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Cautionary Note 2 - Ethical Marketing

Dear Registered Architects

I write to draw to your attention to an issue which architects who are running or managing practices need to consider.

The NZRAB has become aware of situations in which architects have been making claims about their involvements in projects which are not fully accurate.

Some architects have presented photographs and comments about particular projects on their websites etc. as if they were the lead architect from beginning to end, when actually they worked in collaboration with others and their role was much more limited.

Also we have come across cases in which architects were involved in a project when working in another practice, and yet their websites or other marketing creates the impression that the work was done at their present place of work.

This is unethical and could be the basis of a discipline case against an architect.

The Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct for Registered Architects says "A Registered Architect must not represent or promote him or herself, his or her business, or his or her professional services in a false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive manner."

Architects need to be careful about the accuracy of their marketing.

When you cite a project as yours, make clear what your role was and at what stages your involvement began and ended. That way, if another architect was involved, there is no conflict. If you worked on a project when employed elsewhere, make clear where it was done, so people don't think it was the work of your current practice.

As you know, we have been taking real estate agents to task for falsely advertising houses as designed by "architects" when this isn't so. It is critical to the reputation of the profession that each and every architect is scrupulously honest when dealing with both individual clients and the public more generally.

If you are responsible for a practice's website, I suggest you check it now, to be certain that none of its claims could put you or your colleagues at risk.

Yours sincerely



Warwick Bell
Chair

