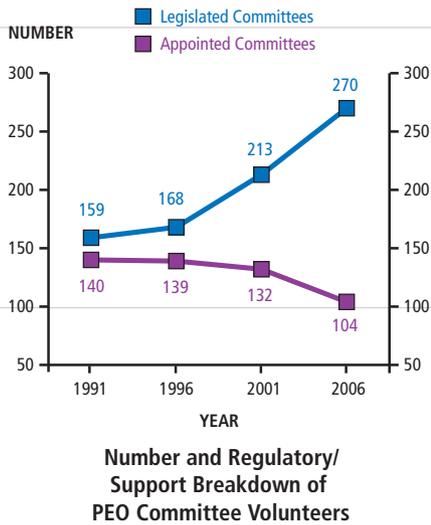


Volunteering with PEO:



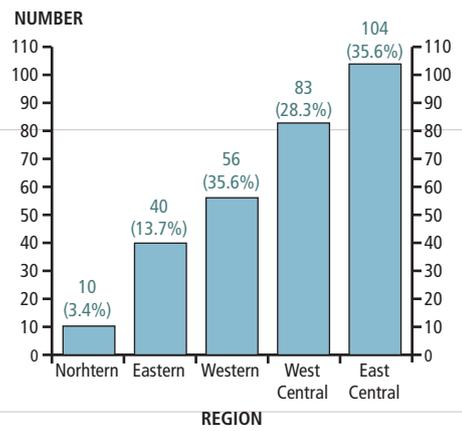
An organization's fulfillment of its objectives is significantly influenced by how it activates and uses its human resources. In PEO's case, human resources comprise many more people than just the paid staff. The regulator relies a great deal on the valuable contributions of close to 700 volunteers who put their expertise to work on PEO's Council, committees, task forces, and at the chapter level.

Throughout its history, PEO has relied heavily on the participation and contribution of volunteers to aid in administering the *Professional Engineers Act* and to help govern and manage the regulator's programs throughout the province.

Volunteers have two ways to get involved in the official work of PEO: as members of the executive boards of the 38 local, community-based "chapter" organizations distributed throughout the province, and/or as members of the governance committees operating out of PEO's central offices in Toronto.

In 2006, approximately 400 people will volunteer with chapter executives, while another 293 will participate as members of the central committees. Current statistics indicate that 70 (or 24 per cent) of central committee members started their volunteering at the chapter level, and a small number continue to help out locally. It is hoped that chapters will be a growing source of volunteers for central committees as PEO enhances both leadership training and regulatory knowledge for members and EITs at the regional level.

One notable example of this commitment is PEO Council's recent decision to include chapters in the association's Government Liaison Program (GLP). This will involve coordinating the involvement of the 75 volunteer government spokespersons recruited in 2005, and increasing this number over the next few years to a goal of involving some 309 spokespersons (one spokesperson for each provincial party in each riding).



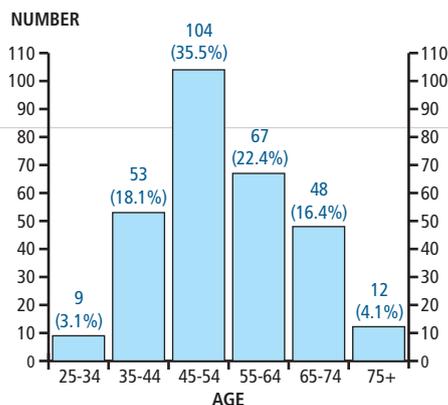
Who volunteers?

To the extent that there is a typical PEO committee volunteer, that volunteer is male, between 35 and 54 years old, lives in the greater Toronto area, participates on a standing committee prescribed under the *Professional Engineers Act*, and has been a member of that committee for three or fewer years. PEO has 26 formal standing committees involving 293 individual volunteers holding 374 committee positions. Each committee is aligned by both function (operational, advisory, fiduciary, governance or special) and by reporting authority (Council, Executive Committee, or CEO/Registrar). A quick snapshot of the 2006-2007 membership of these standing committees reveals that:

The trends

By TOM CHESSELL

MANAGER, VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT



Age Distribution of PEO Committee Volunteers

- More men than women volunteer (men make up 89 per cent of all volunteers);
- About one-half (54 per cent) of all volunteers are between the ages of 35 and 54. Another 20 per cent are 65 or over, although only half of this age group have officially retired from the practice of professional engineering;
- The majority (64 per cent), live and work in the greater Toronto area (East Central and West Central regions), making it relatively convenient for them to travel to PEO's offices to attend to their committee duties. On the other hand, committee volunteers residing outside Toronto face lengthy travel schedules and many are forced to make special arrangements with their workplaces, often using personal vacation time to attend meetings;

- Nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) of volunteers are directly involved in the core regulatory business through committees prescribed in the Act or Regulation 941/90. These members make decisions on the academic qualifications and experience for licensure of applicants for licensing; they assess the sufficiency of evidence in complaints against licence holders and adjudicate through discipline hearings, and they review the qualifications of engineers and businesses and recommend legal designations. Due to the nature of the legislative recommendations and decisions made by committee volunteers, it is critical that specific professional practice backgrounds and experience be reflected in the make-up of the volunteers sitting on committees;
- Coincident with the steady increase in the numbers of volunteers involved in legislated matters, has been a decrease (20 per cent over the past five years) in the number of volunteers participating in the supporting group of committees that advise on operational, regulatory, policy, or other special matters of PEO; and
- The same volunteer has occupied the majority (75 per cent) of the current 374 committee volunteer positions for six or fewer years, 50 per cent of them for three or fewer years.

Time commitment

These statistics provide only a small window into what's involved in volunteering for a PEO standing committee. However, they can be interpreted as a barometer of PEO's overall volunteer participation, and point to areas where we need more indepth study. For example, we need to know what motivates those who volunteer and what restricts others from participating. And we may need to adjust, or add new technologies and resources to how our committees conduct their business to help accommodate current and potential volunteers.

One thing is for sure: Time is a precious commodity for volunteers. Lack of time is cited most frequently by current and prospective volunteers as the reason for not volunteering more. Many also state that they cannot make a long-term commitment to serve. A year-long volunteer term is just out of the question for many potential volunteers. Shorter-term "episodic" opportunities that are well managed and set up with clearly stated goals are more likely to generate a positive response. A number of PEO committees, like the Professional Standards Committee (PSC), for example, have responded to this need by establishing small working groups that function under the direction of the main committee, but have a shorter (four- to six-month) working life.

The most recent national study of Canadian volunteerism, the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP), undertaken as part of the federal government's Voluntary Sector Initiative, revealed that the number of volunteers declined by close to one million from 1997 to 2000; the average overall commitment from the 6.5 million volunteers averaged 162 hours a year, with 73 per cent of the total volunteer hours coming from just 25 per cent of volunteers. ♦