

Regulator welcomes commission ruling on release of information

By Michael Mastromatteo

PEO NOW HAS CLARITY that the regulator's obligations for handling information it collects under the *Professional Engineers Act* (PEA) do not apply to the Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry's handling of the same information under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

In a January 8 ruling, Commissioner Paul R. Bélanger found that confidentiality and consent requirements under section 38(1)(c) of the PEA have no bearing on the commission's release of information.

Under section 38(1)(c), PEO must obtain consent from an affected party prior to releasing information that is not otherwise public obtained in the course of administering the act. In requesting an order under section 10(4) of the *Public Inquiries Act*, PEO highlighted this obligation and requested that the commission similarly give notice and an opportunity to consent or make submissions to those named in PEO's documents, prior to any pre-hearing release of documents.

In his ruling denying PEO's request, the commissioner also noted that PEO "has produced all relevant documents in its possession to the Commission as it was required to do pursuant to the Commission's summons."

"PEO will continue to fully support and co-operate with Commissioner Bélanger and the important work of the commission," said Michael Price, P.Eng., MBA, FEC, PEO's acting CEO/registrant, in response to the ruling.

PEO requested and was granted standing in Part I of the inquiry, which is looking into events prior to the collapse of part of the Algo Centre Mall on June 23, 2012. PEO has also opened its own investigations into what part, if any, the conduct of its licence and certificate holders might have played in the tragedy.

The collapse resulted in the deaths of two Elliot Lake residents and injuries to more than 20 others. Closure of the mall has also led to significant economic disruption in the northern Ontario community.

The Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry is scheduled to start its formal hearings in Elliot Lake on March 4 and is publishing information on the inquiry's progress at www.elliottlakeinquiry.ca. Information on PEO's participation in the inquiry is available at www.peo.on.ca.



Repeal marks new era of stepped-up worker safety

By Michael Mastromatteo

THE LONG-AWAITED REPEAL of the industrial exception is scheduled to become a reality on September 1, 2013.

As of that date, those responsible for professional engineering work in relation to production machinery or equipment must be licensed by PEO.

With the Ontario government's repeal of section 12(3)(a) of the *Professional Engineers Act* (PEA), indi-

viduals will have to be licensed by PEO if they do any act within the practice of professional engineering on machinery or equipment used to produce products for their employer in their employer's facility.

"Engineering is regulated to serve and protect the public interest. Bringing this mindset into the design of the production process should be

cost-effective for industry by lessening workplace illness or injury and associated workplace insurance claims, and minimizing retrofitting, downtime and equipment replacement," Michael Price, P.Eng., MBA, FEC, PEO's acting CEO/registrant said in a March 1 statement.

PEO's Repeal of the Industrial Exception Task Force has been working

for over two years to prepare industry and manufacturers for the change. Working with PEO's chapter system, task force members and associated staff have already met with manufacturers in close to 80 per cent of the province to provide information on the specific scope of the change and to learn what assistance would be useful to industry in implementing the change.

In addition, the Ontario government has approved a regulatory provision—section 88 of Regulation 941/90—to help employers make the transition to the new requirement. Under this regulation, employers who file an acceptable compliance plan with PEO before the repeal's effective date will have up to one year to meet the requirement and come into compliance (see p. 23 to read the new section of Regulation 941).

COM DEV of Cambridge and Ottawa is among the first organizations to have applied for the one-year extension by filing a compliance plan.

“From the earliest announcement of the proposed changes to the PEA, COM DEV recognized the requirement to perform a full re-assessment of the need for engineering licences by COM DEV staff,” says Nigel Doran, P.Eng., COM DEV vice president, engineering and quality. “An initial internal assessment of the changes identified the need to significantly increase the number of licensed engineers at COM DEV, and an approach to PEO confirmed that PEO recognized the significant impact of the changes and that a collaborative approach was required to support companies and organizations in achieving compliance.”

He says COM DEV subsequently submitted a compliance plan to PEO, which provided an onsite licensing workshop attended by over 100 COM DEV staff. COM DEV is supporting staff to obtain either a PEO limited licence or P.Eng licence.

“COM DEV has a diverse workforce, reflecting the international basis of the satellite industry. This diversity is reflected in a significant number of foreign-trained staff. The limited licence is an essential tool in achieving compliance within the one-year extension period granted to companies with an agreed compliance plan. The limited licence and one-year extension will allow COM DEV to continue to operate the business with the flexibility to assign staff the work with the flexibility essential to running a successful business,” Doran notes.

To provide further support, PEO is waiving its licence application or reinstatement fees for all employees who apply for a licence by August 31 who are named in their employer's compliance plan also filed with PEO by August 31.

PEO will assist these employees through the one-year compliance period by providing application and engineering intern program seminars, and administering its professional practice exams at their job sites for groups of at least 20 people. Instructional webinars and questions and answers about the new requirement are available at www.peo.on.ca and www.engineeringinontario.ca.



Phil Maka, P.Eng., FEC, will be inducted as a Companion, the Order of Honour's highest distinction. This honour is reserved for individuals whose distinguished service has profoundly influenced the profession.

PEO names six to the ORDER OF HONOUR

By Nicole Axworthy

This year, PEO will induct four Members into the Professional Engineers Ontario Order of Honour (OOH) and raise the status of two to the ranks of Companion and Officer. The OOH is an honorary society of PEO. Its purpose is to recognize and honour professional engineers and others who have rendered outstanding service to the engineering profession in Ontario, primarily through the association. The honorees will be recognized at a ceremony on Friday, April 26, held in conjunction with PEO's annual general meeting in Toronto.

E. Philip Maka, P.Eng., FEC, who will be inducted as a Companion, the OOH's highest distinction, was first recognized for his service to PEO in 1998 when he was inducted as a Member. He first joined the Mississauga Chapter executive in the mid-1980s. Since then, he has held every position within the chapter executive, including three terms as chapter chair, and he has run numerous events. He served as West Central Region councillor on PEO council from 2003 to 2011 and as chair of the Regional Councillors Committee for two years. He has also served on many committees and task forces, including the Discipline Committee from 2003 to 2013.

As a member of parliament for Pickering-Scarborough and a retired Canadian Forces major, Corneliu Chisu, P.Eng., MEng, CD, FEC, joined PEO in 1989 and has been a volunteer ever since. First inducted into the OOH as a Member in 2006, Chisu will be inducted as an Officer on April 26. The rank of Officer is given to those who have served the profession for many years and whose leadership has contributed greatly to its operation or improvement in status. In addition to his ongoing involvement with the Scarborough Chapter, his many volunteer contributions include roles on PEO council, and the Executive, Audit, Regional Councillors, Awards, Discipline, Legislation and Registration committees. A dedicated advocate for an open and inclusive profession, he has long been a mentor for newcomers to Canada on the requirements for licensure in Ontario.

Gheorghe Bacioiu, PhD, P.Eng., joined the Windsor-Essex Chapter in 2001 and has been its champion of science, math and engineering education ever since. As an advocate for preserving the future of the profession, Bacioiu was involved in the Engineers-in-Residence program for 12 years. He also served on the chapter executive for six years until, in 2007, he elected to return to school to complete his PhD. As an international engineering graduate, he frequently speaks to newcomers about his experiences and provides information about PEO's licensure requirements.


Haoxuan Sarah Jin, P.Eng., began volunteering with the York Chapter over 12 years ago and has held many roles, including chapter chair. As a result of Jin's goal to promote

the engineering profession within York Region and increase networking opportunities for members, the chapter has hosted events like a boat cruise on Lake Ontario and a charity golf tournament with support from local businesses. Jin also organized a retreat for the York executive team to brainstorm the future of the chapter and develop a roadmap and led to the development of an award to recognize outstanding projects of local engineering businesses.

Pappur Shankar, P.Eng., has been an active member of the Mississauga Chapter since 2004 and chaired the chapter from 2007 to 2010. Working with the Chapter Mentoring Committee, he helped develop a program that supports new immigrants and engineering interns (the program has since been endorsed by PEO council for roll-out across the province). He has organized many events, including full-day workshops for the benefit of members, and has secured workshops sponsors using his personal contacts. Shankar also initiated more volunteer recognition programs, established a Women in Engineering Committee for his chapter to encourage women to consider engineering as a career and promote the value of licensure to female engineering graduates.

Noubar Takessian, P.Eng., FEC, has served the Willowdale-Thornhill Chapter for 15 years. He supports the chapter's attempts to diversify its events and reach the local community, as well as collaborating with neighbouring PEO chapters in joint ventures, such as seminars, social events and the mentorship program. As chair, he introduced the chapter's Government Liaison Program Committee and helped create a culture for promoting PEO's role to elected officials. Today, the Willowdale-Thornhill Chapter is one of PEO's busiest in GLP activities.

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PROVINCIAL ENGINEER STILL A PRIORITY FOR PEO

By Michael Mastromatteo

PEO announces 2013 G. Gordon M. Sterling Engineering Intern Award winner

PEO has selected Zachary White, EIT, as the recipient of this year's G. Gordon M. Sterling Engineering Intern Award. A civil engineering graduate of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, White has over two years of well-rounded structural engineering experience in both design and field work for the mining, pulp and paper, and transportation industries. Working as a structural engineering intern with Genivar Inc., he has been engaged in several large-scale projects in Canada and the US. White is also an active member of PEO's Lakehead Chapter and serves as an executive member.

White's commitment to the engineering profession is further demonstrated through his volunteer work with the Engineer-in-Residence program, where he prepares and executes activities in local elementary schools to promote math and science, and his involvement in the Government Liaison Program as a co-representative for the Lakehead Chapter.

His course selection, Preparing for Leadership: What It Takes to Take the Lead (with Canadian Management Centre), will enable White to enhance his growing leadership skills. Recently, he was selected to be the semi-lead on a structural project for a progressive bio-energy plant, with responsibilities for preliminary engineering and estimating, as well as recruiting, managing and directing other EITs.

The G. Gordon M. Sterling Engineering Intern Award promotes leadership development and is available to engineering interns who are in good standing with Professional Engineers Ontario's Engineering Intern program.

THE INSTALLATION OF Kathleen Wynne, former minister of education, transportation and municipal affairs, as Ontario premier on February 11 hasn't dulled PEO's interest in the creation of a provincial engineer office to take on authority for engineering works in the province.

The provincial engineer position has been described by PEO President Denis Dixon, P.Eng., FEC, as akin to Ontario's chief medical officer of health. He has said he believes an independent Ontario provincial engineer could provide the necessary review, analysis and integration of information to help ensure the most effective technical solutions to pressing policy concerns. The concept was prompted, in part, by the partial collapse last June of the Algo Centre Mall in Elliot Lake, Ontario, in which two people were killed and more than 20 injured. Dixon first raised the provincial engineer idea in July 2012 with former premier Dalton McGuinty, and had at least two meetings with the former premier's advisors in 2012.

In November, following McGuinty's decision to resign and prorogue the Ontario legislature, Dixon told *Northern Ontario Business* that PEO would be raising the idea of a provincial engineer with all three major political parties.

"Now, with the possibility of a provincial election coming up in the near future, we will be pushing it even more, so all three parties have this idea in their platform," he said.

At a PEO council plenary session on February 7 devoted to PEO's government liaison activities, in fact, panelists representing the Liberal, Progressive Conservative and New Democratic parties agreed the idea deserves careful consideration.

Liberal MP David Zimmer (Willowdale), now aboriginal affairs minister, and a former parliamentary assistant to the attorney general, likened the concept to both the chief justice of Ontario and the chief medical officer of health. "The important thing here," he said, "is what is in the best public interest. If this position is going to make the province a safer place, it would be a good thing. The [then] premier-designate is open to new ideas from anywhere. I'm sure we will have a real look at this."

NDP MPP John Vanthof (Timiskaming-Cochrane) advised PEO to "strike while the iron is hot," noting the concept is proven in other professions and suggesting it might be something positive to come out of the Algo Centre Mall disaster.

PC MPP Rod Jackson (Barrie) said he'd be surprised if there were resistance in his caucus to looking closely at the concept. "Whenever there is a chance to increase transparency, it is a great step forward," he said. All three politicians also agreed there may be other options to achieve the same result that should be considered, but that the important thing for PEO is to keep the conversation with government going.

Commissioner seeks “institutional change” to overcome access barriers

By Michael Mastromatteo



Ontario Fairness Commissioner Jean Augustine outlined recommendations of her *A Fair Way to Go* report January 16 in Toronto.

Ontario’s regulated professions, including engineering, have made progress in accommodating the needs of internationally educated professionals, but additional work remains to be done, says the Ontario fairness commissioner (OFC).

In her latest report, *A Fair Way to Go: Access to Ontario’s Regulated Professions and the Need to Embrace Newcomers in the Global Economy*, the OFC called for long-term institutional change to fully harness the skills, experience and ability of new Canadians in an increasingly competitive and diverse economy.

Described as the culmination of five years of research and analysis of regulated professions in the province, the report was released January 16 at a media conference in Toronto.

The OFC was created in 2007 to oversee implementation of the Ontario government’s 2006 *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act*, which aims to bring fairness, consistency, objectivity and accountability to the registration and licensing practices of the province’s 40 regulated professions, with a combined membership of more than 800,000.

In releasing the report, Fairness Commissioner Jean Augustine said that while regulated professions are “exceeding expectations” with regard to accommodating internationally educated professionals and new immigrants, there are still collective shortcomings that must be addressed.

The fairness commissioner outlined 12 recommendations, or areas for improvement, in the report. Among the recommendations are providing clear rationale for registration requirements, recognizing acceptable alternatives for meeting requirements, identifying some requirements that might be exempted from the normal process, and improving assessment criteria.

The report also recommends general streamlining, improved timelines, red tape reduction and increased communication between regulators and applicants as key steps in improving the province’s self-regulated professions landscape.

Two key recommendations directed specifically at regulators are identifying acceptable alternatives for meeting the competencies “imbedded in academic and experience requirements,” and expanding the reach of international mutual recognition agreements (MRAs).

On that score, Augustine said the engineering profession has already taken a leading role. She cited Engineers Canada, the national federation of the provincial and territorial engineering regulators, for its work in reaching MRAs with a number of international engineering bodies.

The January 16 event also included a panel discussion on “protection and protectionism” and the Canadian experience requirement that many regulated professions, including engineering, maintain as a condition of licensing.

PEO requires new applicants to obtain at least 12 months of Canadian experience before a licence is granted to ensure applicants have sufficient

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exposure to Canadian engineering codes, legislation, technical standards and regulations.

The panel, comprising Debbie Douglas, executive director, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants; Gervan Fearon, PhD, dean of continuing education, Ryerson University; and Lorne Sossin, PhD, LLB, dean, Osgoode Law School, discussed the Canadian experience requirement from two perspectives: as a way of maintaining high admission standards and protecting the general public, or as a more subtle way of protecting members' interests.

Augustine said accommodating the needs of new Canadians in regulated professions will help Ontario's economic competitiveness and bring valuable diversity to membership in general.

"In the broader context, we need to have the right mindset, embracing skilled newcomers as vital economic contributors, rather than assuming that their training is inherently inferior," Augustine said.

Since the creation of the OFC in 2007, PEO has won high marks for its efforts to examine registration and licensing practices with a view to the needs of internationally educated professionals. PEO was one of the first to allow immigrants to apply for licensing prior to their arrival in Ontario.

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Undergraduate and graduate university students who are registered in a full-time Ontario engineering program and in PEO's Student Membership or EIT programs are invited to enter OCEPP's 2013 student essay competition. There are two categories: undergraduate and graduate. The winner of each category will receive a \$1000 award and complimentary registration to the centre's 2013 Public Policy Conference in Toronto.

Submission deadline: midnight ET, April 2, 2013
Details: www.ocepp.ca; click on For Students

PEO to support study group on used nuclear fuel

By Michael Mastromatteo



Peter Ottensmeyer, PhD, discusses the recycling of used nuclear fuel at an October 18 policy engagement series event presented by the Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy.

PEO, through its public policy centre, is supporting a working group aimed at raising awareness of the potential of spent nuclear fuel as a reliable and cost-effective source of power generation.

Known as the Working Group on the Productive Utilization of Spent Nuclear Fuel (WGPUSNF), the group arose out of an October 18 policy engagement seminar presented by the Ontario Centre for Engineering and Public Policy (OCEPP) on the topic of "Fast-neutron reactors: A wiser solution to spent nuclear fuel."

Presented by Peter Ottensmeyer, PhD, professor emeritus, University of Toronto (U of T), the seminar focused on the environmental and economic benefits of recycling CANDU reactor fuel waste using fast-neutron reactors.

An article on the subject by Ottensmeyer appeared in the Policy Engagement section of *Engineering Dimensions* (July/August 2012, p. 47).

In his article and at the seminar, Ottensmeyer stated that burying nuclear waste in deep geological repositories, the current government policy direction, isn't necessarily the best policy option. He estimates that recycling nuclear waste would be less costly than burial, would greatly reduce left-over radioactivity of the spent fuel, and could provide trillions of dollars' worth of carbon-free electricity.

Ottensmeyer said he believes, however, that recycling nuclear fuel waste has a low to non-existent profile among government policy-makers, many of whom may have been scared away from nuclear energy because of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Fukushima, Japan. In that instance, flooding of the reactors' basement-level emergency generators prevented emergency cool-down operations and led to a significant core meltdown.

The working group's initial meeting took place November 23 at PEO headquarters. The group's plans include briefing PEO council on the use of recycled nuclear fuel and publishing a discussion paper on the best path forward for this initiative.

Its wider objectives include examining what policies would be needed to incorporate fast-neutron reactors into the Ontario energy supply, bringing the best technical and system management research on spent nuclear fuel management and related topics into the policy-making debate, and encouraging policy-makers to make decisions based on technologically innovative and economically sustainable choices.

In interviews with *Engineering Dimensions*, Ottensmeyer described the creation of the working group as "an excellent step in the right direction."



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North Bay engineers convene at symposium



The January 25 Professional Engineers' Day Symposium hosted by PEO's North Bay Chapter and the Near North Chapter of the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT) attracted over 100 local engineers, who heard presentations on transportation and infrastructure. MP Marc Garneau, PhD, spoke about connecting Canada to the global economy. Also in attendance were North Bay Mayor Al McDonald, Victor Fedeli, MPP, and Jay Aspen, MP. Left to right: Michael Price, P.Eng., MBA, FEC, PEO acting CEO/registrar; Rod MacLeod, C.E.T., OACETT president; Annette Bergeron, P.Eng., PEO president-elect; Marc Garneau, PhD, MP; and Nadine Miller, P.Eng., president, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers.

ENGINEERS CANADA WEBSITE helps newcomers entering the profession

By Jennifer Coombes



NEWCOMERS.ENGINEERSCANADA.CA is a new website developed by Engineers Canada to help internationally educated engineering graduates gain a foothold in their profession in Canada.

Funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and incorporating input from Engineers Canada's constituent regulators, the website provides a one-stop source of detailed information to newcomers on overcoming obstacles on their path to licensure, finding employment and integrating into the Canadian engineering profession.

Newcomers will get answers to questions like: How does my education compare to a Canadian engineering education? How do I show my work

experience? and Which provincial engineering regulator should I apply to?

According to Engineers Canada, "the launch of this new website coincides with recent changes made to the Government of Canada's Federal Skilled Worker Program that will make it easier for international engineering graduates to become 'licence ready' before coming to Canada...potential newcomers can get a better idea of what exactly they should know and do ahead of time so they can make it through the Federal Skilled Worker Program selection system quickly and efficiently."

PEO BUILDING BRANDING NOW COMPLETE

By Jennifer Coombes



PEO's new building signage.

PEO'S HEADQUARTERS building at 40 Sheppard Avenue West in Toronto can now be identified as the "Professional Engineers" building, following the long-awaited installation of exterior signage.

The signage, installed in January and February, includes two roof-level signs on the building's south and east faces that read "Professional Engineers" in blue lettering by day (illuminated white at night), the street address above the main building entrance facing Sheppard Avenue, and a polished aluminum monument sign with a concrete base at street level displaying the Professional Engineers Ontario logo. All of the signs are lit to be seen easily at night.

Signage ideas and designs have been in the works since June 2010, six months after PEO moved its operations from rented premises at 25 Sheppard Avenue West to its own building. Because Intercon, the building's major tenant, held signage rights that extended to January 31, 2012, a participatory approach to the signage design was undertaken with ideas initially solicited from PEO's entire member-

ship. From the almost 400 ideas received, staff and PEO's Executive Committee shortlisted to a handful to test and develop further. Some of the shortlisted suggestions were the Professional Engineers Ontario logo, Engineering House, Ingenuity Place–Place Ingénuité, Engineering Centre Ontario, and Engineering Ontario.

Intercede Facility Management Inc., PEO's building design consultant, developed several rough signage concepts using the shortlisted names to test through displays at PEO's 2011 AGM and in the building lobby. Responses were gathered from chapter leaders, AGM guests, PEO staff, the building's tenants and visitors to the building. PEO members were also able to view the designs and comment via an e-blasted survey.

Although the PEO logo was the favoured design for the rooftop signage and initially approved by council at its November 2011 meeting on the recommendation of the 40 Sheppard Task Force, the decision was reconsidered by council in February

2012 and rescinded over concerns about the sign's legibility at a distance.

Ultimately, council decided to drop the graphic element of the logo and simply use the words "Professional Engineers" for the rooftop signage to enable legibility from a distance of

several blocks. Council's initial decision for the fascia address sign and logo monument sign remained unchanged.

Total cost of the signage was budgeted at \$250,000 and came in at just under \$194,000.

P.Engs to get up close and personal with MPPs

By Michael Mastromatteo



PEO'S GOVERNMENT LIAISON COMMITTEE (GLC) is moving ahead with plans for its first-ever Take Your MPP to Work Day.

First announced at PEO's October 18, 2012 Queen's Park reception, the event is intended to have elected members of the Ontario legislature (MPPs) spend a day or part of a day with professional engineers at work in the MPP's riding.

The day is aimed at allowing MPPs to learn more about professional engineers and their work in ensuring that the public is served and protected.

As many as nine PEO chapters and 11 MPPs are expected to be involved in the initiative.

The GLC held a planning webinar December 13, and has developed a guideline for staging the event.

Although February 15 had originally been picked as the date for the inaugural event, chapter leaders indicated a need for more time to prepare.

Eight other participating chapters, including Mississauga, Brampton, York, Grand River, Porcupine-Kapuskasing, Toronto Humber, Thousand Islands, Niagara and Brampton are scheduling their events later this winter or in early spring.

Jeannette Chau, P.Eng., PEO manager, government and student liaison programs, says the experience of the first chapter's event will be considered by the other participating chapters in organizing their respective events.

Among the key messages to be shared with MPPs at the Take Your MPP to Work Days are PEO's legislative mandate to regulate professional engineering in the public interest, the value of engineering contributions to new policy initiatives, and the concept of an independent provincial engineer office, which was first suggested to former Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty in July 2012.