

## Divisional court reserves judgment on OBC challenge

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

The Ontario housing ministry's efforts to impose additional qualifications on professional engineers engaged in the building design, general review and permit application process is an unauthorized encroachment upon the exclusive right of engineers to self-regulation under the *Professional Engineers Act* (PEA).

This was the central argument in PEO's legal challenge of amendments to the *Ontario Building Code*, which became effective on January 1, 2006. Enabled by Bill 124/02, the *Ontario Building Code Statute Law Amendment Act*, the amendments have long been a source of disquiet for the engineering community in Ontario.

Represented by lawyers Richard Steinecke and Lisa Braverman of the firm Steinecke Maciura LeBlanc, PEO fully outlined its case on October 26 and 27 before Justices Dennis Lane, Sandra Chapnik and Patrick Smith of the Ontario Divisional Court.

Lawyer David Moore, of the firm Bellmore & Moore, argued against the housing ministry position as a court-sanctioned intervenor on behalf of the Ontario Association of Architects.

The housing ministry was represented at the hearing by Ministry of the Attorney General lawyers Dennis W. Brown, QC, and Sandra Di Ciano.

The two-day hearing was the culmination of almost five years of dispute between PEO and the housing ministry over the jurisdictional boundaries between the PEA and recent regulations enacted under the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992*.

In defending PEO's claim to exclusive authority to regulate the practice of engineering, Richard Steinecke argued that prior to the introduction of the building code amendments, the boundaries between the PEA and other statutes relating to the practice of professional engineering were not in doubt.

Steinecke said that the need for professional engineers to prove building code fluency under a ministry-mandated exam-

ination regime was part of a "competing licensing regime" for engineers in the building sector. He argued that the building code amendments should be declared *ultra vires* on three main points—they encroach on the exclusive regulatory jurisdiction of PEO, they are not authorized under the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992*, and they are, in effect, an example of "unauthorized subdelegation."

Arguing the Ontario Architects Association position on the matter, David Moore suggested that building code regulations superseding elements of the PEA and the Ontario Architects Act (OAA) are akin to "regulations wagging the statute." Moore said the housing ministry's action has upset the "fine calibration" of professional regulation and responsibility, and that building code regulations "insofar as they purport to apply to engineers and architects regulated under their parallel governing statutes, have not been validly enacted."

In defending the building code reforms, Dennis Brown outlined the development of the *Ontario Building Code* as a fluid document that is continually being updated to reflect an expectation that practitioners upgrade their skills and qualifications. Brown and his colleague Sandra Di Ciano also argued that as a creation of the Ontario Legislature, the building code act gives the ministry full authority to impose new regulations overseeing the qualifications of practitioners involved in building design and construction.

Brown said the public safety intent of the code and disputed regulations justify the need for ongoing demonstration of professional competence among practitioners, and that engineers have "no corner" on public safety by virtue of their holding a P.Eng. designation. He also denied claims that the regulations requiring building code examinations on professional engineers establish a competing regulatory regime for PEO licence holders.

"The respondents deny that there is any inconsistency between the regulatory requirements under the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992* and the professional obligations set out under the PEA and OAA," Brown said. "If a conflict existed, which is denied, it would invalidate the relevant provisions of the PEA and OAA, rather than rendering the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992* amendments invalid."

Di Ciano went one further by suggesting that professional engineers do not practise "in splendid isolation" but should be cognizant of the legislature's authority to regulate professional conduct on an increasing number of levels. Di Ciano said it was no accident that professional engineers were not exempted from the building code qualification system when the regulations were first drafted.

PEO applied to Ontario Divisional Court in March to clarify the application of the amendments, which purport to require licensed professional engineers to qualify and register under a housing ministry certification scheme to engage in building-related design and general review of construction activities.

PEO has long argued the building code amendments duplicate, contradict and otherwise interfere with its statutory role to license, discipline and regulate its members and are not authorized by the *Ontario Building Code Act, 1992*. Public safety and improved administrative efficiency in the issuing of building permits in Ontario have been cited by the housing ministry as the chief benefits of the amendments.

In addition to PEO and housing ministry officials, the Osgoode Hall courtroom was crowded with representatives of Ontario's consulting engineering firms, many of whom have a stake in the outcome of the hearing.

Justices Lane, Chapnik and Smith reserved judgment on the hearing, and a final decision on the matter is expected soon.

# Engineering salaries hold the course in 2006

By ELEANA RODRIGUEZ

Results of the 2006 Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) employer compensation survey show median base pay salary growth for most engineers has outpaced the increase in Ontario's Consumer Price Index (CPI). Surprisingly though, the increases are not being shared with recent entrants to the profession.

This is one of several findings in a recent survey jointly conducted by OSPE and Mercer Human Resource Consulting. Compensation data for nearly 15,000 engineers across six engineering responsibility levels and 14 job types were collected from 178 organizations in the private and public sectors. The 2006 survey reflects data for engineers working in organizations of all sizes, across a broad array of industries in 17 metropolitan areas in Ontario.

## Emergence of a compensation increase gap

In general, pay increases remained relatively stable in 2006. Noteworthy, however, is emergence of a gap between senior engineers and their more junior counterparts.

The majority of the incumbents in the sample (76 per cent) are considered to be fully qualified professional engineers. For them, median base salary growth outpaced the increase in Ontario's Consumer Price Index (CPI) again this year. From 2005 to 2006, the CPI for Ontario increased 2.4 per cent, while median base salaries for levels C, D, E, and F increased 2.5 to 5.1 per cent.

On the other hand, for the 24 per cent of engineers working in entry-level or junior positions, who are not typically

% Change in median base salary—core sample										
Engineering level	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
All	2.9	3.6	1.4	5.6	3.3	2.4	2.0	3.6	-1.8	2.1
Level A	4.7	4.3	1.6	7.9	8.3	-3.8	0.0	-2.0	3.3	2.0
Level B	4.6	4.2	1.7	6.7	7.6	-4.1	0.3	2.1	3.6	0.0
Level C	3.6	2.3	2.2	4.9	3.2	0.9	2.7	1.9	2.3	2.7
Level D	3.6	3.7	2.2	4.0	4.0	1.4	0.6	5.3	2.3	2.5
Level E	3.9	3.1	3.1	2.4	4.0	1.1	1.1	3.1	2.6	3.5
Level F	2.2	3.0	4.4	3.7	6.1	0.6	0.3	2.2	4.4	5.1
CPI Ontario	1.2	2.1	1.9	3.2	3.5	1.2	2.5	2.4	1.9	2.4

regarded as fully qualified, salary increases lagged behind the province's CPI.

## Base salary and total cash compensation

As of June 1, 2006, the median annual base salary across all engineering responsibility levels was \$81,500 and the median total cash payment was \$84,400. Predictably, base salary and total cash compensation are highest for jobs focused on management, marketing and teaching/education. Incentive pay is highest for jobs in the management category.

## Industry choice counts

The differences in pay across primary industries was found to be significant.

Non-durable manufacturing, other (a category that includes resources, retail and other employers), and transportation/utilities continued to be the top industry sectors in the sample this year. Of note, the high-tech/electrical products/telecom industry had a relatively low average base salary.

## Location, location, location

This year's survey results mirror the findings of the 2005 survey, with engineers working in Sarnia, Ottawa, and Mississauga enjoying the highest base salaries relative to the provincial average base salary, while engineers working in Guelph, Sudbury, and Kitchener/Waterloo having the lowest base salaries.

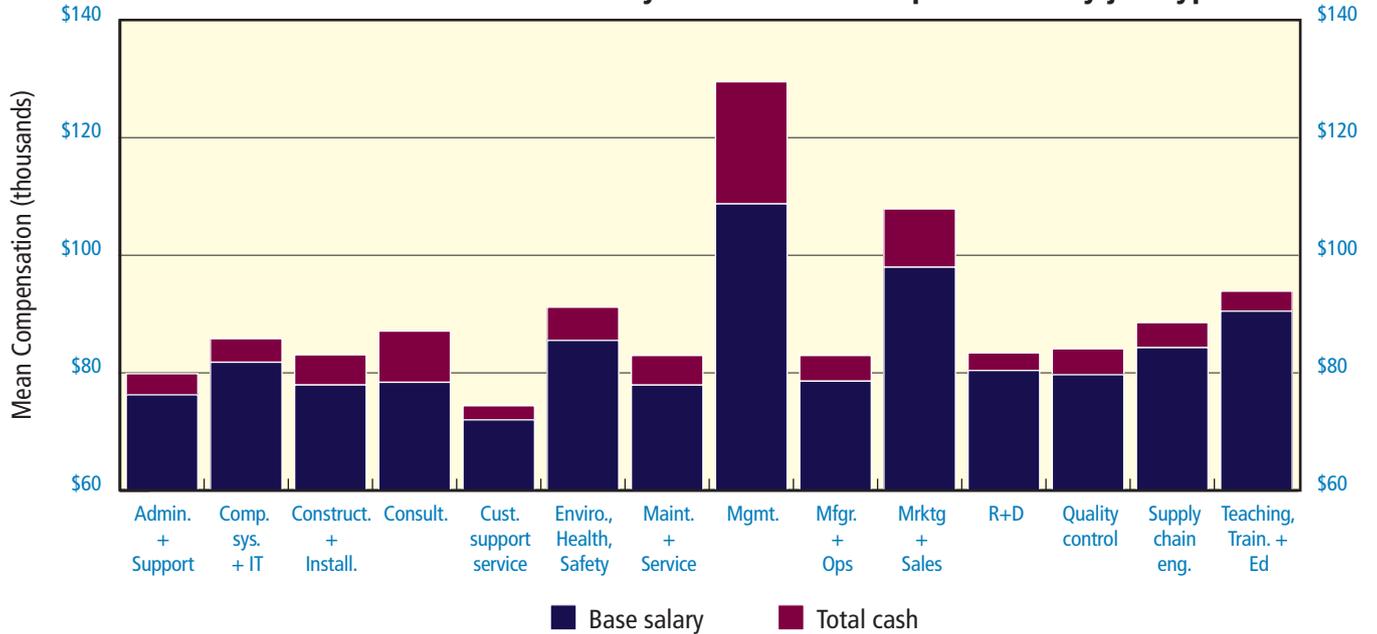
## About the survey

In 2005, OSPE partnered with Mercer Human Resource Consulting to undertake the Employer Compensation Survey. Now in its 53rd year, the survey helps establish meaningful criteria for levels of engineer responsibility, to benefit both engineers and employers and provides current data on actual compensation levels for engineering work. The survey

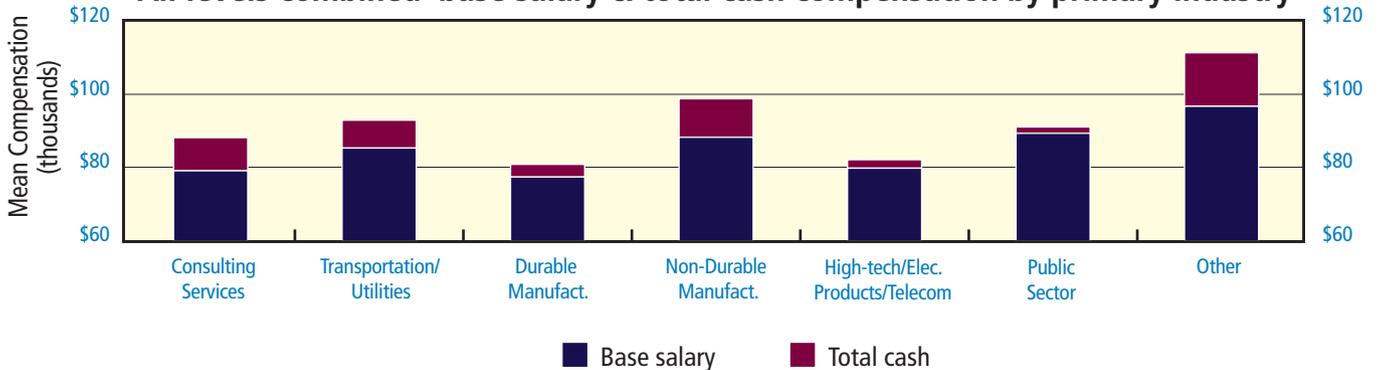
## 2006 compensation at a glance

- stable pay increases for experienced engineers;
- greatest base salary, incentive pay, and total compensation for engineers with management and marketing responsibilities;
- some pay differences between industries;
- little pay difference based on company size, and revenue/operating budgets (exception: organizations with \$5 billion revenue/operating budget); and
- previously reported geographic differences remain in place.

### All levels combined—base salary & total cash compensation by job type



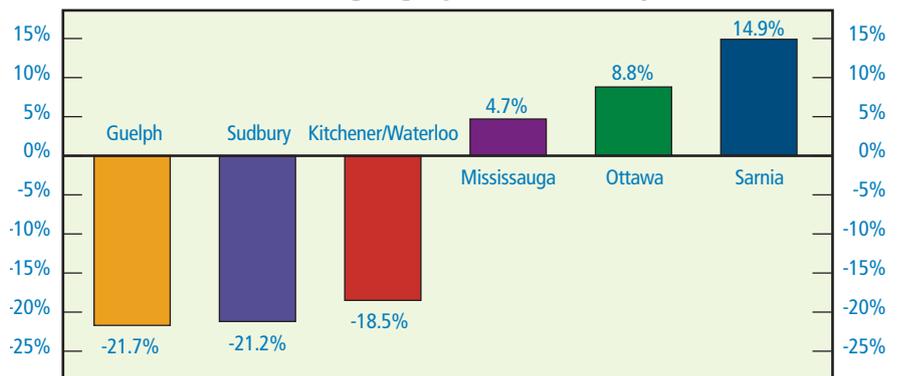
### All levels combined—base salary & total cash compensation by primary industry



results are available in PDF format for both employers and OSPE members. In addition to the PDF, the survey results are available in an online format through Mercer PayMonitor®. As in previous years, the design and implementation of the survey were overseen by an OSPE advisory committee comprising representatives from industry, and the engineering and human resources communities. The committee ensures the survey remains a current and reliable resource on compensation for engineers. A list of committee members is published in the report.

Employers and OSPE members can order the 2006 OSPE Employer Comp-

### All levels combined—geographic base salary differentials



sation Survey by contacting Mercer at [www.imercer.ca/ospe](http://www.imercer.ca/ospe), 800-631-9628 or [info.services@mercer.com](mailto:info.services@mercer.com). OSPE mem-

bers can access a complimentary copy of the Member Market Compensation Summary online at [www.ospe.on.ca](http://www.ospe.on.ca).

# Guide backs quality-based selection of consultants

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

Officials involved in procuring engineering services for municipal infrastructure renewal projects are applauding the release of a new best practice paper extolling the benefits of qualifications-based selection (QBS).

Published by InfraGuide, the *Selecting a Professional Consultant* best practice guide recommends QBS be the sole criterion for selecting engineering firms competing for infrastructure-related municipal works.

As the name suggests, QBS is a process that takes factors other than price into consideration in choosing a professional consultant. Many US jurisdictions have adopted QBS practices, resulting in significant progress in infrastructure renewal and revitalization in a number of urban centres.

InfraGuide, also known as the National Guide to Sustainable Municipal Infrastructure, is a Canada-wide association of experts that publishes best practice guides for policymakers and procurement officials.

For the past several years, procurement officials and consulting engineers have advocated the use by municipalities of QBS principles, rather than lowest-price bids, in choosing the best-qualified engineering firms to rebuild aging sewer systems, roadways, bridges and other urban infrastructure. However, with continued pressure on municipalities to rein in their capital expenditures, the tendency has been to award projects to the lowest bidder.

The *Selecting a Professional Consultant* guide says the appeal of the “lowest-priced design solution” often overrides the value to be gained from considering overall life cycle costs.

The new guide, aimed primarily at decision makers, procurement agents, policymakers and technical staff, says QBS facilitates selecting professional consultants based on qualifications, experience and competence related to each project or assignment under consideration.

“This [QBS] approach does not preclude the consideration of price in the process,” the guide reads. “Rather, it encourages consideration of price within a more meaningful context by bringing the fee into the equation after the scope of work has been jointly established and agreement reached with the top-ranked firm.”

Peter Steblin, P.Eng., general manager of environmental and engineering services, City of London, says selecting the right engineering services based on qualification rather than price ultimately ensures a higher return on investment.

the release of the *Selecting a Professional Consultant* guide supports the view that infrastructure renewal by way of QBS practices is an investment rather than a cost.

“This guide is not the end in itself, but it’s a very important validation of the things we’ve been saying for many years,” Gamble told *Engineering Dimensions*, “not only in the consulting sector but also what P.Engs have been saying in the public sector, many of whom have felt constrained by short-term, short-sighted solutions. I think a lot of P.Engs in the public sector are going to be vindicated by this document.”

“This [QBS]...approach encourages consideration of price within a more meaningful context by bringing the fee into the equation after the scope of work has been jointly established and agreement reached with the top-ranked firm.”

The *Selecting a Professional Consultant* guide

Steblin, who chaired the InfraGuide technical committee, was instrumental in having London adopt QBS practices in its selection of engineering consultants.

In a recent article, Steblin said price-based selection of professional consultants might save upfront costs, but often imposes heavier, unseen costs down the road. “Nowhere is this more apparent than when hiring consulting engineering firms,” he says. “Municipalities have forced engineering firms to compete on price to the exclusion of almost everything else, and in doing so have cut themselves off from the very attributes that differentiate engineering firms in the first place—their creativity, talent and innovative abilities.”

John Gamble, P.Eng., president, Consulting Engineers of Ontario (CEO), says

Gamble says the guide will give new focus to QBS discussion, and is likely to have a positive impact on infrastructure renewal decisions at the federal, provincial and municipal levels.

The guide will also be a subject of discussion at the International Federation of Consulting Engineers meeting in Budapest this fall.

The authors say long-term savings accrue to municipalities and taxpayers by a careful adherence to QBS ideals. With engineering fees usually about 2 per cent of the total life cycle cost of a project, by applying QBS to the initial cost, it is expected municipalities can save on subsequent construction, operation and maintenance costs, which often comprise about 98 per cent of overall life cycle costs.

# PEO forging new links with engineering students

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

The Engineering Student Societies' Council of Ontario (ESSCO) is working with engineering societies across the province in preparing a survey of engineering students' plans for licensure after graduation.

Established as a forum to link engineering undergraduates from throughout Ontario, ESSCO is financially and materially supported by PEO. One result of the PEO-ESSCO link is the Student Membership Program (SMP), which since 2000 has worked to build a stronger relationship between the regulator and engineering undergraduate students.

Led by President Kristopher Lelliott of Carleton University, the current ESSCO executive recently came together for a planning meeting at PEO headquarters, at the invitation of Noreen Calderbank, P.Eng., manager of prelicensing programs for PEO. A similar meeting is held each September to assess previous ESSCO initiatives and to plan events for the coming school year.

Other ESSCO officials attending the August 22 meeting included Christina Waters (Waterloo University), Steve Quilan (McMaster University) and Phil Geddis (University of Guelph). Margaret Walcott of the prelicensing program, and Manoj Choudhary, P.Eng., the recently appointed student liaison coordinator for PEO, also attended the ESSCO gathering.

ESSCO officials, in conjunction with the engineering student society at Queen's University, are also now at work organizing for a joint PEO-ESSCO conference November 17-19 in Kingston. The ESSCO executive has delegated much of the conference work to the Queen's engineering society.

Attending the recent Engineering Student Societies' Council of Ontario meeting at PEO were, left to right, Phil Geddis; Christina Waters; Manoj Choudhary, P.Eng., PEO student liaison coordinator; Noreen Calderbank, P.Eng., PEO manager of prelicensing programs; ESSCO President Kristopher Lelliott; and Steve Quilan.

Although the PEO-ESSCO student conference details are still coming together, it will focus on the lasting value of the professional engineer licence.

*"I'm hoping that engineering students see the creation by PEO of a student liaison coordinator position as a sign of our willingness to reach out to students, understand their concerns, and to show them the importance of staying on the path to licensing."*

Manoj Choudhary, P.Eng.,  
PEO student liaison coordinator

The ESSCO student survey is designed to elicit engineering undergraduate students' knowledge of PEO licensing procedures. It is also aimed at providing information about students' career objectives, including their intention to practise engineering, to remain in Ontario, or to pursue engineering work in another province or outside Canada.

Among ESSCO's objectives is keeping engineering undergraduates on the path to licensing, once they have completed their education and obtained the required work experience.

In setting the agenda for the meeting, Calderbank described engineering students as "future members" of the profession, who often need encouragement and support to make the full transition from graduate to licensed engineer.

Waters of ESSCO suggested one way to keep students focused on the road to licensing would be to communicate the value and importance of the P.Eng. title, a focus of PEO's strategic plan and Government Liaison Program, both of which emphasize the value of the engineering licence in the public interest.

The students and PEO staff also discussed the best means of disseminating

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## Infrastructure renewal plans invite P.Eng. policy input

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

Professional engineers and others concerned with the state of Canada's infrastructure are awaiting word on federal funding for a national roundtable dedicated to the best use of sustainable infrastructure investment.

The National Roundtable of Sustainable Infrastructure (NRTSI), a partnership involving engineers, industry and trade officials, and government policy leaders, was established in 2005 to study best practices, investment guidelines and technical issues in responding to the aging of many of Canada's roadways, bridges, water systems and sewers.

Led by the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE), the roundtable is an extension of CCPE's work to develop a technology road map for municipal infrastructure renewal.

Speaking September 27 at the Future of Canada's Infrastructure Conference in Toronto, CCPE Chief Executive Officer Marie Lemay, P.Eng., said the idea of the national roundtable as a permanent forum for discussing and sharing infra-

structure best practices has been well received across the country.

Lemay and other NRTSI officials met with Lawrence Cannon, minister of transport, infrastructure and communities, in June 2006 to discuss long-term prospects and funding for the roundtable. Although the

federal government has not yet indicated its commitment to supporting NRTSI, Lemay said it appears receptive to the concept.

Lemay described NRTSI as "a non-partisan body facilitating the understanding of infrastructure need, and helping to define issues of national priority."

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She said extensive consultation across the country led to development of NRTSI strategies and action plans for infrastructure renewal projects. NRTSI, which recently set up a website at [www.nrsti.ca](http://www.nrsti.ca), is seeking a five-year funding commitment from the federal infrastructure department, with matching funding from stakeholders.

A NRSTI concept paper dated May 2006 said invitations to join the national roundtable would be extended to engineering and professional service industries, representatives from all three levels of government, urban planners, banking and insurance officials, and representatives from the construction, environmental and education communities.

Although it isn't designed to be an advocacy group, the roundtable could



CCPE head Marie Lemay, P.Eng., at the Future of Canada's Infrastructure Conference in Toronto. At right is Todd Latham, publisher of *Renew Canada* magazine.

present more opportunities for engineers and engineering associations to promote the engineer's role in sound policy development.

"All too often, we, as engineers, are not utilized for our strategic planning abilities," Lemay said in a recent CCPE statement. "We are seen as the makers of pipes and cement, but we are excluded from the planning and policymaking stage. I am confident that by becoming involved in NRTSI, we can offer a unique approach and provide a wealth of information to ideas that might otherwise be overlooked."

Within days of the conference, CCPE issued a statement linking the September 30 overpass collapse in Laval, QC, with the need for a new emphasis on infrastructure renewal. The collapse killed five Laval residents and injured several others.

"It is unfortunate that it takes events such as that of September 30 to get Canadians to pay attention to issues such as infrastructure renewal and maintenance," Lemay said. "Hopefully this tragic event did not happen in vain and we, as a society, will learn from it and make the conscious decision to reinvest in infrastructure using a long-term, holistic approach, as well as life cycle management guidelines."

Lemay added that long-term adequate financial resources are needed from all levels of government to support a sustainable and planned approach over the full life cycle of any infrastructure project.

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licence-related information to Ontario's engineering student population, and the exact role of ESSCO within PEO's wider mandate.

A key development in the history of PEO-ESSCO relations is the recent hiring of Manoj Choudhary, P.Eng., as student liaison coordinator. Choudhary will be instrumental in helping engineering undergraduates fully appreciate PEO, its mandate and the importance of licensing.

"I'm hoping that engineering students see the creation by PEO of a student liaison coordinator position as a sign of our willingness to reach out to students, understand their concerns, and to show them the importance of staying on the path to licensing," Choudhary said.

PEO's ongoing involvement with students complements the regulator's Engineer-in-Training (EIT) internship program.

Increased outreach to engineering graduates aims to increase the number of graduates from Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB)-accredited engineering programs who ultimately become licensed by PEO.

## PEO issues engineering declaration

On October 10, PEO issued its own statement on the Laval bridge collapse via an advertisement in the national edition of the *Globe and Mail*. The ad aimed to support the CCPE media release, and offered PEO's assistance in several possible ways. Below is the ad's message:

### Engineering Declaration Laval Bridge Collapse

Professional Engineers Ontario regulates the practice of professional engineering and governs the more than 68,000 professional engineers in Ontario.

- We sincerely regret the failure of the Laval bridge, care deeply for the tragedy and hurt to the families of those affected, and wish to extend our sincerest sympathies and concern.
- Professional engineers must be the responsible authority where the safety of bridges is concerned.
- Governments must make conscious decisions to re-invest and maintain infrastructure using the long-term, life-cycle management practices required to adequately protect the public.

We offer:

- To participate in any review or inquiry on infrastructure;
- To put our licence holders' expertise at the service of the public to determine the cause of the failure;
- To act as an intermediary for anyone who has information related to public safety in this or another area of structural infrastructure. We have an enforcement hotline, 1-800-339-3716 ext. 1444, for such contacts; and
- To work to ensure that all attempts are made to avoid such an event again.

## IEG integration project makes new inroads

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

Efforts to integrate internationally trained engineering graduates into the Canadian labour force are moving into higher gear with implementation of the third phase of the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers' From Consideration to Integration (FC2I) project.

Initiated in 2003, FC2I is a three-part project aimed at reviewing and enhancing processes through which international engineering graduates are licensed in Canada.

Supported by the federal government's human resources secretariat, FC2I has been working with CCPE's constituent member regulators to look for ways to streamline

licensing and registration processes without compromising public safety, or lowering professional standards.

The project's latest report to the CCPE board of directors outlines another key motivating factor for FC2I. "FC2I was launched in response to a perception that our licensure processes for IEGs were neither consistent nor efficient. It was founded on the belief that we could collectively improve the process," the report says.

Much of the FC2I work has involved finding effective ways of advising international engineering applicants of the requirements and expectations for licensing, which is especially important in view of the fact many IEGs come from countries where engineering practice is unregulated.

The project's first two phases involved gaining information about the experiences of IEGs, and working with engineering regulators to identify ways in which the overall integration process can be better understood. The outcome was 17 recommendations that are to be implemented in whole or in part during the project's third and final phase.

CCPE's board of directors, which approved the Phase II recommendations in May 2004, recently established a secretariat to establish timeframes for the implementation of the recommendations.

### Single-source information

Among the recommendations are that IEGs and other applicants be tracked throughout the licensing process, that they be provided more consistent and single-source information about the engineering licensing process prior to their arrival in Canada, that networks and information exchange with immigrant advocacy groups be increased, that a language standard be developed to ensure IEGs have sufficient knowledge of English or French to get through the licensing process, and that applicants be allowed to prepare for and write professional practice examinations at any time during the licensing process.



Other recommendations centre on credential equivalency assessment, establishing interim approval mechanisms (such as provisional licences), setting up “working in Canada” seminars for IEGs, cross-cultural training exercises for staff and volunteers of regulatory bodies, studying best practices for job placement activity, and expanding mentoring and job trial opportunities for IEGs.

Deborah Wolfe, P.Eng., CCPE FC2I project manager, is encouraged that a number of the key recommendations are now being implemented. “So many reports sit on shelves and gather dust,” Wolfe said. “FC2I had 17 recommendations and a number of them are being moved forward. For example, the database on international degrees and institutions, a working in Canada seminar, and a language benchmark, have all been started and are well along the road to completion. Also, the regulators have worked hard in other areas [including] relations with local immigrant settlement agencies and allowing applicants to write the Professional Practice Exam (PPE) at any time.”

Although some of the FC2I recommendations are scheduled for implementation between 2006 and 2007, others await establishment of deadlines.

Wolfe says the increased media attention on integration of foreign trained professionals into the Canadian labour force, coupled with the high number of new Canadians applying to work in the engineering field, have added urgency to the FC2I project.

Both the federal and Ontario governments recently announced plans to monitor regulators’ handling of foreign credential assessment in response to criticism that highly educated new Canadians are being denied opportunities to find meaningful, career-related employment.

“There are thousands of people who say they have engineering backgrounds immigrating each year,” Wolfe said, “and employers are hesitant to risk their bottom line by hiring people with qualifications they are not familiar with, or communication skills that are different from people born and educated in Canada. There are

hundreds of immigrant-serving agencies in cities across the country, and foreign credential recognition has been a hot political topic for quite some time. Balancing these forces while listening to IEGs and the many stakeholders gave the steering committee a challenging task, but they came up with recommendations that were unanimously approved by the CCPE board of directors and which are now being implemented across the country.”

Wolfe says the experience of IEGs arriving in Canada in great number has given engineering regulators an advantage over other major regulators in responding to licensing and credential recognition issues.

“The engineering regulators have been licensing IEGs for decades and were out in front of the rest of professions when it came to studying how to improve the process while maintaining public safety,” Wolfe said. “The engineering profession’s work on the integration of immigrants has been recognized by the government as an excellent example of how a profession efficiently licenses foreign-trained applicants.”

## Alberta P.Engs and technologists coming to terms

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

Engineers and technologists in Alberta appear to be nearing agreement on a plan to regulate both groups of practitioners under a “one act, two associations” model.

The Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA) and the Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET) have been in negotiations for over a year to resolve issues involving regulation of engineers and technologists.

Discussion team members from the two groups met September 26 with Alberta employment ministry mediator David Jones, but neither side is ready to provide fresh details of the negotiations. A fourth meeting between APEGGA and ASET discussion teams was scheduled for late October.

In an August 22 joint communiqué, APEGGA and ASET said negotiations have already led to “common ground and consensus at a conceptual level.” The communiqué, which appears verbatim on both the APEGGA and ASET websites, outlines areas of agreement between the two organizations.

The communiqué calls for certified technologists practising under supervision to be regulated by ASET. It also identifies APEGGA as the regulator for engineers and geoscientists who practise independently, and it names APEGGA and ASET as joint regulators for technologists with independent practice.

Finally, APEGGA and ASET pledged to continue negotiating with the aid of the provincially appointed mediator, in hopes of finding a “mutually acceptable conclu-

sion” to the jurisdictional issues involved. Both parties said they are committed to outlining the negotiations to their respective councils, and have asked for feedback from their memberships at large.

The technologists’ association had been pressing the Alberta government to create a new act making ASET the regulator of technologists with the right to practise independently. APEGGA, meanwhile, has argued for an amendment to the existing engineering act to allow APEGGA and ASET to jointly regulate those technologists who practise independently. Under this scenario, ASET would take on regulatory responsibilities for categories of technologists who practise within teams (see *Engineering Dimensions*, September/October 2006, p. 20).

Although forthcoming negotiations are expected to be tendentious, the two sides have come to some agreement under the one act, two associations model. Areas of current agreement include:

- certified technologists practising under supervision will be regulated by ASET;
- engineers and geoscientists practising independently will be regulated by APEGGA;
- technologists practising independently will be regulated jointly by ASET and APEGGA; and
- all practitioners under the act will adhere to a common standard of professionalism.

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# Toronto women in engineering groups revitalizing

By MICHAEL MASTROMATTEO

Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Toronto, which operated between 2001 and 2003 but has been inactive in recent years, is expected to be back in operation in late fall 2006 or early 2007.

In addition to encouraging female high school and university students to consider careers in science and engineering, WISE acts as a professional support network for female engineering graduates. The group is affiliated with

“We will be starting with the basics of social networking and enhancing the ‘enjoyability’ of being a female engineer or scientist,” Wong said. “From there, we’ll work together with the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers’ Women in Engineering Advisory Committee (WEAC) to encourage, educate, promote and support our aims.”

Leila Kheradapir, P.Eng., a missions systems engineer at MDA Corporation in Brampton, expects to take on the role of president of WISE Toronto. She says

Anderson said WEAC has in the past held joint events with WISE Toronto, WISE U of T and a Women in Engineering (WIE) group at Ryerson University. “The interaction of these varied groups allows for informal mentoring opportunities within the profession,” she added. “Joint events gave the WISE/WIE student groups an opportunity to learn about volunteer and committee opportunities available when they graduate, and the students and recent grads were encouraged to pursue registration by becoming engineering interns (EITs) and P.Engs.”

WEAC has invited WISE Toronto to participate in its seventh annual Claudette MacKay-Lassonde Fall Forum scheduled for November 4, 2006.

## Student activism also increases

The rebirth of WISE Toronto coincides with a new period of activism by WISE U of T, which in 2004 established the Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award to honour female engineering professors for excellence and leadership in engineering education. The most recent winner of the award is Yu-Ling Cheng, P.Eng., former chair of engineering science at U of T.

Jennifer Yen, a U of T biotechnology student, and former WISE Director General Jennifer Pereira, created the award to spread awareness of gender-based barriers in the workplace and to prepare WISE membership for future challenges in this area.

“Our aspiration is to provide female role models who, through their work and accomplishments, prove that there are no limits to what a woman can achieve in her career, and can motivate our members to break that ceiling,” Yen told *Engineering Dimensions*.

Although PEO’s former WEAC is now an OSPE committee, PEO has established an Equity and Diversity Committee, chaired by Councillor Márta Ecsedi, P.Eng., to ensure its licensing and regulatory processes foster diversity in the profession, including seeing that all engineering school graduates stay on the path to obtaining the P.Eng. licence.

*“We will be starting with the basics of social networking and enhancing the ‘enjoyability’ of being a female engineer or scientist. From there, we’ll work together with the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers’ Women in Engineering Advisory Committee (WEAC) to encourage, educate, promote and support our aims.”*

Wai-Lyn Wong, P.Eng.

student-populated WISE chapters at several Ontario universities.

Wai-Lyn Wong, P.Eng., a performance analyst with Pratt and Whitney Limited Canada, is one of two women hoping to restart WISE Toronto. Wong was involved with the WISE chapter at the University of Toronto (U of T) in her undergraduate days, and later collaborated with Shelley Cox, P.Eng., to support WISE Toronto in working with female engineers.

Although the professional (non-student) chapter of WISE Toronto has lately been inactive, interest in mentoring, networking and career information sharing has remained high among female engineers.

she hopes membership will eventually number between 50 and 200 female engineers and that the group will gain new visibility in the professional community.

WEAC Chair Lisa Anderson, P.Eng., says the relaunch of WISE Toronto is complementary to WEAC’s aims. “WEAC’s mandate is to provide networking and professional development opportunities for women engineers in Ontario, as well as providing outreach to young women to encourage them to consider engineering as a career,” Anderson said. “This is closely tied to WISE Toronto’s mandate to support women engineers across the greater Toronto area.”

# National Engineering Week 2007 around the corner

By JULIE COHEN

National Engineering Week (NEW) 2007, happening February 24 to March 4, is only months away, so now is the time to organize an event or activity that promotes the profession to young people. In its 16th year, NEW's mandate is to raise awareness of the importance of engineering and technology in daily life, and to encourage young people to consider careers in engineering and technology. This year's theme, "Engineering is all around us!" speaks to the daily impact engineering has on all aspects of everyday living.

Organizing an event or activity for Engineering Week is full of rewards, personal satisfaction among them. NEW activities and events also improve visibility in the community, enhance professional development and networking, and help establish valuable relationships with other partners.

Successful events organized by PEO chapters last year include the 2006 Ottawa Engineering Challenge sponsored by PEO's Ottawa Chapter and the National Research Council. More than 2000 students in grades 4 to 6 took part in "engineering teams" that designed and constructed a Disaster Relief Operation Prototype (DROP) from readily available craft supplies and recycled materials. Volunteer engineers began visiting classrooms in early February to help students with their design and building work. In-school competitions were held prior to the final event, which took place during Engineering Week at the Canada Science and Technology Museum.

PEO's Upper Canada Chapter hosted its 5th Annual Model Bridge-Building Competition at Cornwall Square on the first Saturday of NEW. A total of 18 teams in junior grades (6 to 8) and senior grades (9 to 12) participated. "It was a phenomenal success with bridges being built much more efficiently and stronger than anticipated," says event co-organizer John St. Marseille, P.Eng. "The contest strives to promote science, engineering,



A local elementary school student looks on as her bridge is tested in the 6th Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge-Building Competition hosted by PEO's Kingston Chapter.

teamwork and the importance of professional engineering."

PEO members interested in organizing an activity can find event ideas and

information on the NEW Ontario website at [www.engineeringweek.on.ca](http://www.engineeringweek.on.ca). (Click on Event Organizer Help, then Planning Advice.)

## Correction

In the September/October 2006 issue of *Engineering Dimensions* (p. 12), we incorrectly stated that OPEA Gold Medal recipient **Thomas Anthony Brzustowski, P.Eng.**, is the endowed research chair in commercialization of innovation in the school of management at the University of Ottawa, that he was a former CEO of the University of Waterloo, and that he is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. In fact, Brzustowski is the RBC Professor at the school of management at the University of Ottawa, he has never been CEO of the University of Waterloo, and he is a specially elected Fellow, not an Honorary Fellow, of the Royal Society of Canada.

We also incorrectly reported on page 12 that OPEA Entrepreneurship Medal recipient **Philip J. (Rocky) Simmons, P.Eng.**, currently serves on the Dean's Advisory Board of the faculty of applied science and engineering at the University of Toronto. Simmons no longer serves on that board.

**Helen Wojcinski, P.Eng.**, holds an MBA in addition to her engineering designation.