

## Newsletter

### 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Alternate Dispute Resolution at the Board!



It is hard to believe it has been 20 years since the Board commenced alternate dispute resolution as part of its appeal processes. In 1998, we not only changed our name to the Property Assessment Appeal Board but we also changed the way we resolved appeals. As a result of serious concerns regarding a large backlog of appeals and increasing costs, it became clear at that time that doing business based on the old adversarial model was not working.

In 1998, the Board adopted new Rules of Practice & Procedure to incorporate active appeal management, dispute resolution, and settlement conferencing. Over the years, we have seen more collaboration between the parties in working through problematic assessment issues.

This dramatic change quickly resulted in benefits for all parties. We dropped from 180 days of in-person hearings in 1998 to a mere 14 in 2017. During 2017, we resolved 94% of appeals.

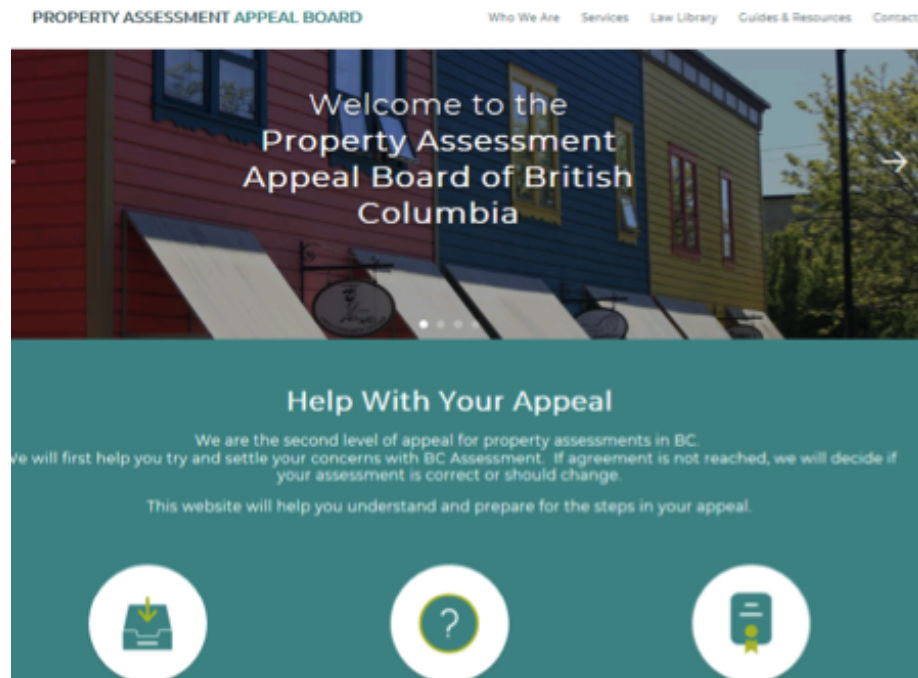
We have been able to do this in large part due to the efforts of our stakeholders, parties, tax agents, and counsel. I want to express the Board's appreciation to the assessment community for this achievement and their efforts.

# Continued Innovations at the Board

As part of its history of continuous improvement at the Board, we are excited to tell you about new and improved innovations at the Board:

## New Website!

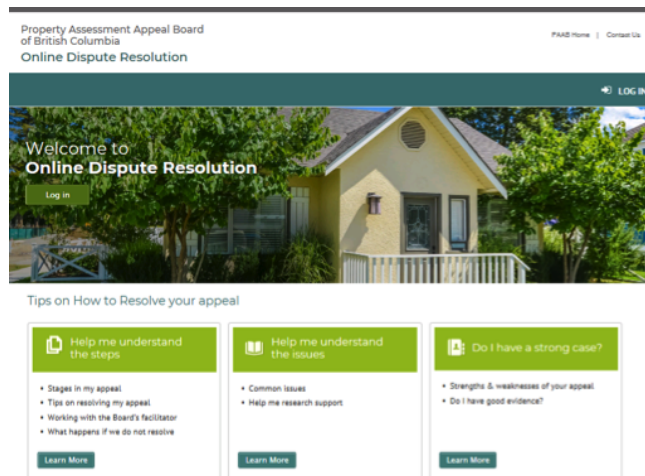
Welcome to our [New Website](#), launched on May 31, 2018:



Key website features:

- More user friendly navigation
- Access to advanced online tools
- A searchable decision database to help you find Board decisions
- A searchable appeal database to inform you on the status of appeals
- A Law Library for research and information gathering
- Guides to help you through our appeal process and case preparation

## New Platform for Online Dispute Resolution:



The Board was the first administrative tribunal in British Columbia to adopt Online Dispute Resolution (ODR). We piloted ODR in 2012 with residential and commercial appeals and it became a regular service option for residential homeowners from 2013 – 2016. In 2018, we partnered with the Justice Education Society of BC to launch a new and improved ODR package.

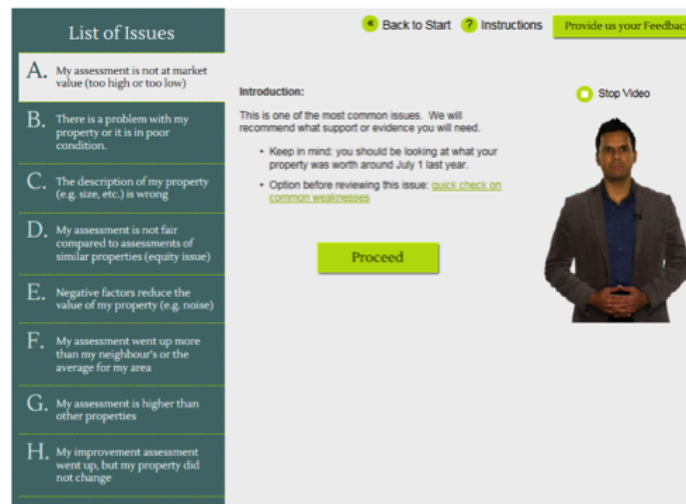
ODR involves a two-way discussion escalating to a three-way mediated online discussion. Interactive online evaluation tools assist users in evaluating the strength of their case and promotes higher resolution. We resolved 71% of appeals by agreement using ODR (compared with 64% using traditional telephone mediation).

## Increased use of E-filing of Appeals:

The Board was an early adopter of filing appeals online since 2003. Tax agents have the option to bulk file 100's of appeals in one electronic document. Individuals can e-file their appeals via our website with an e-payment option.

We have seen a steady increase in e-filing compared to traditional filing by mail, courier or fax. In 2018, the vast majority (91%) of appeals were filed electronically.

## Interactive site helps Self-Represented homeowners:



The Board has continued to improve its “Solution Explorer” web-service for homeowners. This site actually allows users to evaluate the strength of their case - our leading edge technology has been emulated in the U.S.

- How strong are my arguments?
- Is it worthwhile filing an appeal?
- How can I improve my evidence?

To improve accessibility, the Board is now looking at having this web-service available in different languages in the near future.

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## Conclusion:

The Board will continue to make improvements and innovations to its processes. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Contact us at [office@paab.bc.ca](mailto:office@paab.bc.ca).

Simmi K. Sandhu, Chair