

MEETING NOTES
SURVEYING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS

January 10, 2024
9:30 a.m. – Noon

Online Via ZOOM

Discuss and Possibly Act on the Following Agenda Items:

- Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chairman Piper
- Roll Call
 - Stan Piper, RPLS, LSLS - SAC Chair
 - Manny Carrizales, RPLS - SAC Member
 - John Eby, RPLS – SAC Member
 - Vas Kalogirou, RPLS – SAC Member
 - Ronny Lackey, RPLS – SAC Member
 - David McDow, RPLS, LSLS - SAC Member
 - Dorothy Taylor, RPLS - SAC Member
 - Heather Welch-Westfall, RPLS - SAC Member

 - Coleen Johnson, RPLS – TPBELS Board Member Liaison
 - Mark Neugebauer, RPLS, LSLS – TBPELS Board Member Liaison
 - Davey Edwards, PhD, RPLS, LSLS – TBPELS Advisory Member

 - Lance Kinney, PhD, PE – TBPELS Executive Director
 - Ed Brannan, PE – TBPELS Licensing Technical Specialist
 - Michael Sims, PE – TBPELS Director of Compliance & Enforcement
 - Rick Strong, PE – TBPELS Director of Licensing and Registration
- TSSE Exam Report

Mr. Strong presented exam data from the October 2023 TSSE Exam. This information included breakdowns by applicant education and other factors. The SAC discussed the data and recommended additional analysis for future exams, including 1st time examinees indexed to education, comparisons of FS exam results to TSSE performance, and if possible, and age breakdown.

Mr. Strong also reported on post-exam customer service survey results that indicate examinees were happy with the performance of the staff and the exam location, etc. SAC members reported that

they had good feedback on the exam itself. Mr. Piper noted that a TSSE course offered by TSPS went well.

Mr. Strong also reported that the exam workgroups were preparing the next 3 exams to be delivered in 2024. They should have all 3 ready by early spring with the March TSSE ready in February. The new format and methodology will help in exam development and preparation to allow for exams to be set up well in advance instead of the more urgent processes used previously.

- 32 Hour Course Guideline Discussion

- Update on Draft Model and Education Programs

- Dr. Kinney reported that he had polled the surveying educational programs in Texas regarding the draft 32 hour model developed by the SAC. All respondents indicated that their current programs currently meet the draft model. The only program that had not responded was Lonestar and Dr. Kinney will follow up to get their response.

- Given this information it seems that moving to the proposed model would be feasible (and favorable) from an educational perspective.

- Update from White Paper Workgroup

- The workgroups are in progress and need more time to complete their work. To facilitate progress, the groups nominate a facilitator and staff liaison. For the White Paper Group, Heather Welch-Westfall will coordinate and Lance Kinney will be the staff liaison.

- Update from Definitions Workgroup

- For the definitions workgroup, Ronny Lackey will coordinate and Michael Sims will be the staff liaison.

- Continuing Education Hours – Ethics and Rules

- Dr. Kinney presented a question from TBPELS staff about the difference between RPLS and PE continuing education requirements (both total hours required and ethics hour per year). There was much discussion about what was needed within the profession, what seems to be lacking and therefore a focus of continuing education, the quality of CE programs in the marketplace, etc. One area of discussion is the difference between perception of ‘ethics hours’ and ‘ethics and laws and rules’ and how surveying has a major focus on laws and court cases in solving complex surveying issues. That is why additional hours focused on those topics are important.

Overall, the SAC members did not think any change to the RPLS CE requirements were needed at this time. However, a focus in the TBPEL outreach might help regarding continuing education standards as well as some additional outreach scenarios specifically for surveyors might help. Possibly a second surveyor specific ‘ethics / law / rules’ webinar could be helpful.

- **Contract Field Crews / Drafters and Direct Supervision / Plan Stamping**

This is a staff initiated topic based on complaints and questions received concerning companies that do surveying related work without an RPLS on staff or without being a registered surveying firm. Examples are contract field crews that do work on the ground with no RPLS but then provide their data and work product to an RPLS that reviews (to some extent) and then stamps the work. In these cases, who is 'offering' services, precisely what services are they offering, and how much review is needed / actually being performed by the RPLS. Are they meeting the standards for direct supervision when the sub-contractor isn't their employee?

The SAC members knew of examples and shared their input on the prevalence of this situation. Some noted that it is often on the residential side of the business. They recommended checking with other state boards to see how they address this issue or separate it out in their laws / rules / policies. Also to check NCEES model law and rules.

It was recommended to include this in outreach going forward.

SAC members agreed to keep this on the agenda and provide time at the next meeting to continue the conversation. No recommendations made at this time.

- **Other Items from Committee Members**

It was recommended to work on scheduling the next SAC meeting in-person at the TBPELS offices in Austin.

- **Adjourn**