

ARE

INTO THE FUTURE: THE ARE®

When the practice of architecture moved into the computer age in the 1980s, it would have been difficult to predict that a few decades later we would be living in the digital age of tweets, streaming video, and Building Information Modeling (BIM). The challenge of any company is to invest in a technology platform that can expand and grow with its needs into the future—even when it does not know exactly what those needs may be.

As the search for vendors to develop and deliver the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®) began in 2010, the issues of flexibility, growth, and change were paramount to the discussion.

“We needed to consider our ability to be agile and support all facets of ARE delivery, including exam committees, creation and scoring of content, management of candidate records, testing eligibilities, score reporting, test centers, and statistical analysis,” said Director, ARE Erica J.

Brown, AIA, NCARB. “We are taking the lessons learned from our current process and building enhancements to better position us for efficiency in the future.”

Beyond the complex technological needs for the ARE, there is also the important issue of how to best serve our customers—the candidates and the registration boards who, on a daily basis, engage with aspects of ARE eligibility, scheduling, score reporting, and the testing centers. The ARE is much more than a deliverable at the test center, it encompasses years of research and development, software development, pre-testing, scoring analysis, and score reporting.

The many different facets of delivering the ARE led the Council to break the needs down into three categories of service: content management, candidate management, and site management. This separation of services allowed more testing organizations the ability to respond

NCARB RELEASES EXPANDED CONTENT INFORMATION FOR THE ARE

After careful consideration by the Examination Committee and approval by the NCARB Board of Directors, NCARB has released new exam guides to include expanded information regarding the makeup of the multiple-choice sections of the ARE.

“This level of expansion is consistent with the amount of information disclosed by many other licensure programs, and aligns with the NCARB value of transparency,” said Examination Committee Chair John E. Enkemann Jr., AIA, NCARB.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The newly released editions include a detailed breakdown of the test content areas and a percentage outline for the major content areas of each multiple-choice section. Candidates can use this information to better outline and focus their preparation.

“We are excited to offer candidates this additional level of information to use while preparing for the ARE. This change is a dramatic shift for the exam guides and we hope it will help to ease anxiety over the content distribution and make-up of the ARE,” said Director, ARE Erica J. Brown, AIA, NCARB.

to the Request for Information, which was sent out in fall 2010. Following initial responses and evaluation, requests for proposals were sent to all qualified vendors in spring 2011. Qualified vendors were evaluated and interviewed based on proposals submitted for one or more of the three categories of service.

In September 2011, NCARB announced the signing of long-term contracts with Alpine Testing Solutions, Inc. and Prometric, Inc. These two vendors were selected for their unique strengths that will allow NCARB to continue to provide the profession with the highest quality licensing exam, enhance the candidate experience, and position the ARE for a more agile future.

Alpine Testing Services, Inc. was selected to manage both the content and candidate management services. This comprehensive effort includes support for the exam committees, creation and maintenance of all multiple-choice and graphic

content, management of all candidate records and testing eligibilities, score reporting, and statistical analysis. Prometric, Inc. was selected to continue as a long-term partner with NCARB as the site management consultant focused on delivering the ARE to candidates in their extensive test center network.

Partnering with these two vendors will enable NCARB to build, maintain, and continuously improve our testing program. Among the benefits that this change will bring to ARE candidates is an enhanced experience in terms of communication and scheduling. Candidates will have online access to their examination history, authorization to test, and other related data. Improvements to the customer experience are also being explored for special accommodations requests and Rolling Clock extensions. The online system will provide NCARB a more efficient means to communicate directly with candidates related to Rolling Clock deadlines, changes

to the exam, or other related policies. Continuing to provide a high quality test environment for candidates, with unparalleled access to test centers across the United States, was a critical component in the vendor selection process.

As NCARB works through the migration process, we will continue to be vigilant in analyzing how future enhancements might be delivered and what the impact will be to candidates and our Member Boards.

“The ARE is an integral part of the profession, and as such, its evolution must be carefully conceived and executed,” says NCARB CEO Michael J. Armstrong. “NCARB is committed to investing judiciously in this process to ensure the best outcome for our many stakeholders.”

More information on future enhancements to the ARE program will be released throughout the migration process, which is anticipated to be complete in 2013. **DC**

NEW EXAM GUIDES

For example, the new edition of the *Construction Documents & Services Exam Guide* provides the following information for Codes & Regulations:

1. CODES & REGULATIONS (5-8 percent of scored items)

A. Incorporate building codes, specialty codes, zoning, and other regulatory requirements in construction documents and services.

1. **Government and Regulatory Requirements and Permit Processes** Conduct code analysis to ensure compliance with all building codes, zoning ordinances and other regulations and document code compliance in the contract documents.

2. **Specialty Codes and Regulations including Accessibility Laws, Codes and Guidelines** Conduct code analysis to ensure compliance with all specialty codes, such as seismic, life safety, historic preservation, accessibility, universal design, energy, or other specialty regulations.

The percentages published provide the range for scored items only. The six divisions with multiple-choice items include some questions that are being pretested and will not affect a candidate's actual test score and are not included in the content distribution breakdown. These pretest questions will be evaluated and may be included in future editions of the test.