

Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland v U

This was a disciplinary action brought by the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland (“**Board**”) against a registered professional engineer (deidentified as “**U**”) which settled at compulsory conference before the Tribunal.

Disciplinary Ground

The complaint against the respondent, U, alleged that he engaged in unsatisfactory professional conduct while registered as a professional engineer in Queensland.

U’s Background

U was registered as a registered professional engineer.

Conduct of U

U was engaged to provide professional engineering services in relation to a proposed detached structure at a residential property in Kingston. U subsequently undertook a soil test and prepared a geotechnical report, prepared a footing system design for the proposed structure, and prepared a set of structural drawings including a site plan and wall and roof design.

U provided the designs to the homeowner and then issued a Form 15 Certificate for building Design and Specification for the designs.

Later that year, the homeowner attempted to obtain quotations for the construction of the structure in accordance with U’s designs, and was advised that the designs were unsuitable and did not comply with the relevant Australian Standards.

The Board argued that U had failed to uphold the standards of the profession, and had demonstrated a lack of adequate knowledge, judgement or care in respect of his work in preparing the geotechnical report, the footing system design and the structural drawings for the structure, and in signing the Form 15 certificate for the designs.

In addition the Board argued that U had failed to adequately supervise two postgraduate engineering students in U’s employ, who had assisted on the project.

What the Tribunal Said and Consequences for U

In this instance, the complaint did not proceed to a hearing before the Tribunal, but was settled at a compulsory conference between U and the Board.

It was agreed by the parties that U’s conduct in completing and/or supervising the work undertaken at the property was of a lesser standard than that which might reasonably be expected of a registered professional engineer. As such, it was agreed that U’s actions constituted unsatisfactory professional conduct.

On reaching this conclusion the parties then recommended to the Tribunal an appropriate monetary penalty and costs. Further by consent the Tribunal ordered U be reprimanded for the conduct.

The Tribunal made an order by consent confirming that U’s conduct constituted unsatisfactory professional conduct and requiring U to pay a monetary penalty and costs.