

ACCOUNTABILITY IN REGULATION



Annette Bergeron, P.Eng.
President

I AM HUMBLED by the support from my professional colleagues to lead the association as its 94th president. Thank you.

At PEO's 91st annual general meeting (AGM), I delivered my first remarks to attending licence holders as their new president and I would like to share them with you as well:

"In the next 12 months, we will bring a renewed focus to PEO's regulatory functions and a plan to prioritize where our association should maximize its resources. Why, you may well ask, is there engineering activity in Ontario that is effectively unregulated? Is it related to

the fact that Ontario's uptake rate in licensure is the lowest in Canada? Prospective licence holders of the profession are choosing not to seek licensure because they do not believe it is necessary to earn a living. In addition, employers of engineering graduates, including all levels of government, are reluctant to require them to be licensed. These are important issues that need to be addressed.

"Simply put, our resources should support our regulatory functions. Resources should be allocated to licence- and discipline-related initiatives first. We can then measure regulatory effectiveness by identifying outcomes such as licence application rate versus successful outcomes, number of disciplinary cases versus number of complaints, and changes to the *Professional Engineers Act*, such as the repeal of section 12(3)(a) of the act.

"Other regulatory issues might be: the lack of legislative constraints on the areas in which a licensee may practise, the lack of specialty-specific certification procedures, and the lack of a mandatory requirement for continuing education. The question may arise as to how PEO ensures continuing competency, or competency in the area in which a P.Eng. practises.

"We must also be prepared to be proactive to any threats to PEO as a self-governing body. In the coming months, we'll receive recommendations from the Elliot Lake Inquiry and we must be prepared to address issues.

"As the 2013-2014 council begins its work, I will aim to continue a cohesive, collaborative and accountable council and regulatory body. At our council workshop in June, we'll decide on our plan, focus and desired outcomes for the year and you, the licence holder, will know what we're doing.

"Ontario has an advantage over other provinces. We have two engineering bodies in Ontario, leaving PEO the luxury of focusing on regulation, and OSPE on advocacy and member services. I know we can leverage each other to make PEO better than it has ever been.

"My work has always been guided by the philosophy of consensus-building negotiations, and I will continue to stress this theme at PEO's council table. I'm anxious to continue work with my council colleagues, PEO staff and our dedicated contingent of volunteers across the province to advance the association's regulatory mandate. My congratulations to those newly elected to PEO council and my thanks to those whose terms have concluded. And

thank you to Past President Dixon for his valued mentorship during my term as president-elect."

The weekend of PEO's AGM on April 26 and 27 provided a number of highlights that showcased the diversity and importance of the profession, as well as the role of the association.

Our 91st business meeting allowed licence holders to participate in the governance of the profession, and webcasting the event in real-time (the webcast is available on PEO's homepage) increased the accessibility of information to a broader audience. Our AGM keynote luncheon speaker, Gerry Chaput, P.Eng., assistant deputy minister, provincial highways management, Ministry of Transportation, provided an entertaining and informative perspective on the diverse engineering accomplishments at the ministry. Following the luncheon was the first assemblage of the 2013-2014 council. The six women and 23 men on the new leadership group provide province-wide representation from a wide array of sectors, including the business community, industry, academe and government.

Our first Penta Forum allowed delegates to explore ways to improve the operations and the governance of PEO through one of our most valuable resources: our 36 chapters across the province. Sixteen presenters spoke on a variety of topics, including chapter budgets and business planning; preparing awards nominations; and our communications processes, all of which aimed to maximize the contributions of the chapters.

The wonderful and valued work of six of our volunteers was celebrated at PEO's 2013 Order of Honour Awards gala. Congratulations to Philip Maka, P.Eng., FEC (companion); Corneliu Chisu, P.Eng., FEC (officer); Gheorghe Bacioiu, PhD, P.Eng. (member); Sarah Jin, P.Eng. (member); Pappur Shankar, P.Eng. (member); and Noubar Takessian, P.Eng., FEC (member), who were recognized for their devoted and selfless contributions to the profession.

Ours is a wonderful profession and together we must commit to serving and protecting the public interest through our licences. I welcome your participation and support.

Thank you! Σ