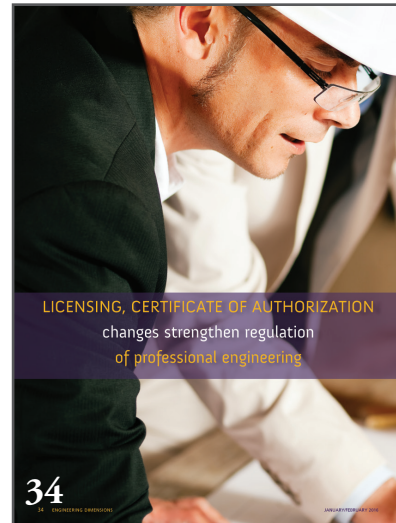


ENGINEERING DIMENSIONS

January/February 2016
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**Licensing, Certificate of Authorization
changes strengthen regulation of
professional engineering**
By Michael Mastromatteo



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[EDITOR'S NOTE]

THE EXCEPTION STANDS (FOR NOW)



Jennifer Coombes
Editor

WHILE THERE WERE quite a few new developments in the engineering profession in late 2015, perhaps eclipsing all was the Ontario government's stunning announcement November 26 it had reversed its commitment to repeal a section of the *Professional Engineers Act* (PEA) that permits unlicensed people to perform engineering work on manufacturing production machinery and equipment (p. 3, 8). Often referred to as the industrial exception, this section of the PEA is something PEO has, for many years, been

actively working to reverse, citing the potential to enhance manufacturing productivity and worker safety, among other reasons.

Despite assurances that the profession just needed to bide its time, PEO only learned from the province's *2015 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review* that the government intended on "permanently maintaining the industrial exception in the *Professional Engineers Act*."

Understandably, this 180 course change was accompanied by shock. President Thomas Chong, P.Eng., FEC, on behalf of the profession, expressed his disappointment in a press release, saying the way the decision was made and communicated to PEO was "not in keeping with PEO's position as a valued stakeholder that traditionally works in partnership with government to serve and protect the health, safety and economic interests of all Ontarians" (www.peo.on.ca/index.php?ci_id=29315&la_id=1).

Engineers Canada also issued a press release condemning the decision.

Whether the issue can be resolved remains to be seen. In the meantime, this apparent setback has not weakened the president's resolve to see the repeal of the exception proclaimed. He has used every avenue to drive home to government the need to reconsider its decision, including writing to the premier, encouraging members to write their MPPs and holding meetings with party leaders.

One thing rolling out as planned is implementation of the series of regulation amendments (in effect as of July 1, 2015) that recognize the knowledge and special skills of PEO's limited licence holders and, for the first time, allow them to be responsible for engineering services offered to the public under a Certificate of Authorization. Strengthened academic and experience requirements to obtain a limited licence also accompany this change. All is explained in "Licensing, Certificate of Authorization changes strengthen regulation of professional engineering" (p. 34).

Another new area for the profession is continuing professional development (CPD). Council signaled its intention to move ahead with developing the details of a CPD program for PEO licence holders by approving the guiding principles and basic elements of the program outlined in the Continuing Professional Development, Competence and Quality Assurance Task Force's (CPDCQA TF) final report (www.peo.on.ca/index.php?ci_id=29313&la_id=1) at its November meeting (p. 52). Next steps include creating an implementation task force to develop the details and, ultimately, testing PEO members' acceptance of mandatory elements of the program through a referendum.

On the subject of new developments, albeit on a much smaller scale, you may have noticed that with this issue we've reverted to the print edition as the default delivery method for *Engineering Dimensions* (p. 54). If you had previously signed up for the digital edition and would like to continue receiving it, it's easy to switch back. Simply click the Pay Fees/Manage Accounts tab at www.peo.on.ca and change the *Engineering Dimensions* delivery preference in your online profile back to the digital edition. Σ

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Professional Engineers Ontario

THIS ISSUE: PEO recently welcomed a series of regulation changes that recognize the special skills of limited licence holders and ultimately strengthen the profession.

ENFORCEMENT HOTLINE

Please report any person or company you suspect is practising engineering illegally or illegally using engineering titles. Call the PEO enforcement hotline at 416-224-9528, ext. 1444 or 800-339-3716, ext. 1444. Or email enforcement@peo.on.ca.

Through the *Professional Engineers Act*, Professional Engineers Ontario governs licence and certificate holders and regulates professional engineering in Ontario to serve and protect the public.