

MOU: Questions, Concerns and Grumbles – Posted: May 3, 2006

Question: Will AIBC continuing education units be accepted by the IDIBC?

Response: Yes it is expected that all relevant courses will be approved and new courses will be approved if they are reviewed and meet the criteria set out by IDCEC.

Question: is there any indication of other organizations also joining? E.g. technologists, landscape architects, etc.? And if so, would it change anything?

Response: Yes the ASTTBC (architectural technologists) are currently in discussions with AIBC. No it would not change the structure of the new organization, as the intent of the new organization has always been to include multiple disciplines.

Question: What will become of IDIBC assets (financial and otherwise) should we join AIBC?

Response: This is a point for negotiation, however IDIBC assets would be used to settle lease arrangements, cover legal fees and if after that funds exist they would be designated for Interior Design Special Interest Groups.

Question: If we find that the amalgamation is not working for interior designers, do we have a way out?

Response: We are negotiating the best terms possible and will not sign an agreement that we feel has negative ramifications for interior designers. However, there is no easy out after the agreement takes effect.

Question: I am sure larger firms are embracing this merger wholeheartedly, but what will be the ramifications for small firms and sole practitioners?

Response: The majority of members of AIBC work for small firms or are sole practitioners.

Question: With only one-twelfth or 8% of the vote, do we have sufficient voice to have our concerns heard if and when they arise?

Response: The board positions are not the only avenue for our voice to be heard. Members need to remain active in the special interest groups and subcommittees as well as during AGMs.

Concern: ensure the wording for interior designers scope of work does not limit designers in responsibility and practice levels less than currently experienced (to avoid the Alberta experience).

Response: Absolutely – the intent is not to limit the scope of work that designers currently hold. The NCIDQ definition of Interior Design is the one used for this model.

Concern: - formal recognition that there *is* overlap between the practice of architecture and interior design and that this is normal, legal and okay (or words to this effect! ;-) to avoid bitter and petty turf wars;

Response: This has been an area of discussion for the Task Force and is reinforced by NCIDQ's definition of interior design.

Concern: - to have at least two (2) interior designers on the Board (as opposed to the currently stated one) to better reflect the percentage of designers within the AIBC/IDIBC organization - approx. 20%;

Response: To date our position has been to have two interior designers on the Board. In addition to Board positions there will be various special interest groups that will allow interior designers to become involved and have a voice in the new organization.

Concern: to have interior design reflected in the name of the new organization (i.e. not just keeping it as AIBC) because it *is* a whole new organization.

Response: The name of the new organization has not been discussed at this point. The name of the new Act will be something of a more generic nature than The Architects' Act, more along the lines of The Building Professionals' Act. There has been discussion regarding the appellations members of the new association would use, i.e., registered designers may use AIBC.RID

Concern: to ensure design professional fees do not increase substantially.

Response: The fee structure is not intended to have a substantial increase – but it is expected that there will be an increase from fees currently assessed. This increase in fees is reflected by the increase in benefits to members. Perhaps a more important factor to consider is that designers will not be taking on the liabilities of the architects.

Concern: Many long-term IDI members have paid legal levies in the past which have resulted in very little (i.e. Practice Act lobbyists). Our newer members have no memories of this. They will be the ones who benefit should this merger be mutually successful, so they need to be made aware of the ramifications of this merger as it really impacts on their future (not mine!). I am not sure that the newer members are asking all the questions that will affect them.

Response: We have brought on some younger members to the negotiating team and have a cross section of members on the legal committee. This is why we want to hear from all our members – give us your feedback – send your comments to MOU@idibc.org.

Grumble: We don't want a situation like Alberta.

Response: The situation in Alberta differs from our scenario because they have two professional associations for registered interior designers – one joined with the architects and another that is designers only. This sets up a conflict situation between the two groups of designers. The proposed association in BC is one that will bring building professionals together under one umbrella. There are members of our legal team that have first hand experience with the Alberta situation.