

# PROVIDING CLEAR DIRECTION



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FEC, President

AS THIS IS MY LAST MESSAGE as PEO president, I would like to thank the council of 2013-2014 for their support during my term and our licence holders for bestowing on me the privilege of leading the profession.

My tenure as PEO president came with an unexpected challenge. As I mentioned in the last issue of *Engineering Dimensions*, a search for a new registrar wasn't something I expected during my term; however, I am glad I was able to participate in what I think is one of the most important duties of council or of any board of governance. Hiring the

right person to lead PEO sets the tone of our association for years to come and, undoubtedly, has a lasting impact on the success we have in carrying out our mandate. Some of you may have already met Gerard McDonald, MBA, P.Eng., who joined PEO as registrar on January 6 and brings to the association a proven record of high-level regulation development and expertise, along with a commitment to focus PEO on its core mandate.

You may recall that my election platform in 2012 promised just that: a clear focus on regulatory activities. I am proud of council's focus on regulation this term as we have had to deal with some critical regulatory issues.

When I assumed the presidency in April 2013, we were at the height of our efforts to ensure proclamation of the repeal of section 12(3)(a) of the *Professional Engineers Act*, an exception that, regrettably, allows certain acts of engineering in a manufacturing setting to be performed by unlicensed employees. Although proclamation of this important legislation was ultimately postponed, it remains on the government books until 2020. Undeterred, PEO has continued to press for its implementation. I have been meeting with MPPs, industry stakeholders and the media to raise awareness of the repeal and summon the facts. This issue is one of protecting safety in workplace environments and I remain concerned every time I read about another manufacturing accident where life has been lost or a worker has been harmed. So our resolve to see the repeal proclaimed remains steadfast.

As president, I'm grateful to have had the expertise and support of five structural engineers on council and staff who, as a task force, addressed the issues and questions presented to PEO by the Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry during its examination into the partial collapse of the roof-top parking deck of the Algo Centre Mall. I am very proud of the association's contributions to the commission, which included participation in expert roundtable sessions and recommendations intended to strengthen PEO's regulation of engineering practice, and to help prevent similar tragedies from occurring again. I look forward to the commission's final report in October 2014 and

anticipate that we, as a profession, may have additional regulatory work ahead of us as a result. In anticipation of that report, and knowing what the inquiry has already asked PEO, council recently requested terms of reference for a task force to explore what PEO currently has in place for licence holder professional development, and whether it is sufficient to assure quality, competence and, ultimately, public safety.

During the 2013-2014 council term, I remained true to my promise to carry on Past President Dixon's [P.Eng., FEC] work with the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE). I increased the frequency of our Joint Relations Committee meetings to almost one a month (there were years in the past where the committee never met) to leverage our distinct roles in the profession. As I've stated previously, we have two engineering bodies in Ontario, leaving PEO the luxury of focusing on regulation, and OSPE on advocacy and member services. The distinction is obviously an important one but often gets overlooked, even in our best efforts to serve the profession. This continuous dialogue helps to provide clarity for the leadership groups of both organizations and makes us stronger in the process.

While significant work has been accomplished this year to improve the governance of our profession, there is still much to be done. A presidential term of one year is short by governance standards. Fortunately, our new registrar will be formulating a forward-looking corporate and strategic plan for council's consideration that should assist in keeping PEO focused on its mandate.

With the 2014-2015 council being introduced at PEO's 92nd annual general meeting in April, I would like to thank all of the candidates who put their names forward to serve the profession. PEO made a concerted effort to engage licence holders in the recent election (I hope you noticed the improved communications) and all those who placed their name on the ballot as candidates deserve our praise. I look forward to welcoming the new council next month in Niagara Falls and encourage you to join us to participate in the governance of your profession. Please visit [www.peo.on.ca/index.php?&ci\\_id=26496&event\\_id=27374&la\\_id=1](http://www.peo.on.ca/index.php?&ci_id=26496&event_id=27374&la_id=1) for all the details. Σ