

**Professional Engineers  
Ontario**

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February 18, 2003

Dalton J.P. McGuinty, MPP  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
Room 381, Main Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A4

Dear Mr. McGuinty:

Re: *Achieving Our Potential*

This letter regards the statement on page 13 of your party's economic platform, *Achieving Our Potential*, which says that if elected the Liberal Party "will work with professional and trade associations to accelerate the entry of skilled Ontarians into the workforce" with a one-year goal of eliminating "major barriers".

In anticipation of the possibility of our working with you on this issue, Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO), the self-regulating licensing body for professional engineering in Ontario, is pleased to inform you of the latest changes to its licensing process, aimed at expediting licensure for foreign-educated engineering professionals. Effective February 28, 2003, the *Professional Engineers Act* and Regulation will be amended to enable PEO to grant Provisional Licences to foreign-educated licence applicants who have satisfied all of the legislated requirements for licensing, except for obtaining 12 months of engineering experience in a Canadian jurisdiction under the supervision of a Canadian professional engineer. We believe this new category of licence will allow PEO to maintain high standards of qualification to serve and protect the Ontario public, while being of assistance to both licence applicants and their Ontario employers.

The second upcoming change to our licensing process, also effective February 28, will allow licence applicants to appeal the decisions of PEO's Academic Requirements Committee and Experience Requirements Committee. These committees assist the Registrar in assessing the academic and experience qualifications of licence applicants who do not hold degrees from accredited engineering programs. With this change, appeal of all aspects of PEO's licensing process will be possible.

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Access to practice in Ontario for foreign-educated professionals is an issue on which PEO has been working for some time as evidenced by the fact that about one-third of the 65,000 professional engineers licensed by PEO were educated outside Canada.

To speed assessment of academic qualifications for licensing, we have identified over 3,000 institutions in 150 countries as appearing to have *bona fide* engineering programs. In addition, by combining traditional credential review with an assessment of prior experientially gained knowledge, PEO has almost doubled the number of P.Eng. licences granted to foreign-trained applicants, about 60 per cent of whom meet PEO's academic requirements for licensure annually without having to write any technical exams.

To help ensure that immigrants arrive in Ontario with full knowledge of our licensing requirements and a head start, PEO allows prospective immigrants to begin the Ontario P.Eng. licensing process from outside Canada, before they finalize their immigration plans, and to continue the process when they arrive in Ontario. More than 200 prospective immigrants have to date taken advantage of this recently introduced facility. To ensure availability of even more information for them, PEO collaborated with the Access to Professions and Trades Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to develop a fact sheet called *Access to the Engineering Profession for Internationally Trained Workers*. Canada's immigration officers overseas have been provided information on PEO's out-of-country application procedure and the new fact sheet, which is available on both the PEO and the MTCU websites. Further information and licence application forms are also accessible from our website at [www.peo.on.ca](http://www.peo.on.ca).

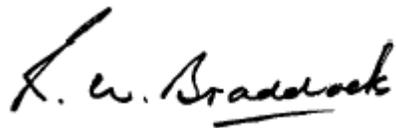
Sadly, it is a fact that there is sometimes a failure to distinguish between the selection criteria for immigration purposes and the requirements for licensing. And it may be that individuals are qualified for the profession in their country of origin, or qualified in their assessment for immigration purposes, but are not immediately qualified for licensing in Canada. These different qualifications reflect differences in local conditions that affect professional practice, as well as the expectations of Canadians that professional licensing will afford them a high level of public protection. PEO hopes that by providing prospective immigrants destined for Ontario more information on our licensing requirements sooner, this problem will be addressed. We also hope that our individual assessment of each applicant's experience, along with the upcoming process changes to be introduced at the end of this month, will enable those who do satisfy the established standards to begin their practice sooner.

It is also worth noting that a licence is not required for engineering employment in Ontario, so long as a licensed professional engineer supervises and is responsible for the work.

In closing, PEO is proud to note that on May 31, 2000, we were presented the Toronto-Davenport Award, in recognition of our role "in fostering the integration of engineering professionals trained in foreign jurisdictions". We understand Tony Ruprecht, MPP, sponsored this award, and the certificate you and he signed now hangs in our lobby.

We trust that you have found this overview of PEO's activities relating to the licensing of foreign-educated engineering graduates of interest, and would welcome an opportunity to meet with you and discuss this subject further. We continue to look for ways to improve our process to license qualified applicants more quickly. We welcome your ideas and suggestions. Please have your staff contact Mr. Kim Allen, P.Eng., at (416) 224-9528, ext. 426, indicating your availability. Should you have any questions or comments in the meantime, please feel free to contact Mr. Allen or me directly, at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. W. Braddock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Richard W. Braddock, P.Eng.  
President

RWB/cm

Copies: Kim Allen, P.Eng., Chief Executive Officer/Registrar, Professional Engineers Ontario  
Tony Ruprecht, MPP, Davenport  
Greg Sorbara, MPP, President, Liberal Party of Ontario  
The Honourable David Young, Attorney General