



DESIGNING A STRONG FOUNDATION

The evolution from a napkin sketch to an actual building requires taking an idea and developing it into a three-dimensional reality. Throughout the development of a project, design decisions are constantly evaluated and considered from a variety of different perspectives—that is the essence of good design. The same principals of project development are being applied to designing the 2012 NCARB Practice Analysis of Architecture survey.

“The Practice Analysis is a powerful tool. It is more than data collection; it is about the future of the profession,” said NCARB CEO Michael J. Armstrong. “A carefully conceived and designed survey will maximize potential results, provide valuable insight into the profession, and lay the strongest foundation for education, experience, examination, and continuing education.”

“NCARB uses the data collected from the Practice Analysis to identify the knowledge and skills necessary to practice architecture independently,” said Vice President, Programs Stephen Nutt, AIA, NCARB, CAE. “The data will drive the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®), inform the Intern Development Program (IDP), and guide our response to the next National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) Accreditation Review Conference (ARC).”

The success of the Practice Analysis and its implementation into key programs is dependent upon the support of practi-

tioners. The number of architects, educators, and interns that complete the survey directly impacts and improves the quality of the decisions made—a rare example in architecture where more is better.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

The 2012 NCARB Practice Analysis of Architecture has been in the early design stage for more than a year, beginning with the formation of the Practice Analysis Steering Committee (PASC) in August 2010. The PASC is charged with the task of overseeing the design and implementation of the Practice Analysis survey. The PASC is made up of volunteer architects involved in the development of key NCARB programs, recently licensed architects, and NCARB staff. Additionally, for the first time, the committee includes representatives from all of NCARB’s collateral organizations—the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), and the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB).

“With the diversity and representation from all the collaterals, the PASC has been able to unreservedly discuss the past, present, and future of architecture. With this we will be able to develop a very successful and informative Practice Analysis of the current and future trends in our chosen profession,” said Travis J. Bridges, AIAS liaison to the PASC. “NCARB has done a wonderful job at integrating the insight and knowledge of all aspects of

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the profession from senior professionals and educators to mid career and young professionals just starting their careers.”

A key decision in designing this year's practice analysis is also to broaden the audience of survey recipients to include interns and educators. With a broader audience, the data collected will have greater depth and relevance across the profession. “We are reaching out to the profession at large and encouraging all re-

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cipients to respond to the Practice Analysis survey,” said Armstrong.

NCARB has historically conducted an analysis of the profession every five to seven years as a basis for the ARE. The *2001 Architecture Practice Analysis Study* resulted in the development and release of ARE 4.0 in July 2008. The *2007 Practice Analysis of Architecture* resulted in modifications and updates to the ARE test specification, formed the foundation for the evolution of the IDP and the development of IDP 2.0, and, for the first time, strengthened NCARB's response to the NAAB's Accreditation Review Conference (ARC).

This year's collaboration is significant and supports one of NCARB's strategic goals—all architectural collateral organizations will contribute to and value an expanded practice analysis and will use common terms to define the expected outcomes for architectural education, internship, examination, and continuing education.

“The 2012 Practice Analysis is, first and foremost, a critical component of

NCARB's overall efforts to design the specification for the ARE and inform the content of the IDP. In addition, the NAAB also believes the 2012 NCARB Practice Analysis will be of great value in guiding and informing the Council's preparation for the 2013 Accreditation Review Conference” said Keelan P. Kaiser, AIA, NAAB President and NAAB liaison to the PASC.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

In August 2011, NCARB selected PSI Services, LLC of Burbank CA, as the consultant for the 2012 study. PSI has extensive experience in providing a full range of psychometric services, data analysis, test design, and content specifications. PSI's enhanced survey and analysis capabilities will allow for greater depth of informa-

tion than any previous practice analysis while at the same time improving the survey experience.

The survey experience is being designed to maximize the potential value of the results. Practice Analysis survey participants will benefit from the ability to complete it in multiple short sessions, enhanced navigation and graphics, and the use of new techniques such as “matrix sampling.” Matrix sampling tailors the number of questions delivered to each survey participant, thereby reducing the amount of time to complete the survey, while still providing coverage of a broad range of content areas across all participants.

The next stage of design development is underway through the work of the Practice Analysis Task Force (PATF). The PATF is comprised of 36 volunteer architects, each representing an area of importance to the profession—education, experience, examination, and continuing education. The effort of the PATF is focused on the development of the knowledge/skills and tasks that will be included in the survey. Additionally, the PATF is responsible for reviewing the Background Information Questions (BIQ) and the multiple rating scales, which will be used throughout the Practice Analysis survey.

The 2012 NCARB Practice Analysis of Architecture survey is scheduled to be released in April 2012 and is anticipated to be distributed to more than 80,000 members of the profession including interns and educators. **DC**