



Practice Review Task Force Recommendations

Fall 2013

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Executive Summary

The Practice Review Task Force brings before the Legislation Committee, Council and members of the AAA this document for discussion, recommendations and approval.

This document contains the draft recommendations intended to be used by the AAA as it enters into the legislation review process with the Government of Alberta.

This document is not a final draft; the draft recommendations are open to discussion and revision. It is being presented to the Legislation Committee, Council and AAA membership to determine: a) whether to endorse the recommendations in principle; and b) whether any fundamental changes to the recommendations need to be made. The recommendations will only be final once endorsed by AAA membership.

Current Legislation

Practice reviews are listed in Part 5 of the Act under 'Practice Reviews & Discipline'.

The legislation states that the Practice Review Board shall, on its own initiative or at the request of the Council, inquire into and report to and advise the Council in respect of: both existing and new educational standards and experience requirements, evaluation of desirable competence standards, any other issues the Council deems necessary, the practice of architecture generally, and may conduct a review of the practice of an authorized entity in accordance with the *Architects Act* and *General Regulation*¹.

The *Architects Act* and *General Regulation* defines a "review panel" as either the Complaints Review Committee or the Practice Review Board, as the case may be².

Issue

The issue is whether the current legislation/status quo is sufficiently protecting the public interest. If it is not, how can legislation be improved to:

- better protect the public interest;
- provide the Association with the best tools for enforcing the *Architects Act* and *General Regulation* and Bylaws, and to ensure the practice of Architecture and Interior Design are being performed competently;
- provide members with the support they need from a practice review system; and
- ensure that the Practice Review Board has the ability to carry out practice reviews as necessary.

The overall tone of the practice review legislation is felt to be far too punitive, and does not do enough to support and foster best practices within the architecture and interior design industry. As a result, practice reviews can often be viewed by members as a negative, unhelpful activity that infringes their autonomy.

There is ambiguity surrounding the Practice Review Board's relationship to Council and to the Complaints Review Committee. There is additional confusion in regards to the abilities of each entity, and how they interact with one another.

Recommendations

¹ Architects Act, RSA 2000 c.A-44, s.39.

² Architects Act, RSA 2000 c.A-44, s.29(c).

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1. Provide for a clearer description and system of practice reviews that focuses on support, rather than discipline.
2. Clarify the relationship and interaction between the Practice Review Board, Council, and the Complaints Review Committee).
3. That a Practice Support Program be created and supported with funding that will have the ongoing task of developing a compendium of resources to be utilized by both members and the Practice Review Board (Appendix A).

Rationale

Making clear that practice reviews are a supportive and positive function will reiterate to members that practice reviews should not be seen as a negative and punitive function meant to cause inconvenience, but a mechanism that supports the growth and development of their practices and to highlight the stature of the profession.

By replacing optional practice reviews with the suggested format, the ambiguity that plagues our current legislation would be eradicated. Minimum practice standards would be ensured and promoted by the Practice Review Board. Additionally, with an emphasis on the supportive nature of the practice review program, practice reviews will no longer be viewed as a negative activity but rather one that is welcomed and encouraged.

Without clarifying the relationship between the Practice Review Board, Council, and the Complaints Review Committee, confusion will remain as to who has the statutory power to do what, and when those abilities can be exercised. By clarifying these roles, the Practice Review Board will be able to fulfil its statutory mandate properly and fully.

The Practice Support Program is necessary in order to provide the support and resources required by the membership and the Practice Review Board. Without this body, the supportive featured envisioned by the Task Force may be too difficult to implement.

What We Learned and Next Steps

Of the architectural associations nationwide, there is little guidance with respect to implementation of practice reviews and practice review boards. The same can be said for the other self-regulating professions that we researched. Because of this, we have learned that it is up to us to create the ground-breaking practice support framework envisioned by the Task Force.

All architectural regulators have a Practice Review Board that appoints a reviewer to investigate a member or practice, reports their findings to the Board, and then makes recommendations to Council. Quebec's legislation clearly prescribes two possible recommendations. Aside from this, legislation provides for little guidance. Of the other self-regulated professions, many face the same legislative ambiguity that we do.

The Practice Review Board has been relatively active through its recent history by providing Practice Support largely through the publication of Practice Bulletins. However, there has been far less activity and a general reluctance to engage in the sensitive matter of Practice Reviews. There is no formal process in place for conducting reviews despite the topic consuming a significant portion of our current Act.

The expression, extent and implementation of practice support and reviews amongst national architectural associations and other self-regulating professions is inconsistent and often unclear. The organizations that conduct regular practice reviews have expressed concerns about balancing the benefits of regular reviews with the administrative and volunteer burden. However, there is significant evidence the notion of regular ongoing practice support *and* reviews are fundamental components of any good self-regulating legislation. We believe there is also growing interest by government, clients, the public and members for the Association to be able to demonstrate the competency of our profession.

Other national architectural bodies are intrigued by our interest to articulate a clearer standard and procedures for conducting practice reviews and look to the Alberta Association of Architects in demonstrating leadership by shaping this program.

Based on the assumption that current Practice Support activities appear to be relatively effective and expected to remain and mature, the underlying question about our current legislation appears to be: *“Do we continue to maintain a Practice Review process that is initiated only by the Practice Review Board or Council with the risk that it remains relatively inactive due to the sensitive nature of the function or do we mandate a regular Practice Review program that clearly demonstrates our interest in monitoring not only the competencies of our individual members but also the organizational entities within which they conduct their professional affairs?”* If a mandated review function is not included, it could be argued the Act should be revised to include only a Practice Support function to reflect the actual activities.

In any event, there is clearly a need to develop, document, and communicate a much clearer standard regarding the expectations of professional practices, to provide more educational opportunities with regards to practice matters, and to define a much clearer process for reviews whether self-initiated by the Practice Review Board, requested by Council or as part of a regular review program.

In making a decision about whether to embed a mandated Practice Review function as a component of our Act, it is essential to distinguish the mandate from the process. Should a mandated Practice Review process be accepted, it will be critical to consider procedures that are affordable, scalable, yet effective. The Appendix of this report includes the initial draft of a regular Practice Review standard and process to demonstrate that a sustainable and effective program is conceivable. It is expected this program will continue to be developed and evolve.

Next steps, pending acceptance of these recommendations, include further development of how future legislation can be written in a manner that reflects and more supportive and less punitive tone, and to liaise with the Governance Task Force to ensure the authority and responsibilities of the Practice Review Board can be clearly developed and documented.

There are examples of professional legislation in Alberta that allow professions to have mandatory competence processes that include practice review; but that allow flexibility for tailoring the details of the program through regulations and rules. These examples include the Health Professions Act, the Regulated Accounting Profession Act and the Agrology Profession Act. It will be important as the profession moves forward to ensure that while the foundation for a competence program, including practice review, is embedded in the Act, the framework can be set out in regulations and the details in rules. This will allow certainty in respect of the core of the program, while allowing flexibility for the program to be tailored to the needs of our profession and to develop over time.

The Practice Support Program Task Force will continue to develop and articulate the standard and review process for conducting Practice Reviews.

Recommendations

Issue 1 Change the Statutory Tone

1.1 Current Legislation

Practice reviews are currently listed in Part 5 of the Act under 'Practice Reviews & Discipline'. This description has the effect of equating the two activities; while the Practice Review Board does possess disciplinary abilities, this is not the primary intent of the body or activity

1.2 Issue

Future legislation needs to have a positive and supportive tone, rather than negative and punitive.

1.3 What We Learned

As it stands, there is no exemplary legislation - architectural or otherwise - that describes practice reviews as a positive, supportive function. While many pieces of legislation separate 'Practice Reviews' from 'Discipline' into two autonomous entities, the tone sought by the Practice Review Task Force does not seem to exist. However, the Task Force believes the current tone is what draws the strongest negative reaction by the membership and that a bold move to re-define the underlying objectives of this portion of the Act is a bold yet essential move towards achieving a truly effective Practice Support and Review program. A review of the principles of administrative law would suggest there is nothing that would prevent this recommended fundamental shift in focus and tone but would require some legal support through subsequent steps in the development of our amended legislation.

There are examples of legislation that obligate professions to have competence processes, including practice review, but then empower those professions to develop the competence and practice review programs that best suit their profession through regulations and rules.

1.4 Recommendations

The Practice Review section in future legislation should be conceptually separated from Discipline to underscore that the two are separate and distinct. The Task Force recommends that the statutory language describing practice reviews be changed from punitive to supportive while retaining the Practice Review Board's ability to refer cases to the disciplinary process where a member refuses to participate in the competence process or where practice review reveals unskilled practice or professional misconduct that cannot be remedied through the support program.

Additionally, the Practice Review Board should be given the power to make binding directions to members and regulated entities where necessary in the practice review process. These would be "non-disciplinary directions" designed to remedy concerns about skill or professionalism before they turn into discipline matters or result in harm to the public.

An additional recommendation includes a widening of the Practice Review Board's purview and purpose to include support, mentoring, training, inquiry, and investigative/audit function. This option will be bolstered by the Practice Support Program. It will be up to the Practice Support Program to develop the list of guidelines and supporting documentation required at each level; they will also be charged with developing a library of informative resources that regulated entities and members can utilize. As a result, the function of the Practice Review Board will be two-

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fold: to support practice review process, and provide support for professional development in both new and existing practices. The goal is that by having these supportive mechanisms and resources in place, fewer disciplinary cases will come forward. The Practice Support Program will work to develop a streamlined and transparent compendium of resources to be utilized by the Practice Review Board. These resources will evolve over time in order to adapt to the best practices of the day.

A further explanation of the Practice Support Program and its functioning can be found in Appendix A.

1.5 Rationale

The recommended change to the tone of practice review legislation will result in a clear message that the Practice Review Board and accompanying practice reviews are meant to be a body and activity that help foster, support, and mentor members and regulated entities. With this change in tone, it is likely that members will be increasingly more receptive and enthusiastic about practice reviews being conducted of their practice.

Additionally, with the supportive functions provided for in the Practice Support Program, the Practice Review Board will be a more holistic entity focused on providing support and resolving issues in practice before they become disciplinary issues.

What the Task Force wishes to reiterate is that both of these recommendations are high level principles attempting to point out and clarify issues of authority and ambiguity that currently exist in our legislation, and will be left to the Government of Alberta as to how best to implement in future legislation.

Issue 2 Change the Statutory Wording

2.1 Current Legislation

The current legislation states that the Practice Review Board shall, on its own initiative or at the request of the Council, inquire into and report to and advise the Council in respect of: both existing and new educational standards and experience requirements, evaluation of desirable competence standards, any other issues the Council deems necessary, the practice of architecture generally, and may conduct a review of the practice of an authorized entity in accordance with the *Architects Act* and *General Regulation*³.

2.2 Issue

The difference in meaning between the two qualifiers *shall* and *may* is subtle, yet extremely important; *shall* means that the activity *will* be done, while *may* means that the activity *might* be done.

The ramification of this distinction, combined with the confusion surrounding how the Practice Review Board, Complaints Review Committee, and Council interact, is that the statutory wording does not always empower the Practice Review Board to do the very thing their name suggests – review practices.

Future legislation needs to provide a clear statutory capability to empower the Practice Review Board to conduct reviews whenever required. This legislation should empower the Association to adopt clear guidelines and standards that will be reinforced by the Practice Support Program.

2.3 What We Learned

As it currently stands, the architectural legislation for the other provinces provides little to no guidance with respect to the implementation of practice reviews or practice review boards. Of the ten other associations, only three have a designated practice review board: Ontario⁴, Northwest Territories⁵, and Quebec⁶.

None of these architectural associations prescribe any fixed situations in which a practice review is to be conducted - besides a request from their version of a Complaints Review Committee – instead, relying on a discretionary power to initiate a practice review which is very similar to that found in Alberta's legislation. The same can generally be said for other non-architectural professions that we researched.

What this tells us is that there is no exemplary framework for the Alberta Association of Architects to follow in implementing the type of practice review envisioned. Correspondingly, our research tells us that it is up to the AAA to develop a truly ground-breaking framework that could serve as a model to other self-regulating associations.

³ Architects Act, RSA 2000 c.A-44, s.39.

⁴ Architects Act (Ontario), RRO 1990, Reg.27, s.52(2).

⁵ Architects Act (Northwest Territories), General Bylaws, s.58(b).

⁶ Architects Act (Quebec), c.A-21, r. 6, Regulation respecting the professional inspection committee of the Ordre des architectes du Québec.

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2.4 Options

2.4.1 Status quo

Overview

The legislation remains the same – practice reviews are an optional, rather than a required exercise by the Practice Review Board.

Pros

- No increased burden on the AAA's administration or Practice Review Board.
- Processes and procedures remain as are.

Cons

- Ambiguity remains in our legislation about how practice reviews can be conducted.
- Members and firms will not benefit from the supportive processes and mechanisms envisioned in a required practice review program.
- Practice reviews continue to be viewed as a punitive, rather than a supportive function.
- The public interest is not being adequately protected.

2.4.2 Change the statutory wording

Overview

Statutory wording exists stating that the Association must have a competence program. The inclusion within this program would be the practice review process. The legislation would be empowering and allow the Association, in conjunction with the government, to set out the framework of the program in regulations. The regulations must authorize the Practice Review Board to conduct practice reviews. The legislation would also allow the Council to develop binding rules that would provide detailed governance for the competence process, including the practice review process.

Within the scope of the regulations and rules, the Practice Review Board would operate the program independently. The Practice Review Board has always had the ability to carry out practice reviews, and members have always had a statutory obligation to cooperate with the process⁷ - so in this regard, the suggested format should not elicit any concern on the members' end. Because practice reviews have always existed in our legislation, no new additional administration will be required – just amendments to our existing processes. What the suggested format does do is clarify the abilities of the Practice Review Board to conduct practice review and to ensure that the Board is able to carry out its statutory function, and work to ensure that minimum practice standards are followed.

⁷ Architects Act R.219/2010 (Regulations), s.44.

Pros

- The suggested practice review format is in the public's best interest, as it ensures that minimum practice standards are enforced through a competence and practice review process that falls under the direction of the Practice Review Board
- Practice reviews become a supportive, constructive mechanism.

Cons

- Possible amendments to AAA administration, the Practice Review Board, and practice review procedure.

2.5 Recommendation

After considering both options, the Task Force recommends that practice reviews shall form part of the competence process and be conducted at the direction of the Practice Review Board within the framework of the regulations and rules.

Additionally, the Task Force recommends that the suggested system of practice reviews is supplemented by the Practice Support Program. Both the Practice Review Board and Practice Support Program will strive to provide support and mentorship; disciplinary action shall be a last resort, with referrals being made to the Complaints Review Committee only if required and only if the issue cannot be resolved through the Practice Review Board.

2.6 Rationale

Replacing optional practice reviews with the suggested system, as laid out in Option 2.4.2, would remove the ambiguity that plagues our current legislation and the Practice Review Board would be able to fulfil their legislative mandate in ensuring that minimum practice standards are adhered to and the public is protected.

Additionally, with the supportive functions provided for in the Practice Support Program, the Practice Review Board will be a more holistic entity focused on providing support and resolving disciplinary issues.

Issue 3 Clarifying the Practice Review Board's Relationship to Council and the Complaints Committee

3.1 Current Legislation

The *Architects Act* and *General Regulation* defines a “review panel” as either the Complaints Review Committee or the Practice Review Board, as the case may be⁸.

3.2 Issue

The relationship and interaction between the Practice Review Board, Council, and Complaints Committee needs to be made clear in future legislation.

The phrase ‘review panel’ is utilized consistently and without clarification throughout the sections dealing with discipline, so that all of these sections seem to apply to both the Complaints Review Committee and the Practice Review Board. In this way, the legislation appears to contemplate that the Practice Review Board would be empowered to engage in the same scope of activity as the Complaints Review Committee.

However, in past litigation, the Supreme Court of Canada interpreted the legislation to hold that the Board is simply responsible for reporting to Council and for making appropriate recommendations⁹. In an attempt to honour the Court’s findings, it is necessary to interpret the Act in a manner that excludes the Practice Review Board from the definition of “review panel”. Consequently, this leaves the Practice Review Board with far more limited abilities and process than the Complaints Review Committee and even less envisioned by the Act.

Some specific ambiguities include: unclear as to when or why a practice review should be initiated, why it is the Practice Review Board’s reviewer and not the Board itself which makes the decision to refer a matter to the Complaints Review Committee, unclear whether or not it is Council or the Practice Review Board who is responsible for conveying recommendations to the member, and whether it is the Council or the Practice Review Board who monitors the completion of recommendations.

While the relationship between the three entities does not need to be explicitly written into the new legislation (drafting should cover this issue), it is vital that all parties, especially the public, understand the relationship. If the purpose of this legislation review is grounded in, among other things, the public interest, the public needs to be able to understand the process and relationship.

3.3 What We Learned

In terms of process, in all cases concerning architectural regulators, the Practice Review Board appoints a reviewer, who has broad investigatory powers which are equal to those of complaints investigators, and are responsible for reporting back to the Practice Review Board. In all instances, the Practice Review Board then makes recommendations to Council. However, Quebec’s legislation is the most clear in that it prescribes two possible recommendations: (1) a recommendation that the member be required to successfully complete a period of refresher training, and (2) a recommendation that the Practice Review Board restrict or suspend the right of the member to engage in professional activities or fulfil the requirements imposed¹⁰. Beyond this, the provisions provide minimal guidance.

⁸ Architects Act, RSA 2000 c.A-44, s.29(c).

⁹ *Chandler v The Alberta Association of Architects* [1989] 2 SCR 848.

¹⁰ Architects Act (Quebec), c.A-21, r. 6, Regulation respecting the professional inspection committee of the Ordre des architectes du Québec

Of the other self-regulated professions in Alberta that we researched, Veterinarians¹¹ and Engineers¹² have practice review legislation most similar to ours. In particular, the provisions stipulating the mandate of the Practice Review Board are identical, and all pieces of legislation fail to directly define the process and scope of the practice review board's powers, instead doing so by analogy to the complaints process. While the provisions of these associations generally do a more complete job of delineating the scope of the practice review board, their legislation is ultimately plagued by some of the same inherent ambiguity as our own.

Other professions with recent legislation benefit from practice review processes that are embedded into their competence processes. This allows their practice review boards (or equivalent bodies) to independently manage the competence and practice review process without direct Council involvement or overlap with discipline processes. Council sets the rules at a policy level; the Board then operates the program independently within the parameters set by the rules. There ceases to be a statutory confusion between practice review and discipline. Practice review is set up separately from discipline. In cases of non-cooperation or unskilled practice or unprofessional conduct that cannot be remedied through the Practice Review Board, there would be a referral to the discipline process (which would then handle the case outside the practice review context.)

3.4 Recommendations

Considering the effects of the inconsistent statutory provisions, combined with the outcome of the Supreme Court of Canada case, the Task Force recommends that the purpose and purview of the Practice Review Board is clearly defined in future legislation. Having the statutory ability to conduct necessary practice reviews will go a long way towards reinforcing the authority of the Practice Review Board.

It is also recommended that the Practice Review Board (and not just the individual reviewer) have the authority to refer a case to the Complaints Review Committee, in cases where members do not comply with or fail practice reviews in a manner that cannot be remedied through the Program. This ability is necessary because the Practice Review Board is, at the core of the legislation, a body that needs to be able to resolve deficiencies in practice. It is critical the relationship, authority, and capability of each body is clearly articulated.

The practice review process must also be designed so that it can be applied to regulated entities within which the members practice.

3.5 Rationale

Without statutory clarification, ambiguity and inconsistencies will remain, and the Practice Review Board will not be able to fully carry out its mandate envisioned by statute. Practice reviews ensure that members and entities are in full compliance with minimum professional requirements and responsibilities, and if deficiencies exist, it is essential that they are properly addressed in order to protect the public. Clarification of roles is vital in order to ensure that the Practice Review Board has the ability to monitor conduct, review all those practices it deems necessary, and to rectify any professional deficiencies it finds.

¹¹ Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, Practice Inspection and Practice Standards Bylaws, 2003.

¹² Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act, RSA 2000, c.E-11, s.15.

Appendix: Practice Support Program

Practice Support Program

The Practice Support Program is a body charged with the development of supportive resources and documentation that registered architects and licensed interior designers can use to facilitate both the business and design aspects of their practices.

The Practice Support Program Task Force is an ad hoc body comprised of registered architects and licensed interior designers that have a specific interest in the development of these standards and best practice tools for practitioners in Alberta. The three-tiered review system, along with the compendium of supportive resources, will be enhanced on a continuous basis in order to reflect the changing norms and standards within the profession.

Mandate

The Practice Support Program's focus is on the development of standards and tools for practitioners in Alberta, which will change and adapt over time based on evolving standards of best practices. These high-level guiding principles are meant to foster best practice standards for the professional practice of architecture and interior design in Alberta, as well as being utilized by the Practice Review Board as a resource when conducting practice reviews. The Practice Support Program develops the resources available to aid professionals in areas they may require additional support.

Level 1 – 3 Reviews

Summary

The Practice Review Board Task Force proposes a scalable, confidential, and cost-effective practice review process, whereby information gathering and investigations will range from an ongoing support function to a full review investigation of a member or practice. The Practice Support Program Task Force will be developing tools and resources to be utilized by the Practice Review Board and by members when conducting reviews. This system ensures that fairness and transparency are observed.

The review process is envisioned to run on a cost recovery basis, whereby any costs resulting from the review is born by the member or firm so that the membership as a whole is not penalized.

The Level 1-3 reviews listed below explain how and when a practice review could be performed.

Level 1 – Checklist/Declaration

- A checklist/declaration is submitted:
 - 1) Upon a firm's or member's initial registration, and
 - 2) On an annual basis to confirm the requirements on the checklist are correct and current.
- The Practice Support Program to develop checklist/declaration. The checklist could draw from portions of the Canadian Handbook of Practice (CHOP) manual that the Practice Support Program deems relevant. The Practice Support Program is recommending referencing the CHOP manual because it is a generally accepted and widely used guide in the industry.

Level 2 – Review Checklist and Submission of Corroborating Documentation

- Level 2 reviews triggered in two types of situations:
 - 1) After failing to account for all of the Level 1 requirements, a physical copy of missing Level 1 documents would be requested by the AAA, and/or
 - 2) Where additional documents are requested to complement the checklist. Reviews will be based on budget availability, and the number will be reflectively of the number of firms/members currently registered.

Level 3 – Practice Review Board Reviews Practice and Projects

- Level 3 reviews triggered in two types of situations:
 - 1) Failing Level 2, or
 - 2) A recommendation from Council or the Complaints Review Committee.
- Level 3 reviews would entail a more in-depth review.
 - 1) This review may involve one or more of the following:
 - a. Review areas that were deficient from Level 2,
 - b. Review a number of projects in various stages, and/or
 - c. Review the process of an entire project from start to finish.
 - 2) Provide recommendations on improving areas that appear to be deficient and possible resources to consult.
 - 3) Possibly conduct a follow up review at a date to be determined.

Draft Framework and Principles

Principle 1 - Ethics and Professionalism

This section aims to summarize the principles and ideals that every registered architect and licensed interior designer should strive to achieve.

Principle 1 will mainly focus on Competency and Discipline. As architecture and interior design are in constant evolution, it is necessary to stay abreast of changes in the industry; further education requirements are required to develop and maintain competency of our members. And as a self-regulating profession, we have processes in place to deal with concerns of practicing members (i.e. complaints, professional misconduct).

- a. Standard of Care
- b. Professional Conduct
- c. Public Interest
- d. Code of Ethics

Principle 2 - Business Management

This section focuses on providing the necessary templates, documents, tools, etc. that will facilitate the practical day-to-day requirements for running the business side of a practice.

- a. Financial Management (i.e. invoicing and monthly cash flows)
- b. Insurance
 - i. Business
- c. Licenses
 - i. Alberta Association of Architects
 - ii. City of Edmonton Business License
- d. Leasing or Ownership of a Building
- e. Human Resources

Principle 3 - Practice Management

This section aims to support the actual running of an architectural/interior design practice. These tools will help practitioners to secure and move projects forward.

- a. CCDC Contracts
 - i. Contract Administration
 - ii. Sub-consultants
- b. Professional Liability Insurance
- c. Succession Planning
- d. Public Relations and Marketing (i.e. proposals)
- e. AAA Practice Bulletins

Principle 4 - Project Management

A comprehensive list of tools, forms, and resources to aid in moving projects along from start to finish comprise this section. Good Project Management practices complement the standards to what is expected from members of our profession.

- a. Scope of Services
 - i. Pre-Design Phase
 - ii. Design Phase
 - iii. Contract and Administration
- b. Quality Assurance
- c. Cost Control
- d. Coordination
- e. Scheduling
- f. Communication
- g. Building Regulations and Authorities Having Jurisdiction

The extent of the practice review may vary from the completion of a good practice principles checklist to a complete practice investigation on a progressive and iterative basis depending on questions that may result from less obtrusive enquiries. The process will generally attempt to avoid potential costly and detailed investigations unless absolutely necessary and will be based on the underlying principles of continual learning, membership and firm support and membership competency. The process will ultimately seek to balance the resources of the Association against the benefits drawn from a practice review.