

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

engineerscanada



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Issue

In today's increasing global economy, Canada-based engineers need to be able to practise in other countries. Meanwhile, within Canada public safety must be guaranteed by ensuring that internationally trained engineers arriving in Canada meet the academic and experience standards necessary to be licensed.

Why Is This Important?

Canadians benefit from the skills and experience offered by international engineering graduates who are qualified to practise engineering safely and competently in Canada.

Canada ranks among the top four exporters of engineering services internationally. Global demand for engineering services requires the establishment of internationally recognized qualification and practice standards. Rapid expansion in trade in engineering services can place pressures on governments to ask regulatory authorities to lower standards for admission to practise engineering, which could put public safety at risk.

What Has Engineers Canada Done To Date?

Engineers Canada's International Committee promotes rigorous international engineering qualifications and standards of practice, and monitors the impact of international trade activities on public safety and the engineering profession in Canada.

International registers of engineers

In cooperation with a number of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members, Engineers Canada operates an international engineers register. A second register has also been developed through the Engineers

Mobility Forum, which includes the United Kingdom, Ireland and South Africa as well as most of the APEC agreement countries. These two registers provide a common basis for participating countries to negotiate mutual recognition of qualifications that enable countries with different accreditation, regulatory and/or licensure systems to recognize the credentials of engineers who meet common educational or experience criteria. The goal is to minimize any extra assessments required to be included on the international register, maintained by the signatory licensing body.

Educational agreements

Engineers Canada has also signed three international agreements at the educational level:

- The *Washington Accord*, a multilateral agreement among 12 engineering organizations responsible for accrediting engineering degree programs;
- A bilateral agreement with ABET, the United States' accreditation board;
- A bilateral agreement with the Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (France) this is a hybrid agreement that also includes the recognition of professional qualifications.

Educational agreements improve international mobility for qualified engineers by recognizing the substantial equivalency of accreditation systems of each signatory body as well as the accredited engineering education programs in each signatory country.

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Mutual recognition agreements

Mutual recognition agreements facilitate the processing of the professional qualifications of applicants from signatory countries. Engineers Canada currently has mutual recognition agreements under NAFTA, and with Hong Kong and Australia. Negotiations are underway to sign additional agreements with Ireland and the United Kingdom.

How Can Engineers Canada Contribute?

Negotiations are ongoing within the World Trade Organization to reach a global agreement on trade in services. The Government of Canada is also involved in trade discussions at regional and bilateral levels, which Engineers Canada monitors on behalf of the profession through contact with government officials. Engineers Canada is available to provide expertise and to facilitate consultation to ensure that Canada's engineering education, standards of practice and admission qualifications are preserved.

THE PROFESSION'S POSITION

In the interest of public safety, Engineers Canada supports rigorous international standards of practice and qualifications for admission to the profession of engineering that are in accord with the standards and qualifications that apply in Canada.

In the interest of public safety, international engineering graduates must demonstrate that they meet Canadian standards for admittance into the profession prior to licensure.

Engineers Canada believes that federal policies must enhance the national and international mobility of engineers, to retain the existing high standards for engineering in Canada and to encourage the development of high standards abroad.