

Report of the National Board of Examiners Committee to the 2003 Annual General Meeting of The Canadian Council of Land Surveyors

Background

The National Board of Examiners Committee was formed at the 2001 Annual General Meeting of CCLS. The Committee had a mandate to explore and facilitate the development of a National Board of Examiners (the “National Board”) with the goal of having that National Board take over the functions of the existing Boards of Examiners or the body of a member Association that is responsible for examination of candidates for membership to the level of certificate of completion and to also take over the accreditation function currently undertaken by CCLS.

The Committee started small with just myself as Chair and Larry Pals as a member. We had several discussions about the mandate and met with the various representatives of the existing Boards in Fredericton in June of 2001. Following those discussions, a discussion paper outlining the issues and a draft “constitution” of a National Board were developed and widely circulated. The Committee was expanded to include representation from across the country and to also include input from the academic community. This expanded Committee dealt with the small amount of feedback that was generated by the discussion paper and constitution. Through several long teleconferences, the Committee amended the documents to reflect a growing consensus around the issues. There was excellent participation from all the members of the Committee, including representation from the OAGQ.

Throughout this time, there was significant pressure on the Committee from the western associations and from the ACLS for progress. The Atlantic provinces appeared to be somewhat cool to the idea. The Ontario association was difficult to read in that they perform these functions differently than the those associations represented by the Atlantic, the Western and the ACLS Boards. Quebec was also a bit of a mystery.

The Committee decided that the best way forward was to propose, as an interim step, that the present Atlantic Board, Western Board and ACLS Board go forward to merge the functions of those Boards. CCLS would participate with this “Volkswagen” Board by conducting the accreditation process through it. In the longer term, the Committee hoped that Ontario and Quebec might join the Board after it was up and running. A budget for this approach was drawn up and Committee members visited the nine associations in question to make a presentation to each Council and eventually solicit their support.

Recent Activities

Since December of 2002, the Committee has made presentations to all of the member associations of the Atlantic Board, the Western Board and the ACLS Board. In addition, a less formal presentation was made to the Ontario Association. While it is difficult to be definite, the Committee believes that the following statements about the individual reactions of the Associations would be fair:

- the Atlantic provinces are supportive of the goals and national vision of the proposed Board, especially if all Associations would be participating. There is some concern that they will face increased costs under the new structure and that candidates would also face increased costs to write examinations.
- the Western provinces and the ACLS are supportive of the Board. The ACLS is concerned about the considerably increased costs to candidates. There are still some issues that must be addressed. For example, the Alberta Association has passed a motion of support, but included in the motion is wording that “preparing learning modules for candidates and providing seminars for candidates should not be a function of a national board of examiners.” On the other hand, the Manitoba association passed a motion that included the wording: “the preparation of learning modules and the assemblage of reference material must be paramount in the functions of the new Board.”

Next Steps

The ultimate decision to form a National Board is for the individual associations to make. CCLS can continue to act as a facilitator for the process.

The constitution document has been amended to make CCLS's contribution to the National Board more explicit. The document now deals more fully with the accreditation process and the role of CCLS in it.

The Committee recommends that the Directors adopt the following motion:

"The Board of Directors supports the creation of a National Board of Examiners along the lines set out in the documentation prepared by the National Board Committee and:

- authorizes the Executive to sign documents on behalf of CCLS which will create such a Board should sufficient support from the member associations be present to make the Board viable;
- agrees that each Director will act as an advocate for the National Board to their association;
- agrees that the National Board Committee will continue as presently constituted with a mandate to advocate for and support creation of the National Board.
- agrees that CCLS will organize and host a meeting of all associations for the purpose of negotiating the final form of the National Board. This meeting should be scheduled as soon as is convenient for all participants."