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ENGINEERING^{*}

on the Hill

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REPORTING ON ISSUES ON PARLIAMENT HILL OF INTEREST TO THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION

Federal election called for October 14



Ottawa - On Sunday, September 5, 2008, Governor General Michaëlle Jean officially dropped the writ which launched the 40th General Election. Canadians will return to the ballot boxes to vote in the next federal government on Tuesday, October 14th, 2008.

Understanding the platforms of each of Canada's five leading political parties is an important step for Canada's engineers to make educated decisions on Election Day. A special issue of Engineering on the Hill later this month will summarize Engineers Canada's priority position statements for key issues and provide details on the corresponding positions of the five main political parties, once their respective platforms are made available. We will also feature a listing of candidates from across Canada with engineering backgrounds.

Labour Mobility: changes to the Agreement on Internal Trade

The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) signed by federal, provincial and territorial governments in 1994 provides for a framework to eliminate restrictions on labour mobility within Canada. In September 2006, federal, provincial and territorial governments decided to set a firm target for implementation and asked regulators to achieve compliance by April 2009, which would provide for "full mobility for all Canadians". For the engineering profession, the objective laid out by governments was to provide nation-wide access to the expertise of all licensed engineers regardless of where they are licensed, while continuing to recognize the authority of provincial and territorial regulatory bodies.

Following meetings in the city of Quebec this past July, provincial and territorial government leaders announced further details on what they consider to constitute full labour mobility:

1. Any worker certified for an occupation by a regulatory authority of one province or territory shall be recognized as qualified to practise that occupation by all other provinces and territories; and
2. Such recognition shall be granted expeditiously without further material training, examinations or assessment requirements.

Premiers further directed that any exceptions to full labour mobility would have to be clearly identified and justified as required to meet a legitimate objective such as the protection of health or public safety.

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Licensing of Federal Employees

Engineers Canada continues to focus on having the Government of Canada adopt guidelines or regulations across all federal departments and agencies which require that federal government employees who undertake engineering work be registered with, and licensed by the appropriate professional regulating bodies. Our approach includes a strategy, and a value statement, and is not linked to fee reimbursement for federal employees.

As part of our ongoing outreach efforts, Engineers Canada Chief Executive Officer, Chantal Guay, P.Eng., met the Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment Canada to discuss the federal licensing issue. Environment Canada is one of the largest employers of engineers in the federal government and we have spoken with the department previously about our concerns that not all officials occupying engineering positions in that department are licensed. The meeting provided the opportunity to explain the benefits of Environment Canada employing P.Engs, and reiterate the need for registration of all Environment Canada employees occupying engineering positions.

At the recommendation of the Senior Official, C. Guay will be meeting with the vice-president of Strategic Infrastructure, Organization and Classification at the Canadian Public Service Agency this fall. The Public Service Commission is the lead federal agency for determining occupational credentials for positions within the service of the federal government.

Additional follow up with individual departments and agencies regarding their specific human resources policies and practices is also being undertaken as each federal department has been delegated the responsibility for individual employee credential requirements. Engineers Canada will continue to build upon its previous success in requiring that licensure be implemented as a minimum requirement for engineering work (i.e. Transport Canada and the Department of Public Work and Government Services).

Engineers Canada continues to discuss the licensing issue with parliamentarians and other key government officials as part of our ongoing efforts to articulate that it is in the public interest pertaining to safety and health, by ensuring that all federal employees performing engineering work are licensed accordingly.

On October 14th, Do You Know Where to Vote?

Go to www.electionscanada.ca and punch in your home postal code in the Voter Information Services Box in the Centre of the web page. You will find the name of your home riding, be able to determine whether you are on the eligible voters list, and who to contact if you appear not eligible.

Labour Mobility *(continued from page 1)*

Engineers Canada has been working diligently with federal officials to ensure that the federal government understands the engineering profession's leadership role to date in addressing the mobility issue and that the federal government has a clear understanding of the profession's positive record to date on labour mobility. Earlier this summer, Engineers Canada Chief Executive Officer Chantal Guay, P.Eng., wrote to Human Resources and Social Development Minister Monte Solberg, in order to advise him of the work that provincial and territorial licensing bodies have already accomplished with their respective governments. The Inter-Association Mobility Agreement affirms that registration and licensing be granted to a member in good standing of any other association/ordre that is a signatory to the Agreement. This letter was also forwarded to constituent members as background information for their use in their discussions with their own governments.

In the federal government's response, Minister Solberg acknowledged the work that Engineers Canada and its constituent members are doing to ensure labour mobility for engineers across Canada.

Subsequently, Engineers Canada was invited to participate in a presentation and panel discussion with stakeholders on inter-provincial labour mobility in early September. Engineers Canada was mentioned specifically at this event for its leadership on mobility issues for the engineering profession.

Engineers Canada will continue to be proactive and to further engage the federal government at the political and bureaucratic levels on what the engineering profession is doing on the issue of labour mobility.