



**Professional Engineers
Ontario**

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March 31, 2004

The Honourable David Caplan
IFP Stakeholder Outreach
Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal
7 Queen's Park Crescent, 6th Floor
Frost Building South
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

Enforcement Hotline:
416 224 9528 Ext. 444

Dear Minister Caplan,

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal's discussion paper entitled, *Building a Better Tomorrow: Investing in Ontario's Infrastructure to Deliver Real, Positive Change*. It was a pleasure speaking with you at the Stakeholder Outreach session on March 11, 2004. As mentioned, Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) can play a unique role as our mandate includes protecting the public interest as it relates to the practice of professional engineering.

Under authority delegated by the Ministry of the Attorney General, PEO serves the public by ensuring that those who practice professional engineering or provide engineering services in the province do so by meeting the requirements under the *Professional Engineers Act*. Accordingly, your government appoints 12 of PEO's 29 Council members, up to five of whom are members of the public.

As the rebuilding of Ontario's infrastructure will primarily require the skills of professional engineers, we believe we might contribute meaningfully to the creation of standards and guidelines resulting from this plan. Specifically, our input would best be directed to reviewing how any recommended standards relate to the requirements in the *Professional Engineers Act*, Regulation 941 and our professional practice guidelines. Professional engineers not only protect the public interest in terms of safety and effectiveness, but also make valuable, cost-effective investments in society and the economy.

PEO shares the Ministry's conviction, as summarized in its guiding fundamental principles, that the public interest is paramount. Indeed, for over 80 years, the people of this province have entrusted the designing and construction of Ontario's infrastructure to professional engineers. During this time, public accountability has been afforded through the *Professional Engineers Act*. PEO would continue to offer this reassurance by urging that your Ministry look for ways to make use of this legal instrument to ensure that the public interest is preserved and that those taking responsibility for any infrastructure projects are held accountable via licensure.

The value offered by the existing regulatory structure of the *Professional Engineers Act* is substantial. The utilization of the existing PEO framework would provide an efficient and effective vehicle without the need to create a time consuming and costly new model. In addition, the Act already serves to clearly define matters of negligence and professional misconduct, insurance, discipline and enforcement, and also prescribes a Code of Ethics, through which professional engineers have a clearly defined duty to society, which is to regard the duty to public welfare as paramount.

As the self-regulatory body that licenses Ontario's 65,000 professional engineers, 1600 designated Consulting Engineers and 3900 holders of Certificates of Authorization, PEO is bound by its statutory obligations and its ethical responsibilities to the people of the province to protect their well being where the practice of professional engineering is involved.

Professional Engineers Ontario would like to offer its assistance to your Ministry and the McGuinty government in the realization of its commitment to renewing the infrastructure of Ontario. Should you be interested in arranging a meeting to further discuss this issue, I invite you to contact me directly at (416) 224-9528, ext. 426.

In the meantime, please accept our best wishes for success in this vital endeavour.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Allen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Allen, P.Eng.
Chief Executive Officer/Registrar

Copies: The Honourable Michael Bryant, LL.B., LL.M., Attorney General
 John Twohig, Senior Counsel, Policy Branch, Ministry of the Attorney
 General
 Kenneth C. McMartin, P.Eng., President, Professional Engineers Ontario