



## BREAKING DOWN THE ROLE OF A REGULATOR

*What is the scope of a regulatory body like ARIDO?*

Regulatory bodies serve as the authority responsible for regulating a profession on behalf of the *public's best interest*. This means that rules are implemented to protect the public by ensuring that services offered (by the Interior Design profession, for example) are provided in a competent and ethical manner. A regulator's primary focus, therefore, is to ensure that any activity or function it carries out does not compromise or compete with the public's interest.

Examples of purely regulatory functions are:

- Define criteria for registration with the association in order to practice a defined scope of work or grant access to a restricted title;
- Set and enforce a prescribed Code of Ethics and Practice Standards;
- Investigate complaints about members and discipline members appropriately;
- Issue a licence to practice for qualified practitioners; and
- Manage the official register of qualified practitioners.

---

**Regulatory bodies serve as the authority responsible for regulating a profession on behalf of the public's best interest.**

---

*Can a regulator (ARIDO) carry out advocacy?*

Advocacy functions are an important responsibility of a regulator as they pertain to the public's best interest. Protecting the interests of the public usually involves a public awareness campaign and communication on how regulating the profession helps to protect public health, safety and welfare.

A public awareness campaign, in turn, enhances the profession and builds awareness around the expertise and competencies of the profession. It also plays an important role in educating the public as to which body they can turn to when issues arise with members of the regulated profession.

As a regulator, ARIDO also participates in the development of provincial public policy related to the interior design profession. Our lobbying of the provincial government to change Ontario building code to allow Interior Designers to obtain permits is one example of this type of advocacy.

### *What functions should a regulator avoid carrying out?*

Providing member services and carrying out advocacy on behalf of the members' best interest (vs. the public's best interest) are often carried out by an organization other than the regulator. If a regulator were to focus on these areas, it could be seen as a potential conflict of interest in decision-making. In particular, there could be concerns surrounding the regulator's ability to balance the best interests of the public over and above the interests of the membership.

Member services and advocacy on behalf of the profession, therefore, become the responsibility of a separate advocacy organization, such as Interior Designers of Canada (IDC).

These responsibilities include:

- Providing networking opportunities to help further the member's career or network;
- Publishing information of general interest to the membership such as networking events;
- Conducting research that demonstrates the value of interior designers to clients and the economy;
- Providing continuing education seminars and workshops;
- Maintaining job boards; and
- Negotiating rates for members for various products and services (national insurance provider and affinity programs, for example).