

Draft for Consultation

Your input is requested on the following Framework Element. Engineers Canada is seeking expert feedback and validation regarding specialist certifications. Key questions for consideration:

- What criteria should be used to create a new specialist certification?
- What should be included in the plan for a certification program?
- What terms and conditions should be placed on the certification?

If you have any questions, or would like to submit your feedback please contact:

Kathryn Sutherland
Vice-President, Regulatory Affairs
Engineers Canada
Kathryn.sutherland@engineerscanada.ca

We welcome your feedback!

Specialist certifications

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Purpose and policy direction

The purpose of this framework element is to define criteria for the creation of specialist certification and the ongoing maintenance requirements of the certification program. The creation and management of specialist certifications by regulators shall serve and protect the public interest.

Key considerations

1. Regulators recognize that legislators may require the creation of a new specialist certification.
2. Regulators recognize that legislation may emanate from formal commissions, inquiries or judicial findings or recommendations suggesting the creation of a specialist certification. In such cases, the regulator will work with the appropriate authorities and stakeholders to ensure any resulting specialist certification program is properly legislated, designed and built.
3. Regulators recognize that some legislation (examples below) may refer to a requirement of an engineering specialist but that this does not necessarily require the creation of a specialist certification program.

4. When pending legislation mandating a new specialist certification is tabled, the affected regulator shall provide immediate notice to its counterparts and canvass opportunities for national participation and acceptance of the specialty certification.
5. Where two jurisdictions recognize the same specialist certification, both regulators shall apply the mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade.
6. In the absence of a legislated requirement to create a specialty certification, regulators will not create a specialty certification without first seeking a consensus of provincial and territorial regulators to create a parallel specialty certifications across Canada.
7. The purpose of the specialty certification shall be defined and must include a statement as to how it will serve and protect the public interest.
8. Specialty certification is often in practice areas where there is increased threat to public safety and for this reason the regulator shall ensure defensibility in program activities.
9. The plan for a specialty certification program shall include its development, implementation, maintenance, administration and revision activities.
 - a. The regulator shall determine, validate and publish a profile of the competencies, tasks, eligibility and performance criteria that are necessary to achieve certification. This profile will be reviewed on a regular schedule.
 - b. The certification program must include valid, reliable and fair assessment methods.
 - c. Certification information shall be posted and shall clearly identify the fees and renewal requirements.
 - d. The program shall develop internal policies for accommodation, appeals and requirements for renewal of certification.
 - e. Renewal requirements may include continuing quality assurance, assessment procedures, continuing professional development, portfolio reviews, and other forms of evidence.
10. Certification granted shall be for fixed periods following which certified registrants may apply for renewal.
11. The regulator shall take all necessary steps to obtain title protection for the specialist certification (e.g. Struct. Eng.) and for the ongoing enforcement of that title protection.
12. Certification may be revoked by the regulator in a similar process as the revocation of a licence to practice.

13. The continued validity of a certification shall be contingent on the holder being in active practice and maintaining a current licence.
14. The regulator will maintain a publicly available list of all certified registrants.
15. Where a regulator becomes aware of a privately sponsored specialty certification or certificate program in its jurisdiction, the regulator shall inform its counterparts and canvas views on a joint response.

Definition:

“Specialist certification” is an additional qualification to a professional engineer designation available to those registrants with the necessary established set of competencies gained from education, training and experience.

Related:

Element: Public identification of engineering expertise

Element: Technical examinations

Element: Applicants registered in another province or territory

2016 Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs published by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (revised November 2014)

Research:

Elliot Lake Commission Inquiry Recommendation 1.5 – “The prescribed structural inspection should be conducted in accordance with the Performance Standard by a structural engineering specialist who has met the Professional Engineers of Ontario qualification and requirements to be so certified.”

Example of mandatory legislation:

Designated Structural Engineer	Bylaw 11(h) (1) of the Engineers and Geoscientists Act
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Examples of demand side (non-mandatory) legislation:

Temporary Work Engineering Specialist	Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter O.1 R.S.O. 1990, Reg. 859 Amended to O. Reg. 532/92
Safety Engineering Specialist	Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter O.1 R.S.O. 1990, Reg. 851 Amended to O. Reg. 280/05
Structural Engineering Specialist	Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.50,

	Ontario Regulation 104/97, amended to O. Reg. 160/02, Standards for Bridges
Sanitary Engineering Specialist	Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, Chapter 32, Ontario Regulation 242/05, no amendments, compliance and enforcement Ontario Regulation 170/03, amended to O. Reg. 253/05, Drinking Water Systems
Water Resources Engineering Specialist	Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, Chapter 29
Flammable Fuels Engineering Specialist	Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000, S.O. 2000, Chapter 16, Ontario Regulation 214/01, no amendments, Compressed Natural Gas Ontario Regulation 217/01, no amendments, Liquid Fuels Ontario Regulation 210/01, no amendments, Oil and Gas Pipeline Systems Ontario Regulation 211/01, no amendments, Propane Storage and Handling
Elevating Devices Engineering Specialist	Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000, S.O. 2000, Chapter 16 Ontario Regulation 209/01, amended to O. Reg. 185/03, Elevating Devices