Some of us (5 Board Members and 2 Staff) have recently returned from the Southern Zone Meeting of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) in Charleston, SC.

There are four national zones that meet each year and then all meet at the national meeting in the summer to discuss, vote upon and/or conclude actions on the current issues. Although I was skeptical of the merit of these meetings when I first became a board member, I now appreciate their value. I feel all board members benefit from the knowledge they gain associating with other state boards and learning from their experiences as well as being a part of shaping the regulations governing the practice of professional engineers and surveyors in the United States.

According to current NCEES President Patty Mamola, PE (NCEES’ first female President), “In 1920, seven states got together to form NCEES for the primary purpose of improving mobility.” Prior to NCEES fully taking effect over the following years, most states had their own separate regulations and requirements that, in many cases, were unique when compared to other states. NCEES created the MODEL LAW for the requirements and regulations governing licensure. Each state is encouraged to have their legislature adopt these Model Laws so that licensees as well as the general public could expect the same requirements in each state. This has generally been done although, due in large part to state legislatures, some differences do exist from state to state. These differences hamper mobility (reciprocity) of licensees across state borders.

Another thing that hampers mobility is the different Continuing Professional Competency (CPC) requirements from state to state. NCEES is attempting to either get the states to have the same CPC requirements, or to accept a licensee’s CPC if it has been satisfied in his/her state. This will be a challenge.

These goals are sometimes made more difficult when state legislatures for one reason or another decide to add or subtract special interest type laws or regulations as has been done in several states.

The Texas Board reported that their legislature now requires criminal background checks as well as fingerprinting for licensure.

NCEES reports that computer based testing (CBT) for the FE and FS exams appear to be going smoothly. They continue to work on CBT for the 20 or so PE exam disciplines and will probably start with a few disciplines and then add others as it proceeds.

NCEES also reports that many countries are using the NCEES system of licensure as a model for their own system.

In 2020, the NCEES Model Law is to be changed to require more than a BS as the educational requirement for licensure. It will be some years more before the state legislatures have adopted this.

The Uniform Procedures and Legislative Guidelines (UPLG) committee report discussed an effort to try to “uncouple” the requirement that the 4 years of experience occur before an applicant could take the PE exam rather than after. South Dakota as well as some other states have voiced opposition to this. The jury is still out. It will probably come up for a vote at the national meeting in late summer.

These are just a few of the many issues in the works at NCEES, but some I thought might be interesting to you.

Our Arkansas Board now has about 80% of new applications and 90% of renewal applications being made online. We now have a social media presence with a Newsroom and Facebook. The rebuilding of our parking lot is complete. With the exception of some unusual disciplinary hearings, our year so far has been a normal one for a change.

If you have any questions concerning matters of the Board, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Board office.~ Jim Engstrom, PE
Lapse (1) the termination of a right or privilege through neglect to exercise it within some limit of time (2) termination of coverage for nonpayment of premiums

- Merriam Webster Dictionary

Anyone that keeps up with local affairs even a little bit is probably aware of the current brouhaha in this state over the issue of lapsed law licenses for judicial candidates. The issue peaked when a circuit judge candidate was disqualified because her law license had been administratively suspended earlier for failing to complete the required continuing education. As a result of the suspension, it was found she failed to meet the constitutionally mandated qualification of being licensed for 6 years.

In the aftermath, it has been revealed that a number of other judicial candidates, including the incumbent that would have opposed the one disqualified, also had their licenses suspended in the recent past. Most of the suspensions were merely for failing to pay the renewal fee on time. How this will eventually be resolved is not clear at this time, and the Arkansas Supreme Court has been asked to rule on the matter. Regardless of the outcome, it is an embarrassing mess for all involved.

This issue does not just affect lawyers. In 2011, the Board received a complaint that an engineer who had not renewed his license was serving as an expert witness in a court case. The complaint was submitted by opposing counsel after the trial ended, and the matter before this Board resulted in a disciplinary action.

Being a procrastinator myself, I know it is tempting to put the renewal notice aside when it is received – after all there are probably at least 30-45 days until expiration. Even so, the above examples show there should be at least some sense of urgency, and they also provide at least a couple of clear lessons:

- practicing on a license that is lapsed for any reason and for any length of time is unlicensed practice, and we all know that unlicensed practice is a violation of the Board’s laws and rules; and
- there is no reason to put you, your reputation or your practice at risk by delaying.

We have implemented improvements to hopefully make renewing easier and more convenient. Most recently, the Board voted to absorb the online credit card transaction fee so that those renewing via the website pay no more than those by check or money order. We hope to do more in the future and if you have ideas, suggestions or comments feel free to let us know. BUT DON'T BE LATE!!!

Verification of Exam(s) and or Licensure

If you need verification of your Arkansas license or examinations for another jurisdiction, it may be possible to do it in an expedited manner electronically by visiting the NCEES License/Exam Verification website at https://verify.ncees.org/. If the state is listed, then select that state and supply the requested information. If it's not listed, please complete their form and forward it to the Arkansas Board’s office via email, fax, or USPS.
CASE NUMBER #2013-02, in the matter of HPD, LLC
COMPLAINT  An Illinois firm, HPD, LLC was charged with providing or offering to provide engineering services without a Certificate of Authorization.
RESOLUTION  After a hearing on March 12, 2014, the charges were sustained and HPD, LLC was assessed a civil penalty of $1,500.

CASE NUMBER #2013-07, in the matter of Aaron Burroughs, PE
COMPLAINT  Because of the actions of his employee, Douglas Fellenz, the Board concluded Burroughs’ conduct may have constituted two counts of unlicensed practice of surveying, six counts of offering or providing surveying services in Arkansas without a valid Certificate of Authorization, and seven counts of false or misleading advertising.
RESOLUTION  On 10/04/2013, without admitting the allegations, Burroughs entered into a Consent Agreement with the Board which called for a reprimand to his file and payment of a civil penalty of $2,000.

CASE NUMBER #2013-08, in the matter of Douglas Fellenz, EI, SI
COMPLAINT  Fellenz was charged with four counts of the unlicensed practice of surveying, four counts of the fraudulent use of another licensee’s seal, unauthorized practice of, or offer to practice, surveying by a firm, unlicensed practice of engineering, unauthorized practice of, or offer to practice, engineering by a firm, and an ethical lapse in the form of failing to faithfully serve the legitimate interest of his employer.
RESOLUTION  On 11/12/2013 Fellenz entered into a Consent Agreement with the Board which called for revocation of his EI and SI certificates and a letter of reprimand.

CASE NUMBER #2013-10, in the matter of the C.T. Brannon Corporation
COMPLAINT  The firm self-reported that a project had been completed in Arkansas without a valid Certificate of Authorization.
RESOLUTION  On 10/09/2013, the firm entered into a Consent Agreement with the Board which called for an admission of violation and payment of a civil penalty of $1,000.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2014
May 12  Complaint Committee Meeting, PELS Board Office
May 13  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
26  Memorial Day – State offices closed
July 1  Cut-off date for applications to take the October Exams
4  Independence Day – State offices closed
July 8  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
Aug TBD  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
20-23  NCEES Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington
Sept 9  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
Oct 24  PE/PS & AR State Specific Exams, Arkansas State Fair Grounds
Nov 4  Registration with NCEES opens for April 2014 PE/PS exam
10  Veterans Day – State offices closed
11  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
27  Thanksgiving Day – State offices closed
Dec 24-25  Christmas Eve & Day – State offices closed

2015
Jan 1  New Year’s Day – State offices closed
1  Cut-off date for PE/PS applications for April 2015 exams
13  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
19  Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday – State offices closed
Feb TBD  Board Meeting, PELS Board Office
17  President’s Day – State offices closed
Passing Scores & Proctors

While previous articles on testing have focused on exam development and exam takers, some mention should also be made of those that administered them, how they were scored and specifically how it was determined if an examinee passed.

PASSING SCORES

Although many things have changed from the very early days until now, one thing has not – the Board has always retained the authority to decide when someone passes an exam. The original 1925 law provided that an applicant had passed when it was “in a manner satisfactory to a majority of the Board” Act 202 of 1925 § 10.

Jumping forward to today, and though the Board still retains the authority to set the passing score, it like all other licensing Boards in the U.S. accepts “standards of passing as established by NCEES.” Rules of the Board, Article 11.C.3. The method used to set the NCEES “cut score” is fairly regimented and detailed as described on its website.

For about the first 25 years and until the 1950’s, it appears that exam grading was quite informal. Minutes show the usual approach was that the Board would simply vote to license those that made an acceptable grade. Beyond that, however, there seemed little consistency because sometimes the entire Board would grade an exam, sometimes only one, and there is even a reference to the Board summoning N.B. Garver to explain how he graded a particular exam.

Things got a little more formal when the exams were changed to two days in the late 1940’s and the Board also changed the way it “scored” applicants. Rules in the 1948 roster explained now that applicants would be given two scores - one based on the applicant’s “education, professional experience, testimony of references, and other reliable sources of information” and the other would be based on examinations. Each score would be given a 50% weight and the total combined score would have to be at least 75%. This method was used for roughly the next 30 years. The first record of results from this approach are available beginning with the 1950 exams and all are shown to have passed that year. The first shown to fail under this method came at the July 1951 exams and they had the following scores:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Engineer Intern exams started around this time too and it appears that Dr. Wray, the University of Arkansas professor hired to prepare and grade the exams, was also charged with determining who passed. The first results from those showed scores from seven different subject areas and a total overall score.

Later examination results became more streamlined. In the late 1950’s two scores were reported with one being for the “General” portion of the exam, one for the “Specific” portion and an overall score that was the average of the two. Around this time, Professor Wray also apparently began “adjusting” the scores based on the overall performance of the examinees. His report on the 1957 results states the grades were “adjusted to a basis that requires 75 for passing”.

Maybe because of the prior experience with the engineer exams, the basic format for scoring for surveyor exams didn’t change all that much from one year to the next. Early results showed two scores with one for an open book and another for a closed book portion with an overall combined, and two continued to be reported after the NCEES examinations were administered with one score for the morning and one for the afternoon sessions.

The final examination to be administered by the Board was the surveyor intern exams and probably because it was a national examination and scored by the national organization from the beginning, it had the most consistent scoring scheme. Results for those almost always showed one raw score and one adjusted score.

Proctors

Any summary of how exams have been administered is a fairly simple matter because the only apparent engineering exam proctors for the first 75 years or so were either Board members, Board staff, Professor Wray or other University of Arkansas staff – later, staff at other schools participated in administering the fundamentals exams to their student. Surveyor exams were administered first by Land Survey Committee members as long as that continued to exist, and then later either Board members or Board staff with Dr. Knowles assisting with the Fundamentals examinations.

One of the few reported points of contention involved whether to allow example problems and solutions in to the exam room. Calculators were first allowed in 1972 and programmable calculators were allowed in 1980.

Amid growing concerns over exam security, the Board chose in 2005 to contract with ELSES, a newly-formed division of NCEES, to administer their exams and this ended direct involvement by the Board or staff with exam administration except for the locally developed Arkansas Specific surveying examination and that is still administered by Board staff.
CONGRATULATIONS EXAMINEES - OCTOBER 2013

FUNDAMENTALS OF ENGINEERING

Seth Adams    Gregory Dillett    Courtney Hill    Joseph Mayfield    Caleb Posey    Andrew Simms
Adam Albright Robert Dorch    John Holloway    Christine Mcalpine    Daniel Power    Zachary Slinkard
Eric Anderson Ryan Dufour    Wesley Honnell    Katherine Mcwilliams    Jackie Rabb    Nathan Smith
Eric Apgar    Neil Eastwood    John Hoover    Austin Miller    Kenneth Rains    William Stanton
James Bailey Ashlee Ellis    Daniel Hoyer    Jessie Moncrief    David Ramsey    Joel Stewart
Russell Bair Keith Enlow    Steven Hryniewicz    Josiah Moore    Andrew Raybon    Zane Sturm
Nadia Bhatti Jordan Falls    Nathan Huffer    Zachary Morehart    Colby Reavis    Rashid Swann
Andrew Binder Justin Franco    Tai Huynh    Christopher Morris    Bryan Rich    Jeffery Thomas
Dominick Bisogni William Goodson    Collin Jackson    Nathaniel Newton    Bryce Robertson    W Upton
Brett Bland    Ryan Hagedorn    Bruno Jacobo    Amlam Niragire    Eric Romero    Brett Vaughn
Ethan Broadway Douglas Hall    Kyle Keene    Everett Noblin    Benjamin Ross    Alexander Warzecha
Daniel Bryant Christopher Hankins    David Kimmel    Jared Northcutt    Marshall Rucker    Michael Wear
Joshua Collins Matthew Harrison    William Lake    Kirby Parks    Brandon Rush    Micah Wyssmann
Benjamin Cottrell Justin Hart    Michael Lunday    Jordan Patoka    Morgan Rush    Josh Yancey
Jonathan Crews Seth Hathcock    Kirsch Mackey    Justin Payne    Gibran Santana    Jordan Zielinski
Doddridge Davis Joshua Hernandez    Matthew Martin    Alexander Pichalski    Anna Shafer    Jonathan Zinck
Shanyece Day

PRINCIPLES & PRACTICE OF ENGINEERING

Steven Bishop    Kirk Grimsmesman    Kathleen Mauldin    Daniel Siskowski
Joshua Bockelman Raymond Herndon    William Mauldin    David Siskowskki
Preston Campbell Clinton Hoover    Christopher Melhorn    Andrew Tackett
Brian Eddins    Mark Johnson    Monica Pazahanick    Jason Tankersley
Jesse Eisenhart Thomas Johnson    Christopher Poague    Jared Watson
Daniel George    Maneesh Krishnan    Jason Scates    Charles Wise
Thomas Gerard Mathew Lewis    Samuel Selig    Scott Woodward
Maxwell Good    Cordell Lyons    Donnie Sharp    Ashly Zink

Arkansas State Specific Exam

EriC Stuart
Scott C North
Jesse P Murphy

NCEES launches computer-based testing

January 8, 2014

NCEES is pleased to announce that the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) exams have fully transitioned to computer-based testing and are now administered exclusively at approved Pearson VUE test centers. Computer-based testing provides many advantages for both examinees and NCEES. Examinees are now able to schedule their exam at a time and location that work best for them and receive their results within 7 to 10 days. NCEES gains enhanced security and better uniformity in testing conditions with the move to computer-based testing.

“We are excited that computer-based testing for the FE and FS is under way and that all of our preparation leading up to the conversion has been successful,” said Jerry Carter, NCEES Chief Executive Officer. “The transition to computer-based testing is a positive step forward for NCEES.” To learn more about the FE and FS exams, visit ncees.org/exams.
SOCIAL MEDIA

The Arkansas Board is pleased to announce its presence through our Newsroom and Facebook pages.

Working with the Information Network of Arkansas (INA) a Newsroom and Facebook page have been created to help expand our reach of public information and better connect with audiences through media technology.

In 2013 the Board started electronic correspondence through E-mail which was initially set up to provide notification of newsletter postings and renewal notices. In addition to the current email notifications our social media sites have been created to provide you with current information and resources such as news and updates. You can choose to receive additional information in multiple formats through subscribing to our RSS feed or staying connected on Facebook.

How to Follow The Arkansas Board:

RSS feed – Utilizing Internet Explorer, click the “All News” link under the pictures on our homepage to access our Newsroom. To subscribe click the “All Feeds” link

Facebook – Access Facebook and then click “Like”. This will allow you to follow our postings.

  o Stay Connected” by clicking the Facebook icon at the bottom of the Newsroom page.
  o Login to Facebook & search for the AR Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers & Professional Surveyors
  o Type our Facebook address https://www.facebook.com/AR.PELS.Board into your browser.