



GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE PROCESSES

1. PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

In order to develop criteria for judging the appropriateness of issuing a guideline on a particular topic, and in order to provide guidance in developing content, the following specific objectives have been identified.

- .1 Guidelines are intended to aid engineers perform their engineering role in accordance with the *Professional Engineers Act and Regulation 941*.
- .2 Guidelines are not intended to be short courses in an engineering subject. Instead they define processes required by regulatory, administrative or ethical considerations associated with specific professional services provided by engineers.
- .3 Guidelines provide criteria for expected practice by describing the required outcome of the process, identifying the engineer's duty to the public in this particular area of practice, and by defining the relationships and interactions between the various stakeholders (government, architects, other engineers, and clients).
- .4 Guidelines add value to membership and public by establishing criteria for professional standard of competence.
- .5 Guidelines communicate the role of the engineer to the public by clarifying the objective of the practice and what is expected of engineers engaged in this particular task. By demonstrating that the task requires specialized knowledge, higher standards of care, and responsibility for life and property the public perception of engineers as professionals is reinforced.
- .6 Where appropriate alternative media such as practice bulletins will be used for urgent issues or where short document shelf life is expected. Bulletins would also be used for interpretations or supplements to the guidelines. Development of bulletins would be governed by the same criteria imposed on guidelines. Where appropriate bulletins will be incorporate into guidelines at the earliest opportunity.

2. PROCESS FOR INITIATING AND DEVELOPING A GUIDELINE

- .1 The following elements should be considered in determining the assessment of need for guideline:
 - a) number of members affected by practice
 - b) impact on public
 - c) number of inquiries made to PEO about practice
 - d) required by creation or amendment of legislation
 - e) change in Professional Engineers Act or its Regulations
 - f) demonstration through the existence of disciplinary cases indicating common misconceptions of engineers'

- g) responsibilities that a coherent, consistent standard of practice in a particular area is required
direction of Council
- .2 PPC will be provided with information regarding the above by staff as prelude to determining need for guideline.
- .3 Professional Standards Committee shall report decision on assessment of need for Guideline together with Terms of Reference to Council and ACC for direction.
- .4 Send letter to appropriate Ministry and other external stakeholders announcing the decision to create or revise a guideline
- .5 Communications Department will publish a notice in *Engineering Dimensions* and the website announcing the formation of a guideline subcommittee, the reasons for creating or revising guideline and the terms of reference of the subcommittee. The notice shall also ask members wishing to volunteer to serve on the subcommittee to submit a volunteer application form and resume.
- .6 The staff advisor with the assistance of Volunteer Management will review the volunteer submission and identify candidates for the subcommittee and review network.
- .7 The PEO webmaster shall create an SharePoint page for each guideline under development.
- .8 The Subcommittee shall meet and prepare content for incorporation into Guideline. This content will be forwarded to the Communications Department for editorial review and preparation of drafts. When necessary drafts will be submitted for legal review.
- .9 During development of the Guideline drafts may be posted to the website for review and comments.
- .10 Guidelines shall be reviewed every five years with bulletins issued when required to clarify, interpret or alter document.

3. PROCESS FOR REVISING GUIDELINES

- .1 The following elements should be considered in determining the assessment of need for revision of a guideline:
 - a) required by creation or amendment of legislation
 - b) change in *Professional Engineers Act* or its regulations
 - c) significant changes to documents referenced by guideline
 - d) demonstration through the existence of disciplinary cases indicating common misconceptions of engineers' responsibilities that clarification of standard of practice in a particular area is required
 - e) direction of Council

- .2 PSC will be provided with information regarding the above by staff as prelude to determining need to revise guideline.
- .3 Professional Standards Committee shall report decision to revise Guideline to Council for information.
- .4 The Subgroup shall meet and prepare content for incorporation into Guideline. This content will be forwarded to the Communications Department for editorial review and preparation of drafts. When necessary drafts will be submitted for legal review.
- .5 During revision of the Guideline drafts may be posted to the website for review and comments.

4. CONTENT OF GUIDELINES

- .1 All guidelines shall contain the following:
 - .1 Cover page with guideline title and issue date
 - .2 Table of contents
 - .3 A standard paragraph explaining PEO's mandate and criteria for issuing guidelines (see Appendix A)
 - .4 Preface describing the role and history of the document including a list of changes in the current edition
 - .5 Statement describing scope of the document, specifically defining the problem being addressed
 - .6 Bibliography of reference documents
 - .7 Definitions
 - .8 Subject matter divided into sections as required with a statement of intent for each section
 - .9 Appendices
 - .10 Sheet for proposing amendments and future revisions (see Appendix B)
 - .11 Notice that guideline will be reviewed every five years (see Appendix C)
 - .12 A list of contributors specifically the members of the guideline taskforce noted by name only (no affiliations indicated). A standard paragraph should appear in the preface or foreword that indicates that the document has been reviewed and approved for publication by the PSC. One suggestion for the standard paragraph is: "This guideline has been developed by a task group of the association's Professional Standards Committee, and reviewed and approved for publication by the full Professional Standards Committee, the association's Executive Committee and finally by Council."
- .2 The following terms will be used to describe the various phases of the document:
 - .1 reprint: no changes to document, an inhouse description for a supplementary print run.
 - .2 reissued: new document distributed after review with no changes to content though date is altered to indicate this process.

- .3 revision: new document distributed after review with changes to content and date altered to indicate this process.
- .3 A standard numbering system shall be used to identify all guidelines by document number, revision code and publication year.
- .4 All alterations from a previous issue are to be identified in some way such as bold text or a vertical bar in the margin.

5. FORMAL PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL/REMOVAL

- .1 Procedures for approval of a guideline for publication are:
 - a) After the development of a new guideline has been approved by PSC Subcommittee and PSC Full Committee it will be submitted to Council for approval. Communications Department will arrange publication and distribution following approval.
 - b) Revised and reissued guidelines require only approval of the PSC Subcommittee and PSC Full Committee. Staff will notify Council (provide For Information agenda item) and arrange with Communications Department for publication of revised document.
 - c) Communications Department will publish a notice in *Engineering Dimensions* and on the website announcing the publication of new or revised guideline.
- .2 Procedure for removing a guideline must make all members, PEO departments (such as Complaints, Discipline & Enforcement) and the public aware that the document is no longer applicable. When removing a guideline the impact on any ongoing Discipline cases must be evaluated first. Some suggested elements of this process are:
 - a) Council can be informed of the withdrawal by means of an information item included in meeting agenda. No action is required by Council.
 - b) If no objection from Council members can be informed of the withdrawal by means of a notice in the Gazette.
 - c) The notice should describe the reason for withdrawing guideline and should provide guidance in locating replacement sources of information if they are available.

6. DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING OF GUIDELINES

- .1 Communications department will be responsible for publication, distribution and marketing of guidelines.
- .2 Communications shall distribute complimentary copies of new or revised guidelines to subcommittee and review network members, to appropriate ministries and external stakeholders.
- .3 Communications will be responsible for notifying holders of particular guidelines of revision and withdrawal of that document. Communications will keep a directory of holders or an email subscription list.

APPENDIX A – PARAGRAPH DESCRIBING PEO MANDATE AND GUIDELINE CRITERIA

PEO MANDATE AND CRITERIA FOR GUIDELINES

Professional Engineers Ontario produces guidelines for the purpose of educating both licensees and the public about standards of practice. This is done to fulfill PEO's legislated objectives. Section 2(4)2 of the *Professional Engineers Act* states: "For the purpose of carrying out its principal object" PEO shall "establish, maintain and develop standards of qualification and standards of practice for the practice of professional engineering." The association's Professional Practice Committee is responsible for developing practice standards and preparing guidelines.

This guideline has been developed by a subcommittee of the Professional Standards Committee, reviewed and approved for publication by the full Professional Standards Committee and by PEO Council.

Professional Engineers Ontario produces guidelines to meet the following objectives, which were used to develop the content of this document.

1. Guidelines are intended to aid engineers in performing their engineering role in accordance with the *Professional Engineers Act* and *Regulation 941*.
2. Guidelines are intended to define processes required by regulatory, administrative or ethical considerations associated with specific professional services provided by engineers. They do not aim to be short courses in an engineering subject.
3. Guidelines provide criteria for expected practice by describing the required outcome of the process, identifying the engineer's duty to the public in the particular area of practice, and defining the relationships and interactions between the various stakeholders (government, architects, other engineers, and clients).
4. Guidelines add value to the professional engineer licence for licensed engineers and for the public by establishing criteria for professional standards of competence.
5. Guidelines help the public to understand what it can expect of engineers in relation to a particular task within the practice of professional engineering. By demonstrating that the task requires specialized knowledge, higher standards of care, and responsibility for life and property, guidelines help reinforce the public perception of engineers as professionals.

**APPENDIX B – STANDARD FORM FOR PROPOSING REVISIONS TO GUIDELINE
AMENDMENT AND REVISION SUBMISSION FORM**

Guideline:

Statement of proposed amendment or revision:

Reason:

Submitted by:

Date:

Mail: Professional Engineers Ontario
40 Sheppard Avenue West, Suite 101
Toronto, Ontario M2N 6K9
Attention: Guideline and Standards Development Coordinator

Fax: (416) 224-1579 or (800) 268-0496

Email: practice-standards@peo.on.ca

APPENDIX C – NOTICE OF REVIEW

Notice: *The Professional Standards Committee has a policy of reviewing guidelines every five years to determine if the guideline is still viable and adequate. However, practice bulletins might be issued from time to time to clarify statements made herein or to add information useful to those professional engineers engaged in this area of practice. Users of this guideline who have questions, comments or suggestions for future amendments and revisions are invited to submit these to PEO using the form provided.*