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Trade Show Update

New England Employee Benefits Council (NEEBC) is running their annual trade show on May 14, 2009 at the Westin Waterfront Hotel in Boston, MA. In addition to some excellent sessions on the economy and health and welfare plans, the trade show will have two retirement-focused sessions in the afternoon. Dan Cassidy will be moderating one of the sessions titled "Target Date Funds - The great debate, are they an appropriate vehicle for participants near/in retirement?" which will include representatives from Fidelity, T. Rowe Price, and Vanguard.

If you would like to sign up to attend the trade show, please visit www.neebc.com for registration information.

If you would like to attend the afternoon sessions only, please contact Maureen McClain at maureen@cassidyretirement.com.

Client Reception - Post Trade Show

CRG will be hosting a dinner for our clients immediately following the trade show. More details will follow soon.

CRG Retirement Plan Update - DB and DC Plans

Recent Guidance

- **February 24 (DC):** The IRS released a final regulation pertaining to automatic contribution arrangements. This regulation reflects provisions of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 and generally adopts the proposed rules issued in November 2007, with certain modifications. The final rules pertaining to qualified automatic contribution arrangements (QACAs) apply to plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2008, and the final rules pertaining to eligible automatic contribution arrangements apply to plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2010.
- **February 20 (DB):** The PBGC announced on its website that it will not grant automatic waivers for 2009 for the requirement under ERISA §4043 to notify

the agency of missed quarterly contributions. For 2008 and prior years, the PBGC had provided automatic waivers of this reporting requirement for certain small and/or well-funded plans.

- **February 10 (DB):** The DOL issued Field Assistance Bulletin No. 2009-01 which provides model annual funding notices to participants for single-employer and multiemployer DB plans, along with related guidance. The bulletin confirmed that the funding notice for plan year 2008 is due by April 30, 2009 (for calendar year plans).

For a list of past guidance, please click [here](#).

Looking Ahead

- **March 16 (DC):** ADP/ACP corrective distributions (for excess contributions/earnings) are due to participants.
- **April 1 (DB):** Deadline for the "preliminary" actuarial certification of funded status for the 2009 plan year (calendar year plans). Plans that were certified to be at least 90% funded for the 2008 plan year are deemed to be at least 80% funded as of April 1, 2009 and are therefore exempt from benefit restrictions through at least October 1, 2009. However, any plan that was certified to be less than 90% funded for the 2008 plan year must certify that the funded status as of January 1, 2009 was at least 80%, or else certain benefit restrictions may apply effective April 1, 2009.
- **April 15 (DB):** First quarterly contribution deadline for calendar year plans (for the 2009 plan year).
- **April 15 (DC):** Excess deferral amounts are required to be distributed to participants (§402(g))
- **April 30 (DB):** 2008 plan year annual funding notices to participants are due (for calendar year plans).

Market Summary - Total Returns Through March 10, 2009

Year-to-date and one-year returns for key market indexes are summarized below:

	Dow Jones Industrial Average	Standard & Poor's 500 Index	Russell 2000 Index	MSCI EAFE International Equity Index	Lehman Brothers Aggregate Index
Year-to-date	-21.1%	-20.3%	-26.4%	-23.3%	-1.3%
Last 12 Months	-43.0%	-45.5%	-45.4%	-52.3%	2.9%

Source: The Wall Street Journal

Defined Benefit Plans - Liability Returns

The return on assets in a pension trust is clearly a key driver of the funded status of a pension plan. However, pension liability values can also fluctuate significantly with changes in market interest rates. In essence, pension liabilities carry their own market returns. Plan sponsors should therefore focus on the net impact of changes in assets and liabilities on a plan's funded status. The following table provides the estimated return on pension plan liabilities as of February 28, 2009 as calculated by Ryan Labs, Inc. (used with permission):

	Ryan Labs, Inc. PPA Liability Index (Funding)	Ryan Labs, Inc. FAS 158 Liability Index (Accounting)
Last Month	-5.8%	-4.9%
Year-to-Date	-9.7%	-6.4%
Last 12 Months	-9.0%	-4.4%

Source: Ryan Labs, Inc.

Ryan Labs, Inc. Asset Management specializes in managing custom fixed income portfolios for pension plans and institutional clients. For more information on Ryan Labs, please visit <http://www.ryanlabs.com>, or call 800-321-2301.

Defined Benefit Plans - Key Interest Rates

- **IRC §430 Corporate Bond Yield Curve (DB Funding):** For a graph showing the year-to-date and 12-month change in the yield curve as of February 2009, please visit the Industry Resources section of our website [here](#).
- **IRC §417(e)(3) Lump Sum Rates (DB Plans):** For a graph showing the year-to-date and 12-month change in lump sum interest rates as of February 2009, please visit the Industry Resources section of our website [here](#).

Resources

For more information on Cassidy Retirement Group, please visit www.cassidyretirement.com.