

N C A R B  
**ARE**  
**SECURITY AND  
DEVELOPMENT FEE**

### **Why are the fees being increased?**

In recent months, NCARB has had to turn off substantial amounts of exam content after several candidates posted ARE content on the internet. The cost to develop and replace the exposed content and handle the administrative and legal costs related to these incidents totals an estimated \$1.1 million. While the new fee structure will help offset the costs incurred as a result of exam disclosure, it still falls short of the actual cost of developing and administering the exam and monitoring its security.

### **Why does it cost so much to develop exam content?**

Before a vignette or multiple-choice item is added to the exam it must be written, reviewed, edited, and thoroughly pretested. Prometric, NCARB's test consultant, evaluates the psychometric data on each pretested item to determine if it meets established requirements to be included on the exam. Any item—multiple-choice question or vignette—that isn't performing as expected is revised or thrown out. The rewritten items go back for another round of pretesting. Only items that perform acceptably during pretesting are included as a scored item in an actual exam. This process takes a minimum of two years from concept to becoming a scored item.

### **What is NCARB doing to prevent further disclosure of exam content?**

Prior to taking any division of the ARE and seeing any questions on the exam, candidates are required to agree to the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement. NCARB's efforts to inform candidates of the consequences of breaking this agreement have included postcards, e-mails, a podcast, and articles in the *ARE e-news* and *Direct Connection*. NCARB staff members have spoken at many student and intern events, and warning messages have been posted on the internet. In addition, NCARB is in the process of hiring two full-time staff members to monitor and investigate exam disclosures and copyright violations.

### **How much will it cost to take the ARE under the new fee schedule?**

The new fee for each division will be \$210, an increase of \$40.

### **When will the increase take effect?**

The new rate of \$210 per division will take effect on 1 October 2009. All exams **scheduled on or after 1 October 2009** will be at the new rate. **Prior to 1 October 2009**, candidates can schedule future exam appointments through 31 December 2009 at the current rate of \$170 per division.

**FAQS**  
**FACTUALLY ANSWERED QUESTIONS**



## SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT FEE

page 2

### **If I make an appointment now, will I be able to cancel or reschedule it?**

Once you schedule an appointment, **your test fee cannot be refunded or transferred to another division of the ARE.** As outlined in the *ARE Guidelines*, you can reschedule an existing appointment by calling Prometric's Candidate Services Contact Center at 800/479-6215. At the time of your call, you must reschedule the appointment for a later date. A \$35 reschedule fee will be charged to your credit card.

For more information about rescheduling an appointment, please refer to the *ARE Guidelines*, which can be downloaded from the NCARB web site.

### **Why do all ARE candidates have to pay for the actions of a few?**

The candidates who exposed the exam content have been sanctioned by having exam scores canceled and testing privileges suspended. While further action against candidates who violate the Confidentiality Agreement to recover a portion of the financial losses has not been ruled out, the high cost of pursuing legal action would likely negate any amount that could be recovered from an exam candidate. In the meantime, NCARB has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by providing a psychometrically justifiable and legally defensible examination that measures the level of competence necessary to practice architecture independently.

### **Is NCARB going to increase the amount of time a candidate has to wait to retake a previously failed division?**

Not at this time. However, if additional exam content is disclosed and a division is compromised, the mandatory six-month waiting period may have to be lengthened.