



THE AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE  
OF ARCHITECTS

# Issue Brief

The American Institute of Architects • Government Advocacy • Current Issue Position and Analysis

## ARE Timing

### Key Points:

- *Passage of the ARE prior to completion of the IDP does not excuse interns from completing their internship requirements before they receive their licenses.*
- *The 2005 Internship & Career Survey, confirmed that the time to complete the IDP is four to five years, considerably longer on average than the three years it is designed to take*
- *In 2003, the Collateral Internship Management Group (CIMG) stated that “Critical to the success of this model would be a new NCARB policy recommending that all of its member boards “accept all examination divisions regardless of when they are taken”.*
- *Currently, nine jurisdictions allow some form of overlap of internship and examination eligibility (CA, TX, WI, KY, FL, AZ, AL, VT and Puerto Rico).*
- *In the 2004, the AIA’s ARE Timing Study among 1600+ respondents to the Firm Leaders Survey—a majority felt that ARE following graduation and concurrent with formal internship does not bear a negative affect on the protection of the public’s health safety and welfare.*

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## ARE Timing

### AIA Position

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) supports architectural registration boards allowing interns for licensure candidacy to take the ARE following their graduation from a NAAB-accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the Intern Development Program (IDP).

### Action Sought

The AIA advocates for individual state licensing boards to take the appropriate affirmative steps to permit interns to take all divisions of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE) following graduation from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the IDP. Individual state licensure boards are encouraged to enact regulatory amendments permitting interns to take the all divisions of the ARE. In states where examination eligibility is assessed as a matter of statutory compliance, the AIA advocates for the initiation of a timely process by which such statutes may be amended. Where model language is needed for regulatory modification, the AIA will provide examples of existing and proposed language from states where such eligibility currently exists or is pending.

### Explanation and Justification

At the NCARB annual meeting in June 2007, the member boards voted to approve Resolution 07-8 as amended to allow interns to take the ARE following graduation from a NAAB accredited degree program, and concurrent with in enrollment in the IDP. In the majority of states, the pathway to licensure as an architect requires candidates to complete a three-step process of education, experience and examination. Among these requirements, timing of eligibility for the ARE is a key factor limiting the tendency of many candidates to complete the exam and continue to pursue a career in the practice of architecture as a licensed architect. In addition, many states have varying requirements for qualification of licensure and registration. By process of adopting the approved resolution through regulatory and statutory amendment, state licensing boards will improve the issue of reciprocity between jurisdictions, providing licensed architects better transparency in documentation and licensure in multiple states.

Allowing interns the ability to take any and all divisions of the ARE concurrent with enrollment in IDP will mitigate an impediment to obtaining licensure and further enable the kind of individualized career development for which the IDP was intended. In this way, promoting the gaining of experience in tandem with examination allows candidates to focus on the substance of their professional development while maintaining all existing requirements of licensure which have been established to safeguard public safety.

To date there is no documented correlation between when a candidate for licensure takes a division of the exam and any level of negligence or frequency of malpractice incidents stemming from the later practice of that architect. It is intuitive that pass rates for certain divisions of the exam may rise as candidates gain more years of experience. There is no need however to maintain experience requirements in advance of examination which only serve to impede the most committed, intelligent and capable candidates who could otherwise begin and complete the exam sooner. Candidates who are capable of successfully passing all divisions of the exam, regardless of when they do so, have proven their ability to uphold the health safety and welfare of the public by virtue of the very nature and intent of the exam. The nine division ARE is bound by no particular hierarchy. As such, all divisions build upon experience obtained in practice. Freedom to choose when to sit for any division is therefore crucial to meet the needs of candidates employed in highly diversified practice settings.

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