



Architects Registration Board of Victoria

June 2005

67

Information *For architects*

This Newsletter is an official ARBV communication with architects.

THE ARBV ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES AWARD FOR 2005.

Registered architects are invited to seek nominations for the Architectural Services Award for 2005.

Entries for this Award close on 31 August.

Nomination forms will be mailed to all registered architects during July. Judging for the award will be conducted over September – October with the award announced at the Board's ceremony in December.

The 2004 Award was very successful with over 60 architects being nominated and the Board was pleased to publicly acknowledge architects' excellent service to clients.

Clients of architects may obtain a nomination form from their architect or direct from the Board. Forms are also supplied to other agencies such as the Building Display Centre and Archicentre.

ARBV CONTACT DETAILS

Level 7
372 Albert Street
East Melbourne
VIC 3002

Telephone 613 9417 4444
Facsimile 613 9417 4711
Email registrar@arbv.vic.gov.au
Website: www.arbv.vic.gov.au

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE AND 2005 REGISTRATION

The transition to insurance compliance under the Architects Act is progressing very well so far, with more than 1500 architects and Firms successfully renewing their registration and providing the required information about their PI insurance.

The Board has received numerous phone calls during the past month as architects become familiar with the requirements and the Board has also conducted an information seminar attended by over 100 architects.

The key questions and answers from that process are provided here to assist where architects are still looking for answers.

- Q.** What information do Practising architects have to provide?
A. The registration renewal form includes a brief questionnaire, the answers for which are normally found on the Certificate of Currency for the insurance.
- Q.** I'm an employee architect and my employer prefers to not provide the Firm's Certificate of Currency. What should I do?
A. Complete the questions on your Account form and ask your employer for a letter identifying you as an employee, stating that you are covered by the Firm's PI insurance policy that complies with the Ministerial Order. Attach that letter to your renewal form and send both to the Board no later than 31 July.
- Q.** The questionnaire asks "Does your insurance cover comply with the Ministerial Order"...How can I establish that?
A. The expectation is that architects will check the Ministerial Order. The key parts for answering this question are Parts 5 and 6 about kind of insurance and amount of insurance required. Architects are responsible for the compliance of their insurance. This task should not be left to administration staff.
- Q.** The Order refers to 'all architects who carry out work as an architect.' What does this mean?
A. The Order generally applies to "Practising architects". The Board takes the words 'working as an architect' to mean provision of advice or service that leads directly to the design and associated services for built works or associated works.

PI INSURANCE QUESTIONS CONTINUED

- Q.** I have been out of practice for 3 -4 years, what sort of cover can I get?
A. Insurance should be available; but 'retroactive' cover may not be available for the gap and premiums will be assessed according to the level of risk ascertained by the insurer.
- Q.** I contract my service to employers on short term contracts. Am I covered by my employer's insurance?
A. Your contract should deal with that question. Otherwise, make sure you have your own cover.
- Q.** If I rely on my employer's insurance and become unemployed, where do I stand?
A. You will need PI insurance cover to remain registered as practising.
- Q.** Must employees be listed in the insurance policy or the Certificate of Currency?
A. Firms' policies and Certificates normally cover employees without specifying employees. Names may be included.
- Q.** What if I only do 'small' jobs?
A. The size of the job is not a determinant. To remain registered, you must be covered by PI insurance.
- Q.** I'm in discussion with my Broker; but won't have my insurance ready for 1 July.
A. You have until 31 July to finalise arrangements. If you can't meet that deadline, pay your registration fee and write telling the Board what you have arranged and up-date your insurance information in writing by the end of August 2005.
- Q.** Don't these new requirements make it difficult for new architects starting out?
A. The requirement for insurance is not new; but it is now tied to registration. Most new architects are in employment and therefore should be covered. The decision to start your own practice is a commercial decision that must take into account costs, including insurance.
- Q.** This just seems to be an extra imposition. What is the Board's role in promoting architecture?
A. The requirement for insurance is a long-standing legislative requirement. It is also prudent and in the best interests of your client and yourself. The Board's primary role is to serve consumer interests under the Architects Act and Architects regulations. In doing so, it helps to maintain professional standards. The Board also promotes good architectural service through its Architectural Service Award. The professional association has as part of its charter the promotion of architecture.
- Q.** Are my insurance details kept confidential?
A. Yes. In compliance with the Act and Regulations, the Register of Architects will identify Practising and Non-practising architects and who is covered by PI insurance as at July each year.

ELECTION OF ARCHITECTS TO THE BOARD

Congratulations to Mrs Jenifer Nicholls on her re-election and to Mr Jose Alfano on his election to the Board for a two year term beginning in October 2005.

Three nominations were received. The names and votes polled by each candidate were:

Mr Jose Alfano	477
Mrs J. Nicholls	615
Mr Alex Njoo	304

There were 698 compliant votes received and 82 Informal votes. The Board expressed its disappointment at the low voter response and the number of informal votes.

New members take up their positions in October.

All positions are subject to the Minister's approval, including two other positions representing consumers and architecture schools.

Ms Jillian Garner, a current, elected member, did not re-nominate. Ms Garner has been an elected member of the Board since 2003. During that time Jillian has made an invaluable contribution to the Board as deputy chairperson and the Board conveys its thanks to Jillian for her work on behalf of the profession.