



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH EXAMINATION, LICENSURE, AND REGULATION

SUMMARY REPORT - FINAL

CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
Landscape Architects Technical Committee

May 31, 2007
Sacramento, CA

LATC Members Present

Christine Anderson, Chair
Linda Gates
Stephanie Landregan
Steve Lang

LATC Member Absent

Dennis Otsuji

Staff Present

Doug McCauley, Executive Officer, California Architects Board
Mary Ann Aguayo, Program Manager, LATC
Ethan Mathes, Special Project Analyst
Mary Anderson, Exam Coordinator
Patricia Fay, Licensing Coordinator
Jessica Molina, Student Assistant

Guests Present

Nancy Linn, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), Office of Examination Resources (OER)
Stephanie Mayorga-Tipton, OER
Timothy Sandefur, Pacific Legal Foundation
Gary Weitman, OER
Richard Zweifel, Administrative Dean, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

**A. Call to Order – Roll Call – Establishment of a Quorum
Chair’s Remarks
Public Comment Session**

LATC Chair Christine Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. and called roll. Four members of the LATC were present and thus a quorum was established (Linda Gates later disconnected from the teleconference).

Ms. Anderson commented on her meeting with OER and that her questions and concerns regarding the redevelopment of the California Supplemental Examination (CSE) were answered satisfactorily.

B. Report on Redevelopment of the California Supplemental Examination
1. Discussion and Potential Closed Session on the California Supplemental Examination [Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 11126 (c)(1)]
2. Approve Implementation of Redeveloped California Supplemental Examination

Stephanie Mayorga-Tipton presented an overview of the occupational analysis and redevelopment of the CSE. OER follows the standards and guidelines for examination validation as prescribed in Business and Professions Code Section 139. She explained the first two OER workshops were devoted to an occupational analysis of the landscape architect profession in California; a survey was developed and sent to 2,834 licensed landscape architects in California (403 responded to the survey, a 17.5% response rate after adjustments). She noted the minimum requirement is 12% response rate to the survey, with a goal of attaining a 25% response rate. The third workshop reviewed the survey results and determined which landscape architecture task and knowledge statements would be kept and which ones would be dropped off the final report; these final task and knowledge statements determined the description of the practice of landscape architecture in California. Another workshop was held to review and compare the national occupational analysis (developed by the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards) and the California occupational analysis and then select the task and knowledge statements that the subject matter experts recommend be tested in the California examination based on the specificity and prevalence of the required tasks and knowledges in California. Ms. Anderson stressed the importance of this last point; while the task and knowledge statements may seem general, they help identify the specificity and prevalence of tasks and knowledges of landscape architecture in California. Although the task or knowledge may not be specific to California, the task or knowledge is more prevalent in California.

Ms. Mayorga-Tipton further explained that the occupational analysis and examination development is a complete sequential process and therefore any changes to the process as recommended by the LATC cannot be permitted due to strict reliance on the expertise of the subject matter experts and the standards and establishing defensibility via the examination development process. The protection of the CSE development process is further assured by the diversity of the subject matter experts and checks and balances built in to the development process. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton also noted that the occupational analysis and examination development is a continual process in which the exam questions are continuously tested and the full exam reviewed and updated annually in order to ensure qualified candidates are licensed.

Richard Zweifel questioned the 17.5% survey response rate and that the numbers did not seem to add up based on the number of surveys sent out versus the number of surveys returned. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton explained, as noted in the Validation Report (Chapter 3. Survey Results, page 5), this was due to adjustments made for surveys sent to non-practicing licensees, for surveys returned as incomplete, or surveys returned as “undeliverable.” She explained this was normal for occupational analysis surveys and this response rate is within the norm. Steve Lang asked about the basis for advocating 100 questions on the CSE and the challenge of creating a new CSE every year. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton explained the subject matter experts selected 100 questions due to the number of questions that would be required to adequately cover the number of identified tasks and knowledges specific to, and prevalent in California. She emphasized that

the subject matter experts agreed there is enough non-redundant content to annually rewrite the CSE. The CSE would be rewritten annually with approximately 30-50 overlapping questions, and that the development of new examination questions take time to build a large bank of questions. Mr. Lang expressed concern about the CSE duplicating what is already tested for on the national examination, but stated that he felt comfortable with the explanation provided by Ms. Mayorga-Tipton regarding the development of California specific examination questions while not replicating the national examination.

Stephanie Landregan expressed concern whether the CSE covered minimum competency and whether it might not be an entry-level examination. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton explained the subject matter experts were reminded throughout the item writing workshops that the CSE was an entry-level examination and to draft questions applicable to a candidate with minimum competency. Moreover, the examination questions will be reviewed in the score development workshop and also reviewed on an annual basis. Ms. Anderson added that its important to remember that entry-level as defined for the purpose of the CSE is a candidate that has education and also experience. Mr. Lang questioned the number of candidates needed to validate the new CSE. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton stated that normally an examination validation would require 50 candidates to validate a new examination, but due to the smaller size of the landscape architect candidate population, 10 candidates would be used to validate the CSE. The 10 examinations would be statistically analyzed and then taken into a passing score workshop in order to make adjustments in the case of problematic items. Ms. Mayorga-Tipton explained this process is due to the timeline for implementing the CSE without it becoming outdated and that the LATC has such a low number of candidates each year, it might delay the issuance of licenses. She also added that the current CSE continues to be invalid based on its take home format, because it is not linked to an occupational analysis, and due to it being written in a subjective manner. It is therefore necessary to implement the new CSE or cease to have a CSE, although the occupational analysis confirmed that there was a need for an examination specific to the requirements for licensure in California.

Ms. Landregan expressed reservation about the economic feasibility of an annual review and rewrite of the content of the CSE. Mary Ann Aguayo added that due to the staffing vacancies and workload, OER will not be able to assist in the annual development of the CSE and that contracting out for its annual development will be considerably more expensive. Gary Weitman remarked that the staffing issue with OER is subject to change. Doug McCauley added that a Budget Change Proposal might be an option for funding the annual development, depending on the LATC fund condition.

Mary Anderson noted that there are approximately 120 candidates annually taking the CSE. Ms. Aguayo commented the number of examinations given annually would likely increase due to the pass/fail rate of the new CSE. Nancy Linn stated that an annual review of the CSE is appropriate for the size of the LATC candidate population. Mr. Lang asked about the difference between an occupational analysis and examination development. Ms. Linn explained an occupational analysis is every 5-7 years and examination development occurs annually; there are typically four workshops in the examination development and, that as examination items are tested, it will help compile statistical data to improve and update the examination.

- **Steve Lang moved to approve the March 2007 Examination Specifications Report and proceed with the implementation of the CSE based upon the rollout plan as provided by staff.**
- **Stephanie Landregan seconded the motion.**
- **The motion carried 3-0.**

Ms. Landregan requested additional budget data at the next meeting regarding the annual review of the CSE. Ms. Aguayo confirmed she would provide the additional budget data. The LATC agreed that following the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards occupational analysis with the LATC occupational analysis was a significant cost savings to LATC and a good idea for future occupational analyses.

Adjournment

- **Stephanie Landregan moved to adjourn.**
- **Steve Lang seconded the motion.**
- **The motion carried 3-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.