

# IHMM's Strategic Initiatives for Improving Our Services to Certificants



May, 2019

The IHMM Board of Directors at its meeting of November 30, 2018 outlined six specific areas where it believed IHMM needed to do a better job serving its certificants and growing the organization. IHMM's Board conducting strategic planning in these and other areas on March 2, 2019, and will complete that strategic planning on May 31, 2019.

IHMM is undertaking projects in these areas, in some instances, in cooperation with other organizations whose purposes may benefit from our working together.

1. **Create the Hazardous Materials Society - Education and Training.** For education and training IHMM needs a separate organization in order to maintain the sanctity of our ANSI accreditation. Currently, we receive notice of training programs from time to time, by email and generally without a great deal of lead time for adequate promotion. Our staff has established and grown two 501[c][3] education foundations and worked with terrific volunteers after having written an actual business plan guiding how to develop and deliver education programs. Each summer we held a series of meetings leading to the publication of a comprehensive curriculum of programs we would deliver in the next calendar year. Some training was done by in-house instructors; much of it was delivered by independent contractors.

There are 800,000 hazardous materials shipments each day in the United States. There are more than 1,200,000 people involved in the hazardous materials and dangerous goods industry across the United States. IHMM recognizes that we can all be doing a better job developing and delivering hazmat education and training.

IHMM believes it's time to create just such a forward-looking, disciplined effort encompassing prep courses for potential certificants to webinars [distance learning important] to seminars involving the issues most important to our participants, including continuing education. Having done it several times before for other organizations, we can do it again.

This is regarded as the highest priority. IHMM is creating The Hazardous Materials Society specifically for the purpose of organizing and executing the delivery of a national education and training program based on constructing an annual curriculum of programs we would establish ourselves and with others that encompasses contributions of programs from sections, chapters, independent contractors, existing institutions and others.

IHMM has created The Hazardous Materials Society within which education and training would be done and welcomes the participation of others to share in its creation, operation and delivery of excellence in education programs. **Expect roll-out of the HMS by Labor Day, 2019.**

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2. **Create Better Meetings.** IHMM does not do national or regional meetings on any schedule, anywhere. As IHMM just finalized the acquisition of ISHM that does a small annual meeting, IHMM needs to consider developing an annual meeting, perhaps divided into regions to make it easier to attend. Given that our staff experience in past annual meetings for energy groups and for a national engineering group in 2016 that at the time had 1,150 members and their annual meeting had 704 attendees and sold 70 booths at a trade show in the Anaheim Convention Center – it strikes us that in a group 8 times as large we should be able to organize and execute an impressive annual meeting at an affordable price, and at an attractive venue.

**With the objective of accomplishing a national meeting schedule in 2020** that could include other organizations joining with IHMM, but that could encompass more than 1 meeting and turn into 3-4 regional meetings around the country – we should start with a clean slate. Start by asking, “what would we create and how would we deliver it if we began without prejudice for what annual meetings had contained before – with the objective being new and outstanding content, greater participation, easier access and more affordable?”

3. **Raise the Visibility and Acceptance of IHMM Credentials - Advocacy and Information.** IHMM has not had a formally organized and operating government relations effort, until now. IHMM has a federal initiative involved in the National Defense Authorization Act to bring current military personnel into our private certification based on their military MOS. IHMM does not charge veterans a fee to take tests, but does not reach into the military before discharge to establish military personnel as being prepared for civilian professions after discharge.

IHMM is a member of the Professional Certification Coalition [PCC], where with 114 other associations across the country we work on issues surrounding state-level deregulation of professional licensing to ensure that those activities do not encroach nor are replaced by state action. As IHMM transitions to using its certificant base to communicate with public policy makers and make effective use of our numbers and geographic breadth across the country – it doesn't make sense to have an IHMM program and a separate government relations effort among other groups when joining together adds strength in numbers and breadth of talent all across America.

IHMM's objective in this is simple. We can and should do everything possible to raise the level of visibility and acceptance of our credentials among state and federal government entities, including Congress. We are already undertaking that task in Congress, at EPA, and with the Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation. IHMM has worked with AHMP and gained acceptance of the CHMM and CHMP credentials in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

We can and will undertake more of these initiatives.

4. **Reach Into Colleges and Universities - Associate Certificants.** We are creating a comprehensive program to create “associate” level certifications, not CESB or ANSI accredited, specifically for students in post-secondary educational institutions whose studies will eventually lead to their application to become professional-level certificants. We have identified 6,500 institutions and individuals around the US, and have two that came to us asking to participate in a pilot program to explore interest and operational realities. IHMM will admit schools to the program after a short application review of their accreditations and curricula, as well as commitment to promoting the program in the areas of their student bodies most likely to develop interest.

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Students will apply, pay a nominal fee, be set up with an on-line exam and upon passing and signing an ethics commitment, and receive the associate's certification. IHMM believes this helps develop a valuable pipeline of future professional certificants at the prime time of their educational experience and provides students with an important head start in their professional career path. This program, operated off of the Higher Logic program mentioned above, includes developing a mentorship program to match students with professionals now in the field, as well as internships at companies associated with us. IHMM's Board approved this being formed on 11/30 and a pilot project being constructed between two colleges and IHMM right now. IHMM will run the pilot program with two colleges in the fall of 2019 and, based on its results, be prepared to spread participation to other schools by the fall of 2020.

5. **Affinity Programs Save Certificants Money**. Adding value to participation by using our numbers to leverage better purchasing arrangements for the goods and services best aligned with our mission and certificant needs means that we reduce certificant costs of the key things they buy and at the same time receive royalty payments from the vendors we choose. Our staff's past experience in the development of these programs across a variety of insurances, banking, legal services, equipment and the like resulted in our earning net income while driving down costs for members. These programs are not difficult to develop and, if we have the critical mass of numbers to attract attention, we will succeed in delivery a program robust in benefits that one could only access by being a certificant.
6. **Create Professional Networking**. IHMM has not developed the environment within which its certificants can effectively communicate with one another, share community of practice best practices, or general advise or guide one another. Our committees meet by conference call, not facilitating participation outside of the conference calls. Given our committees and business interests ranging from the US to China to the EU, we're bringing on a "members only" page behind our website, access afforded through a single-sign-on via ACGI account, to create the forums we need to create an effective networking environment. IHMM believes this development to be a key component of serving its present certificants and providing a valuable added-value benefit for growth. Having a LinkedIn group does not allow us to monetize non-certificant participation or provide secure forums within which actual networking and other group work can be done. Higher Logic will be the vendor for the site.

The fact that this area is #6 of 6 doesn't mean it's the least important as networking encompasses meetings, government relations and almost everything else we do. IHMM has a proposal before its Board and looks forward to launching this initiative in July of 2019.