



# IRB NEWS

The goal of *IRB News* is to keep our partners, including counsel who appear before the Board, up-to-date on developments at the Board which have a national impact.

Over the last year, the IRB has communicated information about the Chairperson's Action Plan for the Refugee Protection Division through regional and national editions of *Lexchange*. With the introduction of *IRB News*, *Lexchange* returned to its focus on regional issues affecting Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary.

If you have any questions about *IRB News*, please contact the IRB Communications Directorate at (613) 947-2965.

## New Requirements for Counsel Appearing before the Board who Charge a Fee

The new *Regulations amending the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* are expected to come into force soon. These regulations will require that a person who, **for a fee**, represents, advises or consults with a person who appears before the IRB must be an "authorized representative."

An "authorized representative" is defined as a member in good standing of either a bar of a province, the Chambre des notaires du Québec or the newly created Canadian Society of Immigration Consultants (CSIC).

Once the regulations come into force, counsel will be expected to provide the IRB with the name of the organization of which he or she is a member in good standing and with their relevant membership identification number. This information will be required on a case-by-case basis until an automated system allowing the tracking of this information is in place. For details on how to provide this information to the IRB, please refer to the IRB practice notice

available on the Board's Web site.

If this information is not provided, the IRB will not consider the counsel to be an authorized representative, will not deal with the counsel on that case file and will treat the subject of the proceeding as unrepresented.

However, it should be noted that these regulations do not apply to family, friends and non-governmental organizations that do not charge a fee for their services. They can continue to represent persons before the IRB without having to be an authorized representative.

For more information about the new regulations, visit the CIC Web site.

## **New Opportunity for Counsel to exchange information electronically with the IRB**

The IRB is in the process of modernizing its case management system in order to improve the efficiency of its three tribunals (the Refugee Protection Division, the Immigration Appeal Division and the Immigration Division). Implementation of this new system will be introduced in incremental steps starting in June 2004.

Most changes are internal and do not affect counsel. However, next winter (2004-2005), the IRB will offer counsel the opportunity to file a refugee protection claimant's Personal Information Form (PIF) electronically. More details on this phase of our project will be provided in early autumn and online training will be available for those interested.

### **New Domain Name**

On April 1, 2004, the IRB's domain name changed from IRB to IRB-CISR. Accordingly, our website's coordinates changed from [www.irb.gc.ca](http://www.irb.gc.ca) to [www.irb-cisr.gc.ca](http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca).

We encourage you to update your links and bookmarks to our website to reflect this change.

As you may know, a survey was conducted in November 2003 to find out who would be interested in and equipped for electronic exchange of information with the IRB (forms, documents, schedule information). The response was positive and showed counsel is equipped to handle this technological change.

Electronic exchange of information will be implemented gradually, starting with the e-PIF, and will remain optional. The IRB new case management system has been designed for maximum convenience and in the long term, it should improve not only the efficiency of our processes, but also the ability of counsel to communicate with the IRB.

Although e-mail addresses will change for each employee, this will not affect delivery. Messages using the former e-mail addressed to IRB employees will continue to be delivered to their mailboxes.