

## GLP Info Notes 18.0 - Council Approves Action Plan to Implement Recommendations of External Review

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**For GLP info only. No action required.**

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At its September 2019 meeting, PEO Council approved an action plan to implement the 15 recommendations in the final report of PEO's external regulatory performance review (see "Council to discuss external review action plan," Engineering Dimensions, September/October 2019, p. 7).

The independent review—prepared by Harry Cayton, international consultant to United Kingdom-based Professional Standards Authority—was conducted following a Council decision in September 2018 to undergo an external regulatory review to identify any gaps between PEO's current practices and those exhibited by the best regulators.

It assessed PEO's performance against its statutory mandate and legislative requirements, internal policies and the standards of good regulation across its core regulatory functions: licensing and registration; complaints, discipline, compliance and enforcement; and professional standards.

The review's final report was received by Council at its June meeting, when Council instructed CEO/Registrar Johnny Zuccon, P.Eng., FEC, to initiate a high-level action plan based on the report's feedback for Council to consider at its September meeting. Council approved a motion to make the report public on PEO's website:

<https://www.peo.on.ca/sites/default/files/2019-10/PEOReviewReport.pdf>

Over the summer months, Zuccon and PEO's senior management team worked to develop the three-year action plan, which outlines the organizational transformation required to implement the recommendations while ensuring that a steady state in PEO operations is maintained.

It maps out each of the 15 recommendations, taking into account the organization's existing capacity and promotes evidence-based decision making.

The plan includes a change vision; guiding principles; the identified problems, objectives and key steps for each recommendation; and criteria for setting priorities and timelines for action, including short-, medium- and long-term activities.

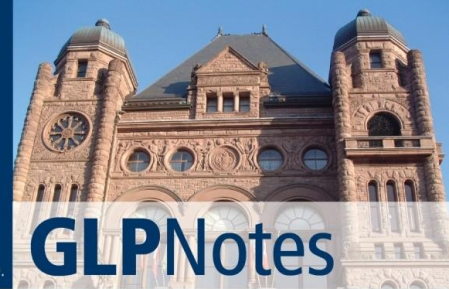
Essentially, the approved plan is meant to provide direction for change while respecting the distinct authorities of Council and the registrar, focus on what can be implemented within PEO's current capacity, and bolster the organization's agility and capacity to manage change in the future.

Since the action plan was approved, Zuccon has communicated the plan to staff and stakeholders and is currently working to develop a tool for assessing the regulatory purpose of the activities of all PEO committees, chapters, subcommittees and working groups for Council's approval.

He is also working to maximize efficiencies within the existing infrastructure by addressing issues such as the security risks related to paper files, the inventory of aging licence applicant files, automation of the professional practice exam and online renewals of certificate of authorization.

The action plan can be found at:

<https://www.peo.on.ca/sites/default/files/2019-10/PEOActionPlan.pdf>



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### Summary of Cayton Report's 15 recommendations:

- 1) PEO should **review all its committees, subcommittees and working groups** to ensure they are both necessary and fit for a regulatory purpose.
- 2) PEO should **clarify the roles of Council members, staff and volunteers**. It should delegate more operational decision-making and responsibility to executive staff and streamline its internal accountabilities, policies and procedures.
- 3) PEO should **consider if its Chapters are either necessary or desirable in delivering its functions as a regulator** and should redirect its financial support for them to its core regulatory functions and activities.
- 4) PEO should **implement all the recommendations of the OFC in his report of 2014 and his subsequent letters**. It should consider the way it uses negative language about everyone who is not a licensed P.Eng. and describe people as what they are rather than as what they are not.
- 5) The **process for application for a professional engineering license should be simplified and speeded up, the discriminatory aspects of written examinations, a Canadian year of experience and face to face interviews should be discarded**. Appeals against refusal of licence should be made available on request of the applicant, who should be provided with legal support in the event of an appeal hearing.
- 6) PEO should **review and revise all its current licensing categories** and designation and eliminate those that do not directly contribute to protection of the public/serving the public interest.
- 7) The **public register of licensed engineers and other public directories published by PEO must be complete and kept up-to date**. Currently they are neither.
- 8) **Licensed engineers employing another engineer should be required as a matter of good practice to check their registration status**. PEO should promote to employers and the public the value of checking the register before engaging an engineer.
- 9) PEO should **establish a formal process for keeping engineering standards up to date and relevant to contemporary practice in all the fields of engineering that it aims to regulate**. PEO should engage fully with setting standards as well as with guidance. PEO should be clear about the enforcement of guidance in complaints and discipline.
- 10) PEO should **revise its PEAK program** to ensure it is proportionate and outcome focused and achievable by licensed engineers. It should then make participation in this CPD program mandatory for licensed engineers.
- 11) PEO should **review its approach to complaints and discipline**. In particular it should: take a more confident approach to the interpretation of its legislation, seeking to protect the public rather than itself, enforce guidance, pay more regard to professional conduct and ethics, as breaches of these bring the profession and its regulator into disrepute, give fuller reasons for disciplinary decisions and publish them.
- 12) **Members of the COC and the DIC should not be drawn from the members of the Council**. The members of these committees must be able to make judgements independent of the interests of PEO Council.
- 13) PEO should **commission a full digital strategy for the organization**. This should include implementation of an electronic case management system and a database for to manage licensing and C of A applications, CPD and complaints and discipline. It should aim for automation of processes. In the meantime, it must improve the security and confidentiality of paper files.
- 14) PEO should **work with the Attorney General's office to seek changes to its statute to modernize its organization and regulatory powers**.
- 15) Council should **assess and implement these recommendations. It should require an action plan and time-frame for implementation** from its executive staff. When it approves the action plan, Council should commit the necessary resources to deliver it.