



Subject	Update on ARB's Operational Activities		
Status	Open		
Purpose	For Note		
From	The Interim Registrar		
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### 1. Purpose

To update the Board on ARB's operational activities since the last Board meeting.

#### For Note

### 2. Contribution to the Board's Purpose and Objectives

In delivering the Act, ARB's objectives are:

Protect the users and potential users of architects' services, and support architects through Regulation. ARB's Operational Activities Report keeps the Board informed of activities which ensure that ARB meets its purpose and objectives and delivers against the Business Plan 2014.

### 3. Risk Implications

ARB's Operational Activities Report provides the Board with an update on business activities, progress against the Business Plan, as well as highlighting any emerging risks which may impact on delivery.

### 4. Key points

#### Discussions with Stakeholders

##### **Built Environment Professional Education Project**

In early December 2014, we attended an update session and reception following the first year of the Built Environment Professional Education Project, which is a part of the Paralympic Legacy project. The session showcased the initiatives which other professional and statutory regulatory bodies have taken forward to embed inclusive design within their requirements for the maintenance of competence; specialisation etc.

##### **ARB/SCHOSA Liaison meeting**

Members of the Team met with representatives of SCHOSA Council in mid-January 2015 to discuss the processes ARB uses to determine eligibility to the Prescribed Examinations. SCHOSA had raised some queries regarding this area and in relation to the transitional arrangements that were in place when the most recent updates to the Examination process took place. Discussions between the team and SCHOSA are ongoing and further reports will be provided to the Board as these move forward. Please see item 9 on today's agenda.

### **Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)**

We have attended various forums run by the Department in the areas of Human Resources, Communications and finance. The Interim Registrar also attended an Accounting Officer meeting with the Head of Finance at the DCLG to discuss the role of accounting officer and the Departments expectations.

### **Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)**

The Interim Registrar and Head of Qualifications met with the Department's new Deputy Director for the Single Market recently. A discussion as to how the ARB could contribute to an exercise BIS was seeking to undertake in order to gather feedback from architects regarding their mobility within Europe took place. It is likely that ARB will assist in the formulation and dissemination of a questionnaire for architects and co-host a feedback forum with BIS and the RIBA in the Spring.

The Professional Standards Manager attended a BIS workshop on the implementation of Small Business Appeals Champion and the Growth Duty, which may impact on ARB in future.

### **RIBA (RIBA) Education Review Group**

We attended the most recent meeting of the RIBA's Education Review Group, which focussed on students' experiences and views of the current model of architectural education. It is anticipated that further meetings will take place in 2015 and that the RIBA will formulate its recommendations in due course.

### **Meeting with Delegation from India**

We, along with representatives of the RIBA, recently met with a delegation from the Indian professional, statutory and regulatory bodies to discuss the current position regarding the profession in India and the UK, as well as the future of the profession in both countries. The Indian authorities were in the process of introducing an amended Act to, amongst other things, manage the growth of the profession across India, and sought the UK's advice on their approach to this. Discussions also covered the requirements for registration in each country and the registration of overseas qualified individuals.

### **Consumer and client stakeholders**

We continue to build relations with stakeholders. We met with the HomeOwners Alliance who updated us on their work with the RIBA on the RIBA's recently launched building contracts, which are an alternative to the Joint Contract's Tribunal's products. We are also in the process of organising further meetings with stakeholders from TrustMark and the Planning Portal to explore possible joint working. We attended a meeting with communications leads from other Non-Department Public Bodies where we shared ideas about social media and managing communications through a time of change.

Informal meetings took place with contacts at the Nursing and Midwifery Council and the General Chiropractic Council.

## 5. Communicating ARB's work

### **Retention fee communications**

A major recent communications project has been undertaken during the retention fee period. The statutory notices and reminders were all reviewed and updated with the focus being on clear, concise messaging. It became apparent that there was an issue with registrants making electronic payments without quoting reference numbers. We used messages in reminder emails and on social media to push the importance of quoting the 7 digit registration number with all payments; this had a substantial impact, with a significant increase in the number of payments quoting reference numbers.

We made extensive use of our communications channels to remind registrants about the retention fee deadline, including working with AJ who published a piece advising architects that we were collecting the fee. The Interim Registrar also wrote to the professional bodies and asked for them to remind their members of the payment deadline. We posted messages about the retention fee on social media, asking our contacts to retweet or like them. This strategy proved highly effective with retention fee messages being shared with over 40,000 twitter users.

AJ and BD both ran stories about the number of architects removed, these covered the points noted in our press release and supportive comments posted in response to articles counterbalanced the negative ones.

### **Home Building and Renovating Show Speaking Slot**

We will be exhibiting at the Home Building and Renovating Show which will take place 26-29 March 2015 at the NEC in Birmingham. We have been successful in our request for a speaking slot in the Masterclass Programme, we will speak on 29 March 2015 on the subject of 'Choosing An Architect: Thinking of using an architect? What consumers need to know'.

### **New 'Consumer Meeting Your Architect' form**

The 'Consumer Meeting Your Architect' form has been very well received; it has been downloaded almost 900 times since mid-October. The HomeOwners Alliance were very interested in this resource and asked to use it on their website which we agreed to, on the condition that they reference ARB and link to our website.

### **Registration Route Finder**

The online Registration Route Finder tool has also proved very popular. It was developed in response to enquiries from potential registrants who requested a resource with clear and concise information on the different routes to registration. It was launched in mid-November and has already had over 900 visits.

## 7. European Issues

### **European Network of Architects' Competent Authorities (ENACA)**

A member of the staff team attended an ENACA meeting in late January 2015. The meeting focused on preparing for the main ENACA meeting which is due to be held in March 2015. We will be hosting the meeting at ARB. Discussions centred around how Competent Authorities were beginning to interpret the revised Directive and the revised processes for notifying qualifications to the European Commission.

## 8. Administration of the Register

### **Accuracy of the Register**

We are continuing to review the information we hold on the Register for each architect to ensure that information held is, up to date, accurate and in a standardised format. Anyone being put on or back onto the Register follows a standardised format. The accuracy and integrity of the Register is paramount.

### **Update on Removals from the Register for Non Payment 2014**

#### **2014 Retention Fee Collection**

Following January's removals for non-payment, as of 31 December 2014, 1465 architects of the 2043 removed had been re-entered on the Register (72 %). Of the 2043 struck off in 2014, 145 were struck off again in January 2015.

#### **2015 Retention Fee Collection**

On 6 January 2015, 1814 architects were removed for non-payment of the retention fee. As of 21 January 2015 777 applications to re-join have been received.

An ongoing project is underway to make sure that anyone continuing to use the title despite being struck off is contacted and asked either to apply to be reinstated or refrain from using the title.

## 9. Committee Meetings

Professional Conduct Committee – 1 & 2 December 2014

Remuneration Committee – 3 December 2014

Prescription Committee – 8 January 2015

Professional Conduct Committee – 9 January 2015

Prescription Committee – 29 January 2015

Professional Conduct Committee – 29 January 2015

## 10. Future Meetings and Events

Investigations Oversight Committee – 12 February 2015

Prescription Committee – 26 February 2015

Audit Committee – 26 March 2015

Prescription Committee – 2 April 2015

We will be attending the next Quality Assurance Agency/UK Inter-Professional Group Forum which will be looking at regulation and the future of quality assessment.

We will be participating in upcoming Architects Council of Europe's meetings including the General Co-ordination, Finance and General Assembly meetings.

We will be hosting a meeting of the European Network of Architects Competent Authorities in mid-March 2015.

**11. Anticipated dates for future Board reports on particular projects within the Business Plan**

**May 2015**

- Routes to Registration Update
- Website / Social Media Report
- Board Members Handbook

**12. Resource Implications**

Staff resources continue to be stretched to capacity. Due to the interim arrangements which are in place, Team members have taken on additional tasks and responsibilities in order to ensure that we continue to deliver. The Board will be alerted should there be any risk to the delivery of ARB's statutory functions.

**13. Communication**

The update on ARB's operational activities, updates the Board on ARB's work and any risks which may prevent the delivery of ARB's operations.

**14. Equality and Diversity Implications**

ARB takes equality implications into account in all areas of its work and where appropriate, specific impact assessments are undertaken.