

ALASKA AELS BOARD

February 2003

Quarterly Board Meeting

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Staff

*Board of Registration for Architects,
Engineers, and Land Surveyors*
PO Box 110806
Juneau, AK 99811
Phone: (907) 465-1676; 465-2691
Fax: (907) 465-2974

Board Staff:

Nancy Hemenway

Executive Administrator

nancy_hemenway@dced.state.ak.us

Julie Adamson

Licensing Examiner

Julie_adamson@dced.state.ak.us

Elton Engstrom

Licensing Examiner

Elton_engstrom@dced.state.ak.us

AELS Quarterly Board Meeting

The Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS) held its quarterly board meeting on February 25-26, 2003 at the Atwood Building, 550 W. 7th Ave., Conference Room 602, Anchorage, AK 99502.

Board members in attendance were: Robert Miller, Chair; Kathy Gardner, Vice-Chair; Daphne Brown, Linda Cyra-Korsgaard, Pat Kalen, Scott McLane, Kimberly Mills, Lance Mearig, and Patricia Peirsol.

Absent and excused were:

Donald Iverson, and Ernie Siemoneit, Secretary. Some highlights of the meeting:

Proposed Regulation Changes Adopted

The Board adopted proposed regulation changes for which the comment period had ended, and asked that the changes be forwarded to the Department of Law for final review prior to promulgation:

1. Technical change to Engineering Table, 12 AAC 36.063 (a)(3)(A):

A technical correction to the Table for requirements for engineers. The portion of the table should read:

ABET Accredited B.S. degree in engineering in the branch of engineering applied for listed in 12 AAC 36.990 (17), and a masters or doctorate in engineering acceptable to the Board.

2. Technical changes to Architect Education Requirements

12 AAC 36.061(a)(2): Changed to reflect the current NCARB education standards publication 2002-2003.

3. Delete Architect by Comity IDP provision in 12 AAC 36.103(5).

Currently all architects who obtained initial registration after 1/1/90 must provide proof of IDP. Since Alaska requires the "Blue Book" NCARB Council record for registration, proof of IDB is not necessary. These Council Record holders have met education and training requirements. Requiring proof of IDP is an added burden to applicants.

4. Require Dates when Sealing Plans 12 AAC 36.185 (d):

The registrant shall include the date each time the registrant signs and seals a document by inserting the date within the seal or in close proximity to the seal.

Disciplinary Action Taken

The AELS Board voted to adopt the hearing officer's recommendation to fine Patrick W. Moore \$4,000 for practicing civil engineering without a valid license. Moore, who previously held license #5327 CE, allowed his license to lapse several times (most recently on 12/31/01) while continuing to work as a civil engineer.

Under Consideration

Expand to add some or all NCEES engineering disciplines:

Still under consideration is a proposal to expand the engineering disciplines licensed in Alaska.

The Board has previously discussed if it should add a few engineering disciplines to the six currently offered.

The Board has considered including those disciplines most frequently asked about (environmental, fire protection, and control systems). Now the Board will discuss adding a broader range of disciplines.

The Board will consider draft definitions of disciplines that a newly-formed subcommittee develops. The Board has been reviewing the Nevada licensure system that offers all specialties based on the NCEES examinations offered.

Why Change Engineering Disciplines Offered in Alaska?

Background on Licensure Proposal:

The Board staff often has inquiries by engineers currently licensed in another jurisdiction seeking licensure in Alaska in a discipline we don't license (such as Environmental Engineering, Fire Protection, or Control Systems). Since we only license six of 19 engineering disciplines (specialties), many engineers cannot practice their specialty in Alaska.

Mobility has been a key issue at the national level and the NCEES leadership has encouraged all jurisdictions to allow U.S. engineers more flexibility to move within U.S. jurisdictions. Growing interest by international governments seeking agreements between host nations are being increasingly sought, and there is concern that U.S. engineers may be disenfranchised by impediments imposed in many U.S. jurisdictions.

The National Council of Examiners of Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES) currently offers nineteen disciplines by examination. They are designated as **Group I exams** (Chemical, Civil [Structural Design Standards, Transportation Design Standards], Electrical/Computer, Environmental, Mechanical, Structural I, and Structural II and **Group II exams** (Agricultural, Control Systems, Fire Protection, Industrial, Manufacturing, Naval Architecture/Marine Engineering, Metallurgical, Mining/Mineral, Nuclear, Petroleum, and Architectural Engineering. (Architectural Engineering is the newest examination first offered in April 2003).

The national trend is to license by non-discipline specific licensure (41 other jurisdictions currently issue professional engineering licenses).

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Jurisdictions using the non-discipline specific system have strengthened their requirements for ethics and disciplinary laws to ensure public health, welfare, and safety are met.

Other jurisdictions offer all engineering disciplines and list the disciplines in the regulations or rules.

Public Comment

Scott Sandlin, PO Box 103563, Anchorage, AK 99510-3563 commented on the Architect by Comity requirements. The Alaska regulations require Architects by Comity applicants to submit a "Blue Book" Council record. If an architect was registered in another jurisdiction but cannot meet the education standards or other requirements (has a 4 year degree and not a 5 year degree, for example) then they are not eligible for licensure in Alaska.

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) has developed (and simplified) an alternative method for obtaining council certification, the Broadly Experienced Architect (BEA) process.

Mr. Sandlin requests that the Board consider paths other than the BEA for Comity Licensure, as some other jurisdictions have done.

Proposed Statutory Changes Requested

Legislative Requests:

The Board requested statute changes in its FY02 Annual Report and has forwarded its requests to the Legislature, and anticipate bills introduced in these three areas:

Continuing Education (CE)

Until the Legislature grants authority, the Attorney General's office has advised the Board that it does not have explicit authority to develop a continuing education regulatory program. The Board has requested statutory authority for CE in its FY02 Annual Report, and if granted, regulations could be developed. Initially, a CE program would be developed only for land surveyor's CE. The other professions

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(architects, engineers, and landscape architects) have not expressed adequate, uniform support for a mandatory CPC (or CE) program.

The model under consideration for the regulatory program was based on the NCEES recommended guidelines for CE. If statutory authority is granted, CE would likely be phased in for the 2005 renewal cycle (in order to allow registrants time to comply with the new CE requirements).

Term Limits:

The Board voted at its February 2002 meeting to support a change to the statutory requirement for term limits. Currently, if the Governor's process to appoint a Board member extends beyond two years, a Board member who serves 6 years is prohibited from being re-appointed. The Board has requested that a full term be considered two or more years. This change would allow a Board member filling a partial term to serve the partial term, plus a full 8 years (two 4-year terms).

Specialty Contractors:

The Board continues to have concerns about the current exemption under AS 08.48.331 (7) for specialty contractors and will ask for revised statutory language. The Division of Occupational Licensing Investigator reports that some specialty contractors perform unlawful design work under the auspices of the specialty contractor exemption and has requested a statute change to address this issue.

Subgroups

The AELS Board did not meet in subgroups at this meeting.

Building Officials Manual:

The Building Official's handbook subgroup circulated a draft version to Building officials and groups for comments in late October. Suggested changes were incorporated into the draft, and it has been posted to the AELS Website. The Board considers it to be a working document and anticipates ongoing changes to the Building Officials Manual.

Canadian Reciprocity and Work Experience Verifications:

The Board will continue its focus on Comity issues and compare the Canadian experience, education, and examinations to the U.S. system. One member attended a meeting of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) meeting in February. Draft language will be developed for the May meeting. Under consideration is:

- 1) To consider work experience under a registered Canadian engineer to meet engineering education requirements;
- 2) To review the regulation (12 AAC 36.090) for Fundamentals of Engineering Waiver, and perhaps consider reducing the requirement from 20 years of professional work experience to 10 years of professional work experience.

What's New

Engineer Requirements for FE/PE exam applicants:

Effective January 1, 2004, new regulations will go into effect for educational requirements to sit for the Fundamentals of Engineering and Principles of Engineering examinations (12 AAC 36.063-064*). Both examinations will require a minimum of at least three years of post-secondary education credit hours in a board-approved curriculum of engineering to qualify to sit for the exams. Less than three years of course work or a degree in Engineering Technology will no longer be considered to meet the education requirement.*

*Refer to the full text and tables of the regulation to see the combination of education and experience required, and also check FAQs.

Arctic Engineering Course

The Board voted not to reconsider a graduate level arctic course, CE A680 (1 credit) that was approved at its November 2002 meeting. CE A 680 currently meets the requirements of 12 AAC 36.110 for arctic engineering.

The UAA will initially offer this web-based course March 3-14, 2003. The UAA plans to offer the course again in May and October 2003. Contact Orson Smith :
@afops@uaa.alaska.edu;
(907) 786-1910 for information.

AKLS Exam

The Board will offer the Alaska Land Surveyor Examination (AKLS) in April, on April 11 2003, and will likely offer it on October 24, 2003 in conjunction with the NCEES PLS exams.

How often the examination will be offered depends on the number of applicant requests, so candidates should check with the AELS Board staff, or the AELS for future AKLS exam dates.

Land Surveyor Requirements for FLS/PLS exam applicants:

On January 1, 2002, new regulations went into effect for educational requirements to sit for the Fundamentals of Land Surveying (FLS) and Principles of Land Surveying (PLS) examinations (12 AAC 36.064-065*). Both examinations require a minimum of at least two years of post-secondary education credit hours in a board-approved curriculum of land surveying to qualify to sit for the exams.

*Refer to the full text and tables of the regulation to see the combination of education and experience required, and also check FAQs.

Landscape Architect Registration Exam (LARE):

The 2003 LARE Exams will only be offered in Anchorage unless otherwise posted on the website. Candidates should check with the AELS Board staff or the website for future LARE exam locations.

Other Updates

Occupational Licensing Director

The Governor appointed Rick Urion as Director of the Division of Occupational licensing.

On-Line Applications

The Director authorized the in-house data processing staff to begin work on on-line applications. Applicants would be required to submit the application on line using a credit card and would submit separately a hard copy signature page. Staff would provide confirmation to applicants that both parts had been received and that the application process was successful. The requirement for a notarized signature could be phased out once digital signatures have been approved by the agency for application use.

Outreach

The Board began to publish information in February 2002 in yellow page directories, and online directories to alert the public of the necessity for professional licensure of architects, engineers, land surveyors, and landscape architects. The Board will continue to advertise and hopes this effort will help to eliminate unlicensed activity.

Host Conferences:

The AELS Board has continued to have good representation by Board members at its national and regional conferences due to budget increments for travel, and support of the Occupational Licensing Director. This has helped to bring the NCEES Presidents' Assembly/MBA Group in February 2003 (Girdwood); the WCARB Region 6 Conference to Alaska in March 2003, both of which were well attended. The Western Zone regional meeting is scheduled (NCEES) for May 2005; and the NCEES Annual meeting for September 2006 (both in Anchorage).

Board Travel:

The Board will send representatives to participate to the Western Zone (NCEES) meeting in Red Lodge, MT May 15-17, 2003.

Applicant Files Reviewed

The board reviewed 132 applicant files for examination or comity licensure for architects, engineers, land surveyors, and landscape architects. The Board approved 124 applicants for comity and examination, found 3 applications incomplete, and denied 5 applicants for FE, PE or PLS, or AKLS exam or comity licensure.

AELS Deadlines

All applications for comity and any supporting documents are due in the *Juneau office* no later than **May 12, 2003** to be considered at the next AELS meeting scheduled for May 21-22, 2003 meeting in Fairbanks at the UAA Fairbanks IARC building.

The June LARE examinations will be given in Anchorage on **June 9-11, 2003**.

All applications for engineer and land surveyor exams for the October 24-25, 2003 exams must be received in the Division of Occupational Licensing *Juneau office* by **July 25, 2003**.

Staff Reports

Investigator's Report

John Clark, Occupational Licensing Investigator for the AELS Board, reported the status on the investigative cases and actions (see attachment A, website)

Board Administrator's Report

The AELS Board administrator reported on statistics of registrants and exams. Two new licensing examiners were hired: Julie Adamson in September 2002 and Elton Engstrom in December 2002.

The Executive Administrator report is attached (see attachment B, website)