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## RETAIL AGENT---E&S MARKET INITIATIVE GAINS MOMENTUM

*ACT, AAMGA, NAPSLO Partner to Improve Efficiencies of E&S Transactions*

(ALEXANDRIA, VA – Dec. 19, 2008) —The Independent Agents & Brokers of America's Agents Council for Technology (ACT), the American Association of Managing General Agents (AAMGA) and the National Association of Professional Surplus Lines Offices (NAPSLO) formed a joint initiative to improve the efficiencies for retail agents interacting with managing general agents and wholesale brokers in the E&S market and to promote the electronic exchange of data between the parties.

"The Retail Agent—E&S Market Initiative has made excellent progress since its May launch with several virtual meetings and an in-person meeting of the work group and its three sub-groups," says Angelyn Treutel, independent agent, ACT chair and co-chair of the work group. "The work group and its three subgroups now involve over 100 industry representatives including ACORD representatives, retail agents, general agents, wholesale brokers, E&S carriers and vendors all working to improve how retailers and MGA/Wholesalers do business together."

"The E&S community is equally excited about the efficiencies general agents, wholesale brokers, and E&S carriers can derive from more efficient data flows between all of the involved parties," added John Deibler, Director, Scottsdale Insurance and co-chair of the work group. "We have three sub-groups addressing retail agent interface (including applications and supplementals), electronic interfaces between the parties, and general agent Web site functionality."

Mike Roy, Chief Information Officer of CRC Insurance Services and a major driver in creating this new initiative, said "The managing general agents and wholesale brokers see major opportunities to apply more of the technologies that the standard market is implementing, such as the ACORD XML electronic standards, Real Time workflows, the use of ACORD forms where possible and more consistent functionality on general agent/wholesaler Web sites in order to be easier to do business with for our retail agent clients."

The objectives of the initiative include improvements in the E&S industry over the next 12-18 months in the following areas:

- Retail Agent Interface: Focus on E&S Carrier supplemental applications to streamline supplemental data requirements and migrate to the use of ACORD standards for applications as much as possible
- General Agent Interface: Concentration on data transmission streams from retail agents to general agents as well as within general agents and begin to automate the flow of this data as much as possible
- General Agent Web sites: Develop a roadmap of recommendations for MGA Web site capabilities – Generation 1 is a Web site with basic marketing information. Generation 2 adds login and rating capability. Generation 3 provides for online applications and policy issuance capabilities. Generation 4 expands the Web site for integration with retail agency management systems.

Retail agents have vastly improved their electronic interfaces between agency offices and standard carriers through the adoption of Real Time ([www.getrealttime.org](http://www.getrealttime.org)). Real time is "the ability to click on a button from a client file in your agency management system or comparative rater for immediate access to carrier information on that client. The transaction may be a quote, billing inquiry, claim inquiry/loss runs, policy view, endorsements or a request for information. This approach provides a single workflow for servicing or quoting." Retail agents have recognized significant time savings which has resulted in improved client service and more sales for the agents and carriers.

Established in January 1999 by the Insurance Agents and Brokers of America (the Big "I"), ACT provides a candid, action-oriented forum to address the critical workflow and technology issues facing the Independent Agency System. ACT helps participants understand the perspectives of the other stakeholders in the process and provides excellent networking opportunities with the participants who are shaping the future for the industry on these issues. For more information about ACT visit [www.independentagent.com/act](http://www.independentagent.com/act).

Since 1926, the American Association of Managing General Agents (AAMGA) has served as the trade association to international wholesale insurance professionals, and as a leader representing the interests of its members before the federal, state and local governmental and regulatory agencies, to elected officials and other industry trade associations in the US, Canada and Europe. Through its focus on fostering relationships, conducting market-wide meetings and educational sessions throughout the year, the AAMGA has earned its trusted reputation by serving as the catalyst to industry practitioners focused on the wholesale insurance marketplace.

Founded in 1974, NAPSLO is a national trade association representing the surplus lines insurance industry. Surplus lines is a specialized segment of the insurance business that is also referred to as non-admitted, specialty and/or excess lines. Risks are placed with the surplus lines market when they cannot be placed in the admitted/licensed market. NAPSLO represents surplus lines insurance agents/brokers and surplus lines insurance companies. NAPSLO has over 1,600 member offices in the United States, Canada, Germany, and England. NAPSLO is on the web at [www.napslo.org](http://www.napslo.org).

Founded in 1896, the Big "I" is the nation's oldest and largest national association of independent insurance agents and brokers, representing a network of more than 300,000 agents, brokers and their employees nationally. Its members are businesses that offer customers a choice of policies from a variety of insurance companies. Independent agents and brokers offer all lines of insurance—property, casualty, life, health, employee benefit plans and retirement products. Web address: [www.independentagent.com](http://www.independentagent.com).

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