



THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

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Date: October 17, 2007

To: Member Oversight Committee
Regulation, Admissions, and Discipline Committee
Stakeholder Relations Committee

From: Francisco Gomez, Staff

Re: Advisory Committee Oversight/Work Plans

The following is a description of the State Bar advisory committee work plan process and an explanation of how it fits within the Board of Governors Strategic Management Cycle. If you have any questions, please contact me directly at 415.538.2170 or by email at francisco.Gomez@calbar.ca.gov.

Background

Historically, the State Bar has operated with a number of "Standing Committees" (e.g. Committee on the Administration of Justice, Committee on Group Insurance) that have focused on specific issues and operated with little oversight by the Board of Governors. The State Bar also works with a number of other entities, including commissions and boards (e.g., California Commission on Access to Justice, Legal Services Trust Fund Commission, and California Young Lawyers Association Board of Directors). The role of these various advisory committees has been to advise the Board on specific issues within their charge and recommend Board action as each entity determines appropriate. The ad hoc nature of the advisory committees and the lack of oversight over their work has sometimes resulted in a duplication of efforts, as well as work that is either not adopted or actively opposed when finally presented to the Board.

These advisory committees are key stakeholders of the State Bar. They are comprised of committed and interested bar members and others who seek to make a difference in the administration of justice. However, in designing and implementing the new governance structure it became clear that the Board needed a better way to oversee the work of these groups.

Therefore, the PPDB Committee put in place, and continues to refine, a process by which all State Bar advisory committees prepare annual work plans. This accomplishes two things: (1) alerts the Board to the kinds of issues and projects these advisory committees are proposing to undertake, and (2) ensures that the resources they are using are in alignment with and will help to accomplish the State Bar's Long-range Strategic Plan and priorities articulated by the Board.

The work plans are very specific and task-oriented. They identify activities for achieving the objectives of the Board's Long-range Strategic Plan. Each work plan covers a period of one year, but the advisory committees submit the plans one year in advance. For instance, the fiscal year 2009 Proposed Work Plan will be submitted by January 31, 2008, so that the Board can consider the advisory committee's recommendations and approve or redirect the use of its resources during the budget development process for fiscal year 2009. Once the Board has provided its direction, the advisory committees revise and complete their work plan during the applicable time frame and then prepare to report on accomplishments and recommend new work plans for the next planning cycle. The "Annual Planning Cycle," requires the advisory committees to develop 2 plans (i.e., implementing the current year plan while developing a plan for the following year as noted above).

Work Plans Types

In July 2004, the Board adopted an Advisory Committee Work Plan Review Process and Criteria, in which two work plan types were defined -- "Proposed" and "Adopted."

Proposed Work Plans are developed annually to assist the Board in developing a proposed budget for the following year. The PPDB, within its budgetary scope, reviews the work plans with regard to budgetary assumptions, proposed allocation schedules and related budget issues, and ensures that proposed budgets are fiscally in alignment with the Board's objectives, policies, and long-range strategic plan.

Adopted Work Plans are Proposed Work plans that were considered by the Board and either approved as submitted or revised with any Board directed changes to guide the activities of the various advisory committees and staff during the budget year for which they were developed. Staff distributes the coming fiscal year's work plans to the Board oversight committees prior to the start of the fiscal period.

Board Oversight Committees

The Board oversight committees (MOC, RAD, or SRC) are responsible for assessing the accomplishments of the State Bar advisory committees, tracking progress against the annual work plan, identifying areas for improvement, and recognizing/rewarding performance.

Each State Bar advisory committee must periodically report to the Board committee with oversight responsibility on its continuing work and must provide status reports on activities as requested by the Board oversight committee.

Current Year Work Plan Assessment Process

The Board oversight committees must conduct a current year assessment of the advisory committee work plans for presentation the following year. State Bar advisory committee staff liaisons are required to annually submit a brief written report summarizing their committee's annual accomplishments and activities by January 31. These summaries are distributed to the pertinent oversight committees.

Oversight committee members should review the current year work plans and year-end summaries. Please coordinate with the oversight committee liaisons regarding submission and/or presentation of the report to the oversight committee(s). Staff and advisory committee chairs will be available to answer questions regarding the work plans and the year-end summaries.

In conducting its assessment, the Board should consider the following:

1. What do we want to accomplish?

Evaluate program performance, track progress against the plan, identify improvements, and recognize/reward performance.

2. How will this be accomplished?

The manner in which the committee chooses to structure its assessment is entirely up to each committee (Method might be influenced by the committee's size and the number of work plans assigned to the committee). However, the oversight committee should consider the following when conducting its assessment:

- Has the advisory committee or staff provided the required information in a format that relates program activities to established measurable outcomes and performance measures?
- If insufficient information has been presented about performance measures, what additional information is needed and when can that information feasibly be provided?
- If sufficient information has been presented, what program accomplishments were achieved and what was not achieved and why?
- What changes, if any, should be made to the direction and desired outcomes related to the program?

Oversight Committee Assignments

Member Oversight Committee (“MOC”)

California Board of Legal Specialization
California Young Lawyers Association
Committee on Group Insurance Programs
Committee on Professional Liability Insurance
Lawyer Assistance Program Oversight Committee

Regulation, Admissions, and Discipline Committee (“RAD”)

Committee of Bar Examiners
Committee on Mandatory Fee Arbitration
Committee on Professional Responsibility and Conduct
Commission for Revision of Rules of Professional Conduct

Stakeholder Relations Committee (“SRC”)

California Commission on Access to Justice
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution
Committee on Appellate Courts
Committee on Federal Courts
Legal Services Trust Fund Commission
Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services