or
- Market yields at the reporting date on high quality corporate bonds consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations, where there is no deep market in government bonds, or where the market yield on government bonds is not the best representation of a risk-free rate (paragraph 90).

If you think that the discount rate should be determined by reference to market yields at the reporting date on high quality corporate bonds please give your reasons.

5. The Standard does not provide guidance for entities reporting in jurisdictions where there is a deep market in neither government bonds nor high quality corporate bonds. Do you think that such guidance is necessary, and, if so what should such guidance be?
6. Reporting entities should be permitted to adopt a policy of fully recognizing actuarial gains and losses in the period in which they occur in the Statement of Recognized Revenue and Expense in accordance with paragraph 106. If you do not think that such a policy is appropriate what requirements in relation to actuarial gains and losses should be reflected in the Standard?
7. The disclosures required for post-employment benefits in paragraph 140 are appropriate. If you consider that they are unduly onerous what disclosures should not be required? Conversely, if you think that the disclosures are inadequate what further disclosures would you include?
8. This Standard becomes effective for reporting periods commencing on a date five years after its issuance, although it can be applied earlier (paragraph 175). If you do not agree with this approach do you think that there should be different dates for the introduction of requirements for different types of employee benefit?
9. On first time adoption of this Standard all actuarial gains and losses related to initial liabilities for defined benefit obligations should be recognized in opening accumulated surpluses or deficits (paragraph 167). If you disagree with this treatment please give your reasons.
10. The reliefs from providing comparative information in the first year of adoption of this Standard and from making disclosures requiring comparative information and information from prior periods are appropriate (paragraphs 169-174). If you do not think that these reliefs are appropriate please give your reasons.

**INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTING  
STANDARD IPSAS XX**

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

**CONTENTS**

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	Paragraphs
Introduction.....	IN1–IN12
Objective.....	1
Scope.....	2-9
Definitions .....	10
Short-term Employee Benefits.....	11-26
Recognition and Measurement .....	13-25
All Short-term Employee Benefits .....	13
Short-term Compensated Absences.....	14-19
Bonus Payments and Profit-sharing Payments .....	20-25
Disclosure .....	26
Post-employment Benefits: Distinction Between Defined Contribution Plans and Defined Benefit Plans.....	27-52
Multi-employer Plans .....	32-38
Defined Benefit Plans that Share Risks between Various Entities under Common Control .....	39-41
State Plans.....	42-45
Composite Social Security Programs.....	46-48
Insured Benefits .....	49-52
Post-employment Benefits: Defined Contribution Plans .....	53-57
Recognition and Measurement .....	54-55
Disclosure .....	56-57
Post-employment Benefits: Defined Benefit Plans.....	58-145
Recognition and Measurement .....	59-74
Accounting for the Constructive Obligation.....	62-63
Statement of Financial Position .....	64-72

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Statement of Financial Performance.....	73-74
Recognition and Measurement: Present Value of Defined Benefit Obligations and Current Service Cost.....	75-116
Actuarial Valuation Method.....	76-78
Attributing Benefit to Periods of Service.....	79-83
Actuarial Assumptions.....	84-89
Actuarial Assumptions: Discount Rate.....	90-94
Actuarial Assumptions: Salaries, Benefits and Medical Costs.....	95-103
Actuarial Gains and Losses.....	104-110
Past Service Cost.....	111-116
Recognition and Measurement: Plan Assets.....	117-126
Fair Value of Plan Assets.....	117-119
Reimbursements.....	120-123
Return on Plan Assets.....	124-126
Entity Combinations.....	127
Curtailments and Settlements.....	128-134
Presentation.....	135-138
Offset.....	135-136
Current/Non-current Distinction.....	137
Financial Components of Post-employment Benefit Costs.....	138
Disclosure.....	139-145
Other Long-term Employee Benefits.....	146-151
Recognition and Measurement.....	148-150
Disclosure.....	151
Termination Benefits.....	152-163
Recognition.....	153-158
Measurement.....	159-160
Disclosure.....	161-163
First Time Adoption of this Standard.....	164-174
Effective Date.....	175

Appendix A: Amendments to Other International Public Sector Accounting Standards

Implementation Guidance

A: Illustrative Example: Funded Defined Benefit Plan

B: Illustrative Disclosures

C: Illustration of the Application of Paragraph 69

Basis for Conclusions

COMPARISON WITH IAS 19 (2004)

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International Public Sector Accounting Standard XX, "Employee Benefits" is set out in paragraphs 1-175. All the paragraphs have equal authority except as noted otherwise. IPSAS XX should be read in the context of its objective, the Basis for Conclusions, and the "Preface to International Public Sector Accounting Standards". IPSAS 3, "Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors" provides a basis for selecting and applying accounting policies in the absence of explicit guidance.

## Introduction

- IN1. The Standard prescribes the accounting and disclosure by public sector entities for employee benefits. It is based on IAS 19, "Employee Benefits." The Standard does not deal with accounting and reporting by retirement benefit plans (see the relevant international or national accounting standard dealing with accounting and reporting by retirement benefit plans).
- IN2. The Standard deals with four categories of employee benefits:
- (a) Short-term employee benefits, such as wages, salaries and social security contributions, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, profit-sharing and bonuses (if payable within twelve months of the end of the period) and non-monetary benefits (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for current employees;
  - (b) Post-employment benefits such as pensions, other retirement benefits, post-employment life insurance and post-employment medical care;
  - (c) Other long-term employee benefits, including long-service leave or sabbatical leave, jubilee or other long-service benefits, long-term disability benefits and, if they are payable twelve months or more after the end of the period, performance related bonuses, profit-sharing bonuses and deferred compensation; and
  - (d) Termination benefits.
- IN3. Benefits in all these categories are commonplace for public sector entities globally.
- IN4. The Standard requires an entity to recognize short-term employee benefits when an employee has rendered service in exchange for those benefits.
- IN5. Post-employment benefit plans are classified as either defined contribution plans or defined benefit plans. The Standard gives specific guidance on the classification of multi-employer plans, state plans, composite social security programs and plans with insured benefits. Benefits that are not consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees or past employees of reporting entities are not within the scope of this Standard.
- IN6. Under defined contribution plans, an entity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity (a fund) and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods. The Standard requires an entity to recognize contributions to a defined contribution plan when an employee has rendered service in exchange for those contributions.

- IN7. All other post-employment benefit plans are defined benefit plans. Defined benefit plans may be unfunded, or they may be wholly or partly funded. The Standard requires an entity to:
- (a) Account not only for its legal obligation, but also for any constructive obligation that arises from the entity's practices;
  - (b) Determine the present value of defined benefit obligations and the fair value of any plan assets with sufficient regularity that the amounts recognized in the financial statements do not differ materially from the amounts that would be determined at the reporting date;
  - (c) Use the Projected Unit Credit Method to measure its obligations and costs;
  - (d) Attribute benefit to periods of service under the plan's benefit formula, unless an employee's service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years;
  - (e) Use unbiased and mutually compatible actuarial assumptions about demographic variables (such as employee turnover and mortality) and financial variables (such as future increases in salaries, changes in medical costs and relevant changes in state benefits). Financial assumptions should be based on market expectations, at the reporting date, for the period over which the obligations are to be settled;
  - (f) Determine the discount rate by reference to a risk-free rate based on market yields at the reporting date on government bonds of a currency and term consistent with the currency and term of the post-employment benefit obligations. Where there is no deep market in government bonds, or where market yields on government bonds at the reporting date do not reflect a risk-free rate, the discount rate should be determined by reference to market yields on high quality corporate bonds of a currency and term consistent with the currency and term of the post-employment benefit obligations;
  - (g) Deduct the fair value of any plan assets from the carrying amount of the obligation. Certain reimbursement rights that do not qualify as plan assets are treated in the same way as plan assets, except that they are presented as a separate asset, rather than as a deduction from the obligation;
  - (h) Limit the carrying amount of an asset so that it does not exceed the net total of:
    - (i) Any unrecognized past service cost and actuarial losses; plus
    - (ii) The present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan;

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- (i) Recognize past service cost on a straight-line basis over the average period until the amended benefits become vested;
- (j) Recognize gains or losses on the curtailment or settlement of a defined benefit plan when the curtailment or settlement occurs. The gain or loss should comprise any resulting change in the present value of the defined benefit obligation and of the fair value of the plan assets and the unrecognized part of any related actuarial gains and losses and past service cost; and
- (k) Recognize a specified portion of the net cumulative actuarial gains and losses that exceed the greater of:
  - (i) 10% of the present value of the defined benefit obligation (before deducting plan assets); and
  - (ii) 10% of the fair value of any plan assets.

The portion of actuarial gains and losses to be recognized for each defined benefit plan is the excess that fell outside the 10% 'corridor' at the previous reporting date, divided by the expected average remaining working lives of the employees participating in that plan.

The Standard also permits systematic methods of faster recognition, provided that the same basis is applied to both gains and losses and the basis is applied consistently from period to period. Such permitted methods include immediate recognition of all actuarial gains and losses in surplus or deficit. In addition, the Standard permits an entity to recognize all actuarial gains and losses in the period in which they occur outside surplus or deficit in the statement of changes in revenue and expense for the year.

- IN8. The Standard requires a simpler method of accounting for other long-term employee benefits than for post-employment benefits: actuarial gains and losses and past service cost are recognized immediately.
- IN9. Termination benefits are employee benefits payable as a result of either: an entity's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date; or an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits. The event which gives rise to an obligation is the termination rather than employee service. Therefore, an entity should recognize termination benefits when, and only when, the entity is demonstrably committed to either:
  - (a) Terminate the employment of an employee or group of employees before the normal retirement date; or
  - (b) Provide termination benefits as a result of an offer made in order to encourage voluntary redundancy.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- IN10. An entity is demonstrably committed to a termination when, and only when, the entity has a detailed formal plan (with specified minimum contents) for the termination and is without realistic possibility of withdrawal.
- IN11. Where termination benefits fall due more than 12 months after the reporting date, they should be discounted. In the case of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy, the measurement of termination benefits should be based on the number of employees expected to accept the offer.
- IN12. The Standard becomes effective for accounting periods beginning on a date five years after its issuance. Earlier application is encouraged.

**INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTING  
STANDARD XX  
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

**Objective**

1. The objective of this Standard is to prescribe the accounting and disclosure for employee benefits. The Standard requires an entity to recognize:
  - (a) A liability when an employee has provided service in exchange for employee benefits to be paid in the future; and
  - (b) An expense when the entity consumes the economic benefits or service potential arising from service provided by an employee in exchange for employee benefits.

**Scope**

2. **This Standard shall be applied by an employer in accounting for all employee benefits, except share based transactions (see the relevant international or national accounting standard dealing with share based transactions).**
3. This Standard does not deal with reporting by employee retirement benefit plans (see the relevant international or national accounting standard dealing with employee retirement benefit plans). This Standard does not deal with benefits provided by composite social security programs that are not consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees or past employees of public sector entities.
4. The employee benefits to which this Standard applies include those provided:
  - (a) Under formal plans or other formal agreements between an entity and individual employees, groups of employees or their representatives;
  - (b) Under legislative requirements, or through industry arrangements, whereby entities are required to contribute to national, state, industry, or other multi-employer plans or where entities are required to contribute to the composite social security program; or
  - (c) By those informal practices that give rise to a constructive obligation. Informal practices give rise to a constructive obligation where the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay employee benefits. An example of a constructive obligation is where a change in the entity's informal practices would cause unacceptable damage to its relationship with employees.

5. Employee benefits include:
- (a) Short-term employee benefits, such as wages, salaries and social security contributions, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, profit-sharing and bonuses (if payable within twelve months of the end of the period) and non-monetary benefits (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for current employees;
  - (b) Post-employment benefits such as pensions, other retirement benefits, post-employment life insurance and post-employment medical care;
  - (c) Other long-term employee benefits, including long-service leave or sabbatical leave, jubilee or other long-service benefits, long-term disability benefits and, if they are not payable wholly within twelve months after the end of the period, profit-sharing, bonuses and deferred compensation; and
  - (d) Termination benefits.
- Because each category identified in (a)-(d) above has different characteristics, this Standard establishes separate requirements for each category.
6. Employee benefits include benefits provided to either employees or their dependants and may be settled by payments (or the provision of goods or services) made either directly to the employees, to their spouses, children or other dependants or to others, such as insurance companies.
7. An employee may provide services to an entity on a full-time, part-time, permanent, casual or temporary basis. For the purpose of this Standard, employees include key management personnel as defined in IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures”.
8. **This Standard applies to all public sector entities other than Government Business Enterprises.**
9. The “Preface to International Financial Reporting Standards” issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) explains that International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) are designed to apply to the general purpose financial statements of all profit-oriented entities. GBEs are profit-oriented entities. Accordingly, they are required to comply with IFRSs.

## Definitions

10. The following terms are used in this Standard with the meanings specified:

**Actuarial gains and losses comprise:**

- (a) Experience adjustments (the effects of differences between the previous actuarial assumptions and what has actually occurred); and
- (b) The effects of changes in actuarial assumptions.

**Assets held by a long-term employee benefit fund are assets (other than non-transferable financial instruments issued by the reporting entity) that:**

- (a) Are held by an entity (a fund) that is legally separate from the reporting entity and exists solely to pay or fund employee benefits; and
- (b) Are available to be used only to pay or fund employee benefits, are not available to the reporting entity's own creditors (even in bankruptcy), and cannot be returned to the reporting entity, unless either:
  - (i) The remaining assets of the fund are sufficient to meet all the related employee benefit obligations of the plan or the reporting entity; or
  - (ii) The assets are returned to the reporting entity to reimburse it for employee benefits already paid.

**Composite social security programs are established by legislation; and**

- (a) Operate as multi-employer plans to provide post-employment benefits; as well as to
- (b) Provide benefits that are not consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees.

**Current service cost is the increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation resulting from employee service in the current period.**

**Defined benefit plans are post-employment benefit plans other than defined contribution plans.**

**Defined contribution plans are post-employment benefit plans under which an entity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity (a fund) and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.**



**Employee benefits** are all forms of consideration given by an entity in exchange for service rendered by employees.

**Interest cost** is the increase during a period in the present value of a defined benefit obligation which arises because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

**Multi-employer plans** are defined contribution plans (other than state plans and composite social security programs) or defined benefit plans (other than state plans) that:

- (a) Pool the assets contributed by various entities that are not under common control; and
- (b) Use those assets to provide benefits to employees of more than one entity, on the basis that contribution and benefit levels are determined without regard to the identity of the entity that employs the employees concerned.

**Other long-term employee benefits** are employee benefits (other than post-employment benefits and termination benefits) which do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

**Past service cost** is the increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation for employee service in prior periods, resulting in the current period from the introduction of, or changes to, post-employment benefits or other long-term employee benefits. Past service cost may be either positive (where benefits are introduced or improved) or negative (where existing benefits are reduced).

**Plan assets** comprise:

- (a) Assets held by a long-term employee benefit fund; and
- (b) Qualifying insurance policies.

**Post-employment benefits** are employee benefits (other than termination benefits) which are payable after the completion of employment.

**Post-employment benefit plans** are formal or informal arrangements under which an entity provides post-employment benefits for one or more employees.

The **present value of a defined benefit obligation** is the present value, without deducting any plan assets, of expected future payments required to settle the obligation resulting from employee service in the current and prior periods.

**A qualifying insurance policy** is an insurance policy <sup>1</sup> issued by an insurer that is not a related party (as defined in IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures”) of the reporting entity, if the proceeds of the policy:

- (a) Can be used only to pay or fund employee benefits under a defined benefit plan; and
- (b) Are not available to the reporting entity’s own creditors (even in bankruptcy) and cannot be paid to the reporting entity, unless either:
  - (i) The proceeds represent surplus assets that are not needed for the policy to meet all the related employee benefit obligations; or
  - (ii) The proceeds are returned to the reporting entity to reimburse it for employee benefits already paid.

The **return on plan assets** is interest, dividends and other revenue derived from the plan assets, together with realized and unrealized gains or losses on the plan assets, less any costs of administering the plan and less any tax payable by the plan itself.

**Short-term employee benefits** are employee benefits (other than termination benefits) which fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

**State plans** are plans other than composite social security programs established by legislation which operate as if they are multi-employer plans for all entities in economic categories laid down in legislation.

**Termination benefits** are employee benefits payable as a result of either:

- (a) An entity’s decision to terminate an employee’s employment before the normal retirement date; or
- (b) An employee’s decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits.

**Vested employee benefits** are employee benefits that are not conditional on future employment.

## Short-term Employee Benefits

- 11. Short-term employee benefits include items such as:
  - (a) Wages, salaries and social security contributions;

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<sup>1</sup> A qualifying insurance policy is not necessarily an insurance contract (see the relevant international or national standard dealing with insurance contracts).

- (b) Short-term compensated absences (such as paid annual leave and paid sick leave) where the absences are expected to occur within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related employee service;
  - (c) Performance related bonuses and profit-sharing payable within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service; and
  - (d) Non-monetary benefits (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for current employees.
12. Accounting for short-term employee benefits is generally straightforward because no actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation or the cost and there is no possibility of any actuarial gain or loss. Moreover, short-term employee benefit obligations are measured on an undiscounted basis.

## **Recognition and Measurement**

### **All Short-term Employee Benefits**

13. **When an employee has rendered service to an entity during an accounting period, the entity shall recognize the undiscounted amount of short-term employee benefits expected to be paid in exchange for that service:**
- (a) **As a liability (accrued expense), after deducting any amount already paid. If the amount already paid exceeds the undiscounted amount of the benefits, an entity shall recognize that excess as an asset (prepaid expense) to the extent that the prepayment will lead to, for example, a reduction in future payments or a cash refund; and**
  - (b) **As an expense, unless another Standard requires or permits the inclusion of the benefits in the cost of an asset (see, for example, IPSAS 12, “Inventories” and IPSAS 17, “Property, Plant and Equipment”).**

**Paragraphs 14, 17 and 20 explain how an entity shall apply this requirement to short-term employee benefits in the form of compensated absences and bonus and profit-sharing plans.**

### **Short-term Compensated Absences**

14. **An entity shall recognize the expected cost of short-term employee benefits in the form of compensated absences under paragraph 13 as follows:**
- (a) **In the case of accumulating compensated absences, when the employees render service that increases their entitlement to future compensated absences; and**

- (b) **In the case of non-accumulating compensated absences, when the absences occur.**
- 15. An entity may compensate employees for absence for various reasons including vacation, sickness and short-term disability, maternity or paternity, jury service and military service. Entitlement to compensated absences falls into two categories:
  - (a) Accumulating; and
  - (b) Non-accumulating.
- 16. Accumulating compensated absences are those that are carried forward and can be used in future periods if the current period's entitlement is not used in full. Accumulating compensated absences may be either vesting (in other words, employees are entitled to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving the entity) or non-vesting (when employees are not entitled to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving). An obligation arises as employees render service that increases their entitlement to future compensated absences. The obligation exists, and is recognized, even if the compensated absences are non-vesting, although the possibility that employees may leave before they use an accumulated non-vesting entitlement affects the measurement of that obligation.
- 17. **An entity shall measure the expected cost of accumulating compensated absences as the additional amount that the entity expects to pay as a result of the unused entitlement that has accumulated at the reporting date.**
- 18. The method specified in paragraph 17 measures the obligation at the amount of the additional payments that are expected to arise solely from the fact that the benefit accumulates. In many cases, an entity may not need to make detailed computations to estimate that there is no material obligation for unused compensated absences. For example, a sick leave obligation is likely to be material only if there is a formal or informal understanding that unused paid sick leave may be taken as paid vacation.

**Example Illustrating Paragraphs 17 and 18 (This example is not authoritative)**

A public sector hospital has 100 employees, who are each entitled to five working days of paid sick leave for each year. Unused sick leave may be carried forward for one calendar year. Sick leave is taken first out of the current year's entitlement and then out of any balance brought forward from the previous year (a LIFO basis). At 31 December 20X7, the average unused entitlement is two days per employee. The hospital expects, based on past experience, which is expected to continue, that 92 employees will take no more than five days of paid sick leave in 20X8 and that the remaining eight employees will take an average of six and a half days each.

*The hospital expects that it will pay an additional 12 days of sick pay as a result of the unused entitlement that has accumulated at 31 December 20X7 (one and a half days each, for eight employees). Therefore, the entity recognizes a liability equal to 12 days of sick pay.*

19. Non-accumulating compensated absences do not carry forward: they lapse if the current period's entitlement is not used in full and do not entitle employees to a cash payment for unused entitlement on leaving the entity. This is commonly the case for sick pay (to the extent that unused past entitlement does not increase future entitlement), maternity or paternity leave and compensated absences for jury service or military service. An entity recognizes no liability or expense until the time of the absence, because employee service does not increase the amount of the benefit.

**Bonus Payments and Profit-Sharing Payments**

20. **An entity shall recognize the expected cost of bonus payments and profit-sharing payments under paragraph 13 when, and only when:**
- (a) **The entity has a present legal or constructive obligation to make such payments as a result of past events; and**
  - (b) **A reliable estimate of the obligation can be made.**
- A present obligation exists when, and only when, the entity has no realistic alternative but to make the payments.**
21. Some public sector entities have bonus plans that are related to service delivery objectives or aspects of financial performance. Under such plans employees receive specified amounts, dependent on an assessment of their contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the entity or a segment of the entity. In some cases such plans may be for groups of employees, such as when performance is evaluated for all or some employees in a particular segment,

rather than on an individual basis. Because of the nature of public sector entities, profit sharing plans are far less common in the public sector than for profit-oriented entities. However, they are likely to be an aspect of employee remuneration in segments of public sector entities, which operate on a commercial basis. Some public sector entities may not operate profit-sharing schemes, but may evaluate performance against financially based measures such as the generation of revenue streams and the achievement of budgetary targets. Some bonus plans may entail payments to all employees who rendered employment services in a reporting period, even though they may have left the entity before the reporting date. However, under other bonus plans, employees receive payments only if they remain with the entity for a specified period eg a requirement that employees render services for the whole of the reporting period. Such plans create a constructive obligation as employees render service that increases the amount to be paid if they remain in service until the end of the specified period. The measurement of such constructive obligations reflects the possibility that some employees may leave without receiving profit-sharing payments. Paragraph 23 provides further conditions that are to be satisfied before an entity can recognize the expected cost of performance-related payments, bonus payments and profit-sharing payments.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 21 (This example is not authoritative)**

A performance-related bonus plan requires a government printing unit to pay a specified proportion of its budgeted surplus for the year to employees who meet pre-determined performance targets and serve throughout the year ie are in post on both the first and last day of the reporting period. If no employees leave during the year, the total bonus payments for the year will be 3% of budgeted surplus. The entity estimates that staff turnover will reduce the payments to 2.5% of budgeted surplus.

*The entity recognizes a liability and an expense of 2.5% of budgeted surplus.*

22. An entity may have no legal obligation to pay a bonus. Nevertheless, in some cases, an entity has a practice of paying bonuses. In such cases, the entity has a constructive obligation because the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay the bonus. The measurement of the constructive obligation reflects the possibility that some employees may leave without receiving a bonus.
23. An entity can make a reliable estimate of its legal or constructive obligation under a performance-related payment scheme or bonus plan when, and only when:
- (a) The formal terms of the plan contain a formula for determining the amount of the benefit;
  - (b) The entity determines the amounts to be paid before the financial statements are authorised for issue; or

- (c) Past practice gives clear evidence of the amount of the entity's constructive obligation.
24. An obligation under bonus plans and profit-shares results from employee service and is recognized as an expense in surplus or deficit.
  25. If bonus payments and profit-shares are not due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service, those payments are other long-term employee benefits (see paragraphs 146–151).

### **Disclosure**

26. Although this Standard does not require specific disclosures about short-term employee benefits, other Standards may require disclosures. For example, IPSAS 20, "Related Party Disclosures" requires disclosures of the aggregate remuneration of key management personnel and IPSAS 1, "Presentation of Financial Statements" requires the disclosure of information about employee benefits.

### **Post-employment Benefits: Distinction between Defined Contribution Plans and Defined Benefit Plans**

27. Post-employment benefits include, for example:
  - (a) Retirement benefits, such as pensions; and
  - (b) Other post-employment benefits, such as post-employment life insurance and post-employment medical care.

Arrangements whereby an entity provides post-employment benefits are post-employment benefit plans. An entity applies this Standard to all such arrangements whether or not they involve the establishment of a separate entity such as a pension scheme, superannuation scheme or retirement benefit scheme, to receive contributions and to pay benefits.

28. Post-employment benefit plans are classified as either defined contribution plans or defined benefit plans, depending on the economic substance of the plan as derived from its principal terms and conditions. In order to be classified as a defined contribution plan a post-employment benefit plan must require the entity to pay fixed contributions into a separate entity. Under defined contribution plans:
  - (a) The entity's legal or constructive obligation is limited to the amount that it agrees to contribute to the fund. Thus the amount of the post-employment benefits received by the employee is determined by the amount of contributions paid by an entity (and perhaps also the employee) to a post-employment benefit plan or to an insurance

- company, together with investment returns arising from the contributions; and
- (b) In consequence, actuarial risk (that benefits will be less than expected) and investment risk (that assets invested will be insufficient to meet expected benefits) fall on the employee.
29. Examples of cases where an entity's obligation is not limited to the amount that it agrees to contribute to the fund are when the entity has a legal or constructive obligation through:
- (a) A plan benefit formula that is not linked solely to the amount of contributions;
- (b) A guarantee, either indirectly through a plan or directly, of a specified return on contributions; or
- (c) Those informal practices that give rise to a constructive obligation. For example, a constructive obligation may arise where an entity has a history of increasing benefits for former employees to keep pace with inflation even where there is no legal obligation to do so.
30. Under defined benefit plans:
- (a) The entity's obligation is to provide the agreed benefits to current and former employees; and
- (b) Actuarial risk (that benefits will cost more than expected) and investment risk fall, in substance, on the entity. If actuarial or investment experience are worse than expected, the entity's obligation may be increased.
31. Unlike defined contribution plans, the definition of a defined benefit plan does not require the payment of contributions to a separate entity. Paragraphs 32-52 below explain the distinction between defined contribution plans and defined benefit plans in the context of multi-employer plans, state plans, composite social security programs and insured benefits.

### **Multi-employer Plans**

32. **An entity shall classify a multi-employer plan as a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan under the terms of the plan (including any constructive obligation that goes beyond the formal terms). Where a multi-employer plan is a defined benefit plan, an entity shall:**
- (a) **Account for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation, plan assets and cost associated with the plan in the same way as for any other defined benefit plan; and**
- (b) **Disclose the information required by paragraph 140.**



33. **When sufficient information is not available to use defined benefit accounting for a multi-employer plan that is a defined benefit plan, an entity shall:**
- (a) **Account for the plan under paragraphs 54-55 as if it were a defined contribution plan;**
  - (b) **Disclose:**
    - (i) **The fact that the plan is a defined benefit plan; and**
    - (ii) **The reason why sufficient information is not available to enable the entity to account for the plan as a defined benefit plan; and**
  - (c) **To the extent that a surplus or deficit in the plan may affect the amount of future contributions, disclose in addition:**
    - (i) **Any available information about that surplus or deficit;**
    - (ii) **The basis used to determine that surplus or deficit; and**
    - (iii) **The implications, if any, for the entity.**
34. One example of a public sector defined benefit multi-employer plan is where:
- (a) The plan is financed on a pay-as-you-go basis such that: contributions of employers and/or employees are set at a level that is expected to be sufficient to pay the benefits falling due in the same period; and future benefits earned during the current period will be paid out of future contributions; and
  - (b) Employees' benefits are determined by the length of their service and the participating entities have no realistic means of withdrawing from the plan without paying a contribution for the benefits earned by employees up to the date of withdrawal.
- Such a plan creates actuarial risk for the entity: if the ultimate cost of benefits already earned at the reporting date is more than expected, the entity will have to either increase its contributions or persuade employees to accept a reduction in benefits. Therefore, such a plan is a defined benefit plan.
35. A public sector entity participating in a multi-employer plan which is a defined benefit plan, will normally have access to sufficient information to enable it to account for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation, plan assets and post-employment benefit cost associated with the plan in the same way as for any other defined benefit plan. However, there may be rare cases where an entity may not be able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the plan with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. This may occur if:

- (a) The entity does not have access to information about the plan that satisfies the requirements of this Standard; or
- (b) The plan exposes the participating entities to actuarial risks associated with the current and former employees of other entities, with the result that there is no consistent and reliable basis for allocating the obligation, plan assets and cost to individual entities participating in the plan. For example, all government agencies may participate in a multi-employer plan under which all agencies jointly and severally have an obligation for the benefits accrued to current and former employees of all agencies. An indication that there is no consistent and reliable basis for allocating the obligation may be that there are common rates of employer and employee contributions for all entities participating in the plan rather than differential rates which reflect actuarial assumptions specific to particular entities.

In those cases, an entity accounts for the plan as if it were a defined contribution plan and discloses the additional information required by paragraph 33.

36. There may be a contractual agreement between the multi-employer plan and its participant entities that determines how the surplus in the plan will be distributed to the participant entities (or the deficit funded). A participant in a multi-employer plan with such an agreement that accounts for the plan as a defined contribution plan in accordance with paragraph 32 shall recognize the asset or liability that arises from the contractual agreement and the resulting revenue or expense in surplus or deficit.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 36 (This example is not authoritative)**

Along with similar entities in State X, Local Government Unit A participates in a multi-employer defined benefit plan. Because the plan exposes the participating entities to actuarial risks associated with the current and former employees of other local government units participating in the plan there is no consistent and reliable basis for allocating the obligation, plan assets and cost to individual local government units participating in the plan. Local Government Unit A therefore accounts for the plan as if it were a defined contribution plan. A funding valuation, which is not drawn up on the basis of assumptions compatible with the requirements of this Standard, shows a deficit of 480 million currency units in the plan. The plan has agreed under contract a schedule of contributions with the participating employers in the plan that will eliminate the deficit over the next five years. Local Government Unit A's total contributions under the contract are 40 million currency units.

*The entity recognizes a liability for the contributions adjusted for the time value of money and an equal expense in surplus or deficit.*

37. IPSAS 19, “Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets” requires an entity to recognize, or disclose information about, certain contingent liabilities. In the context of a multi-employer plan, a contingent liability may arise from, for example:
- (a) Actuarial losses relating to other participating entities because each entity that participates in a multi-employer plan shares in the actuarial risks of every other participating entity; or
  - (b) Any responsibility under the terms of a plan to finance any shortfall in the plan if other entities cease to participate.
38. Multi-employer plans are distinct from group administration plans. A group administration plan is merely an aggregation of single employer plans combined to allow participating employers to pool their assets for investment purposes and reduce investment management and administration costs, but the claims of different employers are segregated for the sole benefit of their own employees. Group administration plans pose no particular accounting problems because information is readily available to treat them in the same way as any other single employer plan and because such plans do not expose the participating entities to actuarial risks associated with the current and former employees of other entities. The definitions in this Standard require an entity to classify a group administration plan as a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan in accordance with the terms of the plan (including any constructive obligation that goes beyond the formal terms).

#### **Defined Benefit Plans that Share Risks between Various Entities under Common Control**

39. Defined benefit plans that share risks between various entities under common control, for example, controlling and controlled entities, are not multi-employer plans.
40. An entity participating in such a plan obtains information about the plan as a whole measured in accordance with this Standard on the basis of assumptions that apply to the plan as a whole. If there is a contractual agreement or stated policy for charging the net defined benefit cost for the plan as a whole measured in accordance with this Standard to individual entities within the economic entity, the entity shall, in its separate or individual financial statements, recognize the net defined benefit cost so charged. If there is no such agreement or policy, the net defined benefit cost shall be recognized in the separate or individual financial statements of the entity that is legally the sponsoring employer for the plan. The other entities shall, in their separate or individual financial statements, recognize a cost equal to their contribution payable for the period.

41. Participation in such a plan is a related party transaction for each individual entity. An entity shall therefore, in its separate or individual financial statements, make the following disclosures:
- (a) The contractual agreement or stated policy for charging the net defined benefit cost or the fact that there is no such policy.
  - (b) The policy for determining the contribution to be paid by the entity.
  - (c) If the entity accounts for an allocation of the net defined benefit cost in accordance with paragraph 40, all the information about the plan as a whole in accordance with paragraphs 139-140.
  - (d) If the entity accounts for the contribution payable for the period in accordance with paragraph 40, the information about the plan as a whole required in accordance with paragraphs 140(b)–(e), (j), (n), (o), (q) and 141. The other disclosures required by paragraph 140 do not apply.

### State Plans

42. **An entity shall account for post-employment benefits under state plans in the same way as for a multi-employer plan (see paragraphs 32 and 33)**
43. State plans are established by legislation to cover all entities (or all entities in a particular category, for example, a specific industry) and are operated by national, state or local government or by another body (for example, an agency created specifically for this purpose). This Standard deals only with employee benefits of the entity and does not address accounting for any obligations under state plans related to employees and past employees of entities, which are not controlled by the reporting entity. Whilst Governments may establish state plans and provide benefits to employees of private sector entities and/or self-employed individuals, obligations arising in respect of such plans are not addressed in this Standard.
44. Many state plans are funded on a pay-as-you-go basis: contributions are set at a level that is expected to be sufficient to pay the required benefits falling due in the same period; future benefits earned during the current period will be paid out of future contributions. Public sector entities covered by state plans account for those plans as either defined contribution or defined benefit plans. The accounting treatment depends upon whether the entity has a legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits. If an entity's only obligation is to pay the contributions as they fall due and, the entity has no obligation to pay future benefits, it accounts for that state plan as a defined contribution plan.
45. It is possible that a state plan may be characterized as a defined contribution plan by controlled entities, but as a defined benefit plan by the controlling entity. This might be because a controlled entity may not be able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the plan with sufficient

reliability for accounting purposes under circumstances identified at paragraph 35(b). However, the controlling entity may be able to obtain sufficient information to enable it to account for its proportionate share of the defined benefit obligation. Where a state plan is characterized as a defined benefit plan by the controlling entity, the controlling entity will account for that plan as a defined benefit plan in respect of the employees and past employees of all controlled entities in the consolidated financial statements.

### **Composite Social Security Programs**

46. **An entity shall account for post-employment benefits under composite social security programs in the same way as for a multi-employer plan (see paragraphs 32 and 33).**
47. Composite social security programs are established by legislation and provide benefits to individuals who have satisfied eligibility criteria. Such criteria principally include a requirement that an individual has attained a retirement age laid down in legislation. There may also be other criteria related to factors such as income and personal wealth. In some jurisdictions the composite social security program may also operate to provide benefits as consideration in exchange for employment services rendered by individuals. This Standard only addresses obligations in composite social security programs which arise as consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees and past employees of the reporting entity. This Standard requires a reporting entity to account for obligations for employee benefits that arise under composite social security programs as for a multi-employer plan in accordance with paragraphs 32 and 33.
48. For an economic entity, such as the whole-of-government level, the accounting treatment for obligations for employee benefits under composite social security programs depends upon whether the component of that program operating to provide post-employment benefits to employees of the economic entity is characterized as a defined contribution or a defined benefit plan. In making this judgment the reporting entity will consider the factors highlighted in paragraph 35. As for state plans, it is possible that the component of that program operating to provide post-employment benefits may be characterized as a defined contribution plan by controlled entities, but as a defined benefit plan by the controlling entity.

### **Insured Benefits**

49. **An entity may pay insurance premiums to fund a post-employment benefit plan. The entity shall treat such a plan as a defined contribution plan unless the entity will have (either directly or indirectly through the plan) a legal or constructive obligation to either:**
- (a) **Pay the employee benefits directly when they fall due; or**

- (b) **Pay further amounts if the insurer does not pay all future employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.**

**If the entity retains such a legal or constructive obligation, the entity shall treat the plan as a defined benefit plan.**

50. The benefits insured by an insurance contract need not have a direct or automatic relationship with the entity's obligation for employee benefits. Post-employment benefit plans involving insurance contracts are subject to the same distinction between accounting and funding as other funded plans.
51. Where an entity funds a post-employment benefit obligation by contributing to an insurance policy under which the entity (either directly, indirectly through the plan, through the mechanism for setting future premiums or through a related party relationship with the insurer) retains a legal or constructive obligation, the payment of the premiums does not amount to a defined contribution arrangement. It follows that the entity:
- (a) Accounts for a qualifying insurance policy as a plan asset (see paragraph 10); and
- (b) Recognizes other insurance policies as reimbursement rights (if the policies satisfy the criteria in paragraph 120).
52. Where an insurance policy is in the name of a specified plan participant or a group of plan participants and the entity does not have any legal or constructive obligation to cover any loss on the policy, the entity has no obligation to pay benefits to the employees and the insurer has sole responsibility for paying the benefits. The payment of fixed premiums under such contracts is, in substance, the settlement of the employee benefit obligation, rather than an investment to meet the obligation. Consequently, the entity no longer has an asset or a liability. Therefore, an entity treats such payments as contributions to a defined contribution plan.

### **Post-employment Benefits: Defined Contribution Plans**

53. Accounting for defined contribution plans is straightforward because the reporting entity's obligation for each period is determined by the amounts to be contributed for that period. Consequently, no actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation or the expense and there is no possibility of any actuarial gain or loss. Moreover, the obligations are measured on an undiscounted basis, except where they do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service.

## Recognition and Measurement

54. **When an employee has rendered service to an entity during a period, the entity shall recognize the contribution payable to a defined contribution plan in exchange for that service:**
- (a) **As a liability (accrued expense), after deducting any contribution already paid. If the contribution already paid exceeds the contribution due for service before the reporting date, an entity shall recognize that excess as an asset (prepaid expense) to the extent that the prepayment will lead to, for example, a reduction in future payments or a cash refund; and**
  - (b) **As an expense, unless another Standard requires or permits the inclusion of the contribution in the cost of an asset (see, for example, IPSAS 12, “Inventories” and IPSAS 17, “Property, Plant and Equipment”).**
55. **Where contributions to a defined contribution plan do not fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service, they shall be discounted using the discount rate specified in paragraph 90.**

## Disclosure

56. **An entity shall disclose the amount recognized as an expense for defined contribution plans.**
57. Where required by IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures” an entity discloses information about contributions to defined contribution plans for key management personnel.

## Post-employment Benefits: Defined Benefit Plans

58. Accounting for defined benefit plans is complex because actuarial assumptions are required to measure the obligation and the expense and there is a possibility of actuarial gains and losses. Moreover, the obligations are measured on a discounted basis because they may be settled many years after the employees render the related service.

## Recognition and Measurement

59. Defined benefit plans may be unfunded, or they may be wholly or partly funded by contributions by an entity, and sometimes its employees, into an entity, or fund, that is legally separate from the reporting entity and from which the employee benefits are paid. The payment of funded benefits when they fall due depends not only on the financial position and the investment performance of the fund but also on an entity’s ability (and willingness) to make good any

shortfall in the fund's assets. Therefore, the entity is, in substance, underwriting the actuarial and investment risks associated with the plan. Consequently, the expense recognized for a defined benefit plan is not necessarily the amount of the contribution due for the period.

60. Accounting by an entity for defined benefit plans involves the following steps:
- (a) Using actuarial techniques to make a reliable estimate of the amount of benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in the current and prior periods. This requires an entity to determine how much benefit is attributable to the current and prior periods (see paragraphs 79-83) and to make estimates (actuarial assumptions) about demographic variables (such as employee turnover and mortality) and financial variables (such as future increases in salaries and medical costs) that will influence the cost of the benefit (see paragraphs 84-103);
  - (b) Discounting that benefit using the Projected Unit Credit Method in order to determine the present value of the defined benefit obligation and the current service cost (see paragraphs 76-78);
  - (c) Determining the fair value of any plan assets (see paragraphs 117-119);
  - (d) Determining the total amount of actuarial gains and losses and the amount of those actuarial gains and losses to be recognized (see paragraphs 104-110);
  - (e) Where a plan has been introduced or changed, determining the resulting past service cost (see paragraphs 111-116); and
  - (f) Where a plan has been curtailed or settled, determining the resulting gain or loss (see paragraphs 128-134).

Where an entity has more than one defined benefit plan, the entity applies these procedures for each material plan separately. For example, a State Government responsible for educational and health services and a number of other services may have separate plans for teachers, healthcare workers and other employees.

61. In some cases, estimates, averages and computational short cuts may provide a reliable approximation of the detailed computations illustrated in this Standard.



**Accounting for the Constructive Obligation**

62. **An entity shall account not only for its legal obligation under the formal terms of a defined benefit plan, but also for any constructive obligation that arises from the entity's informal practices. Informal practices give rise to a constructive obligation where the entity has no realistic alternative but to pay employee benefits. An example of a constructive obligation is where a change in the entity's informal practices would cause unacceptable damage to its relationship with employees.**
63. The formal terms of a defined benefit plan may permit an entity to terminate its obligation under the plan. Nevertheless, it is usually difficult for an entity to cancel a plan if employees are to be retained. Therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, accounting for post-employment benefits assumes that an entity which is currently promising such benefits will continue to do so over the remaining working lives of employees.

**Statement of Financial Position**

64. **The amount recognized as a defined benefit liability shall be the net total of the following amounts:**
- (a) **The present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date (see paragraph 65);**
  - (b) **Plus any actuarial gains (less any actuarial losses) not recognized because of the treatment set out in paragraphs 104 and 105;**
  - (c) **Minus any past service cost not yet recognized (see paragraph 111); and**
  - (d) **Minus the fair value at the reporting date of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly (see paragraphs 117-119).**
65. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the gross obligation, before deducting the fair value of any plan assets.
66. **An entity shall determine the present value of defined benefit obligations and the fair value of any plan assets with sufficient regularity that the amounts recognized in the financial statements do not differ materially from the amounts that would be determined at the reporting date.**
67. This Standard encourages, but does not require, an entity to involve a qualified actuary in the measurement of all material post-employment benefit obligations. For practical reasons, an entity may request a qualified actuary to carry out a detailed valuation of the obligation before the reporting date. Nevertheless, the results of that valuation are updated for any material transactions and other

material changes in circumstances (including changes in market prices and interest rates) up to the reporting date.

68. **The amount determined under paragraph 64 may be negative (an asset). An entity shall measure the resulting asset at the lower of:**
- (a) **The amount determined under paragraph 64; and**
  - (b) **The total of:**
    - (i) **Any cumulative unrecognized net actuarial losses and past service cost (see paragraphs 104, 105 and 111); and**
    - (ii) **The present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. The present value of these economic benefits shall be determined using the discount rate specified in paragraph 90.**
69. **The application of paragraph 68 shall not result in a gain being recognized solely as a result of an actuarial loss or past service cost in the current period or in a loss being recognized solely as a result of an actuarial gain in the current period. The entity shall therefore recognize immediately under paragraph 64 the following, to the extent that they arise while the defined benefit asset is determined in accordance with paragraph 68(b):**
- (a) **Net actuarial losses of the current period and past service cost of the current period to the extent that they exceed any reduction in the present value of the economic benefits specified in paragraph 68(b)(ii). If there is no change or an increase in the present value of the economic benefits, the entire net actuarial losses of the current period and past service cost of the current period shall be recognized immediately under paragraph 64.**
  - (b) **Net actuarial gains of the current period after the deduction of past service cost of the current period to the extent that they exceed any increase in the present value of the economic benefits specified in paragraph 68(b)(ii). If there is no change or a decrease in the present value of the economic benefits, the entire net actuarial gains of the current period after the deduction of past service cost of the current period shall be recognized immediately under paragraph 64.**
70. Paragraph 69 applies to an entity only if it has, at the beginning or end of the accounting period, a surplus <sup>2</sup> in a defined benefit plan and cannot, based on the current terms of the plan, recover that surplus fully through refunds or

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<sup>2</sup> A surplus is an excess of the fair value of the plan assets over the present value of the defined benefit obligation.

reductions in future contributions. In such cases, past service cost and actuarial losses that arise in the period, the recognition of which is deferred under paragraph 68(b)(i), will increase the amount specified in paragraph 68. If that increase is not offset by an equal decrease in the present value of economic benefits that qualify for recognition under paragraph 68(b)(ii), there will be an increase in the net total specified by paragraph 68(b) and, hence, a recognized gain. Paragraph 69 prohibits the recognition of a gain in these circumstances. The opposite effect arises with actuarial gains that arise in the period, the recognition of which is deferred under paragraph 64, to the extent that the actuarial gains reduce cumulative unrecognized actuarial losses. Paragraph 69 prohibits the recognition of a loss in these circumstances. For examples of the application of this paragraph, see Implementation Guidance C.

71. An asset may arise where a defined benefit plan has been overfunded or in certain cases where actuarial gains are recognized. An entity recognizes an asset in such cases because:
- (a) The entity controls a resource, which is the ability to use the surplus to generate future benefits;
  - (b) That control is a result of past events (contributions paid by the entity and service rendered by the employee); and
  - (c) Future economic benefits are available to the entity in the form of a reduction in future contributions or a cash refund, either directly to the entity or indirectly to another plan in deficit.
72. The limit in paragraph 68(b) does not override the delayed recognition of certain actuarial losses (see paragraphs 104 and 105) and certain past service cost (see paragraph 111), other than as specified in paragraph 69. Paragraph 140(f)(iii) requires an entity to disclose any amount not recognized as an asset because of the limit in paragraph 68(b).

<b>Example Illustrating Paragraph 72 (This example is not authoritative)</b>	
A defined benefit plan has the following characteristics:	
Present value of the obligation	1100
Fair value of plan assets	-1190
	-90
Unrecognized actuarial losses	-110
Unrecognized past service cost	-70
Negative amount determined under paragraph 64	-270
Present value of available future refunds and reductions in future contributions	60
The limit under paragraph 68(b) is computed as follows:	
Unrecognized actuarial losses	110
Unrecognized past service cost	70
Present value of available future refunds and reductions in future contributions	60
Limit	240
240 is less than 270. Therefore, the entity recognizes an asset of 240 and discloses that the limit in paragraph 68(b) reduced the carrying amount of the asset by 30 (see paragraph 140(f) (iii)).	

### Statement of Financial Performance

73. **An entity shall recognize the net total of the following amounts in surplus or deficit, except to the extent that another Standard requires or permits their inclusion in the cost of an asset:**
- (a) **Current service cost (see paragraphs 75-103);**
  - (b) **Interest cost (see paragraph 94);**
  - (c) **The expected return on any plan assets (see paragraphs 124-125) and on any reimbursement rights (see paragraph 120);**
  - (d) **Actuarial gains and losses, as required in accordance with the entity's accounting policy (see paragraphs 104-108);**

- (e) **Past service cost (see paragraph 111);**
- (f) **The effect of any curtailments or settlements (see paragraphs 128 and 129); and**
- (g) **The effect of the limit in paragraph 68(b), unless it is recognized in the Statement of Recognized Revenue and Expense in accordance with paragraph 107.**

74. Other Standards require the inclusion of certain employee benefit costs within the cost of assets such as inventories or property, plant and equipment (see IPSAS 12, "Inventories" and IPSAS 17, "Property, Plant and Equipment"). Any post-employment benefit costs included in the cost of such assets include the appropriate proportion of the components listed in paragraph 73.

### **Recognition and Measurement: Present Value of Defined Benefit Obligations and Current Service Cost**

75. The ultimate cost of a defined benefit plan may be influenced by many variables, such as final salaries, employee turnover and mortality, medical cost trends and, for a funded plan, the investment earnings on the plan assets. The ultimate cost of the plan is uncertain and this uncertainty is likely to persist over a long period of time. In order to measure the present value of the post-employment benefit obligations and the related current service cost, it is necessary to:

- (a) Apply an actuarial valuation method (see paragraphs 76-78);
- (b) Attribute benefit to periods of service (see paragraphs 79–83); and
- (c) Make actuarial assumptions (see paragraphs 84-103).

#### **Actuarial Valuation Method**

76. **An entity shall use the Projected Unit Credit Method to determine the present value of its defined benefit obligations and the related current service cost and, where applicable, past service cost.**

77. The Projected Unit Credit Method (sometimes known as the accrued benefit method pro rated on service or as the benefit/years of service method) sees each period of service as giving rise to an additional unit of benefit entitlement (see paragraphs 79–83) and measures each unit separately to build up the final obligation (see paragraphs 84-103).

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 77 (This example is not authoritative)**

A lump sum benefit is payable on termination of service and equal to 1% of final salary for each year of service. The salary in year 1 is 10,000 and is assumed to increase at 7% (compound) each year. The discount rate used is 10% per annum. The following table shows how the obligation builds up for an employee who is expected to leave at the end of year 5, assuming that there are no changes in actuarial assumptions. For simplicity, this example ignores the additional adjustment needed to reflect the probability that the employee may leave the entity at an earlier or later date.

<b>Year</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Benefit attributed to:					
– prior years	0	131	262	393	524
– current year (1% of final salary)	<u>131</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>131</u>
– current and prior years	<u>131</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>393</u>	<u>524</u>	<u>655</u>

<b>Year</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Opening obligation	–	89	196	324	476
Interest at 10%	–	9	20	33	48
Current service cost	<u>89</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>131</u>
Closing obligation	<u>89</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>324</u>	<u>476</u>	<u>655</u>

Note:

1. The opening obligation is the present value of benefit attributed to prior years.
2. The current service cost is the present value of benefit attributed to the current year.
3. The closing obligation is the present value of benefit attributed to current and prior years.

78. An entity discounts the whole of a post-employment benefit obligation, even if part of the obligation falls due within twelve months of the reporting date.

**Attributing Benefit to Periods of Service**

79. **In determining the present value of its defined benefit obligations and the related current service cost and, where applicable, past service cost, an entity shall attribute benefit to periods of service under the plan's benefit formula. However, if an employee's service in later years will lead to a**

**materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years, an entity shall attribute benefit on a straight-line basis from:**

- (a) **The date when service by the employee first leads to benefits under the plan (whether or not the benefits are conditional on further service); until**
- (b) **The date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits under the plan, other than from further salary increases.**

80. The Projected Unit Credit Method requires an entity to attribute benefit to the current period (in order to determine current service cost) and the current and prior periods (in order to determine the present value of defined benefit obligations). An entity attributes benefit to periods in which the obligation to provide post-employment benefits arises. That obligation arises as employees render services in return for post-employment benefits which an entity expects to pay in future reporting periods. Actuarial techniques allow an entity to measure that obligation with sufficient reliability to justify recognition of a liability.

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 80 (This example is not authoritative)**

1. A defined benefit plan provides a lump-sum benefit of 100 payable on retirement for each year of service.  
*A benefit of 100 is attributed to each year. The current service cost is the present value of 100. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the present value of 100, multiplied by the number of years of service up to the reporting date.*  
*If the benefit is payable immediately when the employee leaves the entity, the current service cost and the present value of the defined benefit obligation reflect the date at which the employee is expected to leave. Thus, because of the effect of discounting, they are less than the amounts that would be determined if the employee left at the reporting date.*
2. A plan provides a monthly pension of 0.2% of final salary for each year of service. The pension is payable from the age of 65.  
*Benefit equal to the present value, at the expected retirement date, of a monthly pension of 0.2% of the estimated final salary payable from the expected retirement date until the expected date of death is attributed to each year of service. The current service cost is the present value of that benefit. The present value of the defined benefit obligation is the present value of monthly pension payments of 0.2% of final salary, multiplied by the number of years of service up to the reporting date. The current service cost and the present value of the defined benefit obligation are discounted because pension payments begin at the age of 65.*

81. Employee service gives rise to an obligation under a defined benefit plan even if the benefits are conditional on future employment (in other words they are not vested). Employee service before the vesting date gives rise to a constructive obligation because, at each successive reporting date, the amount of future service that an employee will have to render before becoming entitled to the benefit is reduced. In measuring its defined benefit obligation, an entity considers the probability that some employees may not satisfy any vesting requirements. Similarly, although certain post-employment benefits, for example, post-employment medical benefits, become payable only if a specified event occurs when an employee is no longer employed, an obligation is created when the employee renders service that will provide entitlement to the benefit if the specified event occurs. The probability that the specified event will occur affects the measurement of the obligation, but does not determine whether the obligation exists.

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 81 (This example is not authoritative)**

1. A plan pays a benefit of 100 for each year of service. The benefits vest after ten years of service.

*A benefit of 100 is attributed to each year. In each of the first ten years, the current service cost and the present value of the obligation reflect the probability that the employee may not complete ten years of service.*

2. A plan pays a benefit of 100 for each year of service, excluding service before the age of 25. The benefits vest immediately.

*No benefit is attributed to service before the age of 25 because service before that date does not lead to benefits (conditional or unconditional). A benefit of 100 is attributed to each subsequent year.*

82. The obligation increases until the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits. Therefore, all benefit is attributed to periods ending on or before that date. Benefit is attributed to individual accounting periods under the plan's benefit formula. However, if an employee's service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years, an entity attributes benefit on a straight-line basis until the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits. That is because the employee's service throughout the entire period will ultimately lead to benefit at that higher level.



**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 82 (This example is not authoritative)**

1. A plan pays a lump-sum benefit of 1,000 that vests after ten years of service. The plan provides no further benefit for subsequent service.

*A benefit of 100 (1,000 divided by ten) is attributed to each of the first ten years. The current service cost in each of the first ten years reflects the probability that the employee may not complete ten years of service. No benefit is attributed to subsequent years.*

2. A plan pays a lump-sum retirement benefit of 2,000 to all employees who are still employed at the age of 55 after twenty years of service, or who are still employed at the age of 65, regardless of their length of service.

*For employees who join before the age of 35, service first leads to benefits under the plan at the age of 35 (an employee could leave at the age of 30 and return at the age of 33, with no effect on the amount or timing of benefits). Those benefits are conditional on further service. Also, service beyond the age of 55 will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For these employees, the entity attributes benefit of 100 (2,000 divided by 20) to each year from the age of 35 to the age of 55.*

*For employees who join between the ages of 35 and 45, service beyond twenty years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For these employees, the entity attributes benefit of 100 (2,000 divided by 20) to each of the first twenty years.*

*For an employee who joins at the age of 55, service beyond ten years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. For this employee, the entity attributes benefit of 200 (2,000 divided by 10) to each of the first ten years.*

*For all employees, the current service cost and the present value of the obligation reflect the probability that the employee may not complete the necessary period of service.*

3. A post-employment medical plan reimburses 40% of an employee's post-employment medical costs if the employee leaves after more than ten and less than twenty years of service and 50% of those costs if the employee leaves after twenty or more years of service.

*Under the plan's benefit formula, the entity attributes 4% of the present value of the expected medical costs (40% divided by ten) to each of the first ten years and 1% (10% divided by ten) to each of the second ten years. The current service cost in each year reflects the probability that the employee may not complete the necessary period of service to earn part or all of the benefits. For employees expected to leave within ten years, no benefit is attributed.*

**Examples Illustrating Paragraph 82 (This example is not authoritative)***continuation*

4. A post-employment medical plan reimburses 10% of an employee's post-employment medical costs if the employee leaves after more than ten and less than twenty years of service and 50% of those costs if the employee leaves after twenty or more years of service.

*Service in later years will lead to a materially higher level of benefit than in earlier years. Therefore, for employees expected to leave after twenty or more years, the entity attributes benefit on a straight-line basis under paragraph 68. Service beyond twenty years will lead to no material amount of further benefits. Therefore, the benefit attributed to each of the first twenty years is 2.5% of the present value of the expected medical costs (50% divided by twenty).*

*For employees expected to leave between ten and twenty years, the benefit attributed to each of the first ten years is 1% of the present value of the expected medical costs. For these employees, no benefit is attributed to service between the end of the tenth year and the estimated date of leaving.*

*For employees expected to leave within ten years, no benefit is attributed.*

83. Where the amount of a benefit is a constant proportion of final salary for each year of service, future salary increases will affect the amount required to settle the obligation that exists for service before the reporting date, but do not create an additional obligation. Therefore:
- (a) For the purpose of paragraph 79(b), salary increases do not lead to further benefits, even though the amount of the benefits is dependent on final salary; and
  - (b) The amount of benefit attributed to each period is a constant proportion of the salary to which the benefit is linked.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 83 (This example is not authoritative)**

Employees are entitled to a benefit of 3% of final salary for each year of service before the age of 55.

*Benefit of 3% of estimated final salary is attributed to each year up to the age of 55. This is the date when further service by the employee will lead to no material amount of further benefits under the plan. No benefit is attributed to service after that age.*

**Actuarial Assumptions**

84. **Actuarial assumptions shall be unbiased and mutually compatible.**

85. Actuarial assumptions are an entity's best estimates of the variables that will determine the ultimate cost of providing post-employment benefits. Actuarial assumptions comprise:
- (a) Demographic assumptions about the future characteristics of current and former employees (and their dependants) who are eligible for benefits. Demographic assumptions deal with matters such as:
    - (i) Mortality, both during and after employment;
    - (ii) Rates of employee turnover, disability and early retirement;
    - (iii) The proportion of plan members with dependants who will be eligible for benefits; and
    - (iv) Claim rates under medical plans; and
  - (b) Financial assumptions, dealing with items such as:
    - (i) The discount rate (see paragraphs 90-94);
    - (ii) Future salary and benefit levels (see paragraphs 95-99);
    - (iii) In the case of medical benefits, future medical costs, including, where material, the cost of administering claims and benefit payments (see paragraphs 100-103); and
    - (iv) The expected rate of return on plan assets (see paragraphs 124-125).
86. Actuarial assumptions are unbiased if they are neither imprudent nor excessively conservative.
87. Actuarial assumptions are mutually compatible if they reflect the economic relationships between factors such as inflation, rates of salary increase, the return on plan assets and discount rates. For example, all assumptions which depend on a particular inflation level (such as assumptions about interest rates and salary and benefit increases) in any given future period assume the same inflation level in that period.
88. An entity determines the discount rate and other financial assumptions in nominal (stated) terms, unless estimates in real (inflation-adjusted) terms are more reliable, for example, in a hyper-inflationary economy (see IPSAS 10, "Financial Reporting in Hyperinflationary Economies"), or where the benefit is index-linked and there is a deep market in index-linked bonds of the same currency and term.
89. **Financial assumptions shall be based on market expectations, at the reporting date, for the period over which the obligations are to be settled.**

**Actuarial Assumptions: Discount Rate**

90. **The rate used to discount post-employment benefit obligations (both funded and unfunded) shall be a risk-free rate determined by reference to market yields at the reporting date on government bonds, or, where there is no deep market in government bonds, or where market yields at the reporting date on government bonds do not reflect a risk-free rate, by reference to market yields on high quality corporate bonds. The currency and term of the government bonds or corporate bonds shall be consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations.**
91. One actuarial assumption which has a material effect is the discount rate. The discount rate reflects the time value of money but not the actuarial or investment risk. Furthermore, the discount rate does not reflect the entity-specific credit risk borne by the entity's creditors, nor does it reflect the risk that future experience may differ from actuarial assumptions.
92. The discount rate reflects the estimated timing of benefit payments. In practice, an entity often achieves this by applying a single weighted average discount rate that reflects the estimated timing and amount of benefit payments and the currency in which the benefits are to be paid.
93. There may be jurisdictions where there is no deep market in government bonds or where market yields at the reporting date on government bonds do not reflect a risk-free rate. In such cases the reporting entity determines the risk-free rate by reference to market yields on high quality corporate bonds. In some cases there may be no deep market in government bonds or high quality corporate bonds with a sufficiently long maturity to match the estimated maturity of all the benefit payments. In such cases, an entity uses current market rates of the appropriate term to discount shorter term payments, and estimates the discount rate for longer maturities by extrapolating current market rates along the yield curve. The total present value of a defined benefit obligation is unlikely to be particularly sensitive to the discount rate applied to the portion of benefits that is payable beyond the final maturity of the available government bonds or corporate bonds.
94. Interest cost is computed by multiplying the discount rate as determined at the start of the period by the present value of the defined benefit obligation throughout that period, taking account of any material changes in the obligation. The present value of the obligation will differ from the liability recognized in the statement of financial position because the liability is recognized after deducting the fair value of any plan assets and because some actuarial gains and losses, and some past service cost, are not recognized immediately. [Implementation Guidance A illustrates the computation of interest cost, among other things.]

**Actuarial Assumptions: Salaries, Benefits and Medical Costs**

95. **Post-employment benefit obligations shall be measured on a basis that reflects:**
- (a) **Estimated future salary increases;**
  - (b) **The benefits set out in the terms of the plan (or resulting from any constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) at the reporting date; and**
  - (c) **Estimated future changes in the level of any state benefits that affect the benefits payable under a defined benefit plan, if, and only if, either:**
    - (i) **Those changes were enacted before the reporting date; or**
    - (ii) **Past history, or other reliable evidence, indicates that those state benefits will change in some predictable manner, for example, in line with future changes in general price levels or general salary levels.**
96. Estimates of future salary increases take account of inflation, seniority, promotion and other relevant factors, such as supply and demand in the employment market.
97. If the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) require an entity to change benefits in future periods, the measurement of the obligation reflects those changes. This is the case when, for example:
- (a) The entity has a past history of increasing benefits, for example, to mitigate the effects of inflation, and there is no indication that this practice will change in the future; or
  - (b) Actuarial gains have already been recognized in the financial statements and the entity is obliged, by either the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) or legislation, to use any surplus in the plan for the benefit of plan participants (see paragraph 113(c)).
98. Actuarial assumptions do not reflect future benefit changes that are not set out in the formal terms of the plan (or a constructive obligation) at the reporting date. Such changes will result in:
- (a) Past service cost, to the extent that they change benefits for service before the change; and
  - (b) Current service cost for periods after the change, to the extent that they change benefits for service after the change.
99. Some post-employment benefits are linked to variables such as the level of benefit entitlements from social security pensions or state medical care. The

measurement of such benefits reflects expected changes in such variables, based on past history and other reliable evidence.

100. **Assumptions about medical costs shall take account of estimated future changes in the cost of medical services, resulting from both inflation and specific changes in medical costs.**
101. Measurement of post-employment medical benefits requires assumptions about the level and frequency of future claims and the cost of meeting those claims. An entity estimates future medical costs on the basis of historical data about the entity's own experience, supplemented where necessary by historical data from other entities, insurance companies, medical providers or other sources. Estimates of future medical costs consider the effect of technological advances, changes in health care utilisation or delivery patterns and changes in the health status of plan participants.
102. The level and frequency of claims is particularly sensitive to the age, health status and sex of employees (and their dependants) and may be sensitive to other factors such as geographical location. Therefore, historical data is adjusted to the extent that the demographic mix of the population differs from that of the population used as a basis for the historical data. It is also adjusted where there is reliable evidence that historical trends will not continue.
103. Some post-employment health care plans require employees to contribute to the medical costs covered by the plan. Estimates of future medical costs take account of any such contributions, based on the terms of the plan at the reporting date (or based on any constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms). Changes in those employee contributions result in past service cost or, where applicable, curtailments. The cost of meeting claims may be reduced by benefits from state or other medical providers (see paragraphs 95(c) and 99).

#### **Actuarial Gains and Losses**

104. **In measuring its defined benefit liability in accordance with paragraph 64, an entity shall, subject to paragraph 69, recognize a portion (as specified in paragraph 105) of its actuarial gains and losses as revenue or expense if the net cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains and losses at the end of the previous reporting period exceeded the greater of:**
- (a) **10% of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at that date (before deducting plan assets); and**
  - (b) **10% of the fair value of any plan assets at that date.**

**These limits shall be calculated and applied separately for each defined benefit plan.**

105. **The portion of actuarial gains and losses to be recognized for each defined benefit plan is the excess determined in accordance with paragraph 104, divided by the expected average remaining working lives of the employees participating in that plan. However, an entity may adopt any systematic method that results in faster recognition of actuarial gains and losses, provided that the same basis is applied to both gains and losses and the basis is applied consistently from period to period. An entity may apply such systematic methods to actuarial gains and losses even if they are within the limits specified in paragraph 104.**
106. **If, as permitted by paragraph 105, an entity adopts a policy of recognising actuarial gains and losses in the period in which they occur, it may recognize them outside surplus or deficit, in accordance with paragraphs 107-109, providing it does so for:**
- (a) **All of its defined benefit plans; and**
  - (b) **All of its actuarial gains and losses.**
107. Actuarial gains and losses recognized outside surplus or deficit as permitted by paragraph 106 shall be presented in the statement of recognized revenue and expense. An entity that recognizes actuarial gains and losses in accordance with paragraph 106 shall also recognize any adjustments arising from the limit in paragraph 68(b) outside surplus or deficit in the statement of recognized revenue and expense.
108. Actuarial gains and losses and adjustments arising from the limit in paragraph 68(b) that have been recognized directly in the statement of recognized revenue and expense shall be recognized immediately in accumulated surpluses or deficit. They shall not be recognized in surplus or deficit in a subsequent period.
109. Actuarial gains and losses may result from increases or decreases in either the present value of a defined benefit obligation or the fair value of any related plan assets. Causes of actuarial gains and losses include, for example:
- (a) Unexpectedly high or low rates of employee turnover, early retirement or mortality or of increases in salaries, benefits (if the formal or constructive terms of a plan provide for inflationary benefit increases) or medical costs;
  - (b) The effect of changes in estimates of future employee turnover, early retirement or mortality or of increases in salaries, benefits (if the formal or constructive terms of a plan provide for inflationary benefit increases) or medical costs;
  - (c) The effect of changes in the discount rate; and
  - (d) Differences between the actual return on plan assets and the expected return on plan assets (see paragraphs 124-125).

110. In the long term, actuarial gains and losses may offset one another. Therefore, estimates of post-employment benefit obligations may be viewed as a range (or 'corridor') around the best estimate. An entity is permitted, but not required, to recognize actuarial gains and losses that fall within that range. This Standard requires an entity to recognize, as a minimum, a specified portion of the actuarial gains and losses that fall outside a 'corridor' of plus or minus 10%. [Implementation Guidance A illustrates the treatment of actuarial gains and losses, among other things.] The Standard also permits systematic methods of faster recognition, provided that those methods satisfy the conditions set out in paragraph 105. Such permitted methods include, for example, immediate recognition of all actuarial gains and losses, both within and outside the 'corridor'.

#### **Past Service Cost**

111. **In measuring its defined benefit liability under paragraph 64, an entity shall, subject to paragraph 69, recognize past service cost as an expense on a straight-line basis over the average period until the benefits become vested. To the extent that the benefits are already vested immediately following the introduction of, or changes to, a defined benefit plan, an entity shall recognize past service cost immediately.**
112. Past service cost arises when an entity introduces a defined benefit plan or changes the benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan. Such changes are in return for employee service over the period until the benefits concerned are vested. Therefore, past service cost is recognized over that period, regardless of the fact that the cost refers to employee service in previous periods. Past service cost is measured as the change in the liability resulting from the amendment (see paragraph 76).



**Example Illustrating Paragraph 112 (This example is not authoritative)**

An entity operates a pension plan that provides a pension of 2% of final salary for each year of service. The benefits become vested after five years of service. On 1 January 20X9 the entity improves the pension to 2.5% of final salary for each year of service starting from 1 January 20X9. At the date of the improvement, the present value of the additional benefits for service from 1 January 20X5 to 1 January 20X9 is as follows:

Employees with more than five years' service at 1/1/X9	150
Employees with less than five years' service at 1/1/X9 (average period until vesting: three years)	120
	270

*The entity recognizes 150 immediately because those benefits are already vested. The entity recognizes 120 on a straight-line basis over three years from 1 January 20X9.*

113. Past service cost excludes:
- (a) The effect of differences between actual and previously assumed salary increases on the obligation to pay benefits for service in prior years (there is no past service cost because actuarial assumptions allow for projected salaries);
  - (b) Under and over estimates of discretionary pension increases where an entity has a constructive obligation to grant such increases (there is no past service cost because actuarial assumptions allow for such increases);
  - (c) Estimates of benefit improvements that result from actuarial gains that have already been recognized in the financial statements if the entity is obliged, by either the formal terms of a plan (or a constructive obligation that goes beyond those terms) or legislation, to use any surplus in the plan for the benefit of plan participants, even if the benefit increase has not yet been formally awarded (the resulting increase in the obligation is an actuarial loss and not past service cost, see paragraph 98(a));
  - (d) The increase in vested benefits when, in the absence of new or improved benefits, employees complete vesting requirements (there is no past service cost because the estimated cost of benefits was recognized as current service cost as the service was rendered); and

- (e) The effect of plan amendments that reduce benefits for future service (a curtailment).
114. An entity establishes the amortization schedule for past service cost when the benefits are introduced or changed. It would be impracticable to maintain the detailed records needed to identify and implement subsequent changes in that amortization schedule. Moreover, the effect is likely to be material only where there is a curtailment or settlement. Therefore, an entity amends the amortization schedule for past service cost only if there is a curtailment or settlement.
  115. Where an entity reduces benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan, the resulting reduction in the defined benefit liability is recognized as (negative) past service cost over the average period until the reduced portion of the benefits becomes vested.
  116. Where an entity reduces certain benefits payable under an existing defined benefit plan and, at the same time, increases other benefits payable under the plan for the same employees, the entity treats the change as a single net change.

## **Recognition and Measurement: Plan Assets**

### **Fair Value of Plan Assets**

117. The fair value of any plan assets is deducted in determining the amount recognized in the statement of financial position under paragraph 64. When no market price is available, the fair value of plan assets is estimated; for example, by discounting expected future cash flows using a discount rate that reflects both the risk associated with the plan assets and the maturity or expected disposal date of those assets (or, if they have no maturity, the expected period until the settlement of the related obligation).
118. Plan assets exclude unpaid contributions due from the reporting entity to the fund, as well as any non-transferable financial instruments issued by the entity and held by the fund. Plan assets are reduced by any liabilities of the fund that do not relate to employee benefits, for example, trade and other payables and liabilities resulting from derivative financial instruments.
119. Where plan assets include qualifying insurance policies that exactly match the amount and timing of some or all of the benefits payable under the plan, the fair value of those insurance policies is deemed to be the present value of the related obligations, as described in paragraph 64 (subject to any reduction required if the amounts receivable under the insurance policies are not recoverable in full).

### **Reimbursements**

120. **When, and only when, it is virtually certain that another party will reimburse some or all of the expenditure required to settle a defined benefit obligation, an entity shall recognize its right to reimbursement as a separate asset. The entity shall measure the asset at fair value. In all other respects,**

**an entity shall treat that asset in the same way as plan assets. In the statement of financial performance, the expense relating to a defined benefit plan may be presented net of the amount recognized for a reimbursement.**

121. Sometimes, an entity is able to look to another party to pay part or all of the expenditure required to settle a defined benefit obligation. Such parties may include insurers or other public sector entities. For example, the national governments which are members of a supra-national public sector body may have entered into a legally enforceable commitment to pay part or all of the expenditure required to settle the defined benefit obligations of that supra-national body.
122. Qualifying insurance policies, as defined in paragraph 10 are plan assets. An entity accounts for qualifying insurance policies in the same way as for all other plan assets and paragraph 120 does not apply (see paragraphs 49-52 and 119). When an insurance policy is not a qualifying insurance policy, that insurance policy is not a plan asset. Paragraph 120 deals with such cases: the entity recognizes its right to reimbursement under the insurance policy as a separate asset, rather than as a deduction in determining the defined benefit liability recognized under paragraph 64; in all other respects, the entity treats that asset in the same way as plan assets. In particular, the defined benefit liability recognized under paragraph 64 is increased (reduced) to the extent that net cumulative actuarial gains (losses) on the defined benefit obligation and on the related reimbursement right remain unrecognized under paragraphs 104 and 105. Paragraph 140(f)(iv) requires the entity to disclose a brief description of the link between the reimbursement right and the related obligation.

<b>Example Illustrating Paragraphs 120-122 (This example is not authoritative)</b>	
Present value of obligation	1241
Unrecognized actuarial gains	17
Liability recognized in statement of financial position	1258
Reimbursements from other public sector entities that exactly match the amount and timing of some of the benefits payable under the plan. Those benefits have a present value of 1,092.	1092
The unrecognized actuarial gains of 17 are the net cumulative actuarial gains on the obligation and on the reimbursement rights.	

123. If the right to reimbursement arises under an insurance policy or a legally binding agreement exactly matches the amount and timing of some or all of the

benefits payable under a defined benefit plan, the fair value of the reimbursement right is deemed to be the present value of the related obligation, as described in paragraph 64 (subject to any reduction required if the reimbursement is not recoverable in full).

### Return on Plan Assets

124. The expected return on plan assets is one component of the expense recognized in the statement of financial performance. The difference between the expected return on plan assets and the actual return on plan assets is an actuarial gain or loss; it is included with the actuarial gains and losses on the defined benefit obligation in determining the net amount that is compared with the limits of the 10% ‘corridor’ specified in paragraph 104.
125. The expected return on plan assets is based on market expectations, at the beginning of the period, for returns over the entire life of the related obligation. The expected return on plan assets reflects changes in the fair value of plan assets held during the period as a result of actual contributions paid into the fund and actual benefits paid out of the fund.

<b>Example Illustrating Paragraph 125 (This example is not authoritative)</b>	
At 1 January 20X7, the fair value of plan assets was 10,000 and net cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains were 760. On 30 June 20X7, the plan paid benefits of 1,900 and received contributions of 4,900. At 31 December 20X7, the fair value of plan assets was 15000 and the present value of the defined benefit obligation was 14,792. Actuarial losses on the obligation for 20X7 were 60.	
At 1 January 20X7, the reporting entity made the following estimates, based on market prices at that date:	
	%
Interest and dividend income, after tax payable by the fund	9.25
Realized and unrealized gains on plan assets (after tax)	2.00
Administration costs	-1.00
Expected rate of return	10.25
For 20X7, the expected and actual return on plan assets are as follows:	
Return on 10,000 held for 12 months at 10.25%	1025

<b>Example Illustrating Paragraph 125 (This example is not authoritative)</b> <i>continuation</i>	
Return on 3,000 held for six months at 5% (equivalent to 10.25% annually, compounded every six months)	150
Expected return on plan assets for 20X7	1175
Fair value of plan assets at 31 December 20X7	15000
Less fair value of plan assets at 1 January 20X7	-10000
Less contributions received	-4900
Add benefits paid	1900
Actual return on plan assets	2000
<p><i>The difference between the expected return on plan assets -1,175 and the actual return on plan assets -2,000 is an actuarial gain of 825. Therefore, the cumulative net unrecognized actuarial gains are 1,525 (760 plus 825 less 60). Under paragraph 104, the limits of the corridor are set at 1,500 (greater of: (i) 10% of 15,000 and (ii) 10% of 14,792). In the following year (20X8), the entity recognizes in surplus or deficit an actuarial gain of 25 (1,525 less 1,500) divided by the expected average remaining working life of the employees concerned.</i></p> <p><i>The expected return on plan assets for 20X8 will be based on market expectations at 1/1/X8 for returns over the entire life of the obligation.</i></p>	

126. In determining the expected and actual return on plan assets, an entity deducts expected administration costs, other than those included in the actuarial assumptions used to measure the obligation.

### **Entity Combinations**

127. In determining the assets and liabilities to be recognized related to post-employment benefits in an entity combination an entity considers the international or national accounting standard dealing with entity combinations.

### **Curtailments and Settlements**

128. **An entity shall recognize gains or losses on the curtailment or settlement of a defined benefit plan when the curtailment or settlement occurs. The gain or loss on a curtailment or settlement shall comprise:**
- (a) **Any resulting change in the present value of the defined benefit obligation;**
  - (b) **Any resulting change in the fair value of the plan assets;**

- (c) **Any related actuarial gains and losses and past service cost that, under paragraphs 104 and 111, had not previously been recognized.**
129. **Before determining the effect of a curtailment or settlement, an entity shall remeasure the obligation (and the related plan assets, if any) using current actuarial assumptions (including current market interest rates and other current market prices).**
130. A curtailment occurs when an entity either:
- (a) Is demonstrably committed to make a material reduction in the number of employees covered by a plan; or
  - (b) Amends the terms of a defined benefit plan such that a material element of future service by current employees will no longer qualify for benefits, or will qualify only for reduced benefits.
- A curtailment may arise from an isolated event, such as the closing of a plant, discontinuance of an operation or termination or suspension of a plan. An event is material enough to qualify as a curtailment if the recognition of a curtailment gain or loss would have a material effect on the financial statements. Curtailments are often linked with a restructuring. Therefore, an entity accounts for a curtailment at the same time as for a related restructuring.
131. A settlement occurs when an entity enters into a transaction that eliminates all further legal or constructive obligation for part or all of the benefits provided under a defined benefit plan, for example, when a lump-sum cash payment is made to, or on behalf of, plan participants in exchange for their rights to receive specified post-employment benefits.
132. In some cases, an entity acquires an insurance policy to fund some or all of the employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods. The acquisition of such a policy is not a settlement if the entity retains a legal or constructive obligation (see paragraph 49) to pay further amounts if the insurer does not pay the employee benefits specified in the insurance policy. Paragraphs 120-123 deal with the recognition and measurement of reimbursement rights under insurance policies that are not plan assets.
133. A settlement occurs together with a curtailment if a plan is terminated such that the obligation is settled and the plan ceases to exist. However, the termination of a plan is not a curtailment or settlement if the plan is replaced by a new plan that offers benefits that are, in substance, identical.
134. Where a curtailment relates to only some of the employees covered by a plan, or where only part of an obligation is settled, the gain or loss includes a proportionate share of the previously unrecognized past service cost and actuarial gains and losses. The proportionate share is determined on the basis of the present value of the obligations before and after the curtailment or

settlement, unless another basis is more rational in the circumstances. For example, it may be appropriate to apply any gain arising on a curtailment or settlement of the same plan to first eliminate any unrecognized past service cost relating to the same plan.

**Example Illustrating Paragraph 134 (This example is not authoritative)**

A public sector entity is required by legislation to discontinue the direct provision of waste collection and waste disposal services. Employees of this discontinued segment will earn no further benefits. This is a curtailment without a settlement. Using current actuarial assumptions (including current market interest rates and other current market prices) immediately before the curtailment, the entity has a defined benefit obligation with a net present value of 1,000, plan assets with a fair value of 820 and net cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains of 50. The curtailment reduces the net present value of the obligation by 100 to 900.

*Of the previously unrecognized actuarial gains, 10% (100/1,000) relates to the part of the obligation that was eliminated through the curtailment. Therefore, the effect of the curtailment is as follows:*

	Before curtailment	Curtailment gain	After curtailment
Net present value of obligation	1000	-100	900
Fair value of plan assets	-820	-	-820
	180	-100	80
Unrecognized actuarial gains	50	-5	45
Net liability recognized in statement of financial position	230	-105	125

## Presentation

### Offset

135. **An entity shall offset an asset relating to one plan against a liability relating to another plan when, and only when, the entity:**
- (a) **Has a legally enforceable right to use a surplus in one plan to settle obligations under the other plan; and**
  - (b) **Intends either to settle the obligations on a net basis, or to realise the surplus in one plan and settle its obligation under the other plan simultaneously.**

136. The offsetting criteria are similar to those established for financial instruments in IPSAS 15, “Financial Instruments: Disclosure and Presentation”.

#### **Current/Non-current Distinction**

137. Some entities distinguish current assets and liabilities from non-current assets and liabilities. This Standard does not specify whether an entity should distinguish current and non-current portions of assets and liabilities arising from post-employment benefits.

#### **Financial Components of Post-employment Benefit Costs**

138. This Standard does not specify whether an entity should present current service cost, interest cost and the expected return on plan assets as components of a single item of revenue or expense on the face of the statement of financial performance.

#### **Disclosure**

139. **An entity shall disclose information that enables users of financial statements to evaluate the nature of its defined benefit plans and the financial effects of changes in those plans during the period.**
140. **An entity shall disclose the following information about defined benefit plans:**
- (a) **The entity’s accounting policy for recognizing actuarial gains and losses;**
  - (b) **A general description of the type of plan;**
  - (c) **A reconciliation of opening and closing balances of the present value of the defined benefit obligation showing separately, if applicable, the effects during the period attributable to each of the following:**
    - (i) **Current service cost;**
    - (ii) **Interest cost;**
    - (iii) **Contributions by plan participants;**
    - (iv) **Actuarial gains and losses;**
    - (v) **Foreign currency exchange rate changes on plans measured in a currency different from the entity’s presentation currency;**
    - (vi) **Benefits paid;**
    - (vii) **Past service cost;**
    - (viii) **Entity combinations;**



- (ix) **Curtailments; and**
- (x) **Settlements.**
- (d) **An analysis of the defined benefit obligation into amounts arising from plans that are wholly unfunded and amounts arising from plans that are wholly or partly funded.**
- (e) **A reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of the fair value of plan assets and of the opening and closing balances of any reimbursement right recognized as an asset in accordance with paragraph 120 showing separately, if applicable, the effects during the period attributable to each of the following:**
  - (i) **Expected return on plan assets;**
  - (ii) **Actuarial gains and losses;**
  - (iii) **Foreign currency exchange rate changes on plans measured in a currency different from the entity's presentation currency;**
  - (iv) **Contributions by the employer;**
  - (v) **Contributions by plan participants;**
  - (vi) **Benefits paid;**
  - (vii) **Entity combinations; and**
  - (viii) **Settlements.**
- (f) **A reconciliation of the present value of the defined benefit obligation in (c) and the fair value of the plan assets in (e) to the assets and liabilities recognized in the statement of financial position, showing at least:**
  - (i) **The net actuarial gains or losses not recognized in the statement of financial position (see paragraph 104);**
  - (ii) **The past service cost not recognized in the statement of financial position (see paragraph 111);**
  - (iii) **Any amount not recognized as an asset, because of the limit in paragraph 68(b);**
  - (iv) **The fair value at the reporting date of any reimbursement right recognized as an asset in accordance with paragraph 120 (with a brief description of the link between the reimbursement right and the related obligation); and**
  - (v) **The other amounts recognized in the statement of financial position.**

- (g) **The total expense recognized in the statement of financial performance for each of the following, and the line item(s) in which they are included:**
  - (i) **Current service cost;**
  - (ii) **Interest cost;**
  - (iii) **Expected return on plan assets;**
  - (iv) **Expected return on any reimbursement right recognized as an asset in accordance with paragraph 120;**
  - (v) **Actuarial gains and losses;**
  - (vi) **Past service cost;**
  - (vii) **The effect of any curtailment or settlement; and**
  - (viii) **The effect of the limit in paragraph 68(b).**
- (h) **The total amount recognized in the statement of recognized revenue and expense for each of the following:**
  - (i) **Actuarial gains and losses; and**
  - (ii) **The effect of the limit in paragraph 68(b).**
- (i) **For entities that recognize actuarial gains and losses in the statement of recognized revenue and expense in accordance with paragraph 106, the cumulative amount of actuarial gains and losses recognized in the statement of recognized revenue and expense.**
- (j) **For each major category of plan assets, which shall include, but is not limited to, equity instruments, debt instruments, property, and all other assets, the percentage or amount that each major category constitutes of the fair value of the total plan assets.**
- (k) **The amounts included in the fair value of plan assets for:**
  - (i) **Each category of the entity's own financial instruments; and**
  - (ii) **Any property occupied by, or other assets used by, the entity.**
- (l) **A narrative description of the basis used to determine the overall expected rate of return on assets, including the effect of the major categories of plan assets.**
- (m) **The actual return on plan assets, as well as the actual return on any reimbursement right recognized as an asset in accordance with paragraph 120.**

- (n) **The principal actuarial assumptions used as at the reporting date, including, when applicable:**
- (i) **The discount rates;**
  - (ii) **Whether the discount rates have been based on government bonds or high quality corporate bonds;**
  - (iii) **The expected rates of return on any plan assets for the periods presented in the financial statements;**
  - (iv) **The expected rates of return for the periods presented in the financial statements on any reimbursement right recognized as an asset in accordance with paragraph 120;**
  - (v) **The expected rates of salary increases (and of changes in an index or other variable specified in the formal or constructive terms of a plan as the basis for future benefit increases);**
  - (vi) **Medical cost trend rates; and**
  - (vii) **Any other material actuarial assumptions used.**

**An entity shall disclose each actuarial assumption in absolute terms (for example, as an absolute percentage) and not just as a margin between different percentages or other variables.**

- (o) **The effect of an increase of one percentage point and the effect of a decrease of one percentage point in the assumed medical cost trend rates on:**
- (i) **The aggregate of the current service cost and interest cost components of net periodic post-employment medical costs; and**
  - (ii) **The accumulated post-employment benefit obligation for medical costs.**

**For the purposes of this disclosure, all other assumptions shall be held constant. For plans operating in a high inflation environment, the disclosure shall be the effect of a percentage increase or decrease in the assumed medical cost trend rate of a significance similar to one percentage point in a low inflation environment.**

- (p) **The amounts for the current annual period and previous four annual periods of:**
- (i) **The present value of the defined benefit obligation, the fair value of the plan assets and the surplus or deficit in the plan; and**

- (ii) **The experience adjustments arising on:**
    - **The plan liabilities expressed either as (1) an amount or (2) a percentage of the plan liabilities at the reporting date; and**
    - **The plan assets expressed either as (1) an amount or (2) a percentage of the plan assets at the reporting date.**
  - (q) **The employer’s best estimate, as soon as it can reasonably be determined, of contributions expected to be paid to the plan during the annual period beginning after the reporting date.**
141. Paragraph 140(b) requires a general description of the type of plan. Such a description distinguishes, for example, flat salary pension plans from final salary pension plans and from post-employment medical plans. The description of the plan shall include informal practices that give rise to constructive obligations included in the measurement of the defined benefit obligation in accordance with paragraph 62. Further detail is not required.
142. When an entity has more than one defined benefit plan, disclosures may be made in total, separately for each plan, or in such groupings as are considered to be the most useful. It may be useful to distinguish groupings by criteria such as the following:
- (a) The geographical location of the plans; or
  - (b) Whether plans are subject to materially different risks, for example, by distinguishing flat salary pension plans from final salary pension plans and from post-employment medical plans.
- When an entity provides disclosures in total for a grouping of plans, such disclosures are provided in the form of weighted averages or of relatively narrow ranges.
143. Paragraph 33 requires additional disclosures about multi-employer defined benefit plans that are treated as if they were defined contribution plans.
144. Where required by IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures” an entity discloses information about:
- (a) Related party transactions with post-employment benefit plans; and
  - (b) Post-employment benefits for key management personnel.
145. Where required by IPSAS 19, “Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets” an entity discloses information about contingent liabilities arising from post-employment benefit obligations.

## Other Long-term Employee Benefits

146. Other long-term employee benefits include, for example:
- (a) Long-term compensated absences such as long-service or sabbatical leave;
  - (b) Jubilee or other long-service benefits;
  - (c) Long-term disability benefits;
  - (d) Profit-sharing and bonuses payable twelve months or more after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service; and
  - (e) Deferred compensation paid twelve months or more after the end of the period in which it is earned.
147. The measurement of other long-term employee benefits is not usually subject to the same degree of uncertainty as the measurement of post-employment benefits. Furthermore, the introduction of, or changes to, other long-term employee benefits rarely causes a material amount of past service cost. For these reasons, this Standard requires a simplified method of accounting for other long-term employee benefits. This method differs from the accounting required for post-employment benefits as follows:
- (a) Actuarial gains and losses are recognized immediately and no 'corridor' is applied; and
  - (b) All past service cost is recognized immediately.

## Recognition and Measurement

148. **The amount recognized as a liability for other long-term employee benefits shall be the net total of the following amounts:**
- (a) **The present value of the defined benefit obligation at the reporting date (see paragraph 76);**
  - (b) **Minus the fair value at the reporting date of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly (see paragraphs 117-119).**
- In measuring the liability, an entity shall apply paragraphs 54-103, excluding paragraphs 64 and 73. An entity shall apply paragraph 120 in recognising and measuring any reimbursement right.**
149. **For other long-term employee benefits, an entity shall recognize the net total of the following amounts as expense or (subject to paragraph 68) revenue, except to the extent that another Standard requires or permits their inclusion in the cost of an asset:**

- (a) **Current service cost (see paragraphs 75–103);**
  - (b) **Interest cost (see paragraph 94);**
  - (c) **The expected return on any plan assets (see paragraphs 124-125) and on any reimbursement right recognized as an asset (see paragraph 120);**
  - (d) **Actuarial gains and losses, which shall all be recognized immediately;**
  - (e) **Past service cost, which shall all be recognized immediately; and**
  - (f) **The effect of any curtailments or settlements (see paragraphs 128 and 129).**
150. One form of other long-term employee benefit is long-term disability benefit. If the level of benefit depends on the length of service, an obligation arises when the service is rendered. Measurement of that obligation reflects the probability that payment will be required and the length of time for which payment is expected to be made. If the level of benefit is the same for any disabled employee regardless of years of service, the expected cost of those benefits is recognized when an event occurs that causes a long-term disability.

### **Disclosure**

151. Although this Standard does not require specific disclosures about other long-term employee benefits, other Standards may require disclosures, for example, where the expense resulting from such benefits is material and so would require disclosure in accordance with IPSAS 1, “Presentation of Financial Statements”. When required by IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures”, an entity discloses information about other long-term employee benefits for key management personnel.

### **Termination Benefits**

152. This Standard deals with termination benefits separately from other employee benefits because the event which gives rise to an obligation is the termination rather than employee service.

### **Recognition**

153. **An entity shall recognize termination benefits as a liability and an expense when, and only when, the entity is demonstrably committed to either:**
- (a) **Terminate the employment of an employee or group of employees before the normal retirement date; or**
  - (b) **Provide termination benefits as a result of an offer made in order to encourage voluntary redundancy.**

154. **An entity is demonstrably committed to a termination when, and only when, the entity has a detailed formal plan for the termination and is without realistic possibility of withdrawal. The detailed plan shall include, as a minimum:**
- (a) **The location, function, and approximate number of employees whose services are to be terminated;**
  - (b) **The termination benefits for each job classification or function; and**
  - (c) **The time at which the plan will be implemented. Implementation shall begin as soon as possible and the period of time to complete implementation shall be such that material changes to the plan are not likely.**
155. An entity may be committed, by legislation, by contractual or other agreements with employees or their representatives or by a constructive obligation based on business practice, custom or a desire to act equitably, to make payments (or provide other benefits) to employees when it terminates their employment. Such payments are termination benefits. Termination benefits are typically lump-sum payments, but sometimes also include:
- (a) Enhancement of retirement benefits or of other post-employment benefits, either indirectly through an employee benefit plan or directly; and
  - (b) Salary until the end of a specified notice period if the employee renders no further service that provides economic benefits to the entity.
156. Some employee benefits are payable regardless of the reason for the employee's departure. The payment of such benefits is certain (subject to any vesting or minimum service requirements) but the timing of their payment is uncertain. Although such benefits are described in some countries as termination indemnities, or termination gratuities, they are post-employment benefits, rather than termination benefits and an entity accounts for them as post-employment benefits. Some entities provide a lower level of benefit for voluntary termination at the request of the employee (in substance, a post-employment benefit) than for involuntary termination at the request of the entity. The additional benefit payable on involuntary termination is a termination benefit.
157. Termination benefits do not provide an entity with future economic benefits and are recognized as an expense immediately.
158. Where an entity recognizes termination benefits, the entity may also have to account for a curtailment of retirement benefits or other employee benefits (see paragraph 128).

**Measurement**

159. **Where termination benefits fall due more than 12 months after the reporting date, they shall be discounted using the discount rate specified in paragraph 90.**
160. **In the case of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy, the measurement of termination benefits shall be based on the number of employees expected to accept the offer.**

**Disclosure**

161. Where there is uncertainty about the number of employees who will accept an offer of termination benefits, a contingent liability exists. As required by IPSAS 19, "Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets" an entity discloses information about the contingent liability unless the possibility of an outflow in settlement is remote.
162. As required by IPSAS 1, an entity discloses the nature and amount of an expense if it is material. Termination benefits may result in an expense needing disclosure in order to comply with this requirement.
163. Where required by IPSAS 20, "Related Party Disclosures" an entity discloses information about termination benefits for key management personnel.

**First Time Adoption of this Standard**

164. **On first adopting this Standard, an entity shall determine its initial liability for defined benefit plans at that date as:**
- (a) **The present value of the obligations (see paragraph 76) at the date of adoption;**
  - (b) **Minus the fair value, at the date of adoption, of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly (see paragraphs 117-119);**
  - (c) **Minus any past service cost that, under paragraph 111, shall be recognized in later periods.**
165. **If the initial liability determined in accordance with paragraph 164 is more or less than the liability that would have been recognized at the same date under the entity's previous accounting policy, the entity shall recognize that increase/decrease in opening accumulated surpluses or deficits.**
166. On the initial adoption of the Standard, the effect of the change in accounting policy includes all actuarial gains and losses that arose in earlier periods even if they fall inside the 'corridor' specified in paragraph 104. Entities reporting under accrual accounting for the first time will not have recognized any liability, in which case the increase in the liability will represent the full amount of the



liability minus any past service cost to be recognized in later periods in accordance with paragraph 164(c). Under the provisions of this Standard, this increased liability is recognized in accumulated surpluses or deficits.

<b>Example Illustrating Paragraphs 164 to 166 (This example is not authoritative)</b>	
At 31 December 2007, an entity's statement of financial position includes a pension liability of 1,000. The entity adopts this Standard as of 1 January 2008, when the present value of the obligation under the Standard is 1,300 and the fair value of plan assets is 1,000. On 1 January 2002, the entity had improved pensions (cost for non-vested benefits: 160; and average remaining period at that date until vesting: 10 years).	
The initial effect is as follows:	
Present value of the obligation	1300
Fair value of plan assets	-1000
Less: past service cost to be recognized in later periods ( $160 \times 4/10$ )	-64
Initial liability	236
Liability already recognized under previous policy	100
Additional liability	136
The entity recognizes the additional liability of 136 in accumulated surpluses or deficits.	

167. **On first adopting this Standard an entity shall not split the cumulative actuarial gains and losses from the inception of the defined benefit plan(s) until the date of first adoption of this Standard into a recognized and unrecognized portion. All cumulative actuarial gains and losses shall be recognized in opening accumulated surpluses or deficits.**
168. On first adoption of this Standard, entities are not permitted to split cumulative actuarial gains and losses into recognized and unrecognized portions. All cumulative gains and losses are recognized in opening accumulated surpluses or deficits. This requirement on first time adoption of this Standard does not preclude an entity electing to recognize only part of its actuarial gains and losses in accordance with the requirements in paragraphs 104 and 105 in subsequent reporting periods.

169. **In the first year of adoption of this Standard an entity is not required to provide comparative information.**
170. Paragraph 169 provides relief from the inclusion of comparative information to all entities in the first year of adoption of this Standard. An entity is permitted and encouraged to include comparative information where this is available.
171. **In the first year of adoption of this Standard an entity is not required to provide the disclosures in paragraphs 140(c), 140(e) and 140(f).**
172. The reconciliations in paragraphs 140(c) and 140(e) both involve the disclosure of opening balances relating to components of defined benefit obligations, plan assets and reimbursement rights. The disclosure in paragraph 140(f) requires a reconciliation which relies on information in paragraphs 140(c) and 140(e). These disclosures are not required in the first year of adoption of this Standard. An entity is permitted and encouraged to include these disclosures where the information is available.
173. **In the first year of adoption of this Standard an entity may provide the information required in paragraph 140(p) prospectively.**
174. The information specified in paragraph 140(p) relates to the present value of the defined benefit obligation, the fair value of the plan assets, the surplus or deficit in the plan and certain experience adjustments. This disclosure is only required for the current annual period in the first year of adoption. Information on prior annual periods can be provided prospectively as the entity reports under the requirements of this Standard. This allows entities to build trend information over a period rather than producing such information for reporting periods prior to the period of first adoption of the Standard.

## **Effective Date**

175. **This Standard becomes effective for annual financial statements covering periods beginning on or after January 1 201x (five years after issuance). Earlier adoption is encouraged. If an entity applies this Standard for an earlier period it shall disclose that fact.**

## Appendix A

### Amendments to other IPSASs

The amendments in this appendix shall be applied for annual financial statements covering periods beginning on or after January 1 201x (date of adoption of IPSAS XX, "Employee Benefits"). If an entity applies IPSAS XX, "Employee Benefits" for an earlier period these amendments shall be applied for that earlier period.

**In IPSAS 1, "Presentation of Financial Statements" (version approved by the IPSASB in 2006) the following underlined wording is added at the end of paragraph 118:**

118. An entity shall present a statement of changes in net assets/equity, showing on the face of the statement:

- (a) Surplus or deficit for the period;
- (b) Each item of revenue and expense for the period that, as required by other International Public Sector Accounting Standards, is recognized directly in net assets/equity, and the total of these items;
- (c) Total revenue and expense for the period (calculated as the sum of (a) and (b)) showing separately the total amounts attributable to owners of the controlling entity and to minority interest; and
- (d) For each component of net assets/equity separately disclosed, the effects of changes in accounting policies and corrections of errors recognized in accordance with IPSAS 3.

A statement of changes in net assets/equity that comprises only these items shall be titled a statement of recognized revenue and expense.

## Implementation Guidance A: Funded Defined Benefit Plan

*This implementation guidance accompanies, but is not part of, IPSAS XX*

Extracts from statements of financial performance and statements of financial position are provided to show the effects of the transactions described below. These extracts do not necessarily conform with all the disclosure and presentation requirements of other Standards.

### Background Information

The following information is given about a funded defined benefit plan. To keep interest computations simple, all transactions are assumed to occur at the year-end. The present value of the obligation and the fair value of the plan assets were both 1,000 at 1 January 20X7. Net cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains at that date were 140.

	20X7	20X8	20X9
Discount rate at start of year	10.0%	9.0%	8.0%
Expected rate of return on plan assets at start of year	12.0%	11.1%	10.3%
Current service cost	130	140	150
Benefits paid	150	180	190
Contributions paid	90	100	100
Present value of obligation at 31 December	1141	1197	1295
Fair value of plan assets at 31 December	1092	1109	1093
Expected average remaining working lives of employees (years)	10	10	10

In 20X8, the plan was amended to provide additional benefits with effect from 1 January 20X8. The present value as at 1 January 20X8 of additional benefits for employee service before 1 January 20X8 was 50 for vested benefits and 30 for non-vested benefits. As at 1 January 20X8, the entity estimated that the average period until the non-vested benefits would become vested was three years; the past service cost arising from additional non-vested benefits is therefore recognized on a straight-line basis over three years. The past service cost arising from additional vested benefits is recognized immediately (paragraph 111 of the Standard). The entity has adopted a policy of recognising actuarial gains and losses under the minimum requirements of paragraph 105.

### Changes in the Present Value of the Obligation and in the Fair Value of the Plan Assets

The first step is to summarize the changes in the present value of the obligation and in the fair value of the plan assets and use this to determine the amount of the actuarial gains or losses for the period. These are as follows:

	20X7	20X8	20X9
Present value of obligation, 1 January	1000	1141	1197
Interest cost	100	103	96
Current service cost	130	140	150
Past service cost—non-vested benefits	–	30	–
Past service cost—vested benefits	–	50	–
Benefits paid	-150	-180	-190
Actuarial (gain) loss on obligation (balancing figure)	61	-87	42
Present value of obligation, 31 December	1141	1197	1295
Fair value of plan assets, 1 January	1000	1092	1109
Expected return on plan assets	120	121	114
Contributions	90	100	110
Benefits paid	-150	-180	-190
Actuarial gain (loss) on plan assets (balancing figure)	32	-24	-50
Fair value of plan assets, 31 December	1092	1109	1093

### Limits of the ‘Corridor’

The next step is to determine the limits of the corridor and then compare these with the cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains and losses in order to determine the net actuarial gain or loss to be recognized in the following period. Under paragraph 104 of the Standard, the limits of the ‘corridor’ are set at the greater of:

- (a) 10% of the present value of the obligation before deducting plan assets; and
- (b) 10% of the fair value of any plan assets.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

These limits, and the recognized and unrecognized actuarial gains and losses, are as follows:

	20X7	20X8	20X9
Net cumulative unrecognized actuarial gains (losses) at 1 January	140	107	170
Limits of 'corridor' at 1 January	100	114	120
Excess [A]	40	–	50
Average expected remaining working lives (years) [B]	10	10	10
Actuarial gain (loss) to be recognized [ <sup>A</sup> / <sub>B</sub> ]	4	–	5
Unrecognized actuarial gains (losses) at 1 January	140	107	170
Actuarial gain (loss) for year—obligation	-61	87	-42
Actuarial gain (loss) for year—plan assets	32	-24	-50
Subtotal	111	170	78
Actuarial (gain) loss recognized	-4	–	-5
Unrecognized actuarial gains (losses) at 31 December	107	170	73

### Amounts Recognized in the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Financial Performance, and Related Analyses

The final step is to determine the amounts to be recognized in the statement of financial position and the statement of financial performance, and the related analyses to be disclosed in accordance with paragraph 140(f), (g) and (l) of the Standard (the analyses required to be disclosed in accordance with paragraph 140(c) and (e) are given in the section of this Implementation Guidance 'Changes in the Present Value of the Obligation and in the Fair Value of the Plan Assets'. These are as follows.

	20X7	20X8	20X9
Present value of the obligation	1141	1197	1295
Fair value of plan assets	-1092	-1109	-1093
	49	88	202
Unrecognized actuarial gains (losses)	107	170	73
Unrecognized past service cost—non-vested benefits	–	-20	-10
<b>Liability recognized in statement of financial position</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>265</b>
Current service cost	130	140	150
Interest cost	100	103	96
Expected return on plan assets	-120	-121	-114
Net actuarial (gain) loss recognized in year	-4	–	-5
Past service cost—non-vested benefits	–	10	10
Past service cost—vested benefits	–	50	–
<b>Expense recognized in statement of financial performance</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>137</b>
Actual return on plan assets			
Expected return on plan assets	120	121	114
Actuarial gain (loss) on plan assets	32	-24	-50
Actual return on plan assets	152	97	64

Note: see example illustrating paragraphs 120-122 for presentation of reimbursements.

**Implementation Guidance B: Illustrative Disclosures**

*This implementation guidance accompanies, but is not part of IPSAS XX. Extracts from notes show how the required disclosures may be aggregated in the case of an entity that provides a variety of employee benefits. These extracts do not necessarily conform with all the disclosure and presentation requirements of IPSAS XX and other Standards. In particular, they do not illustrate the disclosure of:*

- (a) Accounting policies for employee benefits (see IPSAS 1, “Presentation of Financial Statements”). Paragraph 140(a) of the Standard requires this disclosure to include the entity’s accounting policy for recognising actuarial gains and losses.
- (b) A general description of the type of plan (paragraph 140(b)).
- (c) A narrative description of the basis used to determine the overall expected rate of return on assets (paragraph 140(l)).
- (d) Employee benefits granted to key management personnel (see IPSAS 20, “Related Party Disclosures”).
- (e) Share-based employee benefits (see the international or national accounting standard dealing with share-based payments).



**Employee Benefit Obligations**

The amounts recognized in the statement of financial position are as follows:

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X8	20X7	20X8	20X7
Present value of funded obligations	20300	17400	–	–
Fair value of plan assets	-18420	-17280	–	–
	1880	120	–	–
Present value of unfunded obligations	2000	1000	7337	6405
Unrecognized actuarial gains (losses)	-1605	840	-2707	-2607
Unrecognized past service cost	-450	-650	–	–
Net liability	1825	1310	4630	3798
Amounts in the statement of financial position:				
liabilities	1825	1400	4630	3798
assets	–	-90	–	–
Net liability	1825	1310	4630	3798

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The pension plan assets include ordinary shares issued by [name of reporting entity] with a fair value of 317 (20X7: 281). Plan assets also include property occupied by [name of reporting entity] with a fair value of 200 (20X7: 185).

**The amounts recognized in surplus or deficit are as follows:**

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X8	20X7	20X8	20X7
Current service cost	850	750	479	411
Interest on obligation	950	1000	803	705
Expected return on plan assets	-900	-650		
Net actuarial losses (gains) recognized in year	-70	-20	150	140
Past service cost	200	200		
Losses (gains) on curtailments and settlements	175	-390		
Total, included in 'employee benefits expense'	1205	890	1432	1256
Actual return on plan assets	600	2250	-	-

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

**Changes in the present value of the defined benefit obligation are as follows:**

	Defined benefit pension plans		Post-employment medical benefits	
	20X8	20X7	20X8	20X7
Opening defined benefit obligation	18400	11600	6405	5439
Service cost	850	750	479	411
Interest cost	950	1000	803	705
Actuarial losses (gains)	2350	950	250	400
Losses (gains) on curtailments	-500	–		
Liabilities extinguished on settlements	–	-350		
Liabilities assumed in an entity combination	–	5000		
Exchange differences on foreign plans	900	-150		
Benefits paid	-650	-400	-600	-550
Closing defined benefit obligation	<u>22300</u>	<u>18400</u>	<u>7337</u>	<u>6405</u>

**Changes in the fair value of plan assets are as follows:**

	Defined benefit pension plans	
	20X8	20X7
Opening fair value of plan assets	17280	9200
Expected return	900	650
Actuarial gains and (losses)	-300	1600
Assets distributed on settlements	-400	–
Contributions by employer	700	350
Assets acquired in an entity combination	–	6000
Exchange differences on foreign plans	890	-120
Benefits paid	-650	-400
	<u>18420</u>	<u>17280</u>

**The entity expects to contribute 900 to its defined benefit pension plans in 20X9.**

The major categories of plan assets as a percentage of total plan assets are as follows:

	20X8	20X7
European equities	30%	35%
North American equities	16%	15%
European bonds	31%	28%
North American bonds	18%	17%
Property	5%	5%

**Principal actuarial assumptions at the reporting date (expressed as weighted averages):**

	20X8	20X7
Discount rate at 31 December	5.0%	6.5%
Expected return on plan assets at 31 December	5.4%	7.0%
Future salary increases	5%	4%
Future pension increases	3%	2%
Proportion of employees opting for early retirement	30%	30%
Annual increase in healthcare costs	8%	8%
Future changes in maximum state healthcare benefits	3%	2%

Assumed healthcare cost trend rates have a significant effect on the amounts recognized in surplus or deficit. A one percentage point change in assumed healthcare cost trend rates would have the following effects:

	One percentage point increase	One percentage point decrease
Effect on the aggregate of the service cost and interest cost	190	-150
Effect on defined benefit obligation	1000	-900

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Amounts for the current and previous four periods are as follows:

**Defined benefit pension plans**

	20X8	20X7	20X6	20X5	20X4
Defined benefit obligation	-22300	-18400	-11600	-10582	-9144
Plan assets	18420	17280	9200	8502	10000
Surplus/(deficit)	-3880	-1120	-2400	-2080	856
Experience adjustments on plan liabilities	-1111	-768	-69	543	-642
Experience adjustments on plan assets	-300	1600	-1078	-2890	2777

**Post-employment medical benefits**

	20X8	20X7	20X6	20X5	20X4
Defined benefit obligation	7337	6405	5439	4923	4221
Experience adjustments on plan liabilities	-232	829	490	-174	-103

The reporting entity also participates in a defined benefit plan for all local government units in Jurisdiction Y that provides pensions linked to final salaries and is funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. It is not practicable to determine the present value of the economic entity's obligation or the related current service cost as the plan computes its obligations on a basis that differs materially from the basis used in [name of reporting entity]'s financial statements. [describe basis] On that basis, the plan's financial statements to 30 June 20X6 show an unfunded liability of 27,525. The unfunded liability will result in future payments by participating employers. The plan has approximately 75,000 members, of whom approximately 5,000 are current or former employees of [name of reporting entity] or their dependants. The expense recognized in the statement of financial performance, which is equal to contributions due for the year, and is not included in the above amounts, was 230 (20X7: 215). The reporting entity's future contributions may be increased substantially if other entities withdraw from the plan.

## **Implementation Guidance C: Illustration of the Application of Paragraph 69**

*This implementation guidance accompanies, but is not part of, IPSAS XX.*

### **The issue**

Paragraph 68 of the Standard imposes a ceiling on the defined benefit asset that can be recognized.

68. **The amount determined under paragraph 64 may be negative (an asset). An entity shall measure the resulting asset at the lower of:**
- (a) **The amount determined under paragraph 64** [ie the surplus/deficit in the plan plus (minus) any unrecognized losses (gains)]; **and**
  - (b) **The total of:**
    - (i) **Any cumulative unrecognized net actuarial losses and past service cost (see paragraphs 104, 105 and 111); and**
    - (ii) **The present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. The present value of these economic benefits shall be determined using the discount rate specified in paragraph 90.**

Without paragraph 69 (see below), paragraph 68(b)(i) has the following consequence: sometimes deferring the recognition of an actuarial loss (gain) in determining the amount specified by paragraph 64 leads to a gain (loss) being recognized in the statement of financial performance.

The following example illustrates the effect of applying paragraph 68 without paragraph 69. The example assumes that the entity's accounting policy is not to recognize actuarial gains and losses within the 'corridor' and to amortize actuarial gains and losses outside the 'corridor'. (Whether the 'corridor' is used is not significant. The issue can arise whenever there is deferred recognition under paragraph 64.)

**Example 1**

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D=A+C</b>	<b>E=B+C</b>	<b>F= lower of D and E</b>	<b>G</b>
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 68(b)(ii))	Losses unrecognized under paragraph 64	Paragraph 64	Paragraph 68(b)	Asset ceiling, ie recognized asset	Gain recognized in year 2
1	100	0	0	100	0	0	–
2	70	0	30	100	30	30	30

At the end of year 1, there is a surplus of 100 in the plan (column A in the table above), but no economic benefits are available to the entity either from refunds or reductions in future contributions<sup>3</sup> (column B). There are no unrecognized gains and losses under paragraph 64 (column C). So, if there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 would be recognized, being the amount specified by paragraph 64 (column D). The asset ceiling in paragraph 68 restricts the asset to nil (column F).

In year 2 there is an actuarial loss in the plan of 30 that reduces the surplus from 100 to 70 (column A) the recognition of which is deferred under paragraph 64 (column C). So, if there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 (column D) would be recognized. The asset ceiling without paragraph 69 would be 30 (column E). An asset of 30 would be recognized (column F), giving rise to an increase in revenue (column G) even though all that has happened is that a surplus from which the entity cannot benefit has decreased.

A similarly counter-intuitive effect could arise with actuarial gains (to the extent that they reduce cumulative unrecognized actuarial losses).

**Paragraph 69**

Paragraph 69 prohibits the recognition of gains (losses) that arise solely from past service cost and actuarial losses (gains).

**69. The application of paragraph 68 shall not result in a gain being recognized solely as a result of an actuarial loss or past service cost in the current period or in a loss being recognized solely as a result of an actuarial gain in the current period. The entity shall therefore recognize immediately under paragraph 64 the following, to the extent that they arise while the defined benefit asset is determined in accordance with paragraph 68(b)**

- (a) **Net actuarial losses of the current period and past service cost of the current period to the extent that they exceed any reduction in the**

<sup>3</sup> Based on the current terms of the plan.

**present value of the economic benefits specified in paragraph 68(b)(ii). If there is no change or an increase in the present value of the economic benefits, the entire net actuarial losses of the current period and past service cost of the current period shall be recognized immediately under paragraph 64.**

- (b) **Net actuarial gains of the current period after the deduction of past service cost of the current period to the extent that they exceed any increase in the present value of the economic benefits specified in paragraph 68(b)(ii). If there is no change or a decrease in the present value of the economic benefits, the entire net actuarial gains of the current period after the deduction of past service cost of the current period shall be recognized immediately under paragraph 64.**

**Examples**

The following examples illustrate the result of applying paragraph 69. As above, it is assumed that the entity’s accounting policy is not to recognize actuarial gains and losses within the ‘corridor’ and to amortize actuarial gains and losses outside the ‘corridor’. For the sake of simplicity the periodic amortization of unrecognized gains and losses outside the corridor is ignored in the examples.

**Example 1 continued – Adjustment when there are actuarial losses and no change in the economic benefits available**

	A	B	C	D=A+C	E=B+C	F= lower of D and E	G
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 68(b)(ii))	Losses unrecognized under paragraph 64	Paragraph 64	Paragraph 68(b)	Asset ceiling, ie recognized asset	Gain recognized in year 2
1	100	0	0	100	0	0	–
2	70	0	0	70	0	0	0

The facts are as in example 1 above. Applying paragraph 69, there is no change in the economic benefits available to the entity<sup>4</sup> so the entire actuarial loss of 30 is recognized immediately under paragraph 64 (column D). The asset ceiling remains at nil (column F) and no gain is recognized.

In effect, the actuarial loss of 30 is recognized immediately, but is offset by the reduction in the effect of the asset ceiling.

<sup>4</sup> The term ‘economic benefits available to the entity’ is used to refer to those economic benefits that qualify for recognition under paragraph 68(b)(ii).



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

	Asset in Statement of Financial Position under paragraph 64 (column D above)	Effect of the asset ceiling	Asset ceiling(column F above)
Year 1	100	-100	0
Year 2	70	-70	0
Gain/(loss)	-30	30	0

In the above example, there is no change in the present value of the economic benefits available to the entity. The application of paragraph 69 becomes more complex when there are changes in present value of the economic benefits available, as illustrated in the following examples.

**Example 2 – Adjustment when there are actuarial losses and a decrease in the economic benefits available**

	A	B	C	D=A+C	E=B+C	F= lower of D and E	G
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 68(b)(ii))	Losses unrecognized under paragraph 64	Paragraph 64	Paragraph 68(b)	Asset ceiling, ie recognized asset	Gain recognized in year 2
1	60	30	40	100	70	70	–
2	25	20	50	75	70	70	0

At the end of year 1, there is a surplus of 60 in the plan (column A) and economic benefits available to the entity of 30 (column B). There are unrecognized losses of 40 under paragraph 64<sup>5</sup> (column C). So, if there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 would be recognized (column D). The asset ceiling restricts the asset to 70 (column F).

In year 2, an actuarial loss of 35 in the plan reduces the surplus from 60 to 25 (column A). The economic benefits available to the entity fall by 10 from 30 to 20 (column B). Applying paragraph 69, the actuarial loss of 35 is analysed as follows:

<sup>5</sup> The application of paragraph 69 allows the recognition of some actuarial gains and losses to be deferred under paragraph 64 and, hence, to be included in the calculation of the asset ceiling. For example, cumulative unrecognized actuarial losses that have built up while the amount specified by paragraph 68(b) is not lower than the amount specified by paragraph 64 will not be recognized immediately at the point that the amount specified by paragraph 68(b) becomes lower. Instead their recognition will continue to be deferred in line with the entity's accounting policy. The cumulative unrecognized losses in this example are losses the recognition of which is deferred even though paragraph 69 applies.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Actuarial loss equal to the reduction in economic benefits	10
Actuarial loss that exceeds the reduction in economic benefits	25

In accordance with paragraph 69, 25 of the actuarial loss is recognized immediately under paragraph 64 (column D). The reduction in economic benefits of 10 is included in the cumulative unrecognized losses that increase to 50 (column C). The asset ceiling, therefore, also remains at 70 (column E) and no gain is recognized.

In effect, an actuarial loss of 25 is recognized immediately, but is offset by the reduction in the effect of the asset ceiling.

	Asset in statement of financial position under paragraph 64 (column D above)	Effect of the asset ceiling	Asset ceiling (column F above)
Year 1	100	-30	70
Year 2	75	-5	70
Gain/(loss)	-25	25	0

**Example 3 – Adjustment when there are actuarial gains and a decrease in the economic benefits available to the entity**

	A	B	C	D=A+C	E=B+C	F= lower of D and E	G
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 68(b)(ii))	Losses unrecognized under paragraph 64	Paragraph 64	Paragraph 68(b)	Asset ceiling, ie recognized asset	Gain recognized in year 2
1	60	30	40	100	70	70	–
2	110	25	40	150	65	65	-5

At the end of year 1 there is a surplus of 60 in the plan (column A) and economic benefits available to the entity of 30 (column B). There are unrecognized losses of 40 under paragraph 64 that arose before the asset ceiling had any effect (column C). So, if there were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 would be recognized (column D). The asset ceiling restricts the asset to 70 (column F).

In year 2, an actuarial gain of 50 in the plan increases the surplus from 60 to 110 (column A). The economic benefits available to the entity decrease by 5 (column B). Applying paragraph 69, there is no increase in economic benefits available to the entity. Therefore,

the entire actuarial gain of 50 is recognized immediately under paragraph 64 (column D) and the cumulative unrecognized loss under paragraph 64 remains at 40 (column C). The asset ceiling decreases to 65 because of the reduction in economic benefits. That reduction is not an actuarial loss as defined by IPSAS XX and therefore does not qualify for deferred recognition.

In effect, an actuarial gain of 50 is recognized immediately, but is (more than) offset by the increase in the effect of the asset ceiling.

	<b>Asset in Statement of Financial Performance under paragraph 64 (column D above)</b>	<b>Effect of the asset ceiling</b>	<b>Asset ceiling (column F above)</b>
Year 1	100	-30	70
Year 2	150	-85	65
Gain/(loss)	50	-55	-5

In both examples 2 and 3 there is a reduction in economic benefits available to the entity. However, in example 2 no loss is recognized whereas in example 3 a loss is recognized. This difference in treatment is consistent with the treatment of changes in the present value of economic benefits before application of paragraph 69. The purpose of paragraph 69 is solely to prevent gains (losses) being recognized because of past service cost or actuarial losses (gains). As far as is possible, all other consequences of deferred recognition and the asset ceiling are left unchanged.

**Example 4 – Adjustment in a period in which the asset ceiling ceases to have an effect**

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D=A+C</b>	<b>E=B+C</b>	<b>F= lower of D and E</b>	<b>G</b>
Year	Surplus in plan	Economic benefits available (paragraph 68(b)(ii))	Losses unrecognized under paragraph 64	Paragraph 64	Paragraph 68(b)	Asset ceiling, ie recognized asset	Gain recognized in year 2
1	60	25	40	100	65	65	–
2	-50	0	115	65	115	65	0

At the end of year 1 there is a surplus of 60 in the plan (column A) and economic benefits are available to the entity of 25 (column B). There are unrecognized losses of 40 under paragraph 64 that arose before the asset ceiling had any effect (column C). So, if there

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

were no asset ceiling, an asset of 100 would be recognized (column D). The asset ceiling restricts the asset to 65 (column F).

In year 2, an actuarial loss of 110 in the plan reduces the surplus from 60 to a deficit of 50 (column A). The economic benefits available to the entity decrease from 25 to 0 (column B). To apply paragraph 69 it is necessary to determine how much of the actuarial loss arises while the defined benefit asset is determined in accordance with paragraph 68(b). Once the surplus becomes a deficit, the amount determined by paragraph 64 is lower than the net total under paragraph 68(b). So, the actuarial loss that arises while the defined benefit asset is determined in accordance with paragraph 68(b) is the loss that reduces the surplus to nil, ie 60. The actuarial loss is, therefore, analysed as follows:

Actuarial loss that arises while the defined benefit asset is measured under paragraph 68(b):

Actuarial loss that equals the reduction in economic benefits	25
Actuarial loss that exceeds the reduction in economic benefits	35
	60
Actuarial loss that arises while the defined benefit asset is measured under paragraph 64	50
Total actuarial loss	110

In accordance with paragraph 69, 35 of the actuarial loss is recognized immediately under paragraph 64 (column D); 75 (25 + 50) of the actuarial loss is included in the cumulative unrecognized losses which increase to 115 (column C). The amount determined under paragraph 64 becomes 65 (column D) and under paragraph 68(b) becomes 115 (column E). The recognized asset is the lower of the two, ie 65 (column F), and no gain or loss is recognized (column G).

In effect, an actuarial loss of 35 is recognized immediately, but is offset by the reduction in the effect of the asset ceiling.

	Asset in Statement of Financial Position under paragraph 64 (column D above)	Effect of the asset ceiling	Asset ceiling (column F above)
Year 1	100	-35	65
Year 2	65	0	65
Gain/(loss)	-35	35	0

**Notes**

- 1 In applying paragraph 69 in situations when there is an increase in the present value of the economic benefits available to the entity, it is important to remember that the present value of the economic benefits available cannot exceed the surplus in the plan.<sup>6</sup>
- 2 In practice, benefit improvements often result in a past service cost and an increase in expected future contributions due to increased current service costs of future years. The increase in expected future contributions may increase the economic benefits available to the entity in the form of anticipated reductions in those future contributions. The prohibition against recognizing a gain solely as a result of past service cost in the current period does not prevent the recognition of a gain because of an increase in economic benefits. Similarly, a change in actuarial assumptions that causes an actuarial loss may also increase expected future contributions and, hence, the economic benefits available to the entity in the form of anticipated reductions in future contributions. Again, the prohibition against recognising a gain solely as a result of an actuarial loss in the current period does not prevent the recognition of a gain because of an increase in economic benefits.

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<sup>6</sup> In the example following paragraph 72 of IPSAS XX the present value of available future refunds in contributions could not exceed the surplus in the plan of 90.

## **Basis for Conclusions**

*This Basis for Conclusions gives the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board's (IPSASB's) reasons for supporting or rejecting certain solutions related to accounting for employee benefits. It also identifies circumstances in which the requirements of this proposed IPSAS depart from the requirements of IAS 19 and the reasons for such departure. This Basis for Conclusions does not form part of the Standard.*

### **Introduction**

- BC1. The labor-intensive character of the operations of very many public sector entities means that expenses and liabilities related to employee benefits are likely to be particularly significant in evaluating the financial performance and position of those entities. It is therefore essential that the general purpose financial statements of public sector entities reflect expenses and liabilities related to employee benefits and that these should be determined on a systematic and consistent basis. It is also important that relevant disclosures are provided to users.
- BC2. Development of a Standard on employee benefits has previously been deferred for two reasons. First, the IPSASB decided to prioritize resources on public sector specific projects, including projects on the general social policy obligations of public sector entities and social security pensions and non-exchange revenue. Second, in the earlier part of this decade it appeared possible that there might have been very significant changes to IAS 19. The IPSASB notes that the IASB has recently added a project on post-retirement benefits to its agenda. The project is to be conducted in two phases, which involve a fundamental review of all aspects of post-employment benefit accounting. Phase One is part of the short-term convergence project of the IASB and the Financial Accounting Standards Board. Whilst this project may identify issues that can be resolved relatively quickly, the IPSASB considers that the development of proposals for fundamental changes to accounting for post-employment benefits is not sufficiently advanced to justify deferral of this proposed Standard. The IPSASB will continue to monitor developments in this project.

### **Composite Social Security Programs**

- BC3. In many jurisdictions post-employment benefits are paid through composite social security programs. Composite social security programs also provide benefits that are not consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees or past employees. At paragraph 10, this Standard includes a definition of composite social security programs that encompasses both components of such programs.

BC4. This Standard does not deal with all potential obligations of public sector entities under composite social security programs. As this Standard deals with employee benefits of reporting entities, only benefits payable under composite social security programs as consideration in exchange for service rendered by employees and former employees of the reporting entity are within its scope. The IPSASB is addressing certain other benefits payable under composite social security schemes under a separate Standard dealing with social policy obligations.

#### **Discount Rates**

BC5. IAS 19 requires adoption of a discount rate based on the market yields at the balance sheet date on high quality corporate bonds. Such a rate has the objectives of reflecting the time value of money, whilst neither reflecting the risks associated with defined benefit obligations nor entity specific credit risk. The IPSASB considered the discount rate in the public sector that best reflected the principles in IAS 19. The IPSASB concluded that, in many jurisdictions, the market yields on government bonds would provide a discount rate most consistent with these principles. However, there may be circumstances where there is no deep market in government bonds. There may also be cases where the market yields on government bonds are not the best indicator of a risk-free rate and where the application of a discount rate based on market yields on government bonds may lead to unrealistically high discount rates and distorted carrying amounts for post-employment benefit obligations. This Standard therefore includes a requirement at paragraph 90 that entities discount post-employment benefit obligations using a risk-free rate, which will be based on the market yields on government bonds unless there is no deep market in such bonds or the market yields on government bonds do not best reflect a risk-free rate. In such circumstances the Standard requires a discount rate based on market yields on high quality corporate bonds. There is an additional disclosure requirement at paragraph 140(n)(ii) informing users whether the discount rates have been based on market yields on government bonds or high quality corporate bonds.

BC6. The IPSASB considered whether it should provide guidance to assist entities operating in jurisdictions where there is neither a deep market in government bonds nor a deep market in high quality corporate bonds to determine a risk-free discount rate. The IPSASB acknowledges that determination of an appropriate discount rate is likely to be a difficult issue for entities operating in such jurisdictions and that such entities may be in the process of migrating, or have recently migrated to, the accrual basis of accounting. However, the IPSASB concluded that this is not an issue that applies only in the public sector and that there is an insufficiently clear public sector specific reason to provide such guidance.

**Actuarial Gains and Losses: the Corridor**

BC7. The IPSASB considered accounting requirements for actuarial gains and losses. In particular the IPSASB considered whether the approach in IAS 19 known as the “corridor”, whereby actuarial gains and losses only have to be recognized immediately if they fall outside pre-determined parameters related to the fair value of plan assets and the carrying amount of defined benefit obligations at the last reporting date, should be adopted in this Standard. The IPSASB recognized the view of those who argue that that the “corridor” approach is conceptually unsound and leads to an unjustifiable deferral of revenue and expenses. However, the IPSASB concluded that there is no public sector reason to remove the “corridor” provisions and require the immediate recognition of all actuarial gains and losses. The IPSASB therefore decided to retain the “corridor” approach in this Standard and to allow entities to select any of the 3 options permitted by IAS 19 for dealing with actuarial gains and losses that are within the “corridor”. These are:

- (a) Non-recognition;
- (b) Recognition on a systematic and consistent basis of actuarial gains and losses related to all defined benefit plans in the statement of financial performance; and
- (c) Recognition on a systematic and consistent basis of actuarial gains and losses related to all defined benefit plans outside the statement of financial performance.

**Actuarial Gains and Losses: Presentation where Recognition Outside Statement of Financial Performance**

BC8. Where an entity adopts a policy of recognizing actuarial gains and losses for all its defined benefit plans outside the income statement, IAS 19 and IAS 1 require “the statement of changes in equity” to be re-termed “the statement of recognized income and expense”. The suite of financial statements in IPSAS 1, “Presentation of Financial Statements” does not include a “statement of recognized revenue and expense”. The IPSASB therefore considered whether IPSAS 1 should be amended to re-term the “statement of changes in net assets/equity” the “statement of recognized revenue and expense”, under certain circumstances, or whether entities should be permitted to recognize actuarial gains and losses in the existing “statement of changes in net assets/equity”, which is required by IPSAS 1. The IPSASB concluded that, consistent with its objective of promoting convergence with IFRS, it should effect a consequential amendment to IPSAS 1 to re-term “the statement of net assets/equity” as the “statement of recognized revenue and expense” when it only includes certain line items, including actuarial gains and losses.



**Reimbursements**

BC9. Although the requirement in relation to Reimbursements in IAS 19 is general, the commentary is written from the perspective of insurance policies that are not qualifying insurance policies and are therefore not plan assets. The IPSASB concluded that there may be cases in the public sector where another public sector entity may enter into a legally binding commitment to provide part or all of the expenditure required to settle a defined benefit obligation of the reporting entity. Commentary has therefore been included at paragraph 121 to acknowledge that such circumstances may arise.

**Effective Date and Transitional Provisions**

BC10. The IPSASB acknowledged that the requirements of this Standard in relation to liabilities relating to obligations arising from defined benefit plans may prove challenging for many public sector entities. Many public sector entities may not be recognizing liabilities related to such obligations currently and may therefore not have the systems in place to provide the information required for reporting under the requirements of this Standard. Where entities are recognizing liabilities relating to obligations arising from defined benefit plans this may be on a different basis than that required by this Standard. In some cases adoption of this Standard might give rise to tensions with budgetary projections and other prospective information.

BC11. IAS 19 requires entities adopting that Standard to determine a transitional liability. Where the amount of the transitional liability is more than the liability that would have been recognized at the same date under the previous accounting policy, IAS 19 permits entities to expense that difference on a straight-line basis over a period up to five years from the date of adoption.

BC12. The impact on financial performance and financial position of increases in liabilities arising from adoption of this Standard will be an issue for many public sector entities. However, as indicated in paragraph BC10, a more immediate issue may be obtaining the information in the first place. The IPSASB therefore concluded that, in order to give public sector entities the time to develop new systems and upgrade existing systems, this Standard should become effective for reporting periods commencing on a date five years after its issuance. Consistent with this objective in the first year of adoption comparative information is not required. Earlier adoption is permitted and encouraged.

BC13. At paragraph 164 this Standard requires entities to determine an initial liability for defined benefit plans. Because entities do not have to adopt the Standard until reporting periods commencing five years after its issuance the IPSASB concluded that it is not necessary to introduce a transitional provision permitting entities to expense any difference between the initial liability and the liability that would have been recognized under the previous accounting policy over a period. In order to avoid a potential distortion of financial performance in the first year of adoption the Standard requires the difference between the initial liability and the liability

that would have been recognized at the same date under the previous accounting policy to be taken to opening accumulated surpluses or deficits.

BC14. The IPSASB also considered whether, in the light of possible difficulties for reporting entities in assembling information, it would be appropriate to provide relief from certain disclosure requirements in paragraph 140 of this Standard. These disclosures require opening balances relating to a number of components of obligations and plan assets or trend information covering the current reporting period and previous four reporting periods. The IPSASB concluded that, because some entities may require the full five year period from the date of issuance in order to develop systems such a relief is appropriate and is therefore included in the Standard at paragraphs 171 and 173.

### **Comparison with IAS 19**

International Public Sector Accounting Standard ED 31, “Employee Benefits” is drawn primarily from International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19, “Employee Benefits” (2004). The main differences between ED 31 and IAS 19 are as follows:

- ED 31 contains commentary additional to that in IAS 19 to clarify that, in order to meet the definition of a defined contribution plan, a post-employment plan must involve the reporting entity paying fixed contributions into a separate entity.
- ED 31 introduces a definition of, and requirements related to, composite social security programs. IAS 19 does not address composite social security programs.
- For discounting post-employment obligations ED 31 requires entities to apply a risk-free rate determined by reference to yields at the reporting date on government bonds of a currency and term consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations. Where there is no deep market in government bonds or where government bonds do not reflect a risk-free rate ED 31 requires a discount rate determined by reference to yields on high quality corporate bonds consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations. IAS 19 requires entities to apply a discount rate based on yields on high quality corporate bonds consistent with the currency and estimated term of the post-employment benefit obligations.
- ED 31 contains commentary additional to that in IAS 19 to acknowledge that as well as non-qualifying insurance policies reimbursements may arise from the legally binding commitments of other public sector entities.
- ED 31 requires entities to determine an initial liability for defined benefit plans on first adoption. If this liability is more or less than the liability that would have been recognized at the same date under the entity’s previous accounting policy, the entity is required to recognize that increase/decrease in opening accumulated surpluses or deficits. IAS 19 requires entities to determine a transitional liability for defined benefit plans and, if that amount is more than the amount that would have been recognized under the previous accounting policy, entities are permitted to recognize the increase over a period up to five years from the date of adoption.
- ED 31 becomes effective for reporting periods commencing at a date five years after its issuance, although earlier adoption is encouraged. IAS 19 includes requirements for the phasing in of certain requirements.
- ED 31 uses different terminology, in certain instances, from IAS 19. The most significant examples are the use of the terms “revenue”, “statement of financial performance”, and “statement of financial position”. The equivalent terms in IAS 19 are “income”, “income statement” and “balance sheet”.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS