



NEWSLETTER

# ISSUE 27

## JULY 2016

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## A WORD FROM THE REGISTRAR

Close to 1,000 engineers took part in the RPEQ survey this year. From the results it is clear the majority support the registration system and are satisfied with BPEQ's performance.

However, there was a degree of scepticism and dissatisfaction expressed by some respondents. I would like to take this opportunity to address some of those concerns and misconceptions.

The original Professional Engineers Act dates back to 1929. From then until now, registration for engineers in Queensland has been a mandatory requirement. Obviously, the legislation has been amended in the last 80 years and the application and scope of the RPEQ system has expanded during that time.

It is imperative that RPEQs keep in mind that BPEQ is first and foremost a statutory authority and regulator. BPEQ should not be compared to AusIMM, Engineers Australia, IChemE, IFE, IPWEAQ, Professionals Australia or RINA, which are voluntary professional associations. Choosing to become a member and pay a membership fee to one of these organisations is not the same as registering with BPEQ.



Furthermore, by being registered with BPEQ (a legal requirement to carry out professional engineering services in Queensland and a system consistent with various other professions) engineers are not entitled to 'member services', nor is BPEQ compelled to provide such services.

In the last 18 months, BPEQ has been far more active in its engagement with RPEQs and is trialling services for RPEQs. BPEQ hopes to develop more tools and services for RPEQs going forward, but doing so is supplementary to its role as the regulator.

The term "engineer" is often applied to non-degreed vocations such as technologists, technicians, draftsmen, machinists, mechanics, electricians and whitegoods repairers.



Conversely, RPEQ is a protected designation and is wholly limited to professionals who have a four year undergraduate engineering degree or equivalent and have demonstrated a high standard of professionalism and competence throughout their career.

The public is protected as only those individuals who have studied engineering and demonstrated the utmost professionalism and competence can hold themselves out to be a professional engineer and legally carry out professional engineering services.

Registration fees go towards the administrative and operational costs of BPEQ. Any increase to registration fees are consistent with CPI increases and must be approved by the Minister for Housing and Public Works.

Other concerns highlighted by survey respondents included that registration increased your personal liability and that BPEQ unfairly targets registered engineers, rather than those engaging in unregistered practice. These assertions will be addressed in detail in an article contained in this edition of the e-news.

It is not to say that the PE Act and the RPEQ system cannot be improved. As an organisation we are mindful of the concerns RPEQs have; be it better practical guidance as to what constitutes a professional engineering service, existing areas of engineering not reflecting specialist categories, non-registered engineers carrying out professional engineering services or mutual recognition.

Let me assure you that we are committed to improving the organisation and the PE Act, but must work within existing legislative provisions.

Thank you to all those who took part in the survey, your input is important and BPEQ appreciates the time taken to complete the survey. I urge all RPEQs to continue to engage with BPEQ and offer their feedback.

This month BPEQ welcomed four new Board members. Evelyn Storey, Sarah Hansen, Yvonne Pengilly and Peter Evans join BPEQ in place of departing members Greg McLean, Julie Mitchell, Mike Brady and Michael Duff.

It has been a privilege working with Greg, Julie, Mike and Michael and I wish them the very best for the future. The new Board members bring a wealth of experience to BPEQ and are committed to working in the interest of the public and RPEQs.

Finally, a reminder that any RPEQ who did not complete their registration renewal before the 30 June deadline will need to apply to BPEQ to have their registration restored.

For more information or assistance from BPEQ contact [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call 07 3198 0000.

**Kylie Mercer**  
Registrar

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST RPEQS

BPEQ extends a warm welcome to the following engineers who became registered in the last month:

Ashlea Laundess	Sing Hai Chai	Stephen Peady	Mark Niclasen
Daniel Shahan	Man Li	Vui Lin	Matthew Thompson
Matthew Reid	Lee Carroll	Neil Hallows	David Bamford
Janakiraman Hariharan	Ursula Starowicz	Chow Lee	Izakk Anand
Kim Seang Leang Ki	Wei Qin	Isaac Yip	Shivkant Patil
Luke Rawnsley	Milan Bachraty	Sarmad Al-Alousi	John Jinu
Jack Grummitt	Syed Ishaq	Pouyan Seddigh	David Finnigan
Richard Page	Jeffery Lever	Ryan Johns	James Morrison
Michael Monti	Cyril Ottenheimer de Gail	Jason Fooks	Michael Evans
Andrew Harrison	Robert Hills	Andrew Buchanan	John Prest
Christopher Freiberg	Mahesh Wickramaratne	Visvalingam Suthagaran	Joseph Thomas
Dusan Ilic	Raminder Sahota	Sanjay Patel	Thomas Chow
Andrew Thomas	Stephen Edwards	Danny Morched	Valentine Gnanakone
Md Manjurul Alam	Alain Mostafanejad	Robert O'Brien	Rosamma Samuel
Ryan Vitelli	Alberto Puccini	Trunk Luu	



## FOUR NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED TO BPEQ

July saw the appointment of four new members to the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland.

Evelyn Storey, Sarah Hansen, Yvonne Pengilly and Peter Evans join BPEQ in place of Greg McLean, Julie Mitchell, Mike Brady and Michael Duff, whose terms of appointment ended on 30 June.

Evelyn Storey becomes Deputy Chair and Engineers Australia representative. She is a highly experienced structural engineer, technical director and business unit manager, with 30 years' experience in Australia and overseas. Educated at the University of London; Evelyn has been involved in and directed projects such as terminal expansions at Brisbane and Gold Coast airports; UQ's Advanced Engineering Building; QUT's Science and Technology Precinct; and the Cross Rail project in London. She currently manages Aurecon's Built Environment business unit in Brisbane and was a member of the Consult Australia Queensland Committee between 2011 and 2013.

Sarah Hansen is appointed as community representative. She started her career as an estimator in 2003, before progressing to contracts administrator and project manager. Sarah has successfully delivered over 33 projects for major supermarket chains, religious organisations, education providers, government and other commercial entities. Sarah is known for her pragmatic and collaborative approach to building and has developed a good reputation and positive working relations with a range of stakeholders throughout her career. She is currently a project manager with major Queensland building firm, Hutchinson Builders.

Yvonne Pengilly is the building and construction industry representative. Yvonne has 30 years' experience as a consultant, contract administrator, project manager, builder and managing director working in north Queensland. Yvonne currently owns and manages Myown Constructions, where she combines her role as managing director with construction manager and consultant. She has studied at the Queensland University of Technology and is a member of Women in Construction, Queensland Master Builders Association and the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Yvonne has been awarded on a number of occasions by QMBA for her work and service in the building industry.

Peter Evans was elected to the Board by RPEQs in March 2016. Peter started his career in local government, before joining DTMR in 1982. He served as area engineer, project engineer, manager and regional director in Barcaldine, Rockhampton, Warwick and Roma and managed or directed projects in water supply and sewerage systems and road works. Since 2010, he has held the position of Deputy Chief Engineer in DTMR and co-manages DTMR's \$3.6 million annual research program. Peter was educated at the University of Queensland and is a member of several professional organisations, including Engineers Australia, Professionals Australia and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Departing members Greg, Julie, Mike and Michael have served BPEQ and the engineering profession with distinction for a number of years, particularly Greg, who this year reached 13 years' service on the Board.

Chair Dawson Wilkie and fellow Board members Professor Simon Biggs and Adam Stoker continue in their respective roles.



## RPEQ SURVEY RESULTS SHOW STRONG SUPPORT FOR REGISTRATION

Close to 1,000 engineers took part in the RPEQ survey this year. The survey yielded some interesting results and gives BPEQ an understanding of the issues important to RPEQs and their expectations.

Importantly, the majority of respondents, 61 per cent, strongly supported Queensland's registration system and believed it is beneficial for the profession.

In contrast to last year's survey, a greater number of respondents were made aware of the need to be registered through either university or BPEQ. This improvement reflects BPEQ's focus to engage more actively with universities and the profession.

Many respondents used the survey to suggest improvements to BPEQ, the PE Act and the registration system. Suggestions included:

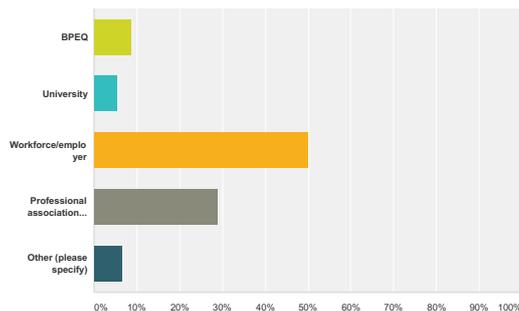
- BPEQ should better enforce the PE Act and investigate unregistered engineers.
- The title of engineer should be legally protected.
- New specialist areas of engineering should be recognised e.g. railway signalling.

- BPEQ should implement a simpler annual renewal process with online payment and automatic invoicing.
- BPEQ should mandate a four year undergraduate engineering degree as a pre-requisite for registration.
- Five year registration periods should be introduced, as opposed to annual registration.

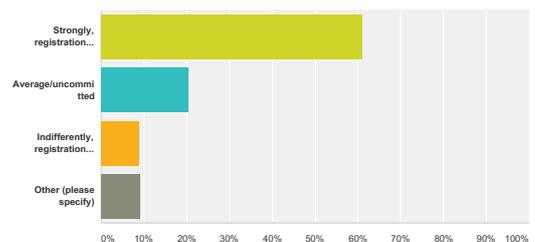
BPEQ is constantly working to improve its operations, the PE Act and RPEQ system and appreciates the input from engineers on ways this can be achieved.

Earlier this year, BPEQ submitted a report to the Minister for Housing and Public Works identifying changes to improve the PE Act and RPEQ system. BPEQ is also committed to reviewing the Code of Practice this year.

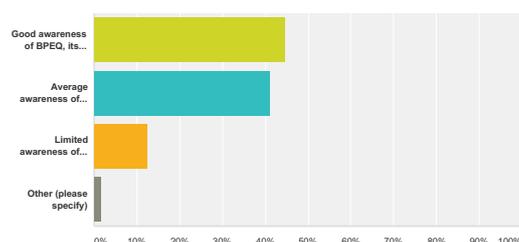
How did you first find out about the legislative requirement to be registered to carry out professional engineering services in Queensland or for Queensland?



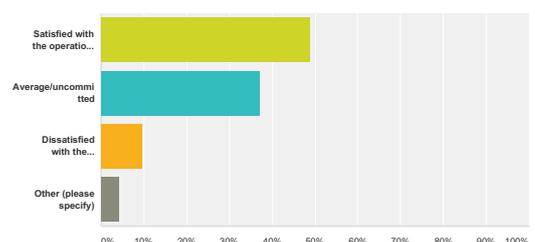
How strongly do you support the RPEQ system and is registration beneficial for the profession?



Rank your awareness of BPEQ, its operations and services?



How satisfied are you with the operation and services offered by BPEQ?





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## GET INVOLVED: BPEQ ANNOUNCES REVIEW OF CODE OF PRACTICE

BPEQ is commencing a review of the current [Code of Practice](#) and is inviting all RPEQs to get involved and have their say.

The review will be conducted on a submissions basis. Any submissions in relation to the review, including any issues with the current code or proposed amendments, should be sent by **31 August 2016** to:

Registrar  
Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland  
PO Box 15213  
CITY EAST 4002

The purpose of the Code of Practice is to provide guidance to RPEQs as to appropriate professional conduct or practice. Under the PE Act, the Code of Practice must be reviewed every three years. The current version of the Code of Practice received regulatory approval on 29 November 2013.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact BPEQ at [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000 if you wish to discuss the review of the Code in more detail.

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## UNREGISTERED PRACTICE AND RPEQ LIABILITY, SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

Some RPEQs feel that BPEQ treats them more harshly than it does unregistered practitioners.

Some also feel there is more risk involved in practising as a RPEQ than unregistered. This is not the case. BPEQ takes the issue of unregistered practice just as seriously as the conduct of its RPEQs, and there is a significantly higher risk in practising unregistered. A higher percentage of notifications about unregistered practitioners proceed to investigation and prosecution than do complaints about RPEQs. Unregistered practice carries more severe sanctions than apply to RPEQs who engage in unsatisfactory professional conduct, and it is easier to prove. Practitioners also jeopardise their ability to get paid for their work by being unregistered.

Based on BPEQ's investigations and prosecutions over the last three financial years, an unregistered practitioner whose conduct is notified to BPEQ is 30 per cent more likely to be investigated and almost 15 per cent more likely to be prosecuted as opposed to a RPEQ. Notifications of unregistered practice have also climbed significantly in the last five financial years, from six notifications in 2011/12 to 17 notifications in 2015/16.

The penalties faced by unregistered practitioners are much greater than those faced by RPEQs in disciplinary proceedings. If found guilty of unregistered practice, an unregistered practitioner is liable for a penalty

of up to 1000 penalty units--\$121,900—for each offence. On the other hand, a RPEQ found guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct risks only a maximum penalty of 200 penalty units--\$24,380—per proceeding, which is at least 80 per cent less than an unregistered practitioner. Over the past three financial years, the average penalty imposed in a prosecution of unregistered practice was \$61,000. The average penalty on RPEQs for unsatisfactory professional conduct, on the other hand, was only \$10,000.

Vastly greater monetary penalties are not the only problems faced by unregistered practitioners—they can also risk their entire fee. An unregistered practitioner who holds out to be an “engineer” providing “engineering services” or “engineering works” can be held to have claimed or held out to be a RPEQ, and if the unregistered practitioner then provides professional engineering services, the contractual price for those services cannot be recovered, solely because the practitioner was unregistered when he or she did the work. Unregistered practitioners can therefore find themselves in disastrous situations if they contract for services and expend significant resources providing those services, only to find they cannot get paid. RPEQs, however, will never have this problem because they are lawfully entitled to carry out professional engineering services.



BPEQ investigates and prosecutes a higher percentage of unregistered practitioners, who also face higher penalties and the possibility of not getting paid for their work. BPEQ is pleased that the rate of reporting of unregistered practitioners is steadily increasing, and will continue to treat all notifications seriously.

If you wish to notify BPEQ about someone you suspect is engaging in unregistered practice, contact BPEQ at [legal@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:legal@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000 and ask to speak to one of BPEQ's legal officers to discuss the process of making a notification.

## BACK IN THE WORKFORCE BURSARY

A bursary to assist women in engineering back into the workforce has been launched by BPEQ.

The [Back in the Workforce bursary](#) is open to female RPEQs, non-practising professional engineers and former RPEQs based in Queensland.

The bursary will assist successful applicants to attend continuing professional development courses and maintain or regain their registered status.

The bursary was the initiative of outgoing Board member Julie Mitchell, who was a firm advocate for greater diversity in the profession.

Bursary applicants can claim up to \$500 to cover the costs of continuing professional development. Applicants should complete the application form and submit it to BPEQ along with their CV and a cover letter up to two pages, detailing proposed course and cost, and how the proposed course will assist them attain the necessary continuing professional development points.

For more information contact BPEQ at [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000.

## CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGISTRATION ROADSHOW



BPEQ staff visit Barcaldine's landmark Tree of Knowledge on their way to meeting with George Bourne and Associates and DTMR.

Emerald, Barcaldine and Rio Tinto's Kestrel Mine were on the itinerary for BPEQ's Central Highlands registration roadshow earlier this month.

During the two day trip, BPEQ met with engineers from Central Highlands Regional Council, Barcaldine Regional Council, George Bourne and Associates, GHD, DTMR, HDE Engineering Design Professionals, Engineers Australia's local membership group and Rio Tinto.

As well as educating engineers and other professionals about the PE Act and registration, BPEQ staff made themselves available to discuss other issues facing the profession locally.

The inclement weather in the region underscored the importance of the work done by engineers, particularly road and water infrastructure.

Next month, BPEQ is planning a registration roadshow taking in Ipswich, Toowoomba, Roma, Chinchilla and Cunnamulla. For more information about the August roadshow contact BPEQ at [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000.



## TRANSITIONING FROM TECHNICAL SPECIALIST TO PEOPLE MANAGER



BPEQ's first CPD seminar held in February attracted close to 100 RPEQs

BPEQ has begun organising the next edition of *Transitioning from technical specialist to people manager*, following on from the successful pilot held in February.

RPEQs interested in joining the seminar with Dr Terry Fitzsimmons should contact [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) to book their place (the seminar will be capped at 80).

**Date:** Friday, 19 August 2016

**Time:** 9:00am – 1:00pm  
(registration commences from 8:30am)

**Venue:** UQ Business School Executive Venue,  
Level 19, Central Plaza 1, 345 Queen St, Brisbane.

**Cost:** \$30.00

*Tea and coffee will be available on arrival; a light morning tea will be served during the interval.*

### CONNECT WITH BPEQ ON LINKEDIN



Don't forget BPEQ is on LinkedIn. To keep up to date with the latest news and events from BPEQ or to start a discussion on registration or engineering issues generally, click [FOLLOW](#).

T 07 3198 0000 E [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au)

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