

## Continuing professional development

### What is continuing professional development (CPD)?

- Continuing professional development (CPD) for accredited certifiers is ongoing learning undertaken after they have been issued with a certificate of accreditation under the *Building Professionals Act 2005* (the Act). CPD is a way for certifiers to keep pace with new developments in their industry, in particular in matters that relate to their practice and statutory responsibilities.
- One of the responsibilities of the Building Professionals Board (the Board) is to coordinate a CPD program for accredited certifiers.
- The Board's CPD program is the means by which the Board can ensure certifiers are keeping their skills and knowledge current. The program is contained in Schedule 5 of the accreditation scheme made under the Act.

### What are the elements of the Board's CPD program?

- There are two elements to the program. Each year, certifiers must:
  - complete the activities approved by the Board, and
  - concurrently maintain their professional organisation's CPD requirements (or the equivalent) in relation to their area(s) of specialisation.
- The activities approved in the CPD program relate to ongoing training on such matters as the Act, the Building Professionals Regulation 2007, the accreditation scheme, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation), other relevant legislation, relevant Australian Standards, and the Building Code of Australia (where relevant).
- The activities approved in the program are provided on the basis of a calendar year, are mandatory and are not subject to a points system.

### When do certifiers need to do the Board's activities?

- Each year, the activities approved in the CPD program will consist of two courses that must be completed in that calendar year – one on legislative requirements and one on professional practice. One course will be available in the first half of the year and the other in the second half of the year. There will be a number of opportunities to attend each course, at various times and locations throughout NSW.

## When does the CPD program apply to accredited certifiers?

- The CPD program applies to all existing accredited certifiers **from 1 March 2007** when the scheme commenced.
- The CPD program also applies to accredited certifiers accredited from 1 March 2007 wishing to renew their accreditation for the following year.

## What CPD do certifiers need to do after 2007?

- Certifiers who seek to renew their accreditation **after the first time** must provide evidence that they have successfully completed the two courses required to be undertaken by the Board for the previous calendar year, as well as evidence that they have satisfied the requirements of the CPD program administered by their respective professional associations or institutes (or the equivalent).
- For example, to have his accreditation renewed in 2009 accredited certifier Jim Jones, who was previously accredited by the Department of Planning before the Board commenced operating, must show he has completed:
  - the two Board courses in 2008, and
  - the requirements of the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors' CPD program for the previous year to the date of expiry of his/her certificate of accreditation.

## What CPD do I need to do if I am first accredited in 2009?

- Certifiers who are first accredited by the Board in 2009 must provide evidence in 2010 that they have successfully completed only those courses that were available during 2009 from the commencement date on their certificate of accreditation. This means that if they are accredited in the later half of the year, they need to complete only the Board's second course (as the first course is only offered in the first half of the year).
- In addition, they must show that they have satisfied the requirements of the CPD program administered by their respective professional associations or institutes (or the equivalent).

## How do I prove I have satisfied the requirements of the CPD program?

- To prove they have earned the points required for their professional organisation's CPD scheme, certifiers must submit the following to the Board with their annual application to renew their accreditation:
  - a list of CPD activities they have undertaken during the current period of accreditation (ie the previous 12 months),
  - evidence that they have participated in each of those activities, and
  - for certifiers formerly accredited under the accreditation scheme for Building Surveyors and Allied Professions, a certified copy of notification from the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS) of the number of points they have accumulated during the most recent 12 month AIBS CPD period.
- To prove they have completed the Board's approved activities required for CPD, certifiers must submit to the Board copies of their certificates of successful completion from the approved courses with their application to renew their accreditation.

## How many points must I earn each year?

- The points system for CPD applies only to the professional organisation's CPD requirements where such a system is adopted. The number of points a certifier must earn for CPD to satisfy the professional organisation's CPD requirements is as set out in their respective CPD schemes.
- The two Board's CPD activities each year are not subject to a points system; the sessions are simply mandatory.

## Are there any exceptions to CPD?

- No, there are no exceptions to the requirements of the CPD program. Under the Act, the Board may refuse to renew an accreditation if it is not satisfied the applicant has undertaken the CPD required by the scheme.
- The Board will, however, consider any extenuating circumstances that may have led to a certifier failing to meet the requirements of the CPD program.

## What happens if I don't do the required CPD?

- The Act enables the Board to refuse to renew accreditation for certifiers who have not undertaken the continuing professional development required by the scheme since the Board last renewed their accreditation.

## How are the CPD courses delivered?

- The Board has previously provided CPD courses to accredited certifiers via correspondence, on-line, DVD and face to face methods.
- The Board has also sought expressions of interest and engaged training providers to deliver the CPD courses.
- The Board will continue to use the above methods of successfully delivering the CPD courses.

## Will the CPD courses be available to certifiers living in regional or rural areas?

- The Board is committed to ensuring the requirement to undertake Board courses twice a year does not significantly discriminate against certifiers who are based in rural and regional areas. The Board is looking into ways to enable flexible delivery of its courses, including web-based learning, use of CDs, and use of the training providers with the appropriate resources to service certifiers in regional or rural areas.

## Can others do the Board's CPD courses?

- Yes. The CPD program is open to all interested persons to attend, not just those who are accredited certifiers.

## Is there a fee for the Board's course?

- Yes. Where the Board provides a CPD course, the Board will charge a fee on a cost-recovery basis. The Board will notify certifiers about the course fee when a request is made to certifiers to attend the course.

- Similarly, where a training provider delivers the Board's approved CPD courses, it is likely that participants will be charged course fees.

### **Can the CPD points earned for a builder's licence be recognised for the Board's CPD program?**

- Possibly. A certifier's professional organisation may recognise the courses or other activities completed by a certifier as part of their builder's licence. Certifiers need to approach their professional organisation to have these activities so recognised.

### **What if I only work part-time?**

- Certifiers who work part-time still need to fulfil the requirements of the CPD program in order to renew their accreditation; there are no concessions for part-time or casual workers.

### **What if I don't work in the industry but want to keep my accreditation?**

- Accreditation is granted for a period of 12 months and cannot be renewed without meeting the Board's CPD requirements (amongst other requirements).

### **What if I am not a member of a professional organisation?**

- In relation to the CPD required for their area(s) of specialisation, certifiers who are not members of a professional organisation have two options under the Board's CPD program - to undertake:
  - CPD that is equivalent to the relevant professional organisation's CPD requirements. For example, a building surveyor who is not a member of the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors would complete the equivalent requirements of the AIBS CPD scheme for its members, or
  - 25 hours of training or education in a course or program approved by the Board that is relevant to their category(s) of accreditation. This may be training or education provided by a Registered Training Authority, a university or other accredited educational institution.
- It is recommended that certifiers contact their relevant professional organisation to find out the requirements of their CPD schemes. For example, an engineer who is not registered on the National Professional Engineers Register (NPER) should contact Engineers Australia to find out their annual CPD requirements for continued registration on the NPER.
- It is up to the applicant to demonstrate to the Board that the CPD they seek to undertake, which is not part of a CPD program provided by a professional organisation, is equivalent to the requirements of a CPD program provided by a professional organisation and/or is relevant to the accredited certifier's category(s) of accreditation.

### **Can other professional organisations have their CPD programs recognised in the scheme?**

- The accreditation scheme recognises CPD programs; it does not recognise CPD providers. Professional associations, institutes or other organisations are welcome to approach the Board to have their CPD program recognised in the scheme.

## Help with the CPD requirements

- If you have a specific question in relation to the requirements of a professional organisation's CPD program, you should contact that organisation.
- If you have a general question about the Board's CPD program or a specific question in relation to course requirements specified by the Board, you can contact the BPB on 02 9895 5950 or [cpd@bpb.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cpd@bpb.nsw.gov.au).

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April 2009  
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