

INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED ENGINEERS: LICENSED, MOBILE, EMPLOYABLE

By Marc Bourgeois, Director of Communications, Engineers Canada

Of the thousands of immigrants arriving in Canada annually, many identify themselves as engineers. In 2001, of the 44 percent of skilled workers who identified an intended occupation at the time of immigration, 63 percent indicated engineering. These international engineering graduates may be seasoned engineering professionals, recent engineering graduates or have worked in jobs that would be considered technologist, technician, architect or scientist positions in Canada. Regardless of which group they fall into, some arrive in Canada expecting to begin work as engineers but are unable to find engineering employment.

The Canadian engineering profession has updated its licensing system to help the international engineering graduates integrate into the workforce and profession without compromising public safety or

lowering professional standards. At the provincial/territorial level, examples include a new way of assessing academic qualifications in Saskatchewan that eliminated their backlog of applicants and a new method of assessing experience in New Brunswick that reduced applicants' waiting time.

In Manitoba, applicants with more than 10 years of experience can do an interview as part of their academic assessment and thus not have to write exams, while in Ontario, new Canadians who apply for licensing within six months of their landing date, can do so at no cost.

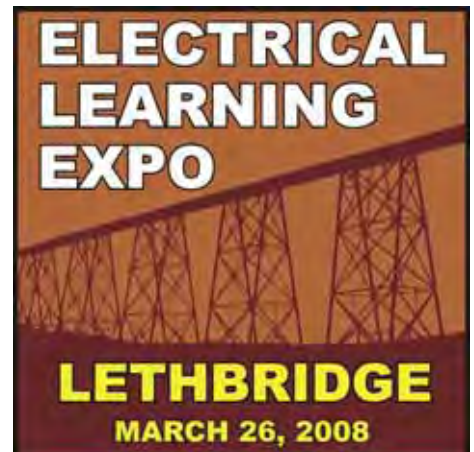
At the national level, Engineers Canada is leading the establishment of an accurate, current database of recognized international degrees and institutions to be used consistently by the provincial and territorial licensing bodies. It is expected that



the database will reduce duplication of effort, resulting in a reduced processing time for international engineering graduates' applications. Canadian companies make hiring decisions every day. Each is looking for the best minds in the country to help build their businesses, expand knowledge and solve problems. That person may be an engineer, licensed in Canada but trained internationally.

Licensed international engineering graduates are assessed to the same standards as each of Canada's 160,000 professional engineers, and they are mobile, able to work in any part of the country.

Employers can hire these professionals with confidence, knowing that having a P.Eng. (or ing.) license means that the Canadian engineering system has validated their academic qualifications, experience and character.



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