

STRATEGY 2022 – 2025

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STRATEGY ON A PAGE

Our Vision

New Zealand architects equipped to make the best possible contribution to the built environment.

Our Role

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board registers, reviews and holds architects to account to protect the public.

Our Values

FAIRNESS

TRANSPARENCY

INTEGRITY

AGILITY

Strategy to Action - 2022 to 2025 priorities

- Protection of Title – ensuring only those who are entitled to do so use the title “architect” or “registered architect” or represent themselves as architects in the context of offering or providing building design services
- Registration (Initial and Continuing) – maintaining robust standards, policies, and procedures to initially register architects and for architects to maintain their registration
- Complaints and Disciplinary – ensuring the integrity and standing of the profession through robust and fair complaints and disciplinary procedures
- Stakeholder Relationships – building and preserving strong relationships with our diverse stakeholders with integrity and transparency
- Governance and Management – our systems and processes are of a high quality, and we operate in an appropriate, adaptive and responsive manner

PROGRESS – 2019 TO 2022

The Board has published strategic plans since its establishment in 2006. This section outlines progress against the current strategic plan for 2019 to 2022.

Focus areas for 2019 to 2022

Greater understanding of the term Registered Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The public understands the difference between “Registered Architects” and architectural designers
Effective continuing registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only architects who meet the minimum standard gain continuing registration
Agile initial registration for current practice and future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants apply for initial registration as soon as is appropriate• Procedures are agile and aligned to the current practice of architecture
Effective and efficient complaints procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints dealt with in a proportionate, timely, fair, user-friendly manner
Strong relationships with key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A trusted and respected regulatory body• Stakeholders well informed
Best practice governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Government is confident that the NZRAB is well governed

The Registered Architect term

We received and responded to 81 enquiries about the misuse of the title Architect. That is 14 in 2019/20, 36 in 2020/21 and 31 in 2021/22.

Significant work to improve the relevant content on our website was put on hold due to financial constraints and other priorities.

The Board is of the view, and has submitted through various channels, that there should be greater regulation of restricted building work and that Licensed Building Practitioners (Design) and Registered Architects should be under a single regulatory regime. This would increase the understanding of the difference between and value of Registered Architects, Architectural Designers and Licensed Building Practitioners.

Continuing Registration

New processes were developed for continuing registration to be managed entirely electronically, and assessors being paired to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions and for the work to be allocated across the country.

PROGRESS – 2019 TO 2022

The continuing registration cohort 12 in 2022 included the group of 1499 architects who were originally registered in 2006/07. Over time this group has reduced by either electing to have their 5-yearly review earlier, or through cancelling registration, or by going into voluntary suspension. This cohort was 1060 in 2011/12, 922 in 2016/17, and 661 in 2021/22.

In response to COVID-19, the Board reduced the target number of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points to be obtained over five years from 1000 to 800.

The CPD policy and procedures were reviewed. In 2021 NZRAB assumed responsibility for and management of the CPD website. This required the creation of a new role within the Executive Office to manage this function.

Agile Initial Registration

With the emergence of COVID-19 in early 2020, the Board initially deferred the March 2020 initial registration intake. When it became clear that COVID-19 was going to cause ongoing difficulties, the Board introduced the professional conversation element virtually through the Zoom platform.

In September 2021 the Board reintroduced the option of conducting professional conversations in-person where that was the candidate's preference and it was permitted by Government guidelines. Although some candidates and assessors have a firm preference for in-person engagement, there is a large group who are comfortable with virtual engagement especially if the alternate option is to defer their application or where it reduces the need for travel. The Board will support individual preferences and maintain the choice of in-person or virtual options.

Four interactive webinars were held each year for potential Pathway 1 & 2 applicants to explain elements of registration process and requirements. These are in addition to the NZIA offered graduate development days.

The Initial Registration Review Panel reported to the Board recommending a number of amendments to various rules and procedures. This work was put on hold pending the review of the National Standards of Competency for Architects (NSCA) 2016 and the publication of the 2021 revision to those standards, and the priority focus on introducing improvements in our complaints and disciplinary processes and reducing the backlog of cases in this area.

PROGRESS – 2019 TO 2022

Complaints and Disciplinary

A major focus of the Board has been on implementing a more robust approach to complaints and disciplinary matters, following the introduction of new Rules in 2020. The Discipline Procedures Manual was rewritten to reflect the new rules. We also focused on reducing the backlog of complaints and disciplinary matters.

The Service Concern process is gathering momentum and having a positive effect on the number of issues which become formal complaints. In 2019/20 there were 11 complaints, in 2020/21 there were 7 complaints and 8 eight concerns, and in 2021/22 there were 6 complaints and 3 service concerns.

The length of time for complaints to be processed at the investigation stage has been reduced to under 40 weeks; this had reached periods in excess of 2 years.

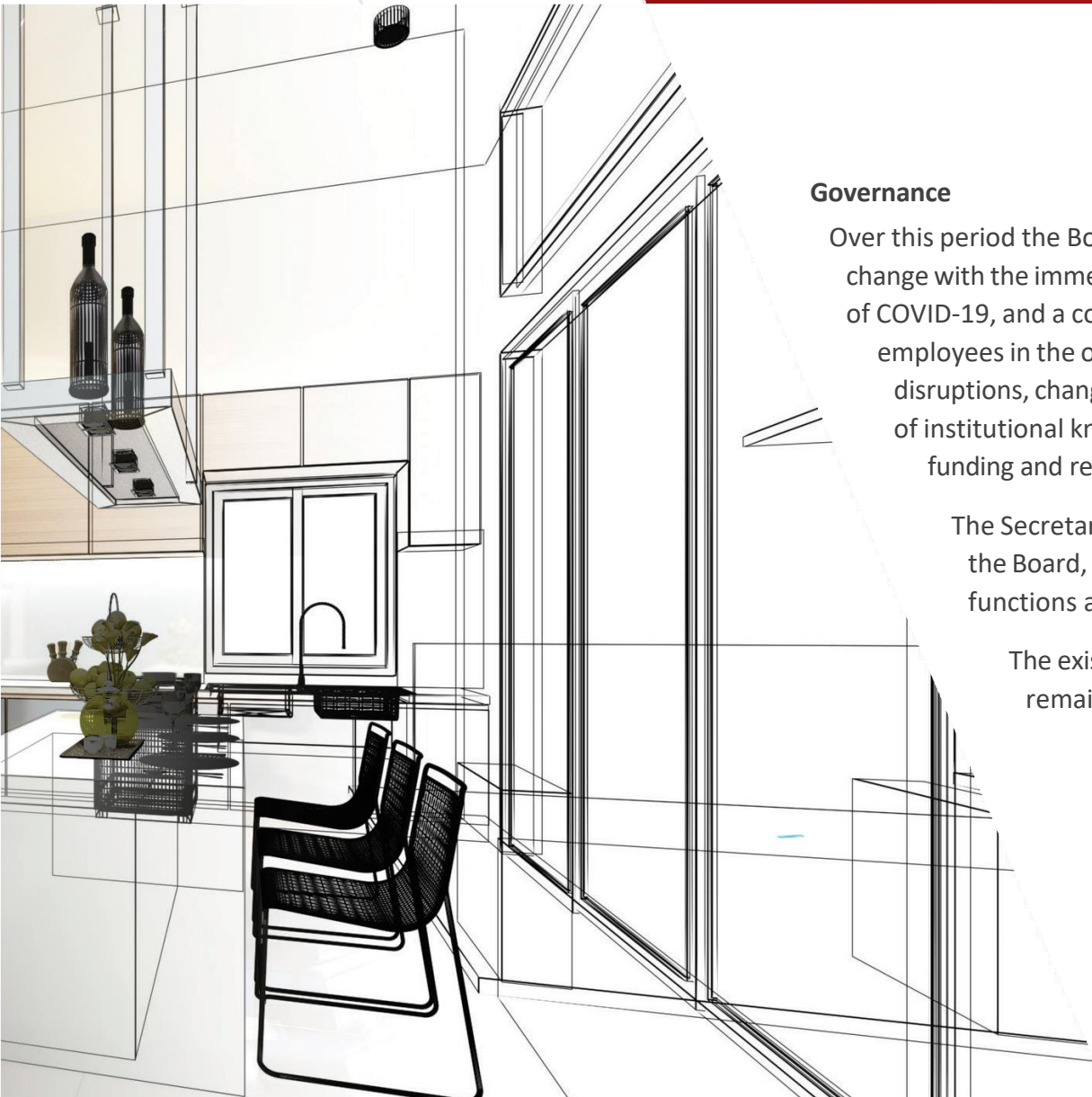
Stakeholder Relationships

The Board has continued to work closely with the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) on the NSCA, Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition, recognition agreements in other jurisdictions, and other areas of common interest. We have continued to actively engage with registration bodies in other jurisdictions, notably the APEC economies of Singapore, Japan, and Canada, and the United States and the United Kingdom.

We have engaged closely with the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as appropriate. We have participated in consultations undertaken by MBIE around the Engineers and LBP regulatory schemes and with the Ministry of Justice on tribunals reform.

Work is on-going to reinforce and strengthen our relationship with Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects, Architectural Designers NZ, and other building and construction sector regulatory bodies.

PROGRESS – 2019 TO 2022



Governance

Over this period the Board has had to respond to significant and fundamental change with the immediate need to vacate our premises in Wellington, the impacts of COVID-19, and a complete turnover of what had been long-term and stable employees in the office. These matters have collectively and individually created disruptions, changed our previously stable income and expenses profile, seen a loss of institutional knowledge, and required a stringent focus on priorities as both funding and resource constraints have permitted.

The Secretariat has been reorganised into an Executive Office advising the Board, to better assist the Board in the performance of its regulatory functions and other duties.

The existing expression of the vision and role of the Board and our values remain valid and will not change.

STRATEGY REFRESH



Values

The current strategic plan articulates our values as being - fairness, integrity, agility, and transparency. These values underpin everything we do – the way we work and operate, the decisions we make, and the relationships we build.

The ideals we aspire to in giving effect to these values are – being professional, valuing and respecting diversity, being responsive and adaptive to current and changing needs, while being reliable, understandable, and consistent.

Objectives/focus areas

The 2019 – 2022 strategy sets out seven focus areas or objectives that have guided our work and we have assessed our progress since the last strategic plan.

STRATEGY REFRESH

The core focus areas continue to be relevant and will remain. However it is recognised that we have appropriately placed an emphasis on:

- implementing revised complaints and disciplinary processes, reducing the backlog, and improving timeliness;
- introducing efficiencies and improvements in managing continuing registration;
- responding to changes to support initial registration, and;
- implementing improved governance practices.

While these areas remain important, we will seek to:

- improve understanding of the term Registered Architects and step-up measures to protect the use of the title;
- place a strong emphasis on building and maintaining strong relationships with all our stakeholder groups, including a stronger focus on professional, relevant and timely communications, and;
- ensure our role is better understood within the profession, the public and our broader stakeholder community.

Our environment is changing

We note that at the end of the period covered by this strategy, NZRAB will be approaching its 20th year of operation. It is appropriate to look at some of the broader changes that have occurred progressively since 2005/2006.

There has been significant technological, legislative and environmental changes that impact architecture, the broader building and construction sector and society at large. It is essential that we keep abreast of these changes and adapt and change our procedures and systems accordingly. In some instances we need to ensure that our stakeholders are made aware of these changes and their impacts so that appropriate responses can be considered.

These changes - outlined in the following few pages - have influenced our strategic intent. Every year we will assess progress and revisit and adjust as appropriate the forward three-year strategic work programme.

STRATEGY REFRESH

Review of the Registered Architects Act 2005

Periodically the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) undertakes reviews of the licensed or regulated professions and the associated legislation. MBIE have indicated that a review of the Registered Architects Act is on their work programme and scheduled to commence in 2022. We will be active in supporting this work and providing input to it as it advances.

The size of the profession

The number of individuals in New Zealand who have become registered architects has continued to slowly climb from the original 1,499 who became registered in our first year of operation in 2006/2007 to 2,200 in 2021/22.

Professional diversity

As at 30 June 2021 the age of Registered Architects range from 28 to 89.

When the NZRAB first began reporting these statistics, women made up 20% of the registered profession in 2012/23. This is now at 27%.

More recent intakes of registered architects are showing that around 50% of newly registered architects are women. This is now presenting as a similar percentage of new graduates emerging from the Schools of Architecture in New Zealand.

The ethnic profile of the profession is also undergoing change although at a more gradual pace – the overwhelming majority of registered architects identify as NZ European.

STRATEGY REFRESH

Pathway from graduation to registration

Research by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) indicates there “is little research into the transition from architectural graduate to registration in Australia and New Zealand”. A University of Auckland study (1987-2018) found that between 1987 and 2018 only 24% of eligible graduates became registered. Surprisingly, this is a reduced percentage from the first survey (1987-1999) when 30% of eligible graduates became registered, and similar to the second survey 1987-2009 at 24%.¹

All show that a significant proportion of graduates do not go on to register as architects in Australia and New Zealand, and that this group includes a higher proportion of women than men.

Both studies emphasise the importance of further research to understand where graduates go. The researchers hypothesise that the reasons graduates do not register include pursuing an alternative career, living and working overseas, being employed by architectural practices or becoming Licenced Building Practitioners (LBPs), or unregulated Architectural Designers without the need for registration and membership.

The pipeline of new architects is via graduates who (if they stay in the industry) often join the Te Kahui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) Emerge group. NZIA advise that they have 835 Emerge members who have graduated, but not yet applied for registration.

Most applicants for registration have a recognised five-year degree in architecture and at least three years’ experience in practice [only 13% of graduates are registered within the minimum timeframe, 44% are registered within 5 years, with just over half of graduates (56%) registering after six years (with some taking over 20 years)].

Future of architecture

This is a future and very important work package which we will look to prioritise. It informs everything from the NSCA and its implementation in New Zealand, to how we manage and evolve both initial and continuing registration requirements and processes.

1 Haarhoff, Baorin, Allen. Architecture Graduate progression to Practice in New Zealand 1987-2018. University of Auckland. 2020.

STRATEGY TO ACTION – 2022 TO 2025

Focus for the next 3 years to our 20th year of operation

For 2022 - 2025 our priorities will be on the following areas.

Protection of Title – ensuring only those who are entitled to do so use the title “architect” or “registered architect” or represent themselves as architects in the context of offering or providing building design services

- Improve understanding of the term Registered Architects primarily through improved website content, targeted at different audiences.
- Step-up measures to protect the use of the title through better engagement and education efforts targeting common sources of issues.

Registration (Initial and Continuing) – maintaining robust standards, policies, and procedures to initially register architects and for architects to maintain their registration

- Advance the NSCA NZ addendum project to take into account the current and evolving practice of architecture, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori perspectives, sustainability, environmental and climate change considerations.

STRATEGY TO ACTION – 2022 TO 2025

- Revisit the work of the Initial Registration Review Panel and their recommendations, reconsider registration processes in light of work undertaken through the NSCA NZ addendum project and diversity perspectives.
- Continue investigating policy and process improvements around CPD, including looking at the long-term future of the current CPD website.
- Prepare the Schools of Architecture of accreditation against the new NSCA 2021.

Complaints and Disciplinary – ensuring the integrity and standing of the profession through robust and fair complaints and disciplinary procedures

- Continue to implement improvements to processes and systems and ensure that we are closely monitoring the impact of the 2020 rules changes in practice.

Stakeholder Relationships – building and preserving strong relationships with our diverse stakeholders with integrity and transparency

- Stronger emphasis on building and maintaining strong relationships with all our stakeholder groups.
- Improve our understanding of our various stakeholder groups and their needs and implement more appropriate communication and engagement mechanisms with them.

Governance and Management – our systems and processes are of a high quality, and we operate in an appropriate, adaptive and responsive manner

- Input into the MBIE-led review of the Registered Architects Act and Regulations.
- Advance a project to formally consider a raft of minor rule changes.
- Modernise the way we work, including being open to using new technology, and introducing paper-light systems and processes.

HIGH LEVEL WORK PLAN

HIGH LEVEL WORK PLAN

The current work programme has been realigned to the focus areas and will be revised and published every year.

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