

# Advocacy goal in sight

Council approves draft plan

by Joyce Rowlands, Senior Project Manager

The Joint Advocacy Implementation Committee (JAIC) isn't holding its collective breath. But there's reason to think it may be nearing the end of its task. This optimism stems from Council's recent approval in principle of a draft plan for creation of a renewed member-interest professional society.



JAIC chair Bob Goodings, P.Eng.

Now, the JAIC has been asked to flesh-out the plan and create a document that will form the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Society for Professional Engineers (CSPE). This next step means working closely with CSPE representatives on the joint committee to devise a governance structure for the new body—one that provides broad representation for professional engineers across the province. Once the plan is final, a referendum will be held, possibly in the late fall.

## Preferred option

PEO members who've been following the progress of this initiative will recall that three options for the new (or renewed) advocacy body were presented to Council in May (see the June/July 1999 issue of *The Link*, p. 7). At that time, Council expressed a preference for the "automatic membership" option, which called for "grandparenting" all PEO members into the member-interest society. However, concerns voiced by some Councillors and other observers following the workshop prompted a rethinking on that question. "Some saw automatic membership as being the same as mandatory membership, and felt it was unacceptable," said Bob Goodings, chair of the joint committee.

This sent the committee back to the drawing board to find a modified approach that retained the best features of the various options—in particular, universal franchise for professional engineers, combined with voluntary membership. The result is the model outlined below.

*The committee invites members' comments on the draft plan to the attention of: R.A. Goodings, P.Eng., chair, Joint Advocacy Implementation Committee, c/o PEO, 25 Sheppard Ave. West, Suite 1000, Toronto, ON M2N 6S9; fax: (416) 224-8168, (800) 268-0496; email: advocacy@peo.on.ca.*

## Draft plan (overview)

The proposed name for the member-interest professional society is the Ontario Society for Professional Engineers (OSPE).

- ☛ Full membership in OSPE would be voluntary and require payment of a membership fee.
- ☛ All PEO members would be eligible to vote in elections for OSPE's governing body; however, only fee-paying OSPE members would be eligible to hold office in OSPE or to participate fully in OSPE's governance structures.
- ☛ PEO members who are not full OSPE members would be considered "sustaining" members of OSPE.
- ☛ Initially, for some interim period (possibly three to five years), an OSPE staff group would report to a Joint Management Board of PEO/OSPE.
- ☛ The mandate of OSPE would be to serve the interests of all professional engineers in Ontario, and to uphold the public interest.

## Details

1. OSPE would be established under its own charter according to its own bylaws and desired governance structure—one that provides representation for professional engineers throughout the province.
2. PEO would proactively support OSPE member recruitment with a high-profile marketing plan, including OSPE

check-off on PEO's membership renewal form (so-called "negative option" billing is not contemplated).

3. An OSPE staff group would be established adjacent to PEO as an interim step.
4. A PEO/OSPE Management Board would be established to ensure funds are allocated to OSPE in a prudent manner.
5. PEO would provide support services to OSPE for an interim period.
6. OSPE would have its own identity (name, logo, letterhead, telephone and fax numbers, website, etc., and its own publication).
7. In addition to member services, OSPE would focus on advocacy initiatives, i.e. activities that advance the position of engineers on issues of strategic importance to the profession. PEO would respect the independence of the member-interest body.
8. PEO and OSPE would provide joint funding to OSPE from OSPE fees and PEO transfer payments during the interim period.
9. Annual operating estimates (revenues and expenditures) are projected to be approximately \$2.5 million.

## Priority issues

One of OSPE's first undertakings would be to commission a comprehensive membership survey by a professional opinion research firm, to determine what issues professional engineers in Ontario see as priority concerns for the profession and to identify the kinds of services they want their advocacy body to provide.

Members of the Joint Advocacy Implementation Committee include: Robert Goodings, P.Eng., (chair); Stewart Crampton, P.Eng., (co-chair); Tony Bonney, P.Eng.; Richard Braddock, P.Eng.; Ben Burke, P.Eng.; Jeremy Cook, P.Eng.; Alberto De-Santis, P.Eng.; Shaul Ezer, P.Eng.; Roydon Fraser, P.Eng.; Max Perera, P.Eng.; John Powell, P.Eng.; and Gordon Sterling, P.Eng.