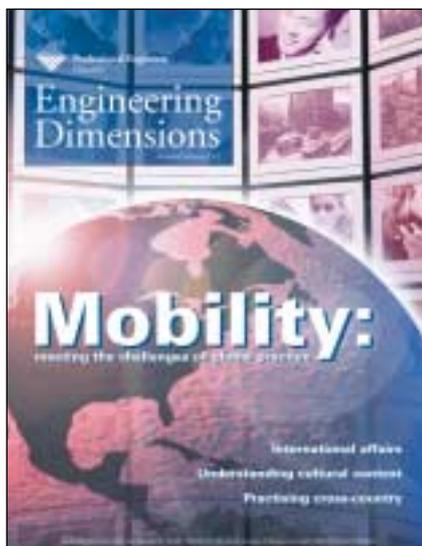


Change but consider issues

After reading "Stakeholders discuss recognition of applied degree graduates" and "Recognition of C.E.T.s get the go ahead" in the November/December

2002 issue, I started to ponder what all of the issues related to applied degrees and L.E.T.s mean to the engineering profession as a whole. Let me go on record first to state that the engineering profession must change with the times to



remain relevant. If we don't change and become adaptive, then the profession will become obsolete. However, that being said, I would like to make some comments about the issues:

- ◆ Public confusion as to qualifications and competence: It's been my personal experience that when I am tended to by a physician or have my taxes completed by a CMA or CA, I am reasonably confident that these individuals have met some minimum standards as set out by their respective regulatory bodies.
- ◆ Corporate confusion as to who they are hiring: Human resources personnel do not necessarily have the tools to distinguish between the emerging degrees

and the existing programs. As a potential example of confusion—a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Chemical Engineering versus a Bachelor of Applied Science or Engineering in Chemical Engineering. What's the difference, right? Wrong.

- ◆ Creation of a regulatory "nightmare" that neither PEO nor OSPE nor OACETT are prepared to handle.
- ◆ Creating "back doors" into a profession, where none should exist.
- ◆ The gradual erosion of the value of a university undergraduate degree in engineering, which, by the way, has probably already begun. By essentially diluting the marketplace with applied degrees, supply and demand means the engineering degree is devalued.
- ◆ Creating a sense of "false knowledge" among graduates of applied degree programs. I have known technology diploma graduates who felt that their qualifications were at least equivalent or better than that of a university graduated engineer and they were not afraid to make this statement. This type of thinking, at least in my mind, is dangerous. By no means am I saying that the pursuit of knowledge is restricted to universities, just that the type of knowledge and breadth of that knowledge is different, and is designed as such.

As a recently minted P.Eng., I take some sense of pride and accomplishment in the road that it takes to get here. For me I suppose it was longer than most. After a B.Sc. (Hons) in chemistry, a B.Eng. degree in chemical engineering, and three years of qualifying experience, I obtained my licence. I am currently working towards an M.Eng. degree in advanced design and manufacturing on a part time basis.

Given all the issues about applied degrees and L.E.T.s creating, at least in my perspective, "easier" ways to get to the finish line (there actually is no finish line, but just to make a point), I sometimes wonder why I bother. But upon reflection, here are the reasons in a rather large nutshell: a sense of commitment and respect for the engineering profession and what

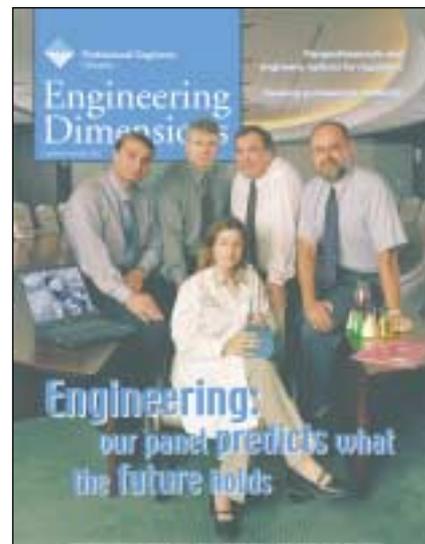
has been accomplished in the last 150 years, and, more importantly, what still needs to be done; a belief in a code of ethics, which ensures that the public can have confidence in the decisions that I make, and that these decisions are in their best interest; and a belief that the very nature of a profession implies a certain knowledge level. This, in my mind, is a university degree in engineering, plus relevant experience. Admittedly, I am passionate about engineering and what it takes to become a competent engineer. Nothing less will do.

*Bradley Campbell, B.Sc., B.Eng., P.Eng.
Waterdown, ON*

Snail mail

In the article "PEO signals end to automatic reinstatement" (September/October 2002, p. 15), I read that as was reported in the June/July issue of *The Link*, engineers whose annual fees are not paid in full by the due date will face the full reinstatement process. I feel that such a move is indeed harsh on engineers who reside outside of the province or country and do not receive mail promptly from PEO.

I live in Trinidad, West Indies, and received the September/October issue of *Engineering Dimensions* on December 3, 2002. I did not receive the June/July issue of *The Link*. My renewal fees are usually invoiced in November. To date I have not yet received the invoice for fees



renewal. I have complained in the past of the slow mailing process.

Please take another look at the routing of mail for us in the Caribbean and implement any change which would result in more prompt delivery.

*Kenneth Razac, P.Eng.
Trinidad, West Indies*

Losing ground and respect

Dave Tipler's letter in the November/December 2002 issue struck a reality chord with me. I have been a member of PEO since about 1980. In my opinion, over the last several years, PEO has become irrelevant when it stopped providing me with helpful information. Instead PEO has become the harbinger of fear for our profession.

I agree with Mr. Tipler—I did not become a professional engineer to act as a police person. Over the years the focus of PEO changed in an attempt to “upgrade the organization.” Somehow

the desire to make PEO appear more professional became the driving force for the organization. I think we've lost our way and suggest that Council go back and review why PEO was started in the first place.

I may be a dinosaur because I also do not agree with the creation of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. In my opinion and experience, engineers mostly deal with non-regulatory issues and it was dumb for PEO to give these up.

*Stan Kieller, P.Eng.
Mississauga, ON*

No problem with registers

A least two past Presidents of PEO have tried unsuccessfully to introduce specialty listings of members. However, a recent article in *Engineering Dimensions* (November/December 2002 issue entitled “International Affairs”) places the problem not with any inherent complexity of our diverse profession, but a

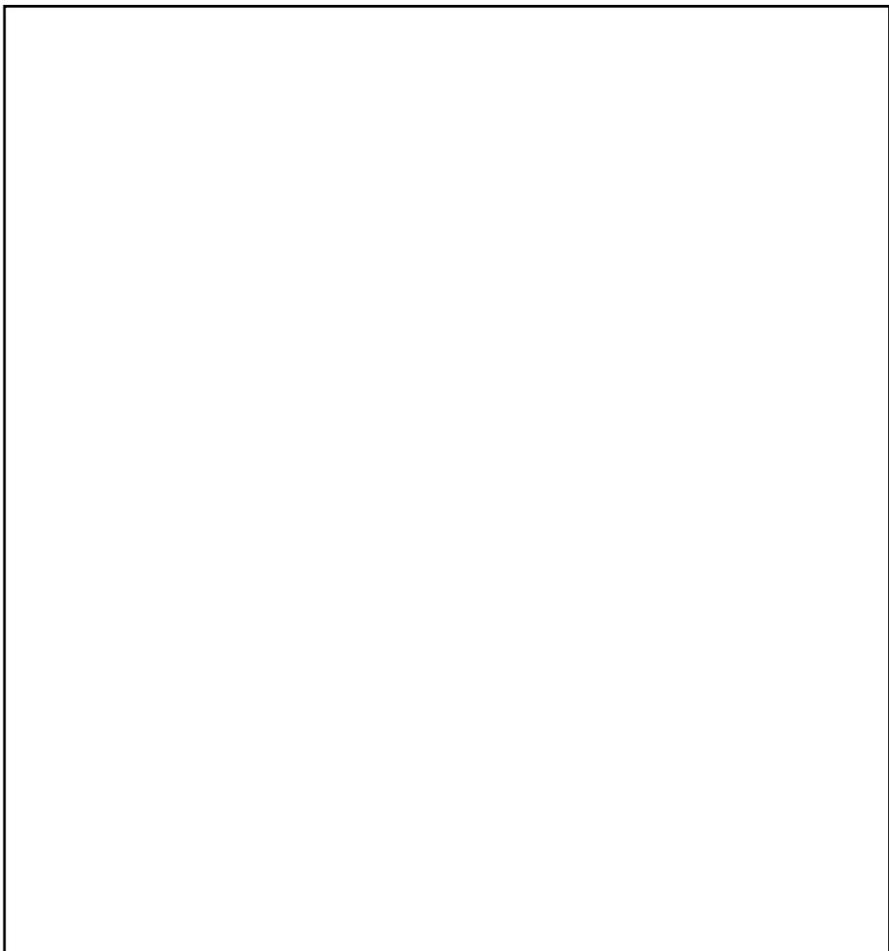
phobia by some that members might gain recognition from inclusion therein.

That experienced engineers who have worked on international projects, might see inclusion in a provincial listing as a ladder to higher honours is subliminal at best. A mirror does not enhance the object it reflects, but rather allows us see ourselves as others see us. In fact, having no list to reflect our achievements may be why we have become an invisible profession.

One is reminded of a recent piece of “political correctness” out of Alberta, that Christian Charity should not assist third-world nations because the recipients might somehow feel belittled. Perhaps therein lies a reason why Ontario defies current international agreements (APEC and other treaties have provisions for listing of professionals, which have been supplied by other provincial licensing boards, but not Ontario engineers). Some non-engineers, or even members of Council, may fear that if governments knew who to approach, they might no longer need those consultants it currently uses.

The wording of my Ontario engineer's licence states that I am entitled to “practise as a Professional Engineer,” but there are those who try to separate my right to title from this right of practice. Advocacy may have been transferred to “the Society” but PEO is still required by the Act to “promote public awareness of the role of the Association,” and what better way than by identifying those engineers it has deemed worthy to receive a provincial license to practice.

*Peter Broad, P.Eng.
Chair, Porcupine Kapuskasing Chapter*



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