



Terms of Reference

Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal Subcommittee

(June 7, 2016)

OBJECTIVES

The Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal Subcommittee is directed by the Professional Standards Committee to review the existing "*Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal*" guideline and, in consideration of changes to the industry and professional engineering, revise that document to consider current practices.

Furthermore, the Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal Subcommittee is directed by the Professional Standards Committee to revise existing Section 53, O. Reg. 941 of the *Professional Engineers Act* as proposed to capture policies in the "*Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal*" guideline and to make provisions for moving this standard from O. Reg. 941 to Regulation 260/08.

BACKGROUND

The current guideline for the "*Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal*" was revised in November 2008 and has not been revised since. In the intervening 8 years there have been numerous changes to:

- The engineering design, modeling, simulation and analysis tools;
- The adoption of three dimensional models for design, manufacturing and inspection purposes; and
- Current engineering practices and the trend towards the elimination of drawings.

Furthermore, the Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal Subcommittee will also identify all activities in the practice guideline that should be considered mandatory and revise the standard for Use of the Professional Engineer's Seal that is currently located in Section 53, O. Reg. 941 for the following reasons:

1. The current regulation states that the seal is applied only on documents provided as part of a service to the public. There is confusion about who the public is and what constitutes a service to the public. This requirement also means that many engineers in Ontario never seal the drawings they produce even though the work involves the practice of professional engineering. There is no compelling reason to distinguish between engineering work provided to the public and work done for one's employer. For instance, an engineer in a factory providing drawings for a new power distribution system to machinery in the plant would not need to seal the drawings whereas a consulting engineer providing the same drawings would be required to seal. Ontario is the only province that makes this distinction. It is suggested that this limitation on sealing be removed. Instead, all engineers should be required to seal their work.

2. The phrase “checked by” refers to engineers sealing work that was done by non-engineers when an engineer assumes responsibility for these services. It is suggested that the regulation be revised to reflect this process.
3. The regulation has many terms such as “final” that are interpreted in various ways. The guideline has sought to clarify the meaning of these terms; however, it would be much better to have these terms defined in the regulation.
4. The regulation does not deal with use of digital seals. As PEO policy has been revised to allow these the regulation should reflect this practice.
5. Currently the use of the professional engineer’s seal is prescribed by Section 53, O. Reg. 941. As this is a practice standard it would be appropriate to move it to O. Reg. 260/08 with all other standards.

MANDATE (Specific Tasks)

The Use of the Professional Engineer’s Seal Subcommittee is expected to obtain and provide information that will aid engineers to perform their engineering role in accordance with best practices defined by the *Professional Engineers Act* and its regulations. Furthermore, the Subcommittee shall prepare a policy statement outlining the appropriate revisions Section 53, O. Reg. 941 and proposing that this standard be moved to O. Reg. 260/08. Finally, the current practice guideline will be revised and a performance standard will be developed.

MEMBERSHIP

The Subcommittee should be comprised of 3-5 members engaged in the practice of professional engineering and 1-2 engineers representing municipalities or other clients retaining engineering services.

DELIVERABLES

The Subcommittee will present the completed guideline and the policy statement outlining the appropriate revisions Section 53, O. Reg. 941 to the Professional Standards Committee no later than February 2018. The Subcommittee will provide quarterly progress reports to Professional Standards Committee.

Meeting Schedule: At discretion of the Chair
Completion Date: February 2018