

November 8, 2021

The Honourable Doug Downey
Attorney General of Ontario
Ministry of the Attorney General

Email: attorneygeneral@ontario.ca

Dear Attorney General Downey:

Thank you for your letter to me of November 4, 2021, expressing support for PEO's ongoing, and vital, anti-racism and anti-discrimination initiatives. PEO is highly mindful of its obligations as a regulator, as an organization and as an employer in these areas. We are committed to equity, inclusion and diversity, in all aspects of our work. We also strive to do better.

As you know, late last year, in the midst of widespread public awareness and concern about these issues, affecting many facets of society, including regulators, PEO's Council appointed a special group from among its members. The group was called the Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group (AREWG). It was tasked with scoping the extent to which further work on anti-discrimination and anti-racism was required, in all areas of PEO's operations and governance. In particular, AREWG was asked to report on vulnerabilities which might potentially exist in terms of systemic racism and discrimination. The group was instructed to identify specific areas of concern and make recommendations to Council as to how they might be further addressed.

Fortuitously, to complete this exploratory phase, AREWG was able to secure the assistance of two highly-regarded, expert consultants in the field of anti-discrimination and anti-racism, Patricia DeGuire (since appointed as Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission) and Shashu Clacken. We were pleased to share with you, as well as with the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, the initial, but quite extensive, AREWG report, entitled "Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination: A Bridge to PEO's More Successful Future". This preliminary report was presented to our Council in June 2021. Since then, the work of AREWG has continued. Later this month, Council will be asked to continue the AREWG work in a new phase. Assuming Council agrees, this new phase will build on what has already been accomplished. It will result in more specific, concrete recommendations, potentially including additional policies, programs and legislative steps, as well as enhanced accountability for maintaining an operational environment and a regulatory regime that is inclusive, diverse, equitable and free from discrimination. Simultaneously, as you know, PEO will also be working closely with the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, and with your Ministry, to address the particular issues arising from our current Canadian experience requirement for licensure.

We are grateful for your support for this work. We intend to keep you fully informed as it continues. We also would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you when you meet with our elected President, Christian Bellini, P.Eng., and myself, on November 16th.

Sincerely,



Johnny Zuccon, P.Eng., FEC
CEO/Registrar

cc. Christian Bellini, P.Eng., FEC
President and Chair