engineerscanada
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NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MOBILITY

THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION'S POSITION

- Global demand for engineering services requires the establishment and regulation of internationally recognized qualification and practice standards.
- To protect public safety and welfare, international and Canadian engineering graduates must meet the same high standards to practise in and across Canada. It is through becoming licensed with a provincial or territorial engineering regulatory body that there is assurance that international engineers meet this standard. It is also through the provincial and territorial regulatory bodies that international engineers can be held accountable for their practice in or for Canada, thereby addressing the public interest in such matters.
- Engineers Canada considers the national and international mobility of:
  - Engineers licensed in Canada to practice across jurisdictions.
  - International engineering graduates coming to Canada, by assessing the substantial equivalency of international engineering credentials.
  - International engineering professionals coming to Canada, by developing Mutual Recognition Agreements that recognize their qualifications towards engineering licensure in Canada.
  - Canadian-based professional engineers practising abroad, by entering into bilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements and multinational agreements that recognize Canadian engineering credentials

The challenge(s)

Despite the increasing globalization of markets, it can be hard to move goods and services across provincial and territorial boundaries within Canada than across international borders, damaging Canada's domestic markets and its competitive position in the global market. To address the problem of existing barriers to inter-provincial and territorial labour mobility, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments came together in 1994 by calling on regulated professions across Canada to eliminate restrictions on labour mobility by April 2009. Currently, licensed engineers are able to practice with ease across Canada.

Canada remains one of the world's top exporters of engineering services. Canadian-based engineers must be able to practise in other countries, while meeting the host country's requirements. Engineers in Canada who are working on international projects are still accountable to their provincial or territorial regulator.

Similarly, internationally trained engineers who wish to practise in Canada must meet the provincial and territorial requirements for licensure, which have been established to ensure that public safety and welfare are protected.

The continuing expansion of international trade in engineering services may result in changes to public policy that exert pressure on regulatory authorities to simplify standards for engineering licensure, thereby resulting in a possible risk to public safety.

How Engineers Canada has contributed

Nationally

The engineering profession has been repeatedly recognized by federal officials as having one of the most advanced internal regimes in Canada.

In 1999, Engineers Canada and the engineering regulators signed the Inter-Association Mobility Agreement. This agreement, which was renewed in 2004, allows engineers who are licensed in one jurisdiction in Canada to register in another province or territory with minimal administrative requirements and processing delays. The final decision for licensing remains at the discretion of the issuing regulator.

The Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) entered into effect on July 1, 2017, replacing the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). The CFTA incorporates all AIT elements requiring that workers in regulated professions be able to work anywhere in Canada without undergoing additional training, assessments, or examinations. More specifically, Chapter 7 of the CFTA titled "Labour Mobility," seeks to eliminate or reduce measures to restrict or impair mobility, provided that the requirements are similar to those imposed in another jurisdiction or region in Canada. As a result of these initiatives, the vast majority of individuals secure a licence efficiently and with little delay as a result of mobility agreements already in place.

The provincial and territorial regulatory bodies regularly review those engineers living in other countries who are

practicing within provincial or territories jurisdictions to ensure that only those who meet the appropriate standards are assessed through licensure and constitute to do so as licensed professionals. Not only are they assessed for licensure as they come to practice in Canada, ongoing licensure ensures that they can be held accountable for their ongoing practice.

National recognition: Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Trade, and Commerce

The Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce released a report in June 2016, entitled, "Tear Down These Walls: Dismantling Canada's Internal Trade Barriers," documenting its study on internal barriers to inter-provincial and inter-territorial labour mobility. Engineers Canada provided verbal testimony during the study regarding inter-provincial and inter-territorial labour mobility for the engineering profession. The Standing Committee's report highlighted the ongoing efforts of the engineering regulators in Canada as a leading example of work being conducted to improve labour mobility across the country.

Internationally

Engineers Canada is the signatory to two international agreements:

- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Engineers Agreement for the member economies of APEC.
- The International Professional Engineers Agreement (IPEA), which includes the United Kingdom, Ireland, India, and South Africa, as well as many of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Agreement countries.

These two multinational agreements recognize the "substantial equivalence" in professional competence in engineering and are intended to help streamline the review of professional credentials for engineers wishing to practise in another member country. Each signatory maintains a national register listing those engineers who meet the international standard of professional competence. Most national registers are online and can be readily searched.

Engineers Canada also created and maintains the Engineers Canada Mobility Register. By joining the mobility register, Canadian engineers may use the APEC or IPEA designations to signify that they have met the academic and competence standards and are prepared to conduct engineering practices internationally. The registration process comes at no cost to the engineer and uses a self-assessment process whereby Canadian engineers declare that they meet and will maintain the qualifications to be on the provincial and territorial registers. To maintain their status on the register, members must annually declare that they continue to meet these qualifications.

Educational agreements that improve international mobility by recognizing the substantial equivalency of engineering education programs in each signatory country are also in place. Engineers Canada is a signatory of the Washington Accord, which facilitates the expeditious review of academic credentials.

Recommendations to the federal government

To reduce, and to ultimately eliminate, barriers to labour mobility, the federal government should consult and collaborate with regulated professions to achieve the desired outcomes for professional mobility in Canada and the international community.

The federal government should:

- Consult regulators when making national and international policy and legislative decisions that could affect the regulators' ability to protect the public interest and ensure public safety.
- Support the maintenance of high standards already in place while enhancing inter-provincial and inter-territorial mobility.
- Facilitate the development of appropriate agreements towards the mobility of qualified engineering professionals between jurisdictions nationally and internationally.
- Ensure that those international engineers who come to Canada to practice engineering in or for the federal government or in federally regulated industries meet Canadian standards through becoming licensed with a provincial or territorial engineering regulatory authority.
- Consult with Engineers Canada when considering new free trade agreements that impact the mobility of engineers.

How Engineers Canada will contribute

Engineers Canada and the engineering regulators play a leadership role in addressing several challenging mobility issues by actively engaging government officials. We have fully supported agreements that enhance maximum mobility between provinces and territories and with the international community. Engineers Canada will:

- Continue to work with government officials to monitor the regional and bilateral trade discussion undertaken by the Government of Canada.
- Continue to monitor changes and additions made to national and international free trade agreements.

- Continue to monitor the ongoing negotiations for a global agreement on trade in services within the World Trade Organization.
- Be available to provide expertise and to facilitate consultation to ensure that Canada's engineering education, standards of practice, and admission qualifications are maintained.
- Facilitate the development of appropriate agreements towards the mobility of qualified engineering professionals nationally and internationally.