

## THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION'S POSITION

- Global demand for engineering services requires the establishment of internationally recognized qualification and practice standards.
- To protect public safety and welfare, both international and Canadian engineering graduates must meet the same high standards to practise in Canada.
- Engineers Canada will continue to facilitate the mobility of:
  - 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 professional engineering licensure in Canada.
  - Canada-based professional engineers practising abroad, by entering into Mutual Recognition Agreements for Canadian engineering credentials.

### The issue

Despite the increasing globalization of markets, it is often harder to move goods and services across provincial and territorial boundaries within Canada than across international borders, damaging Canada's 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.

Canada remains one of the world's top exporters of engineering services. Engineers in Canada 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 from the international community who wish to practise in Canada must meet the requirements for licensure, which have been established to ensure that public safety and welfare is protected.

The continuing expansion of international trade in professional engineering services may result in changes to public policy that exert pressure on regulatory authorities to change standards for professional 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 professional 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.

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.

*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 has developed and maintained two international registers of engineers that provide a common basis for participating countries to negotiate mutual recognition of qualifications:

- The International Engineers Register, in cooperation with several Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Agreement members.
- The International Professional Engineers Agreement (IPEA) Registry, which includes the United Kingdom, Ireland, India, and South Africa, as well as many of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Agreement countries.

The intent of these registers is that participating countries with different accreditation, regulatory, and/or licensure systems are able to recognize the credentials of engineers who meet substantially equivalent education and experience criteria.

In 2016, Engineers Canada released the [Engineers Canada Mobility Register](#), which facilitates registration on the IPEA register and the APEC register. By joining the Engineers Canada Mobility Register, Canadian engineers may use the APEC or IPEA designations to signify that they have met the standard of registration 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 professional engineers declare that they meet and will maintain the qualifications to be on the 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 has signed several international agreements, including the Washington Accord, a bilateral

agreement with the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology Inc. (ABET), and mutual recognition agreements that facilitate recognition of professional qualifications of applicants from signatory countries.

### **What the federal government must do**

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

The engineering profession is ready and willing to work with the federal government to achieve their goals and best serve Canadians. The federal government must:

- Consult regulators when making 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 territorial mobility.
- Facilitate the development of appropriate agreements towards the mobility of qualified engineering professionals between jurisdictions.

### **How Engineers Canada will contribute**

Engineers Canada and the engineering regulators will continue to 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 within 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 the Agreement on Internal Trade.
- 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 between jurisdictions.