

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS FOR THE CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR INTERIOR DESIGN CERTIFICATION

CURRENT SUNSET REVIEW ISSUES

OUTREACH ISSUES

ISSUE #1: In the prior Joint Committee review of CCIDC, it became clear that outreach to law enforcement is important because CCIDC has no legal authority to enforce or refer disciplinary cases. However, it does not appear that outreach efforts have included law enforcement.

Question #1 for CCIDC: *Do CCIDC outreach efforts include law enforcement? If not, why not? If so, what outreach efforts are being made to law enforcement (district and city attorneys and other relevant prosecutors of consumer laws)? If so, what is the message of the outreach efforts?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #1: CCIDC does not include an outreach effort to law enforcement. Because the current law (Section 5800) only protects the title “Certified Interior Designer” and does not protect consumers from unqualified, inexperienced persons who refer to themselves as “interior designers” or “interior decorators”, CCIDC did not see any benefit in contacting hundreds, of district and city attorneys. If the current law included recourse against unqualified practitioners in order to address the grievances of harmed consumers, then it would have been of paramount importance to convey the benefits of such a law to the enforcement authorities.

CCIDC so far has only received a few complaints against practitioners using the “Certified Interior Designer” title when in fact they were not entitled to. CCIDC has dealt with these cases by issuing a cease and desist letter. If these persons persist in using this title after receiving a cease and desist letter from CCIDC, and there has been no evidence that this has been the case so far, then CCIDC would refer the matter to the Attorney General’s office, or to a local district attorney in where the offender resides.

ISSUE #2: CCIDC has been doing outreach to interior design students as well as interior design schools to increase awareness of the CID certification program. Is CCIDC being as effective as they could be?

Question #2 for CCIDC: *What interaction, beside distributing posters and bookmarks, has CCIDC had with the 65 interior design schools in California?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #2: CCIDC has had representatives from its board of directors, and staff, attend many student forums across the state. CCIDC has also provided Power Point presentations to others outside the board that wanted to give a presentation on becoming a Certified Interior Designer, and what that entails. A student forum is usually a weekend event put on by the various interior design associations whereby students can be exposed to many allied professions, manufacturers, etc. It is normally a series of lectures and showcases that give students an understanding of the profession beyond their schooling.

ISSUE #3: The extent and effectiveness of CCIDC outreach towards building officials is unclear. What CCIDC outreach is conducted towards architects is unclear.

Question #3 for the CCIDC: *What outreach has CCIDC conducted towards building officials? What outreach has CCIDC conducted towards architects? How does CCIDC distribute the materials created for building officials? How is the CCIDC website currently being utilized to relay information to building officials? Is there a section on the website's homepage directing building officials to any information they may need?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #3: CCIDC has conducted extensive outreach to building officials over the past ten years. Since its inception, CCIDC has been a member of CALBO (California Building Officials) and has attended the many annual functions that CALBO has put on for its members across the state. CCIDC has provided an exhibit and information booth at all of their Annual Business meetings and at many of their "Education Week" seminars. At these events, CCIDC has been able to hand out the "Questions and Answers for Building Officials" (Q & A) brochure, along with other promotional items such as scale rules and mouse pads that contain the CCIDC address, phone numbers and web site. A recent survey conducted by CCIDC was able to identify those building officials who were not aware of the Certification program for interior designers and will allow CCIDC to make contact with them in order to implement an ongoing education program. CCIDC regularly mails Q & A brochures to the various building departments for the internal use of building officials in order to educate their staff, and receives many requests from them when they run out. All of this information is available on the CCIDC web site and anyone, including building officials, is directed specifically to it.

There has been a lot of hostility towards interior designers in general by the architect's association (AIA) and architect regulatory boards over the past 15 – 20 years, especially as the interior design profession has sought legislative recognition across the country. This position on the part of the architectural community is currently espoused by their national examining body NCARB (National Council of Architectural Registration Boards) in their published resolution to oppose all forms of interior design licensing or regulation. Since the more recent staff changes at the California Architects Board (CAB), CCIDC does feel that there is a more receptive audience to the issues surrounding the regulation of interior design in California, and will continue to pursue that dialog. It should be noted that many architects, including the California State Architect, are also Certified Interior Designers. CCIDC staff has had conversations with the Executive Director of CAB and will encourage CAB staff to attend its board meetings whenever possible.

ISSUE #4: It is unclear if the operational and procedural elements involved in planning and carrying-out CCIDC outreach are executed in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

Question #4 for the CCIDC: *Who from CCIDC conducts the outreach to students, consumers and professional groups? How does CCIDC decide on a plan of outreach? Does CCIDC employ a cost-benefit analysis to determine the best method of outreach to students? Does CCIDC have a strategic plan for the next five years? If not, why not?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #4: CCIDC's outreach programs are conducted by staff, it's volunteer board of directors, and many other volunteers who are certified interior designers, especially with regard to distributing CCIDC information and brochures to consumers. CCIDC has an "Outreach Committee" made up of public and professional members from its board who work on directing and implementing, with the help of staff, its outreach programs. A strategic plan was developed on August 10, 2001 based upon the current changes proposed at that time through SB 136. This plan will be re-visited in 2003 after the recommendation of the JLSRC hearings are known. It is the goal of CCIDC to update its strategic plan every two years.

ISSUE #5: **Consumers cannot access information regarding the status of a certified interior designer (CID) on the internet.**

Question #5 for CCIDC: *Is there a way that consumers may verify a CID's status? How are the inquiries received via the website addressed?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #5: Consumers who access the CCIDC web site and who wish to know whether the person they are contemplating hiring for interior design services is certified or not, are encouraged to E-mail the CCIDC office for this information. CCIDC does not get a sufficient number of these requests to justify the initial and ongoing expense of providing this information online. CCIDC answers these requests the same day as a priority. From a cost benefit basis it is more cost effective to provide this information via E-mail, or over the telephone. If at some time in the future the requests for this information exceed CCIDC's ability to respond in a timely manner, then due consideration will be given to providing it online. Typically, CCIDC gets a request for this type of information once or twice a month, as opposed to getting far more requests from consumers for lists of Certified Interior Designers in their particular area.

ISSUE #6: **CCIDC states that their biggest source of consumer outreach is their website. CCIDC outreach information and material may not be as effective as it could be.**

Question #6 for CCIDC: *How does CCIDC determine the effectiveness of the website? How does CCIDC evaluate the success of other outreach efforts and materials directed at students, consumers and professional groups?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #6: CCIDC's web master, along with staff have access to logs that can identify a host of information regarding the use of the CCIDC web site. We can identify how many times the web site has been visited in any given time frame, which pages were visited, how long each visit lasted and what information if any was downloaded from the web site, such as the consumer guide, examination study guide, building official brochure, etc.

With regard to the other CCIDC outreach programs such as that to students, CCIDC does solicit, and receive comments from both interior design students and teachers, often with requests for

more bookmarks and posters. We also receive comments back from professional groups whose meetings we attend, and often a repeat invitation is extended as the information we impart is of particular importance to the interior design profession as a whole.

EXAMINATION ISSUES

ISSUE #7: During CCIDC's prior review, the Joint Committee recommended that CCIDC exams should be subject to an occupational analysis and examination validation process similar to that followed by the Department of Consumer Affairs' boards and bureaus.

Question #7 for the CCIDC: *Why was the CCRE exam recently updated? What was updated? Who is doing the psychometric validation? What are their credentials? Please articulate the process used for the occupational analysis. When does CCIDC expect completion of the psychometric evaluation? Has CCIDC considered other ways to ensure that candidates are conversant with California building codes and laws with respect to interior design?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #7: The CCRE examination was recently updated because firstly it was over two years old, and secondly the CCRE Task Force felt it was necessary to conduct a review in order to ensure the validity of all the code questions with respect to the ongoing changes that occur with respect to California building codes. It was also an opportunity to divide the current item bank into three separate CCRE examinations so that they could be rotated each time the examination is given to avoid giving the same examination over and over again.

The psychometrician for the CCRE examination is Castle Worldwide located in North Carolina. Psychometric evaluations are conducted continuously, i.e. every time an examination is given (twice a year). Please refer to the CCIDC report to the JLSRC for more information and validation data and statistics on this examination.

The only way to determine if a candidate is conversant with building codes is to test them through the examination process. This is not only done by CCIDC, but also applies to architects, engineers, and building officials. Because the building codes are so voluminous and complex, CCIDC allows testing candidates to bring their building code books into the examination with them and use them as they would in a practical working situation. This is the "open book" portion of the CCRE referred to in the CCIDC report to the JLSRC.

CCIDC is not entirely privy to the methodology for conducting each occupational analysis, but is aware that they are typically conducted through an extensive survey of professional practitioners. If the JLSRC would like a complete description of the methodology for each analysis, CCIDC would be more than willing to collect and provide this information.

ISSUE #8: It is unclear what CCIDC does to ensure that that each national examination required for certification appropriately measures the professional and technical skills required for certification, and what CCIDC does to ensure that each recognized national examination has an occupational analyses every five to seven years.

Question #8 for CCIDC: *What is the status of the most recent occupational analyses of each examination recognized by CCIDC? What does CCIDC do to ensure that the national*

examinations are following the schedule of occupational analyses? Does CCIDC know the schedule for upcoming occupational analyses for each exam? If so, what are they?

CCIDC Answer to Question #8: All the examinations used by CCIDC are currently going through, or are scheduled to go through, updated occupational analyses. NCIDQ is underway; CQRID and NKBA are scheduled for next year, although CQRID did go through an interim occupational analysis several years ago. CCIDC maintains constant communication with these organizations through its board members who either sit on the delegate boards of these organizations, or act as a liaison to the respective organization that maintains the exam. CCIDC also maintains copies of the occupational analysis of each examination and regularly reviews them to ensure they are kept up to date. CCIDC has also given each of the examination organizations a copy of the California requirements, namely Section 139 of the Business and Professions Code.

BUDGETARY ISSUES

ISSUE #9: The CCIDC fund reserve has continued to decline over the past three years. If this continues, CCIDC will not have a prudent reserve and will have to raise fees.

Question #9 for the CCIDC: *What is the status of the CCIDC fund reserve? What caused the depletion of the reserve from November 2000 to the present, even though CCIDC projected an increase of the amount held in reserve? What is the monthly operating budget? How many months in reserve is currently being held?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #9: The status of the fund reserve at this time is cash on hand of \$87,000.00. The fund reserve at November 2000 was \$84,000.00 cash on hand and a receivable note of \$15,000.00. It did not reflect accounts payable which had not been invoiced to CCIDC at that time, which were primarily accrued lobbying expenses from support of AB 1096. The status of the fund reserve a year ago at December 31, 2001 was \$85,000.00 cash on hand. 2002 is a lower income year for CCIDC based upon the bi-annual billing cycle of Certified Interior Designers. In other words, less CID's will be renewing in 2002 than 2003. This should allow the cash reserves to grow slightly more in 2003. The monthly operating budget is \$17,000.00 which based upon the current reserve, and assuming there were no more income during that period, would last 5 months.

ISSUE #10: Some of CCIDC's expenses, as stated in the independent audit of CCIDC'S revenues and expenditures dated December 31, 2001, are unclear.

Question #10 for the CCIDC: *What activities account for the \$21,812 spent on "Travel and Lodging" during 2001? What mailings account for the \$23,300 spent on "Postage?" How much does CCIDC spend participating in or attending community programs and trade shows? How often did CCIDC participate in or attend community programs and trade shows between November 2000 and the present? How does CCIDC decide to attend these shows? Who attends? For what reason were the "credit card fees" expenses listed in the audit so high?*

CCIDC Answer to Question #10: The \$21,000.00 spent on "Travel and Lodging" accounts for all the CCIDC board of director expenses associated with the four (4) board meetings per year

that are rotated throughout the state. These expenses include air travel, hotel lodging, meals, meeting rooms, automobile expenses, and board member per diem (\$100.00 state standard) for attending each meeting. It also includes similar expenses associated with board member attendance at unscheduled meetings, student forums, or trade shows that are not specifically budgeted for.

The \$23,000.00 listed as “Postage” by the auditor has unfortunately been misstated. The actual cost of postage for the year 2001 was \$9,878.00. The auditor included a line item titled “stamps and supplies” from the CCIDC financial records that is specifically used for providing CID’s with their certification stamps, I.D. cards, certificates, certification binders holding all the CCIDC Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, “Use of Stamp” guidelines, etc. This line item has now been re-classified as “Certification Stamps and Supplies” in order to provide proper allocation of expenses during the next audit.

CCIDC attends and/or participates in several major community programs or trade shows every year. Of particular note in the Los Angeles area are the “Neocon West” and “West Week” trade shows, amongst the largest for interior designers in the United States. There are similar trade show events in the Bay area every year that CCIDC attends as well. CCIDC also attends the CALBO Annual Meeting, which is a national conference held each year, and allows CCIDC to communicate with similar boards from other states. It also participates in the ongoing review process of the NCIDQ examination at this event. CCIDC participated at a community event held in Woodland Hills last year at a major mall opening for Westfield Shopping Centers where representatives of the interior design community interacted with consumers.

The decision to attend any trade show or other similar event is made collectively by the CCIDC board, based upon a review of the merits and benefits of attending such an event. Outreach to consumers, students and professionals are of primary importance in the decision making process.

The “credit card fees” are merchant service fees charged to CCIDC for accepting MasterCard, Visa, American Express and the Discover Card. Since CCIDC starting accepting payment online for renewal, inactive status, and CCRE registration, in order to better service CID’s, there has been a considerable increase in the use of credit card payments. CCIDC does not charge users of credit cards these fees, but absorbs them as the cost of doing business.

CERTIFICATION ISSUE

ISSUE #11: Prior Joint Committee reviews of CCIDC have focused on CCIDC’s relationship with the California Legislative Council of Interior Designers (CLCID). It is unclear whether CLCID is still involved in the certification process or with any CCIDC official business.

Question #11 for CCIDC: *Does CCIDC still forward applications to CLCID? If so, can CCIDC explain the appropriateness of such an action? What is the status of the relationship? Please describe CCIDC’s current interaction, including that by board members, with CLCID.*

CCIDC Answer to Question #11: CCIDC does not forward any applications to CLCID, and in fact never has. There was once an “administrative services agreement” between CLCID and

CCIDC, as CCIDC was formed under the CLCID sponsored legislation that created the certification law for interior designers in California. It required that CLCID “ratify” all CCIDC completed and approved applications so that the letter of the original law was followed. All that CCIDC forwarded to CLCID for ratification were the names only of CCIDC approved candidates, and no other information. This was done because CLCID met the formula for the initial organization as described under SB 153 (Craven) that created certification. CCIDC did not meet that initial criteria until the law was changed in 1995 (SB 1028 Marks). At that time the “administrative services agreement” between the two organizations was mutually rescinded and the ratification process by CLCID was halted.

The current interaction between CLCID and CCIDC is that of two completely independent and separate boards, one concentrating on certification (CCIDC), and one on monitoring legislation (CLCID). Communication is kept open between the two boards, and is encouraged through the attendance at the public portion of each other’s meetings by their respective board’s president, or designated representative. CCIDC’s attendance at the CLCID meetings, which are heavily attended by the various interior design association chapter representatives, allows CCIDC to further its outreach efforts to the profession, especially with respect to encouraging certification amongst individual designers, and the ability to solicit the opportunity to speak at various chapter events around the state.