

## **NZRAB Strategic Plan 2007 – 2010**

### **Executive Summary**

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board (the Board) was created by statute in 2005 and began its operations on 1 July 2006.

Overall, the Board has been successful in terms of its initial establishment phase. The Board is now in a development phase in which its systems and processes need to be consolidated and improved. The Board intends that the organisation will stabilise into a continuing operations mode of activity for the commencement of the 2010/11 year.

### **Purpose**

The Board is a statutory entity created by the Registered Architects Act 2005 (the Act).

The Board is a body corporate and a legal entity separate from the Crown. The Board's functions are described in the Act as being to:

- a) make rules relating to Registered Architects
- b) register Architects, issue certificates of registration and assess whether Registered Architects meet the requirements for continued registration
- c) maintain a register
- d) investigate complaints and, if required, discipline Registered Architects
- e) provide information to the public about the registration system for Registered Architects.

### **History**

The Registered Architects Act 2005 came fully into effect on 1 July 2006. Key achievements in the 2006/07 establishment phase included:

- about 1450 Registered Architects being moved from the previous Architects Education and Registration Board Register to the Board's Register
- new and improved pathways to registration
- an enhanced complaints process
- a process for continuing registration
- an electronic register available for view by the public
- a national office.

## **Environment**

The Government is undertaking fundamental reforms in the building sector, most notably a review of the Building Code, the accreditation of consenting authorities and the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme. The quality issues that beset the building industry in recent years have triggered much greater public scrutiny of the building process. As a result, protection of title for Registered Architects has taken on increased importance, both for the public wishing to employ competent Architects and for Registered Architects who want the reputation of their profession protected.

## **Stakeholders**

The Board's key stakeholders include:

- the public
- Registered Architects
- architecture graduates and undergraduates
- the Minister for Building and Construction
- the Department of Building and Housing
- the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA)
- Institute of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ)
- Building Practitioners Board/LBP Scheme Registrar
- other professional registration schemes in the building industry
- other design organisations
- tertiary institutions with schools of architecture
- assessors
- international registries and affiliations.

## **Resources**

The Board is fully funded by Registered Architects and registration applicants on a cost-recovery basis. The Board's assets/resources include:

- a logo (currently being trademarked)
- a website ([www.nzrab.govt.nz](http://www.nzrab.govt.nz))
- a register
- an office.

## **Goals**

Looking forward, a period of consolidation and quality enhancement is required, moving the organisation to commence the 2010/11 year in a continuing operations mode. To this end, the Board intends that by 30 June 2010 the following will have been achieved:

### **REGISTRATION**

1. The Board's initial registration procedure will be accepted by applicants and Registered Architects as fair and efficient and those applying will be well informed as to the requirements for registration.
2. The initial registration procedure will be properly resourced in terms of the numbers and competency of assessors and the support provided.

3. The Board will be in contact with associated registration authorities and be involved in developments affecting the registration of Architects both nationally and internationally.

#### CONTINUED REGISTRATION

4. Continued registration will be managed primarily through a CPD programme that is widely available throughout New Zealand and provides Registered Architects with activities relevant to their practices, the services offered to their clients and their specific interests and/or specialisations.
5. A second procedure for continued registration will be available by which the Board determines the continued competence of Registered Architects where the CPD requirements have not been met.
6. The Board's procedures for determining continued competence in terms of minimum standards will be integrated with procedures for reactivating registrations previously in voluntary suspension.

#### PROTECTION OF TITLE

7. The public will be provided with information explaining what a Registered Architect is, what services they offer, and what can be expected of them.
8. The media will be advised that persons who are not Registered Architects but who nonetheless design buildings should not be described as Architects or confused with Registered Architects.
9. The Board will have resources in place to enforce title protection.

#### REGISTER MAINTENANCE

10. The Register will be operating efficiently and data will be able to be extracted as required.

#### PUBLIC PROTECTION

11. Fair, robust and complete complaints procedures will be in place and all complaints will be processed and concluded within a reasonable period of time.
12. The outcome of disciplinary procedures will be communicated to the profession to assist them learn from others' mistakes, and to the public to maintain the Board's credibility and the public's confidence in Registered Architects.

#### COMMUNICATION

13. Communications programmes will be in place so that Registered Architects receive regular updates about the Board's activities and policies and have access to all necessary information regarding the Board's activities.
14. Communications programmes will be in place so that the public can understand the functions and role of the Board and have confidence in it.
15. Criteria will have been developed for the use of the NZRAB logo by Registered Architects.

## ADMINISTRATION

16. The Board will operate in an open and transparent manner.
17. A fee structure will be in place by which the Board covers its costs, including providing contingency funds for unforeseen events.
18. The Board's governance arrangements will be stable, defensible and well understood by those using them.
19. The Rules and, if need be, the Act will have been amended if and where significant inconsistencies have emerged, and procedures for ongoing review will be in place.
20. Good, continuing and open relationships will be in place with all key stakeholders.
21. The Board will have strategies in place to mitigate key person risk among its employees.

## Issues

The following are descriptions of the issues that the Board currently faces, organised by function.

<b>Functions</b>	<b>Current issues</b>
<p>REGISTRATION: Assess whether persons meet the minimum standards for registration</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appeals against decisions have been received, and there is some confusion over the implementation of the pathways. The pathways model needs refining, both in terms of the 'equivalency' assessment regime and the requirements under each pathway.</li> <li>2. The pressures on those doing the assessments are considerable and a recruitment, training and succession regime for assessors is required.</li> <li>3. Application numbers applying for initial registration may exceed the Board's processing capacity.</li> <li>4. The Board's involvement in the APEC Architect project, consultation on the LBP regime, issues such as immigration etc. consume time and resources and arguably should not be paid for completely out of fees.</li> </ol>
<p>CONTINUED REGISTRATION: Assess whether Registered Architects meet the requirements for continued registration</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Legal advice suggests that the current procedures for determining continued competence – a reliance on Architects completing a continued professional development programme (CPD) – could be challenged in Court. An additional procedure for determining continued competence is required to mitigate this risk.</li> <li>6. The current CPD regime needs to be enhanced</li> </ol>

	<p>to ensure that it is widely available to Architects throughout New Zealand and is of value to Architects throughout all stages of their careers.</p> <p>7. Misunderstandings regarding the service delivery by NZIA under the CPD agreement need to be cleared up, most likely via a revised agreement.</p> <p>8. The voluntary suspension regime does not provide a mechanism for determining continued competence when a Registered Architect wishes to commence practicing again.</p>
<p>PROTECTION OF TITLE: Protect the title "Registered Architect"</p>	<p>9. The Board receives reports of persons described in the media and elsewhere as being Architects who in fact are not Registered Architects. A programme is required to educate the media and the public about what Architects are, the services they provide and the availability of the Register to check if a person in fact is a Registered Architect.</p> <p>10. The Board may need to initiate a prosecution if and when a person is provably shown to be falsely presenting themselves as an Architect.</p>
<p>REGISTER MAINTENANCE: Keep and maintain the Register</p>	<p>11. The Register is operating successfully. In time a review of its usability will be required.</p>
<p>PUBLIC PROTECTION: Receive, investigate and hear complaints</p>	<p>12. The Board has received a number of complaints and some have warranted investigation. It can be expected that some complaints in the near future will require disciplinary hearings. These hearings must be conducted in accordance with due process and natural justice, and procedures for this need to be developed.</p> <p>13. After 12 months some complaints are still under consideration. The time taken process complaints needs to diminish, once the appropriate procedures and precedents have been established.</p> <p>14. Procedures will need to be developed for communicating the outcomes of disciplinary actions to the public and the profession.</p>

<p><b>COMMUNICATION:</b> Provide information to the public about the registration system for Registered Architects</p>	<p>15. Insofar as they employ Architects, the public needs to know what services they are entitled to expect, how to get the best out of an Architect, and what can be done if difficulties emerge. A communications programme to disseminate this information is required.</p> <p>16. More broadly, the Board needs to communicate to stakeholders, including Registered Architects, about its functions and its achievements so far.</p>
<p><b>ADMINISTRATION</b></p>	<p>17. Currently, the Board is operating at a deficit which will continue until fees are increased.</p> <p>18. The Act and the Rules are in need of modification, and a programme is required to collate and then advance these requirements.</p> <p>19. More work is required on developing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders</p>

**Deliverables**

The table below describes deliverables identified as priorities for 2007/2008 and beyond.

<b>Deliverables by function</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<p><b>REGISTRATION:</b> <b>Assess whether persons meeting the minimum standards for registration</b></p>	
<p>1. Complete transition to assessment against new 'competencies' identified in the Rules</p>	<p>November 2007</p>
<p>2. Develop and implement a recruitment, training and succession regime for assessors</p>	<p>June 2008</p>
<p>3. Broaden the role of assessors to include other functions, such as membership of Investigating Committees and Disciplinary Committees and Visiting Panels for the accreditation of schools of architecture</p>	<p>June 2008</p>

<b>CONTINUED REGISTRATION: Assess whether Registered Architects meet the requirements for continued registration</b>	
4. Ensure that the CPD contract with NZIA is appropriate and that the CPD services being provided are appropriate in terms of quality and availability	June 2008
5. Develop an alternative procedure for continuing registration for Registered Architects who choose not to follow the CPD programme	June 2008
6. Develop and implement procedures that replace voluntary severance with automatic abeyance when Registered Architects do not pay for their Annual Certificate of Registration	June 2008
<b>PROTECTION OF TITLE: Protect the title "Registered Architect"</b>	
7. Ensure that all reports received of the title 'Registered Architect' or 'Architect' being used wrongly are investigated and an appropriate response provided	Ongoing
8. Take legal action if a clear and provable case is detected of a person knowingly and falsely pretending for gain to be a Registered Architect	As required
<b>REGISTER MAINTENANCE: Keep and maintain the Register</b>	
9. Service the register and monitor capacity to extract required profiles etc. of Registered Architects	Ongoing
<b>PUBLIC PROTECTION: Receive, investigate and hear complaints</b>	
10. Develop and use where required protocols and procedures for investigating and disciplinary hearings	December 2007
<b>COMMUNICATION: Provide information to the public about the registration system for Registered Architects</b>	
11. Secure Board's working relationships with key stakeholders	Ongoing
12. Prepare and implement a communication strategy to assist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the public better understand what they are entitled to expect when employing an Architect</li> <li>• the public better understand the role of the Board</li> <li>• Registered Architects and potential registration applicants better understand the Board's policies</li> </ul>	June 2008

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote registration as a goal for architecture graduates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
13. Finalise trade marking of the Board logo and develop protocols for the use of the logo by Registered Architects and, where appropriate, architectural firms	June 2008
14. Consolidate and enhance the Board website	June 2008

In addition, the following deliverables are required to secure the Board's day-to-day operations.

<b>ADMINISTRATION:</b>	
15. Develop an office manual to describe office procedures, to help mitigate key person risk	December 2007
16. Upgrade the Board office, providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a discrete board room</li> <li>• a well ventilated office space for staff</li> <li>• a professional entrance for receiving guests</li> </ul>	June 2008
17. Increase Annual Certificate of Registration fee from \$490 (ex GST) to \$660.00 (ex GST), subject to appropriate consultations	June 2009