

17 November 2010

Cautionary Note 1 – Unethical Behaviour

Dear Architects

Last week the New Zealand Institute of Architects Inc issued an Advisory Notice concerning *"instances of NZIA Practices making unsolicited approaches to clients and providing fee proposals which have been determined after reviewing Resource Management Consent approvals at Councils' offices."*

The contention is that architects are viewing applications for resource consents and then making pitches to the owners to supplant the architects already commissioned.

In the view of the New Zealand Registered Architects Board's (NZRAB), this is unethical.

The "Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct for Registered Architects" requires in Rule 54, under "Standards Related to the Profession", that "A Registered Architect must pursue his or her professional activities with honesty and fairness".

Where an architect or a practice has an agreed contract to provide full architectural services with a client, it is a serious contravention of Rule 54 if another architect or practice submits an unsolicited fee proposal in the manner described, whether via a third party or not. Such an action is definitely not "fair", being contrary to accepted ethical practice. It is probably seriously dishonest in the way it is being communicated to the "client".

Any affected architect, client, council employee or member of the public who detects this practice should consider laying a complaint to the NZRAB against any architect who has been involved.

In addition, all architects should know that the NZRAB is empowered to initiate disciplinary proceedings against an architect on its own account.

The NZRAB strongly urges Registered Architects to avoid this method of procuring work.

Yours faithfully



Warwick Bell
Chair

