

▶ HOUSE TAKES SUMMER BREAK

▶ WE HAVE A NEW NAME

▶ MARIE LEMAY, P.ENG., ING.,
APPEARS BEFORE HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE

ENGINEERING^{*} *on the hill*

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

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Engineering On the Hill*

There are many topics discussed in Canada's Parliament that are of interest to the engineering profession. The purpose of this new, quarterly newsletter is to provide a handy summary of activities and current federal government initiatives, which are being debated and discussed on Parliament Hill. It will also report on Engineers Canada activities in Ottawa as they relate to the federal government.

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter, feel free to contact us at:
government.relations@engineerscanada.ca

House of Commons Takes Summer Break

The House of Commons adjourned for its annual summer break on June 20, after a very lively session, typical of minority parliaments. The House is scheduled to resume sitting on Monday, September 17.

Despite widespread election speculation in early spring, election fever appears to have passed for now and parliamentarians will return to business in the fall. The budget was also passed by Parliament and received Royal Assent on June 22.

Many important issues were debated over the past session of Parliament. One of the more prominent debates dealt with climate change and the environment. The government and opposition parties presented competing plans to address climate change. The government submitted a plan, entitled:

Turning the Corner: Action Plan to Reduce Greenhouse Gases and Air Pollution, to Parliament on April 26. Further debate is expected in the fall. A Liberal member of Parliament also introduced a private member's bill, C-288, which requires the government to submit a plan to Parliament on how it plans to adhere to emission targets

“...scheduled to resume sitting on Monday, September 17.”

in the Kyoto Protocol. This bill was passed by Parliament and was enacted into law on June 22.

On March 22, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Natural Resources announced \$998,400 in funding under the federal

government's Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Program to support the Public Infrastructure Engineering Vulnerability Committee, an Engineers Canada initiative to conduct the first engineering assessment of the vulnerability of Canada's public infrastructure to the impacts of climate change.

On infrastructure, the federal budget also announced new spending of \$16 billion over 7 years, bringing total federal support to \$33 billion, for long-

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We Have a New Name!

As of May 2007, the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE) began operations under the new business name Engineers Canada (Ingénieurs Canada in French).

term funding of major infrastructure projects such as highways as well as for large and small-scale projects. Engineers Canada is continuing to work with government officials on possible funding for the proposed National Round table on Sustainable Infrastructure.

On May 24, the federal minister of Immigration launched the first phase of the establishment of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office. This Office will help direct

foreign-trained individuals to the appropriate licensing bodies who have the authority to assess their credentials. This issue is of key concern to many engineers. This will no doubt be a hot issue over the summer months as members of Parliament are back in their ridings gauging the opinions of their constituents.

Many volunteers in the Bridging Government and Engineers program have been in touch with their members of Parliament over the summer months, who are

busy hosting community events and meetings in their constituencies. This provides for good opportunities to meet and network in a casual and relaxed environment.

Meetings and contacts over the summer months also give our volunteers a good opportunity to tell their members of Parliament that our annual Parliamentary Reception takes place on October 3 in Ottawa.

Comments or Feedback?

Do you have any thoughts about the format or content of this newsletter?

Do you have any ideas for stories that you would like to see here?

Would you like more information about Engineers Canada's government relations activities or about the Bridging Government and Engineers program?

Please send your comments to Engineers Canada.

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Filling the Skills Gap – Engineers Canada Appears Before Parliamentary Committee

On March 27, Engineers Canada Chief Executive Officer Marie Lemay, P.Eng., ing., appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources and Social Development as a part of a study on employability in Canada.

Her presentation, entitled *Filling the Skills Gap*, outlined Engineers Canada's role with respect to the integration of international engineering graduates. It covered four topics:

- Immigration and the activities of the *From Consideration to Integration* program
- Women and aboriginal issues
- National and international mobility and the
- Labour Market Study being undertaken by Engineers Canada.

One recommendation made to the Committee was to consider having the engineering profession assess the educational level of applicants as a part of the selection process.

The federal government needs to

adopt a less piecemeal approach and to make this a key priority area - perhaps at the level of a prime ministerial task force. Ms. Lemay also underlined the need for government support on labour market solutions to be long-term.

Committee members raised many questions, many of which focussed on what the engineering profession is doing with respect to foreign credential recognition. This is a topic that many Parliamentarians are hearing about from their constituents.

Ms. Lemay used the question period to reiterate the main points of her presentation, emphasizing the need to better integrate foreign-trained engineers, the establishment of the International Institutions and Degrees Database and the work being undertaken on the Labour Market Study.

To view the presentation, please visit:

www.engineerscanada.ca/e/prog_government_2.cfm