

Bill Seider, AIA, was one of the architects NCARB enlisted to pretest the new electronic Experience Verification Reporting system prior to its rollout last December. He is a past member of the Oregon Board of Architect Examiners and serves on the board of AIA/Oregon.

## THE E-EVR: ALL SYSTEMS GO

by Bill Seider, AIA

There have been numerous announcements sent out since the Six-Month Rule for IDP reporting was approved by the 54 Member Boards at the NCARB Annual Meeting in June 2008. Due in part to the feedback from many in the professional community about this new process, there was an agreement that the rule would not take effect until the online reporting system NCARB was developing was implemented and successfully operating. The electronic Experience Verification Reporting (e-EVR) system rolled out last December, and is now available to interns and IDP supervisors.

One of the other provisions of the resolution was that the reporting system be evaluated prior to the rollout to verify its acceptable performance. After multiple levels of routine testing and refinements, the e-EVR system received a final review from a group of informed professionals and interns charged with reporting back to the NCARB Executive Committee on their findings and recommendations. NCARB President Gordy Mills appointed a review panel consisting of architects, interns, and Board administrators to review the system in early December. I was on that panel and was able to log on as an intern and as a supervisor to test the system

and see if it met the stated goals to properly function in support of Resolution 2008-07 passed at the NCARB Annual Meeting. An independent consultant was also hired by NCARB to test and validate the operation of the program. The panel held a telephone conference call and web broadcast to review our individual experiences and learn more about the e-EVR from NCARB staff.

Overall, I was very impressed with the e-EVR system as presented to us. In exploring the program online I found it very intuitive to use and easy to maneuver through the applications both as a supervisor and as an intern.

## TOP TEN QUESTIONS ABOUT THE E-EVR

In December, NCARB launched the new electronic Experience Verification Reporting system (e-EVR). The new system is part of NCARB's ongoing Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) initiative to streamline operations and improve services. Since the launch, NCARB has hosted several webinars to help interns and supervisors become familiar with the new system and answer questions about how it works. Here are the answers to the top 10 questions about the e-EVR:

### 1. What is the e-EVR?

The e-EVR is NCARB's new electronic Experience Verification Reporting system. It allows interns to document their Intern Development Program (IDP) training by submitting experience reports online through their NCARB Record. Each time an intern submits a report, their IDP supervisor receives an automatic e-mail notification with a link to that report. Once the supervisor has created a profile in the system, they can review and approve all of their interns' experience reports online.

With the new system, the intern's Record is updated immediately, and they can log on to their NCARB Record at any time to see how they are progressing through the IDP. The e-EVR provides greater transparency into the process, and is a very useful tool that will help interns meet the goals and requirements of the IDP.

### 2. How do I access e-EVR?

You can access the e-EVR by clicking on the "Log Into My NCARB Record" link on NCARB's home page, [www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org). Under "Main Menu" in the center of your screen, select "NEW!

e-EVR, the electronic Experience Verification Reporting system." Once you read and agree to the reporting terms, you can begin documenting your IDP experience faster and more accurately than ever before!

### 3. How does my work get verified using e-EVR?

Each time you add an experience report you are asked to identify your direct supervisor. (Please note that your direct supervisor must meet the requirements specified in the *IDP Guidelines*.) After you enter the information for your experience report and click "submit for approval," an e-mail is sent to your supervisor with a link to your report. Your IDP supervisor then clicks the link to log in to the system and review your report. After discussing your report with you, your supervisor can approve, return for edits, or reject your report online. If your report is approved, the "pending" training units in your NCARB Record will immediately change to "approved." If your report is returned for edits, you may correct and resubmit your report. If your supervisor rejects your experience report, the training units will not be accepted by NCARB.

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It was clear that the e-EVR meets the requirements NCARB has established and should be appreciated by all who will be using it. The system allows interns to report their training units in an efficient and user-friendly online environment, improving the process for interns, as well as for NCARB, the state boards, and the IDP supervisors. Following this conference call, the review panel unanimously endorsed the e-EVR system as being ready for full deployment.

NCARB staff and consultants continued to polish some of the e-EVR information and messages, links, and overall graphics, before the program went live on 15 December 2008. Over the past several months, NCARB has produced several web-based seminars to present the Six-Month Rule and other IDP

enhancements to the professional community. Our office participated in several of these webcasts and found them very informative.

One other important part of this online reporting process is an improvement in the information available for the IDP supervisors. NCARB committees have developed a guideline and series of expectations for supervisors to use in carrying out this important function we, as registered architects, provide. The days of just blindly signing an intern's reports are gone. NCARB previewed the *IDP Supervisor Guidelines* at their Annual Meeting in June and I thought they were definitely on the right track. The guidelines explain how to make the most of this responsibility. In addition, they should help to standardize the experience for interns

and their IDP supervisors across the country and from office to office.

I am a strong supporter of the Six-Month Rule for reporting IDP training units and think that NCARB has done a good job of getting ready for the implementation of the program beginning in July 2009 as planned. The architecture community should be comfortable with this next evolution of the IDP process, and embrace it as we move forward to give interns the best professional experience they can have on their way to licensure. I encourage all of you to take advantage of the free training and informational opportunities being made available as the e-EVR system is deployed and the first phase of the Six-Month Rule comes into effect on 1 July 2009. Both will be here to stay. **DC**

## TOP TEN QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SIX-MONTH RULE

At the Annual Meeting in June 2008, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards' (NCARB) Member Boards passed a rule that will require interns to submit their training units in reporting periods of no longer than six months. Since then, NCARB has worked to help interns and IDP supervisors understand the new rule by placing articles in key publications, sending e-mails and postcards to Record holders, and creating a Six-Month Rule web page ([www.ncarb.org/idp/SixMonRul.html](http://www.ncarb.org/idp/SixMonRul.html)). NCARB staff has also made presentations at AIA events and hosted several online webinars. During these events, staff addressed many questions about the new reporting requirement. With the first phase of implementation just a few months away, here are the answers to the top 10 questions about the Six-Month Rule:

### 1. What is the Six-Month Rule?

The Six-Month Rule is a training unit reporting requirement for the Intern Development Program (IDP). The Six-Month Rule requires interns to submit their training units to NCARB in reporting periods of no longer than six months and within two months of completion of each reporting period.

### 2. When will does the Six-Month Rule begin?

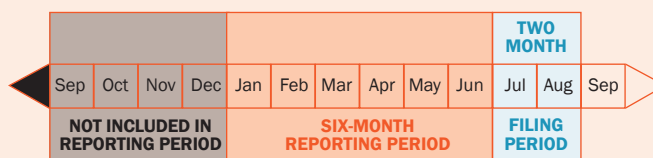
The new reporting requirement will be phased in over two years:

- On **1 July 2009**, the Six-Month Rule will apply to interns establishing an NCARB Record on or after that date.
- On **1 July 2010**, one full year later, the Six-Month Rule will apply to all interns.

### 3. How does the Six-Month Rule work?

Each reporting period can be no longer than six-months in duration. The report must be submitted to NCARB no later than two months after the end of the period being reported. For each day past the two-month filing period, one day of acceptable experience will be lost at the beginning of the reporting period.

That means that an intern taking maximum advantage of the reporting and filing periods would have until 30 August to report training units that were earned during the six month period starting 1 January and ending 30 June. While the reporting period is a maximum of six months, the filing period allows IDP training unit submittals any time between 30 June and 30 August.



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## TOP TEN QUESTIONS ABOUT THE E-EVR *continued*

### 4. **What is the difference between “Saved,” “Pending,” and “Approved” experience reports?**

“Saved” experience reports are training units you have entered for a specific reporting period, but have not yet submitted to your supervisor for approval. You may make changes to your “saved” experience any time until you submit your report.

“Pending” experience reports are training units you have submitted to your supervisor, but have not yet been approved. You may not make changes to an experience report once you have submitted it to your supervisor for approval.

If you need to make adjustments to a report you have submitted to your supervisor for approval, you must have your supervisor select the “Return for Edits” option. This action will cause the experience report to be returned to you so that you can edit and resubmit it.

“Approved” experience reports are training units your supervisor has verified. As soon as your supervisor approves your experience report, your IDP summary on your e-EVR home page will be updated to show all your completed training units. You may need to log out of your Record and log back in for the update to appear. All reports are subject to NCARB’s final review once approved by the supervisor.

### 5. **What is the difference between a warning and an error in my message center?**

A warning in the message center alerts you to the potential for a mistake in your report that could lead to rejection by your supervisor or NCARB. You may proceed with your submission despite a warning message.

All reports currently provide the warning about the upcoming Six-Month Rule. This warning is intended to promote awareness of this upcoming change to the reporting requirement—it *will not impact reports submitted before the noted effective dates.*

An error message alerts you to a mistake that must be corrected before you can submit your experience report. Error messages are most often problems such as overlapping reporting periods or submitting too many training units for the reporting period (only one training unit is allowed per each eight hours of experience documented). You may not submit an experience report until all error messages have been addressed and no longer appear in your message center.

### 6. **Am I able to delete experience reports submitted through the e-EVR?**

You can only delete experience reports listed as “Saved” in the e-EVR. All other reports listed cannot be deleted through e-EVR. To delete submissions other than those listed as “Saved,” please contact customer service at [customerservice@ncarb.org](mailto:customerservice@ncarb.org) and request the deletion by indicating both the employer and reporting period.

### 7. **Do I need to submit previously reported experience through the new e-EVR system?**

All previously submitted and accepted training units are included in the IDP summary you see on your e-EVR home page. Any experience you have already reported using the paper Employment Verification form (Form 123) remains a part of your

Record. You do not need to create a duplicate electronic form for this experience.

### 8. **Am I required to use the e-EVR or can I submit a paper version for employment verification?**

Paper submissions will be phased out on 1 July 2009. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this new service, which will dramatically reduce processing time as well as improve the overall accuracy and efficiency of the IDP. In the past, NCARB staff has had to reject paper Employment Verification forms that did not meet the requirements outlined in the *IDP Guidelines*. Many of these requirements are built into the e-EVR to help you navigate through the program. The system identifies many common mistakes and allows you to correct them before your report is submitted, thus avoiding related delays and rejections.

There is an option to print paper reports out of the e-EVR system, but there are limitations and restrictions to this approach and this option should only be utilized out of necessity, such as when your supervisor does not have an e-mail account. To use this option, you should check the box marked “This experience report will be printed for review, approval, and submission on paper.” Remember, this option should not be used unless absolutely necessary.

### 9. **What happens when I have completed all of NCARB’s minimum requirements for the IDP?**

You will receive a message on your e-EVR home page when you have successfully completed the minimum requirements for the IDP. If you are ready to transmit your file in support of the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®) and/or initial licensure, you must log onto “My NCARB Record” and select “Request a Transmittal.” Your Record will undergo a final evaluation, which currently takes between 30-45 days, before it can be transmitted to the jurisdiction you select.

Completing NCARB’s IDP requirements does not guarantee ARE eligibility in all jurisdictions. Please review your state’s requirements for ARE eligibility to determine if additional experience documentation may be required.

### 10. **Why should I use the e-EVR?**

While the paper system of reporting IDP experience is currently still available, interns should be aware that processing paper forms can take weeks, or even months. In addition, paper forms often contain mistakes, like an incorrect date, which can further delay processing. With the e-EVR, many of the common errors have been eliminated, and experience reports are processed immediately. Interns can track their progress in the IDP through their NCARB Record in real time—and then work with their supervisor to target specific areas where additional training units are still needed. By improving the accuracy and efficiency of experience reports, the e-EVR provides a better overall IDP experience.

**Still have questions about the e-EVR? View the webcast at [www.ncarb.org/webcasts/index.html](http://www.ncarb.org/webcasts/index.html) or write to [customerservice@ncarb.org](mailto:customerservice@ncarb.org).**

## TOP TEN QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SIX-MONTH RULE *continued*

### 4. **How does the Six-Month Rule impact the way I report short-term employment, such as summer internships or employment periods of less than six months in duration?**

You must report short-term employment within a reporting period of no longer than six months and within two months of completion of the reporting period. So, if you have a summer internship that starts on 1 May and ends on 31 August, you must submit your experience report by 31 October.



However, should you miss the 31 October deadline, you may extend your reporting period for an entire six months. In other words, while your actual employment period was from 1 May until 31 August, you could actually extend your reporting period from 1 May to 31 October (an entire six months), and still have a two month filing period until 31 December. You do not have to be employed during the entire reporting period.



### 5. **Will any extensions to the reporting period be allowed?**

Yes, you can receive a six-month extension to the filing period if you are unable to submit your experience report due to the birth or adoption of a child within the filing period. A reasonable extension will also be granted if a serious medical condition or active duty in military service prevents you from submitting your report. All extensions will require documentation and approval. The application and review process for such requests will be available when the Six-Month Rule becomes effective.

### 6. **What is the e-EVR system and how does it relate to the Six-Month Rule?**

The electronic Experience Verification Reporting System (e-EVR)—which was launched on 15 December 2008—allows you to document your experience in various training areas directly into your online NCARB Record. In this system, you must identify your IDP supervisor in each report. When you submit an experience report, NCARB automatically notifies your supervisor that your report is available for review. After discussing your report with you, your IDP supervisor can then approve, return for edits, or reject your report online. Once the Six-Month Rule takes effect, the e-EVR will prevent you from submitting experience reports that do not meet the new requirements.

### 7. **Can I lose experience for administrative delays?**

Once you submit qualified training units to your supervisor through the e-EVR system, you will not be penalized by losing training units for delays in processing caused by your supervisor or NCARB. In other words, submitted units are “protected” in your Record from the reporting requirement while any loose ends are tied up. You can only lose the submitted training units if they are deemed invalid by your IDP supervisor, or they are not earned in accordance with the rules of the IDP.

### 8. **How do I track my IDP progress?**

You can log on to “My NCARB Record” and see which training units you have completed, which are pending supervisor approval, and which training areas still require additional documentation.

### 9. **If I have years of experience to report, how will the Six-Month Rule affect me?**

If you establish your Record before 1 July 2009, then you will not be subject to the Six-Month Rule until 1 July 2010. Until then you may retroactively report your experience, however, you must report all experience by 30 June 2010.

If you establish your NCARB Record after 1 July 2009, you will be required to submit your training units to NCARB in reporting periods of no longer than six months and within two months of completion of each reporting period. No retroactively experience reports will be accepted. That means that if you establish an NCARB Record on 1 July 2009, you will not be able to report any experience earned prior to 1 November 2008.

### 10. **Why was the Six-Month Rule enacted?**

The Six-Month Rule was designed to improve both the accuracy of reporting and the overall IDP experience. By requiring regular reporting, the rule encourages more frequent communication between you and your IDP supervisor. Your supervisor will also be more familiar with the work documented and therefore more likely to approve your experience reports. With the e-EVR, it is easier to track your IDP progress and identify training area deficiencies sooner—then you can work with your supervisor to create a plan to gain exposure to those areas as early as possible. Ultimately, the Six-Month Rule should help reduce the amount of time it takes to complete IDP.

**Have more questions about the Six-Month Rule?**  
Go to [www.ncarb.org/idp/SixMonRul.html](http://www.ncarb.org/idp/SixMonRul.html).