

COUNCIL ESTABLISHES COMMITTEE TO FOCUS EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENT LIAISON PROGRAM

459th MEETING, NOVEMBER 19, 20, 2009

By Jennifer Coombes

COUNCIL HAS APPROVED in principle the concept of establishing a standing committee to coordinate PEO's Government Liaison Program (GLP) efforts and to develop and execute new strategic initiatives for the program. It has directed the CEO/registrar to investigate the requirements to establish such a committee.

The GLP is the outcome of a pilot program launched in 2005 to create a grassroots government relations movement to achieve a better understanding and broader acceptance by government of the *Professional Engineers Act*, the role and jurisdiction of PEO, and PEO's policy direction.

To date, the GLP has resulted in local subcommittees that are active in most PEO chapters, a program reference manual, campaign and candidate colleges, and the annual Engineers for Ontario Day, a reception for MPs and MPPs at Queen's Park. However, there is an identified opportunity among the chapter GLP subcommittees to have them work more effectively with common goals and consistent activities directed by a dedicated central committee.

It is council's view that the program has outgrown its original concept and having central oversight of the GLP could result in a more focused campaign.

The CEO/registrar is scheduled to report on the ways and means of establishing a standing committee at the February 2010 council meeting.

TOWER CRANE STANDARD

The Professional Standards Committee (PSC) has been instructed by council to proceed with development of a new professional standard and guideline with respect to tower cranes, which is needed due to concern about tower crane safety. The Ministry of Labour and the construction industry depend on professional engineers to carry out consistent and rigorous reviews of tower cranes before they are used.

The guideline and standard, which will be coordinated with changes being made in the regulations under Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety*



James Lee, PhD, P.Eng., receives a certificate from President Catherine Karakatsanis, P.Eng. (left), and President-elect Diane Freeman, P.Eng., making him a fellow of Engineers Canada (FEC). Lee was one of several who received their FEC designations at the November council meeting.

Act, will prescribe the responsibilities of professional engineers carrying out the review of tower cranes. The committee will also prepare an accompanying guideline that provides recommended best practices for complying with the professional standard.

TECHNOLOGIST TASK FORCE

Council has created a Professional Technologist Task Force (PTTF) in light of recent changes to Alberta's *Engineering, Geology and Geophysical Professions Act* that have given self-regulation status to the Association of Science and Engineering Technologists of Alberta (ASET) and added a professional technologist (P.Tech.) designation for engineering technicians and technologists (see p. 16).

The task force, proposed by Councillor Corneliu Chisu, P.Eng., will review and assess Alberta's new P.Tech. designation, which allows qualified engineering technologists to practise engineering, geology or geophysics independently without supervision by a professional engineer, within a scope of practice and standards jointly administered by a board of APEGGA and ASET, and recommend a policy direction to council. The PTTF will also review PEO's previous policy positions on engineering technicians and technologists and the implications Alberta's model may have for PEO.

The task force, which will comprise Councillor Chisu as chair and councillors Jim Witmer, C.E.T., Phil Maka, P.Eng., and Martha Stauch, as members, has been given a budget of \$1,500 and will report back to council at its April 2010 meeting.

[IN COUNCIL]

OCEPP STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

At the September meeting, council voted to establish the Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy (OCEPP) on a continuing basis. OCEPP, created by council in 2008, is intended to “help the engineering profession provide input into the creation and review of public policy in Ontario and, in turn, protect the public interest.”

Council also requested that provision for the centre’s financial support be made in the 2010 budget, that the president and CEO/registrars act as council’s representatives on the centre’s advisory board, and that council make an additional special allocation in 2010 to seed a fundraising program intended to help OCEPP become self-sustaining.

In late October, the Finance Committee reviewed the OCEPP business plan and budget and recommended that \$500,000 from PEO council’s special projects fund be used to support the centre, and that a task force be struck to make recommendations for the structure of and PEO’s ongoing funding commitments for the centre.

Council voted to create the Sustaining the Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy Task Force and has appointed councillors Rick Hilton, P.Eng., Rakesh Shreewastav, P.Eng., Allen Jones, P.Eng., Bruce Clarida, P.Eng., and Ishwar Bhatia, P.Eng., to the task force, with another licence holder, who will be chosen at a later date by the Executive Committee.

OCEPP will continue operations at the current funding level while the task force studies the options and develops its recommendations.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK TASK FORCE

In September, council approved creation of an eight-person PEO National Framework Task Force with a mandate to:

- explore the potential value to the public and profession of a national framework;
- participate in the development of PEO’s position on a national framework; and
- support the participation of the CEO/registrars or designate and two PEO National Framework Task Force members on a Canadian National Framework Task Force.

At the November meeting, council decided the PEO National Framework Task Force would comprise:

- President-elect Diane Freeman, P.Eng., as the Executive Committee representative;

- the following members as their committee’s representatives:
 - Ross Judd, P.Eng. (Academic Requirements Committee),
 - Santosh Gupta, P.Eng. (Experience Requirements Committee),
 - Kathryn Sutherland, P.Eng. (Registration Committee), and
 - Tony Cecutti, P.Eng. (Complaints Committee);
 - Kim Allen, P.Eng., PEO CEO/registrars; and
 - two additional members to be appointed by the Executive Committee
- Freeman and Sutherland were appointed to act as PEO’s representatives on the Engineers Canada National Framework Task Force.

OBC POSITION STATEMENT

At the November meeting, council approved a completed PEO position statement that clarifies PEO’s position on professional engineering related to the Ontario Building Code (OBC), including the situation regarding building code identification numbers (BCINs).

The position statement, which has received extensive review by stakeholders, including the Ontario Building Officials Association, Large Municipalities Chief Building Officials, the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA), the Joint PEO-OAA Committee, the ministry of housing, PEO’s Professional Standards Committee, and building design specialist (BDS) designation holders.

The position statement *Clarification of the Practice of Professional Engineering Related to the Ontario Building Code* is available at www.peo.on.ca under Publications, then Position Statements.

PROVINCE-WIDE MENTORING

At the September 2008 meeting, council authorized formation of the Mentorship Task Force (MTF) to evaluate the concept of a PEO-hosted, province-wide mentoring program. Council received the task force’s final report for review at the September 2009 meeting.

At the November meeting, council approved the task force’s recommended implementation plan, a three-phase, year-to-year rollout over three years that involves attracting and matching mentors and mentees at the chapter level, and training, supporting and monitoring the mentors.

In the first phase, the program will be executed in five chapters in the East Central and West Central regions. In the second phase, the program will be expanded to all chapters. At that point, the first two phases will be reviewed to determine the level of participation for the third phase and a recommendation will be made to council for funding that phase.

Council approved spending \$75,000 to fund the program’s first 12 months of operation.

BUDGETS APPROVED

Council approved PEO’s 2010 operating and capital budgets, as recommended by the Finance Committee at the November meeting.

The operating budget is balanced with total expected revenues of \$20.5 million and expenditures of \$18.39 million. With a provision of \$600,000 for council special projects and \$1.27 million for the building reserve, the expected excess of revenue for 2010 is \$241,000.

Of the council special projects fund of \$600,000, \$500,000 will be used to fund OCEPP in 2010.

Capital investments for 2010 have been reduced to \$164,000, compared to the 2009 capital budget of \$327,500. Σ