Inside this issue

1 Message from Board President
2 Message from Executive Officer
3 Q & A
4 2014 Sunset Review Report
5 Admin. Disciplinary Decisions
6 Citations to Licensees
7 Citations to Unlicensed Individuals
8 New Enforcement Manager
9 Examination Development
10 Board Speakers Available
11 NCEES News
12 ASBOG Notices and Information
13 Engineering Trivia No. 2
14 Licensees Recently Deceased
15 Path to Licensure
16 Legislation and Regulation
17 Social Media

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Message from the Board President

Kathy Jones Irish

My professional development has been influenced and shaped by the many interesting jobs I was fortunate to have throughout my career. More importantly, however, I credit whatever I may have achieved to the mentors who carefully guided me along the path I still travel today.

Mentors are essential and vital to the advancement of any career plan. They are teachers, counselors, tutors, and often gurus, who provide perspectives seasoned by years and depth of experience—practical, hands-on, and often academic. I have many memorable and cherished experiences with mentors who remain touchstones in my life. Each person, in their own particular way, suggested and illuminated specific options intended to sharpen my skills, cultivate my competencies, and deepen my understanding about my work environments.

My most cherished mentor, Dr. Mary Jane Hewitt, has become a dear and much-loved friend. Dr. Hewitt was my American Studies professor during my undergraduate years as a student at Occidental College. She was a taskmaster, always demanding more of her students than we thought we could produce. Despite feeling intimidated, I approached Dr. Hewitt and asked for guidance on how to think critically and prepare a well-written term paper and for midterm and final exams. She responded by patiently sitting with me...
Mr. Zinn also talked about the importance of mentorship. He said, “Has mentorship proved of value to you in your career? Have you, in the past, been mentored, or have you mentored a prospective colleague in your career field? Are you currently mentoring someone now? Do you feel that there is a value in the mentoring process, both for you and those that you have mentored?”

Q & A with Immediate Board Past President, Erik Zinn, P.G.

We asked Erik Zinn, P.G., Immediate Past President of the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists, to respond to questions about professional responsibility and mentorship, and the part they played in his career development. Here are his responses:

What do you consider to be your responsibilities when you are asked to verify the experience of a coworker, employee, or associate who is applying for licensure?

I consider my primary responsibility to verify that the licensure applicant truly did practice geology and didn’t just perform tasks peripheral to geology. The key to ensuring that employees get that type of experience is to immerse them in geological analysis with every aspect of their work, even for tasks as mundane as drafting. The bottom line for verification of experience is the question: Has your employee demonstrated to you that they possess the minimum proficiency to practice geology on their own, such that they will not endanger the public?

Has mentorship proved of value to you in your career?

Like you, I am currently mentoring someone now. Not only has mentorship proved of value to me in my career, it has played a significant role in my professional development. I was lucky to be employed in this job. Early on, my field supervisor would give me homework that I was supposed to bring back the next day. I knew the math from my education, but it wasn’t long before I realized that I could apply my studies to upcoming projects our field crew was assigned. My mentor was teaching me how to use the basics of my education in a real world environment. I was supposed to know how to quickly calculate the potential of any possible errors while performing our daily work and see if those errors would be significant enough to affect the outcome for those relying on our work and where the errors might have occurred. Land surveying requires a broad range of experience, and early on I learned to supplement this experience with additional education that would introduce me to new aspects of surveying.

A Timeline to Licensure

ABET (formerly the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) is the accrediting agency for engineering and engineering technology academic programs. Are you interested in becoming a licensed professional engineer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>If you have a non-ABET accredited degree but possess an ABET-accredited Master of Science (M.S.) degree of Ph.D., you may apply for the licensing exam with a minimum of 12 months of qualifying work experience after graduation with the M.S. or Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>If you have an ABET-accredited program Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree, you may apply for the licensing exam with a minimum of 24 months of qualifying work experience after graduation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 months</td>
<td>If you have a non-ABET-accredited engineering degree or an ABET-accredited engineering technology degree, you may apply for the licensing exam with 48 months of qualifying work experience after graduation. (Two additional years of work experience due to not having the ABET program degree.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 months</td>
<td>If you do not receive a degree reflecting an engineering education, you will need to have a minimum of 72 months of documented qualifying work experience to apply for licensure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Message from the Board President (continued from page 1)

and sharing her advice and expectations. I took extensive notes and listened carefully. This experience proved to be the most important moment in my college life, and I have applied all that Dr. Hewitt shared with me, more than 40 years ago, in each opportunity and challenge I have undertaken during my professional life.

I am indebted to Dr. Hewitt and to my other mentors who helped shape me into the person and professional I currently am and aspire to be. I encourage anyone, no matter where they may be in their career path, to cultivate a relationship with a person who can offer wisdom, insight, and “real talk” moments that can only better one’s growth and professional performance.
2014 SUNSET REVIEW REPORT

The Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) recently submitted its 2014 Sunset Review Report to the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee and Assembly Business, Professions, and Consumer Protection Committee. To reiterate our theme, "Path to Licensure," we have included some statistical data from the report identifying by discipline the number of licenses issued by the Board over the last three years. Read our Sunset Report here: www.bpelsg.ca.gov/pubs/2014_sunset_review_report.pdf.

Licenses Issued: Less than 10

Past 3 years

Licenses Issued: 10 to 100

Past 3 years

(continued on next page)

A formal disciplinary decision is considered formal administrative disciplinary action against a licensee. It results from the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists’ (Board’s) adoption of a proposed decision prepared by an administrative law judge following a hearing, a stipulated settlement agreement, or a default decision after a full investigation and the filing of an accusation. An accusation is a formal legal document that notifies a licensee of the Board’s charges and allegations of violations against the licensee and that requests a disciplinary order be issued. The licensee is entitled to contest the charges at a formal hearing before an administrative law judge or to agree to a stipulated settlement. A final disciplinary decision contains findings and determinations or statements of advisements, waivers, and culpability and a disciplinary order. If there are findings of violations, the order may include revocation or suspension of the license with a probationary period and terms and conditions or probation, or a public reprimand. In the alternative, the decision may find that no violations or violations of a de minimus nature occurred and order the dismissal of the accusation. All final disciplinary decisions are matters of public record; for a copy of the final decision, you may contact the Board’s Enforcement Unit at BPELS.Enforcement_Information@dca.ca.gov.

Citations Issued to Licensees: Fiscal Year 2014–15 (July–September)

Citations are issued to licensed engineers, land surveyors, geologists, and geophysicists when the severity of a violation may not warrant suspension or revocation of the licensee’s right to practice. When a fine is levied with a citation, payment of the fine does not constitute admission of any violations charged but represents a satisfactory resolution of the matter pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 125.9(d). Code sections numbered in the 6700s, 7800s, and 8700s refer to the Business and Professions Code; those numbered in the 400s and 3000s refer to Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. All final citations are matters of public record; for a copy of the final citation order, you may contact the Board’s Enforcement Unit at BPELS.Enforcement_Information@dca.ca.gov.

Please include the name of the cited person and the citation number in your request.

Citations Issued to Unlicensed Individuals: Fiscal Year 2014–15 (July–September)

Citations are an alternative to criminal prosecutions that the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) can use to enforce the laws prohibiting the unlicensed practice of engineering, land surveying, geology, and geophysics or other activities for which a license is required. When a fine is levied with a citation, payment of the fine does not constitute admission of any violations charged but represents a satisfactory resolution of the matter pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 125.9(d). Code sections numbered in the 6700s, 7800s, and 8700s refer to the Business and Professions Code; those numbered in the 400s and 3000s refer to Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. All final citations are matters of public record; for a copy of the final citation order, you may contact the Board’s Enforcement Unit at BPELS.Enforcement_Information@dca.ca.gov.

Please include the name of the cited person and the citation number in your request.

![Tiffany Criswell](image) New Enforcement Manager for the Board

The Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) is pleased to announce that Tiffany Criswell will be the new Enforcement Manager, effective December 2014. Tiffany has been with the Board for more than 17 years now, the last 10 as lead analyst in the Enforcement Unit, where she handled liaison duties with the Attorney General’s Office and more recently served as Probation Monitor. Prior to that, Tiffany worked at our front desk, assisted with staff personnel needs and Board member travel before serving as a lead evaluator for the Board Licensing Unit. Please join us in welcoming Tiffany to her new position.
Examination Development … How We See the Role That We Play

By Larry Kereszt, Licensing Manager

Examination development is a critical piece in ensuring that California appropriately licenses individuals with the safety of the consumer in mind. In order for a licensing examination to meet this standard, it must assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities comprising current and competent practices.

The California State-specific examinations are used by the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) to assess whether applicants demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of competency necessary to effectively serve the public.

During the course of an examination cycle, the Board employs expert consultants to assist with the development of examinations. The Board strives to maintain a balance within the group of expert consultants to represent public and private practice, educators, and geographic location. The Board selects experienced as well as newer registrants, who are diverse in ethnicity and gender.

The development process is designed with a system of checks and balances to ensure the integrity of each examination and to secure content validity. Components, such as Item Writing, Item Review, Exam Construction, Field Test, and Standard Setting, are involved in the development of State-specific examinations.

At each Item Writing Workshop, item writing guidelines are reviewed, the test plan is discussed, and the criteria for ensuring complete coverage of the scope of practice are reviewed, the test plan is discussed, and the criteria for ensuring complete coverage of the scope of practice are discussed. The committee is guided to focus on minimum competence and the job-related areas of practice that are critical to effective performance.

At the Field Test Workshop, seven to 10 newly licensed engineers, land surveyors, and/or geologists take the examination under simulated test conditions. After completing each item, they answer a set of questions about each item’s clarity, difficulty, importance, and the time needed to answer. During a debriefing with the examination development committee, the field testers reveal their answers to each item and their rationale.

This critical phase of the field test may reveal ambiguities in the wording of an item and elicit an acceptable alternate that requires further refinement before final approval.

Once the examination has been administered, a panel of content experts is recruited to participate in a Standard Setting Workshop procedure in which a passing point is recommended to the Board decision-makers. These “cut score” study panel members (approximately 10 on the panel) are participants licensed within the last four years.

The cycles of review by Board staff and the development committee ensure that the California State-specific examinations are the best possible measure of candidate competency at the threshold of practice. Item writers’ evaluations of this interactive item development process have been positive concerning the writing skills they have developed during conferences, the knowledge they have gained about the test construction process, and the opportunity for discussions with their colleagues.

If you are interested in serving as an expert consultant, the Board is always recruiting licensed engineers, land surveyors, and geologists who reside and practice in California to assist with various aspects of examination development. Please complete the Engineers and Land Surveyors Program Application for Expert Consultant; the application can be found online at www.bpelsg.ca.gov/pubs/forms/smeapp.pdf.

Newly licensed (within the past three years) professionals are especially needed.

Board Speakers Available

The Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) continues in its efforts to reach out to groups interested in any of the broad array of Board functions. As part of this outreach effort, we have speakers available to present at meetings and events; speakers include Executive Officer Rit Moore, P.L.S.; Assistant Executive Officer Nancy Eisler; Senior Registrar Susan Christ, P.E.; Senior Registrar Mike Donelson, P.E.; and Tiffany Critwell, Enforcement Manager for the Board.

Our Enforcement, Licensing, Examination, and Outreach Departments all have speakers authorized to represent the Board. To request a speaker, we will need the following information: size of group, location, time, length, and type of presentation and proposed subject matter. Appropriate advance notice is always appreciated.

Current and former Board members may also appear on the Board’s behalf, depending on availability.

For more information, contact the Outreach Administrator at the Board, Brooke Phayer at Brooke.Phayer@dca.ca.gov or (916) 263-2239. Every effort will be made to accommodate your request.

NCEES NEWS

NCEES (National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying) is the national organization dedicated to advancing professional licensure for engineers and surveyors.

April 2015 Exam Changes

Structural Engineering (SE) — The SE 16-hour exam has revised design standards starting in April 2015. The standards are posted on the NCEES website, http://ncees.org.

Professional Engineer (PE) Civil — The PE Civil exam has revised specifications starting in April 2015. There are new design standards for the Civil Construction, Geotechnical, Structural, and Transportation modules starting in April 2015. The specifications and standards are posted on the NCEES website, http://ncees.org.

PE Agricultural and Biological Engineering — The PE Agricultural and Biological Engineering exam has new specifications starting in April 2015. The specifications are posted on the NCEES website, http://ncees.org.
Consumer Affairs. ASBOG’s main responsibility is to provide its Member Boards access to the FG and PG examinations for licensure. They assemble at least two Council of Examiners workshops a year through which the continued monitoring and improvement of the FG and PG examinations take place. Although our attendance has been sporadic or nonexistent in the past years, we are attempting to send someone to every workshop, given that our Board found that such attendance was mission critical. We will continue to attend when possible and get the word out to the practicing professionals in California to participate in these workshops—because the number of California resident participants (three this past workshop) is not commensurate with the fraction of test takers that reside in California.

The final day of the whole meeting was the Annual Meeting of ASBOG. It was the first time in years that California had duly authorized a voting delegate. The meeting largely consisted of various committee reports, most of which bordered on being prescriptive in nature. There were several items that came up during these presentations that should be of interest to California.

The first item was the promotion of using the FG as a national curricula standard, turning it into a curriculum performance assessment tool. This work is being done mostly by Randy Keth (the new ASBOG President) and Richard Spruill (a member-at-large). Randy has developed a desktop version of software called Curriculum Performance Assessment Tool (CPAT). This software and the accompanying database that Randy has compiled have many different individual and comparative (national averages) statistical graphs, including z-scores, percentiles, percent above/below the national average, percent passing by graduation year, and ratio and normalized ratio scores. It is not publicly available, nor is it intended to ever be made publicly available for obvious academic political reasons. But Randy will give individual departments with 10 or more examinations access to CPAT if they contact him. I am hoping that we can reach out to California State University department chairs who have contacted our...
Path to Licensure: Guidelines for ensuring a smooth process

Prior to licensure with the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board), an individual must apply and be qualified to be eligible to sit for the appropriate licensing exam. A part of this qualification process includes a technical review by our Senior Registrars on staff.

Our Senior Registrars are licensed in the professions we regulate and have the appropriate skills and knowledge to determine qualified candidates. Susan Christ, P.E., a licensed civil engineer, reviews applications for licensure as a civil, geotechnical, structural, and traffic engineer. Mike Donelson, P.E., a licensed electrical engineer, reviews applications for agricultural, chemical, electrical, mechanical, nuclear, and fire protection engineers.

Other Senior Registrar tasks include reviewing enforcement cases and exam items, assisting licensed engineers with practice issues, and serving as staff liaison to Board Technical Advisory Committees. Prior to joining the Board in January 1994, Susan worked in both public and private engineering in the Stockton and the Pleasanton areas. Mike started work at the Board in 2007, and prior to that, he held various positions at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) from 1993 to 2007. While at Caltrans, he dealt with workstation IT issues and roadway design software.

On a final note, the meeting attendees had a lengthy and, at times, raucous debate over the ASBOG Executive Committee’s decision to decouple the Annual Meeting from the Fall Council of Examiners meeting and offer the Annual Meeting as a GoToMeeting Web-based meeting option. This will encourage more Member Board participation, including Voting Delegates, as well as encourage Executive Officers to participate. The fiscal impact of this decision means that we will have a voice at the Annual Meeting without having to fly to the host state, as well as allow other Board members and our Executive Officer to participate. Some states were vehemently opposed to this idea, mainly stemming from their fear of technology and lack of physical interaction. Unfortunately, for those opposed, the decision was a fait accompli, since the time and method was previously decided by the Executive Committee, as dictated by ASBOG’s bylaws.

The debate was summed up when the sitting Executive Committee did indeed confirm that the decision of where, when, and how to meet for the Annual Meeting was not a democratic decision. This decision works out very well for California, in my opinion.

The top five tips for a smoother technical review process:

1. Do not list “project management” as an engineering task in your application.
2. Spell out your tasks, projects, decisions—do not use acronyms.
3. Define the work by stating the type of reports or calculations rather than just “engineering reports and calculations.”
4. On the Professional Engineer Engagement Record and Reference Form, properly describe the engineering work in the branch for which you are applying.
5. Include specific project names and locations (e.g., SF Bay Bridge abutment, Oakland, CA) in the project section.

Best practices and advice:

• Your evaluator is your guide through the path to licensure.
• Foreign transcript evaluation is not required.
• File your application at least two weeks prior to the deadline.
• Provide more than four references (to facilitate rapid evaluation).
• Order your transcripts early so they will be available to complete your application package.
• Provide the information in a direct, concise, and clear manner; a narrative style is not necessary.

For a list of FrequentlyAsked Questions regarding the Engineering Certification/Licensure Requirements, go to www.bpelsg.ca.gov/applicants/faq_eng.pdf.

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Legislation and Regulation News and Updates

Every legislative session, the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) tracks and analyzes bills that impact the licensed professions the Board regulates and the statutes that determine that authority. We consistently strive to identify, analyze, and advertise at public Board meetings the bills introduced that may change the landscape of our statutory authority. Below is a summary of the bills that Board staff tracked that were chaptered and will become effective January 1, 2015. See accompanying flowchart on how a bill becomes a law.

Assembly Bill 186 (Maienschein R)

Professions and vocations: military spouses: temporary licenses.

Status: Chapter 640, Statutes of 2014

Laws: Adds section 115.6 to the Business and Professions Code

Bill Summary: This bill requires the Board to issue a 12-month temporary license to an applicant who is a spouse or domestic partner of an active duty member of the Armed Forces and holds a current, active, and unrestricted license in another state, district, or territory of the United States. Additionally, applicants seeking temporary license must pass the appropriate California specific examinations.

Assembly Bill 1702 (Maienschein R)

Professions and vocations: incarceration.

Status: Chapter 410, Statutes of 2014

Laws: Adds section 480.5 to the Business and Professions Code

Bill Summary: This bill provides an individual who has satisfied the requirements needed to obtain a license while incarcerated, who upon release from incarceration, shall not be subject to a delay in processing the application or a denial of the license solely based on the prior incarceration, except when the incarceration was for a crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of the business or profession.

Assembly Bill 2396 (Bonta D)

Convictions: expungement: licenses.

Convictions: expungement: licenses.

Status: Chapter 737, Statutes of 2014

Laws: Amends section 480 of the Business and Professions Code

Bill Summary: This bill prohibits boards within the Department of Consumer Affairs from denying a professional license based solely on a criminal conviction that has been withdrawn, set aside, or dismissed by the court.

Senate Bill 1467 (Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development)

Professions and vocations.

Status: Chapter 400, Statutes of 2014

Laws: Amends sections 6730.2, 6735, 6759, 7842, 7860, 8771, and adds sections 7864 and 8725.1 to the Business and Professions Code (among many others)

Bill Summary: This bill removed reference to the title “Petroleum Geologist” and adds petition for reinstatement language to the Geologist and Geophysicist Act to mirror the Professional Engineers Act and Professional Land Surveyors (PLS) Act. Cross-references existing authority to the Education Code and Health and Safety Code sections. Additionally, modifies language to clarify monument preservation requirements in the PLS Act. Requires an authorized land surveyor be designated as the person in responsible charge of professional land surveying work practiced in any public agency.

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Social Media: Board Facebook and Twitter Pages

The Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (Board) is asking for your help in getting the word out regarding the launch of its Facebook and Twitter pages. The Board is now posting information of interest to postsecondary institutions and students on a regular basis. This information includes regulatory changes, updates to our website, interesting articles, useful resources, and a host of other Board-related data.

For those institutions that communicate with students through e-mail or some other means, we invite you to share this information with them. The Board is anxious to use these social media outlets as an ongoing way to reach our stakeholders. Thank you for your assistance in spreading the word.

Please take a few minutes to “like” us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter:

Facebook - www.facebook.com/pages/The-Board-for-Professional-Engineers-Land-Surveyors-and-Geologists/107020752801578

Twitter - www.twitter.com/CA_Engineers