New MOC Part IV Requirements
The American Board of Thoracic Surgery has voted to replace the requirement for mandatory database participation by July 2014 with Performance Improvement. The Board is considering the appropriate start date for the Performance Improvement process, but it will not be earlier than January 2016.

For those who do not participate in a Board approved database/registry, the Board will continue to require participation in the Professional Portfolio until the Performance Improvement process starts.

In August 2013, the ABTS joined the Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program. Quality improvement efforts involving ABTS-certified physicians in the field of thoracic surgery may now be submitted by approved Portfolio Sponsors for MOC Part IV credit through the Portfolio Program.

New Examination Sequence
The ABTS has established a new examination sequence for its candidates for certification that will become effective for all residents graduating on or after January 1, 2014. The new policy will limit the period an individual may be eligible for initial board certification to no more than seven years after completion of training. Candidates will need to apply for the examination within one year after satisfactory completion of their thoracic surgery residency. The Board considers the one year to include two registration cycles. Once approved, candidates will have three years to pass the Part I (Written) Exam and three years to pass the Part II (Oral) Exam. Candidates must certify within a total of seven years from the end of their thoracic surgery residency.

New Congenital MOC Booklet of Information
The ABTS recently approved a Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process for the subspecialty certificate in Congenital Cardiac Surgery. The Congenital MOC process will be similar to the current MOC process to maintain a primary certificate in thoracic surgery. A MOC Booklet for Congenital Cardiac Surgery is now available on the Board’s web site at www.abts.org.

SESATS Update
The Board is currently developing the next version of SESATS. SESATS XI (11), which is scheduled for release in January 2014, will be a modular, web-based program that will be functional on all types of platforms, such as PCs, Macs, tablets, and smart phones. SESATS 11 will be similar to the previous versions in that it will contain 400 questions, critiques and readings covering all areas of thoracic surgery. The Board has also converted SESATS X (10) from a downloadable format to a web-based, multi-platform version, similar to SESATS XI (11). SESATS X (10) is currently available for purchase at www.sesats.org.

Cardiothoracic Critical Care Emphasis
The ABTS recognizes cardiothoracic critical care as one of the four basic components of thoracic surgery along with adult cardiac surgery, general thoracic surgery and congenital heart surgery. As such, cardiothoracic critical care will be emphasized on the qualifying, certifying and Maintenance of Certification examinations.

The Board has worked with the American Board of Surgery to develop cardiothoracic critical care fellowships that lead to subspecialty certification. The Board also supports the development of educational materials and courses in critical care appropriate for cardiothoracic surgical trainees and ABTS Diplomates.

Maintenance of Certification
In response to an initiative by the American Board of Medical Specialties, the ABTS implemented its Maintenance of Certification® (MOC) in January 2008. To date, approximately 2,100 Diplomates have successfully participated in the MOC program, which now includes completing 5-year and 10-year Milestones.

All Diplomates who are currently practicing, including those who hold life-time certificates, are expected to participate in Parts I-IV of the MOC program. In addition, Diplomates who hold Inactive Status are expected to participate in Parts I-III. Diplomates must hold a valid, unrestricted ABTS certificate to enter the MOC process. The only pathway for renewal of a lapsed certificate is to retake and pass the qualifying and certifying examinations.
The Board has approved a plan to develop a specialty specific 10-year Milestone exam. Additional information about the 5 and 10-year Milestones can be found on the Board’s web site.

**Board Web Site**
The Board is in the process of rolling out a new interactive web site and portal for our Diplomates, Residents and the public. Currently, the new web site allows Diplomates to apply for the 5-year and 10-year Milestones of Maintenance of Certification. Residents are also able to apply online for certification. It is anticipated that most of the features will be up and running within a year.

**Pathways to Certification**
Eligibility to enter the American Board of Thoracic Surgery’s certification process may be achieved by completing one of four training pathways and fulfillment of the other requirements. Details about each pathway can be found on the Board’s web site.

**Residency Operative Requirements**
The American Board of Thoracic Surgery (ABTS) has approved new case index requirements for thoracic surgery residents who started their training on or after July 1, 2012. New areas include simulation, interventional wire skills, and critical care. The new case index requirements can be found on the Board's web site.

**Resident Operative Case Logs System**
All residents who start their training in traditional or integrated programs on or after July 1, 2013 are expected to use the ACGME operative logs. Residents who started their training before this date can choose to use either the CTSNet or ACGME operative logs to report their cases. Please see the Board’s web site for additional information.

**Examinations**
The Board administered the Part II (Oral) Examination to 116 individuals on June 7-8, 2013. The pass rate for the examination was 76%. The next Oral Exam will be held on June 6-7, 2014 in Chicago.

The 2013 Part I (Written) Exam was administered on November 25 to 116 candidates. The pass rate for the exam has yet to be determined. The next Written Exam will be held on November 17, 2014.

**Congenital Cardiac Surgery Subspecialty Certificate**
The 2013 Congenital Cardiac Surgery Part I (Written) Exam was administered on December 2 to 25 candidates. The pass rate for the exam has yet to be determined. The next Congenital Cardiac Surgery Written Exam will be held on November 24, 2014.

The Congenital Cardiac Surgery Oral Exam was administered on June 6, 2013 for the fellows who were successful on the Qualifying Exam. The pass rate was 91%. The next Oral Exam will be held on June 5, 2014.

**Applications for Certification**
The deadline for submitting applications for the 2014 certification cycle is August 15, 2014. All requirements must be fulfilled at the time the application is submitted.

**New Board Directors**
At the 2013 Fall Meeting, Drs. Richard J. Shemin (Los Angeles, CA) became the Chair and Cameron D. Wright (Boston, MA) became the Vice Chair of the ABTS. Drs. Joseph A. Dearani (Rochester, MN), John G. Byrnes (Boston, MA), and Ara A. Vaporciyan (Houston, TX) were elected to the Board of Directors. At the 2013 Spring Meeting, Mr. J. Thomas Bowler (Palm Beach, Florida) was elected to be the first public member of the Board of Directors.