BURLINGTON COUNTY MUNICIPAL JOINT INSURANCE FUND

ASSESSMENT ALLOCATION STRATEGY

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Adopted: Fall 1993
Revised: Fall 1996
Re-Adopted: Fall 2003-2009
Revised: Fall 2010
Re-Adopted: Fall 2011

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

BUDGET PROCESS

The BURLCO JIF budget process begins in June each year when the RMCs are asked to update their member **exposures** (e.g. insurable property values, vehicle lists, appropriations, payrolls, etc.). This data is required by the Actuary in order to calculate the **loss fund** demands for the new budget year. Beginning with the 2011 Renewal process, the Fund implemented an on-line exposure data management system that provides members and their Risk Management Consultants with real time direct access to their exposure data. The system allows members to update their exposure data throughout the year and complete the Annual Renewal Process in a fraction of the time compared to prior years. The system also allows Fund Professionals direct access to the exposure information and will increase the accuracy of the Fund's Underwriting data.

In July, all vendors are invited to submit renewal proposals for the coming Fund Year. The Finance Committee reviews these proposals for acceptance, negotiation, and/or other action. The Finance Committee then makes their recommendation regarding contract renewal to the Executive Committee.

BUDGET COMPONENTS

The budget consists of three major categories that are described below:

A. **Loss Funds** - Portion of budget developed by an actuarial review based upon the JIF's aggregate exposures, claims history, and risk factors. Takes into account all costs associated with the payment of members' claims on an accrual basis. The JIF fully funds losses to "Ultimate" expected payout.

B. **Operating Expenses** - Pays all expenses associated with operating the Fund. Includes all contract vendors such as claims adjustment, attorney, safety, actuary, auditor, etc. and contemplates miscellaneous meeting, administrative, and contingency expenses.

C. **EPL/POL Premiums** – In recognition of the ongoing poor loss experience for members in the Employment Practices Liability line of coverage, in the Fall of 2010, the MEL, who had previously provided this coverage, decided to place this coverage in the commercial market. While the MEL acts as the lead negotiator with the commercial market to provide uniform coverage terms on behalf of the MEL affiliated JIF's, the Fund Administrator will bind the coverage on behalf of the Fund. The premium for this coverage will be collected as part of each member's assessment and will be paid directly to the commercial insurer by the JIF.

D. **MEL Assessment** – The JIF belongs to the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund (MEL). The MEL provides excess property, liability and workers compensation coverage beyond the JIF SIR. This budget item is developed by the MEL and transmitted to the JIF in November.

ASSESSMENT ALLOCATION STRATEGY

Once the JIF budget is developed, a formula for allocating individual members' shares must be developed. For an assessment allocation formula to be successful it must be easily understood, easy to administer, and perceived as fair and equitable by the members. The Finance Committee meets each year and establishes the formula that will be used.

The JIF currently uses a loss ratio methodology to allocate the annual budget. Each member's expiring assessment is adjusted by a set percentage that correlates to a range of loss ratios. Loss ratio is defined as the ratio that loss dollars incurred bears to the member loss fund contributions. During the Fall of 2010, the Fund Administrator and Actuary recommended utilizing a six-year average loss ratio rather than the three-year average loss ratio used in prior years to depict a better overall picture of a member's Loss Ratio performance. The six-year loss ratio (excluding the current year), valued as of June 30th of the current year, is used in the formula for determining a member's percentage increase in loss funds for the upcoming year. Members with lower loss ratios will receive a lower percentage increase than members with higher loss ratios. This percentage will vary each year based upon the percentage increase in the JIF budget. Members with less than three years experience may receive an increase equivalent to the overall JIF budget increase. An anomaly loss, which is one loss that accounts for more than 50% of a member's total losses for the six-year period would have their proposed assessment dropped by one category. Members with anomaly losses are usually small members and the reduction of a single category does not have an impact on the assessment strategy.

Beginning with Fund Year 2011, the Fund implemented a Reward/Revaluation Program for Renewing Members who over the past six years (excluding the current year) have been a net giver to the Fund. This program allows the Fund to monitor each member on a three year rotating basis to ensure that member's assessment accurately reflects their exposure to the Fund. Each year the Finance Committee will review each renewing member's performance over the past six years. Those members that have been a net giver to the Fund over the six year time period will be considered for a reduction in their loss funding assessment. The goal of this program is to allow the Fund to adjust a good performing member's loss funding budget so that their assessment is appropriate for their exposure to the Fund thus providing them with financial relief and making them less of a potential target for competing JIFs.

Also beginning with Fund Year 2011, the Finance Committee opted to introduce a *Retrospective Assessment Program* that identifies those members that are the driving force behind the Loss Funding increases year to year and remove the risk they place on the Fund by capping these members in a min/max contract.

As a means of identifying these members, each year the Fund performs an analysis of the each member's performance over the prior three and six year periods to determine those members that are having the greatest negative impact on the Fund's surplus position. Once these members are identified, the Fund Actuary re-prices these members as if they were stand alone members in the Fund. The Fund can then reduce the amount of the Loss Funding Budget by the difference between the member's loss funding assessment and the Actuary's loss funding assessment or a percentage amount as determined by the Finance Committee. Each remaining member of the Fund is then slotted into their appropriate assessment increase/decrease category based upon their performance.

Those members in the *Retrospective Assessment Program* are then given an increase equal to the increase in the loss funding budget had they remained in the original loss funding formula. The difference between the Actuary's stand alone pricing, or a percentage amount as determined by the Committee, and the poor performer(s) pricing with the standard increase becomes the obligation of the poor performing member(s) should the funding be needed to offset losses incurred by this member. This concept is more fully discussed on **pages 7, 8 and 9**.

Loss Ratio				Increase in Premium	Members Affected
RETRO ASSESSMENT PROGRAM				5.00%	3
ABOVE	150%			7.00%	1
BETWEEN	100%	and	150%	5.00%	3
BETWEEN	85%	and	100%	3.00%	3
NEW MEMBERS NO EXPERIENCE				0.00%	2
BETWEEN	60%	and	85%	2.00%	1
BETWEEN	40%	and	60%	1.00%	3
BELOW			40%	0.00%	2
RENEWING NEW MEMBERS (< 6 YRS) LR BETWEEN 50% & 75%				-10.00%	1
RENEWING MEMBERS WITH LR BETWEEN 50% & 75%				-20.00%	3
RENEWING MEMBERS WITH LR BETWEEN 25% & 50%				-25.00%	1
RENEWING MEMBERS WITH LR BETWEEN 10% & 25%				-30.00%	0
RENEWING MEMBERS WITH LR BELOW 10%				-50.00%	1

MEL Assessments (Reinsurance for Workers Compensation, Liability, and Property) are calculated by the MEL and are passed through to the members without further adjustment.

Risk Management Consulting Fees are negotiated individually by each member and are added to the member's assessment after the above factors are applied.

The following pages present a history of past Assessment Allocation Strategies.

THE EARLY YEARS - EQUALIZATION

During its early years, the JIF allocated assessments using a simple formula called "**equalization**". Under this scenario each member's renewal assessment rose by approximately the same amount as the JIF budget regardless of changes in their operations or their claims experience. Many pools use this approach during their formative years and the BURLCOJIF was no exception.

EXPOSURES - In comparing the JIF's membership data over time, however, it became apparent that some members' exposures were changing at a different rate than others. For example a growing municipality may have had to build a new municipal building while another member eliminated their entire police department. The result was that growing members received subsidies at the expense of the other members. This concept is more fully discussed on **pages 9, 10 and 11**.

EXPERIENCE - A review of the members' claims histories also revealed the potential for inequities. One member, for example, may have incurred a relatively low ratio of claims compared to their budgeted assessment while others incurred higher claims ratios. Clearly, the "**Equalization**" strategy offered no inducement to control losses and, in fact, may have rewarded members with poor experience. **Pages 11 and 12** more fully discusses this topic.

After several years of "**Equalization**" the Finance Committee realized that if this strategy continued, inequities would develop and the JIF could lose members. Unfortunately, the first to leave the JIF would be those members whose good experience was subsidizing the JIF.

1993 - COMBINED ALLOCATION STRATEGY

In 1992, after reviewing all of the above facts, the Finance Committee recommended that an Assessment Allocation Strategy be adopted which incorporated both an Exposure Allocation and Experience Rating strategy taking all of the above factors into consideration. This strategy took effect with the 1993 Fund Year.

1997 - EXPERIENCE BASED ALLOCATION STRATEGY

In the Fall of 1996, the Finance Committee again examined the relationship between members' assessments and their claims experience. The Committee agreed that the Combined Allocation strategy did not place enough weight upon a members' claims history. The Committee therefore recommended that a more simplified assessment allocation method be adopted in which members' renewal assessments are modified based upon their preceding three full years claims experience. The Finance Committee recommended that the chart, which appears on page 11, be simplified and that members' **overall** three-year claims experience be used in lieu of individual lines of coverage. That is the strategy in effect today.

2006 – MODEL OPERATING EXPENSES

In the fall of 2005, the Finance Committee examined the way JIF Operating Expenses were allocated to the members. While the above "Experience Based Allocation Strategy" appeared equitable, it was recognized that members' share of JIF Operating Expenses should not be affected by their loss ratio. Therefore, in consultation with the Fund Administrator, The Finance Committee adopted an Assessment Allocation Strategy that applies the above "Experience Based Allocation Formula to **LOSS**

FUNDS ONLY and proposes that a members' Operating Expenses be allocated more in line with their actual cost to the Fund. Therefore, those expenses that are directly attributable to a member (Direct Expenses) e.g. Optional Safety Budget, EPL Consulting Service, Loss Control Service, etc. will be charged to a member's assessment. Those expenses that can not be directly attributable to a member (Indirect Expenses) such as Actuarial Fees, Claims Audit Fees, Financial Audit Fees, etc. shall be charged to a member's assessment in the same proportion that their Loss Fund Contributions, Property Values, or Payroll figures, whichever bases is most appropriate, bear to the entire JIF. Thus, if a member contributes 5% to the JIF Loss Fund budget, they will receive a 5% share of a specified JIF Indirect Operating Expense.

2011 – SIX-YEAR LOSS RATIO, REWARD / REVALUATION PROGRAM & RETRO ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

In the fall of 2010, the Finance Committee undertook an in depth analysis to determine whether the Three Year Average loss ratio was still a good indicator of a member's exposure to the Fund. The Fund Actuary reviewed the current process utilized to decide member loss funding assessments and rendered an opinion that even though the Three Year loss ratio was a good indicator of a member's overall performance the utilization of a longer time period, six or nine years, would be a more accurate indicator of a member's long term performance in the Fund. Based upon this analysis, the Finance Committee decided to utilize a six year average loss ratio when determining the Fund's Assessment Allocation Strategy and adjustments to member's assessments on an annual basis.

In conjunction with this change, the Finance Committee also decide to implement a program that allows the Fund to reduce a good performing member's loss funding budget if they have been a "net giver" to the Fund over the same six year period. Beginning with the 2011 Fund Year, the Finance Committee examined each member during their Renewing Year to make sure that their assessment accurately reflects their exposure to the Fund. In cases where a good performing member is a net giver to the Fund over the preceding six year period (not inclusive of the current year), the Finance Committee will consider reducing the member's loss funding assessment to better reflect their exposure to the Fund. The Finance Committee recognizes that failure to provide financial relief to the good performing members will cause them to become over assessed and an attractive member to a competing Fund. The Fund recognizes that if good members leave the Fund a greater financial burden will be placed on the remaining members. This process continues to repeat itself until all the good members have left the Fund leaving the Fund with only poor performing members resulting in "adverse selection." This program allows for the Fund to remain competitive in the pricing of the good performing members.

Beginning in Fund Year 2011, the Finance Committee also opted to introduce a *Retrospective Assessment Program* that identifies those members that are the driving force behind the Loss Funding increases year to year and remove the risk they place on the Fund by capping these members in a min/max contract.

Each year the Fund performs an analysis of the each member's performance over the prior three and six year periods to determine those members that are having the greatest negative impact on the Fund's surplus position. Once these members are identified, the Fund Actuary re-prices these members as if they were stand alone members in the Fund. The Fund can then reduce the amount of the Loss Funding Budget by the difference between the member's loss funding assessment and the Actuary's loss funding assessment or a percentage amount as determined by the Finance Committee. Each remaining member of the Fund is then slotted into their appropriate assessment increase/decrease category based upon their performance.

Those members in the *Retrospective Assessment Program* are then given an increase equal to the increase in the loss funding budget had they remained in the original loss funding formula. The difference between the Actuary's stand alone pricing, or a percentage amount as determined by the Committee, and the poor performer(s) pricing with the standard increase becomes the obligation of the poor performing member(s) should the funding be needed to offset losses incurred by this member. Members participating in the *Retrospective Assessment Program* are required to adopt a resolution and accompanying Policy Endorsement that outlines the member's minimum and maximum loss funding allocation under the program.

Those members in the *Retrospective Assessment Program* have their incurred losses evaluated at 18, 30, and 42 months after the inception of the Fund Year to determine if they are obligated to pay any of the additional loss funding between the amount the originally contributed to the Fund and their maximum loss funding assessment as determined by the Finance Committee. Any additional loss funding due from a member enrolled in this program can be billed to the member at any time following the conclusion of the Fund Year. All additional loss funds due and owing under this program must be paid to the Fund at the time the Fund transfers the obligations of the Fund Year to the Residual Claims Fund or the member leaves the Fund.

The *Retrospective Assessment Program* benefits both the good and poor performing members of the Fund. Poor performing members benefit in that they are able to spread potentially large increases in loss funding over a number of years easing a potential burden on their local budget, providing them time to address claims and loss issues, and providing a financial incentive to improve their performance. Good performing members of the Fund also benefit in that they are no longer supplementing the poor performing members since the Actuary reduces the loss funding budget by the total amount between the minimum and maximum obligations of those members in the *Retrospective Assessment Program*. As a result, the assessment allocation strategy for the good performing members is lower than it would be if the poor performing members were included in the strategy.

EXPOSURE ALLOCATION STRATEGY

An "exposure" unit is a measure of the magnitude of a loss exposure. For example property values are a measure of the risk of fire. The greater a member's property values, the greater the potential loss.

Appropriations, on the other hand, are traditionally viewed as the measure of liability risk for municipalities. The greater the appropriations, the more activities there are and the higher the likelihood of injury and thus the more likely a law suit to develop.

The exposure unit, therefore, serves as a yardstick to measure the cost of risk and can be easily measured and utilized used to allocate assessment contributions.

The JIF self insures four areas of risk:

1. Property
2. Liability
3. Automobile
4. Workers Compensation

Each of these areas of risk is easily measured through the use of exposure units.

PROPERTY

The Finance Committee recommended that total insurable values be used to allocate property insurance costs. Neither the actuary nor the excess carriers differentiate between buildings, contents, equipment, etc. and we have seen no trend in our losses to weight any one item more heavily than the other. The following example describes how the formula actually works.

> *Example: If the JIF members have a total of $100,000,000 in insurable property values and member "A" has $10,000,000 in insurable values then Member "A" will be allocated 10% of the property loss funds.*

LIABILITY

In allocating liability costs, the Finance Committee elected to use appropriations. Both the actuary and other JIFs rate on this basis. Neither the actuary nor other JIFs charge for any special exposures such as Police, Fire, etc. Our review of liability claims supports this approach.

> *Example: If the JIF members have total appropriations of $100,000,000 and member "A" has appropriations of $5,000,000 then member "A" will be allocated 5% of the liability loss funds.*

AUTOMOBILE

In this area, vehicle counts were used. Again, neither the actuary nor the excess carriers differentiate between types of vehicles. Our instinct tells us that police cars should have a greater potential for loss, however, further analyses indicates that this affects the potential *value* of the loss not the *frequency*, and is therefore more of an issue for the excess carrier than it is for us.

> *Example: If the JIF members own 500 vehicles and member "A" owns 25 vehicles then member "A" will be allocated 5% of the automobile loss funds.*

WORKERS COMPENSATION

Traditionally, workers compensation payrolls have been separated into two categories of employment with different rates for each; “police”, “Clerical, etc. Our analyses and recommendation was to support this more traditional approach. The Committee, therefore decided to accept the Workers Compensation Rating bureau "relativities" and assign these weights to the workers compensation assessment allocation formula.

> *Example: If the “Manual” Workers Compensation premium for the JIF as a whole is $2,000,000 and member “A” has a “Manual” Workers Compensation premium of $200,000 then member “A” will be allocated 10% of the workers compensation loss funds.*

EXPERIENCE RATING

For any assessment allocation to be successful it must recognize the potential for some members to incur more claims than others relative to their assessments. Addressing this issue can eliminate the problems associated with the perception that the Fund is subsidizing some members’ claims experience at the expense of others.

One method, studied by the Fund, is a simplified experience-rating program that does not impose harsh penalties on members but recognizes adverse claims experience over time. This is accomplished through the application of an experience adjustment factor. The experience adjustment factor is determined from a chart that lists the appropriate factor for a given loss ratio in each line of coverage offered by the JIF. The experience adjustment factor is applied to the member’s assessment by line of coverage. The chart below illustrates this concept:

Line of Coverage	Assessment	Experience Factor	Modified Assessment
Property	$ 2,500.00	.90	$ 2,250.00
Liability	$15,000.00	.95	$14,250.00
Automobile	$12,000.00	.94	$11,280.00
Workers Comp.	$20,000.00	1.02	$20,400.00
Total	$49,500.00	N/A	$48,180.00

Since it takes several years for claims to develop to their full potential the committee may decide to defer experience rating on members until they have been in the JIF for three full years.

OPERATING EXPENSE ALLOCATION

The JIF's operating expenses are broken down into two categories:

A. Allocated - These expenses can be directly attributed to a specific member's participation in the JIF. An example of this type of expense is the Safety Director who charges a fee based upon the size of the member.

B. Unallocated - These expenses that can not be directly attributable to a member (Indirect Expenses) shall be charged to a member's assessment in the same proportion that a member's individual exposure relates to the Fund total. Examples of exposure data that are used to distribute unallocated operating expenses across the membership include Loss Fund Contributions, Property Values, and Payroll figures, whichever basis is most appropriate. Thus, if a member has 5% of the total property values for the Fund, this member will pay 5% of the total property appraisal costs for that year.

Under this assessment strategy, the JIF charges allocated operating expenses directly to the members. Unallocated expenses are spread across the membership based upon the individual member's share of the exposure to the total for the Fund.

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSULTING FEES

Risk Management Consulting Fees are negotiated individually by each member and are added to the members' assessment after all of the above factors and the Cap Strategy (described on **page 13**) are applied.

CAP STRATEGY

The Finance Committee realized that one of the major reasons member municipalities formed a JIF was to avoid the harsh cycles associated with the traditional insurance market. Without some type of capping mechanism in place, members' assessments could swing wildly from one year to the next. That is why a capping strategy was developed.

A capping strategy begins with a decision to set an upward percentage limit on the amount of any individual member's assessment increase. Naturally, the imposition of a cap on individual members' assessments will create some compression within the overall assessment allocation strategy. This must be addressed in order for the sum of the members' assessments to equal the budget figure for the JIF. In some cases this could mean that a member whose assessment formula results in a decrease could actually receive a modest increase in their assessment. The trade-off in this scenario is that all members know that they are being protected from large increases should their experience turn sour in a particular year.