

We received many phone calls from Engineering Dimensions readers in response to the article, "Retired P.Engs no longer to act as passport applicant guarantors" (p. 15, March/April 2003). Many of you expressed disappointment with the Canadian government's passport application process. Here are a few of your questions.

Q. Can retired professional engineers act as guarantors for passport applications?

A. It depends on what is meant by 'retired'. The Vital Statistics Act, dated December 5, 2001, states: "Canadian citizens who have know the applicant for at least two years and who are practising members in good standing of a provincial regulatory body may act as guarantors". So, if "retired" means non-practising, a "retired" engineer cannot act as a guarantor.

Q. What is PEO's definition of a member in good standing?

A. A member is considered to be in good standing when annual fee payments are up to date, and there is no disciplinary action against the member. Both full members and retired members who pay the reduced fee are considered to be in good standing if they have met these requirements.

Q. How does the government enforce its eligibility requirement?

A. A passport office will contact PEO to check an engineer's status. PEO's Records Department confirms only whether the engineer is a member in good standing. Experience suggests that the degree of follow-up by individual passport offices is somewhat varied.