

WE'RE MOVING FORWARD!



David Adams, P.Eng.
President

AS I WRITE THIS COLUMN for you early in October, we have just been plunged into an incredible downfall in the financial markets of the world. No doubt this drop will produce profound changes in the market for our services and the degree of certainty in our lives. Besides bearing down on our work as a means of coping with our welfare, may I suggest that we set our minds to improving our personal relationships at home, at work, in our community and here at PEO.

In particular, at PEO, we must build trust among ourselves. It is only through understanding the issues that we can alleviate apprehension about new ideas for regulating our profession, in these changing, challenging times.

For me, as your leader, trust among the members means doing the things after the election that you promised before the election, with, of course, collective agreement and incorporation of council's ideas.

It is of interest that our sister provincial organizations and Engineers Canada are both reviewing the same plans for comprehensive licensure and a more meaningful, accountable internship, as have been put forward for PEO council's consideration. On my recent trips both to Nova Scotia and British Columbia, I have been drawn aside by the leaders of our provincial counterparts, to answer questions about our deliberations at home.

Engineers Canada is, of course, interested in interprovincial mobility of a valued resource.

Let us continue this positive approach, moving forward with the remainder of my goals for the year, as they are introduced for deliberation at council.

On September 24, PEO held its annual Engineering for Ontario Day reception at Queen's Park and I'm pleased to report it was a great success. I was delighted that more than 35 MPPs from across the province joined our representatives from council, chapters and staff, to celebrate PEO's 86-year history as the self-regulatory body for the engineering profession in Ontario. It would appear that our contribution to maintaining a high level of professionalism among engineers working in the public interest is truly appreciated.

At this reception, I also had the pleasure of re-presenting PEO's President's Award for 2008 to David Zimmer, LLB, MPP Willowdale and parliamentary assistant to the attorney general, with his colleagues from the provincial parliament in attendance.

As I also announced at this reception, we are quickly moving to the resolution of a new headquarters for PEO. This is a milestone for us, and one to be proud of. It is important that professional engineers in Ontario own our own affordable building.

During the reception, I was delighted to hear Attorney General Chris Bentley, LLB, announce his support for the new Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy, which intends to make the most of the expertise of our members, by assisting provincial parliamentarians in their

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decision making. Over the last month, we have interviewed eight excellent candidates for the position of executive director for the centre and have selected an individual who is well suited, with both an academic and business background.

With this new centre, we will not only publish papers, but establish a journal of engineering and public policy and hold annual policy conferences to ensure the voice of engineers is heard in a helpful way in the halls of power in government and business over the coming years.

Also, Minister Bentley expressed his interest in our work at PEO on a new, more comprehensive and inclusive national licensure model. One of the benefits of the new licensure proposal from his standpoint is its alignment with the Agreement on Internal Trade put forth by all of Canada's premiers over the last number of years. At a recent meeting between the cabinets of Ontario and Quebec, the notion of breaking down interprovincial barriers was a top priority. Our goal is to ensure that engineers licensed in Ontario can work in other provinces, and engineers from outside Ontario can be licensed easily and work in this province. We also seek to ensure that applicants for membership in PEO and for licensure can be guided along a path that will both fulfill their aspirations and protect the public interest.

It has been a primary goal of my presidency to expand our licensure system. I am pleased to inform you that at the September council meeting, councillors received an extensive proposal on the licensure model. This proposal will be brought back to council after some further development, peer review and consultation with other stakeholders over the coming months.

This is the first major review of licensure by PEO in many years, and it's the first time we're making sure engineering graduates are included explicitly in PEO's licensing efforts from the moment of graduation. Too many engineering graduates finish university, start work and never apply for their licence. For the good of the profession and of the public we serve, I believe it's time for them to get their iron ring *and* their licence.

All of these matters are of significant importance to your leadership at PEO. I believe it is not only helpful, but necessary, to isolate specific issues and focus on them in a given time frame to produce results. You will remember from my previous messages, we introduced knowledge-based governance as our modus operandi for council this year, chiefly to move to a more strategic, policy-driven way of thinking and improve our culture of co-operation.

Events have been unfolding at great speed under this protocol, as I have been able to report to you. I am now halfway through my term as your president and we are well on the way or have already accomplished many of my election promises. I am excited at what the future holds and I hope you are, too.

As I will not be writing to you again until the new year, may I extend the compliments of the season to you and yours and greetings to all. Σ