

## **Federally Registered Marks**

AIC is considering registered marks for its Professional Associate and Fellow members and a provision for this is included in the proposed revisions to the AIC Bylaws.

Prior to implementation, the design of the marks would be approved by the AIC Board and a use policy for the registered marks would be created and approved. Also developed would be a license agreement that holders of the mark would be required to sign. Registered marks will allow AIC to better market our designated members, and it will enhance enforcement of use of the marks throughout the United States.

AIC legal counsel will research AIC proposed marks to ensure that they are unique, prepare the application, file it, and manage any review questions or comments prior to approval. Legal counsel will also provide templates and advice on a use policy and license agreement. The process from application to approval could easily take a year.

However, it is possible to use the logo and mark with the trademark symbol (™) prior to the approval of the registered mark. The trademark symbol would notify people that AIC is claiming rights in the mark, though common law would not give AIC the rights and benefits of federal registration.

The advantages of a federal registration include:

- Public notice of our claim of ownership of the mark;
- A legal presumption of our ownership of the mark and our exclusive right to use the mark nationwide on or in connection with the services listed in the registration;
- The ability to bring an action concerning the mark in federal court;
- The use of the U.S. registration as a basis to obtain registration in foreign countries;
- The right to use the federal registration symbol ®; and
- Listing in the United States Patent and Trademark Office's online databases.