

## Town Hall type meeting, Engineers' Day

The question was raised of how to increase the number of licensees. One idea is to allow PhDs to sit for the PE exam, having granted them an equivalency for the FE exam, based on their advanced degree and academic experience. The intent would be for them to then encourage more students to pursue licensure.

The question was raised about companies using remote supervision or off-shore engineering to meet project workloads. The current Alabama law requires a licensed engineer in responsible charge of a branch office in the state. The Board continues to interpret that section to disallow remote supervision from another site. It was stated that Georgia has been the most aggressive moving to disallow remote supervision in their law. It was opined, however, that there is not a consensus among other state Boards.

The question was raised about the possibility of a separate license for Structural Engineering. There was some activity on the subject about five years ago, but nothing since. The consensus is that a national movement is underway, and that license by discipline is also a future reality. Currently, the cost of the two-part Structural exam is more than what the Alabama law specifies that the Board can charge. The Board will not be able to offer the two-part exam after it is implemented, unless we change our law.

The question was raised about the BS+30 (i.e., Master or equivalent). The Minneapolis conference moved the implementation date from 2015 to 2020, and charged a task force to further investigate the feasibility, cost and options. There are many outstanding issues with this topic. For example:

- 1) what do the hours need to be ? technical, humanities, or some mixture ?
- 2) what should the total hours for a BS degree be ?
- 3) what is the Body of Knowledge for a BS degree ?
- 4) some disciplines feel strongly additional hours ARE needed (e.g., Structural)
- 5) ABET should be more involved in defining the Body of Knowledge

The engineering societies need to get involved, one way or another, to help address this issue. Other comments during this discussion:

- 1) 61% of PhDs were awarded to foreign students last year
- 2) PE fail rates SEEM to be increasing, over the last ten years
- 3) 75% of Civil engineering faculty are licensed
- 4) 45% of Mechanical engineering faculty are licensed
- 5) 30% of Electrical engineering faculty are licensed
- 6) <10% of other engineering faculty are licensed in their discipline

It is the Board opinion that one does not need to be licensed to teach, but one should be licensed if work is done outside of teaching. It is the Board opinion that outside work falls under the definition of the practice of engineering in the state law, and a letter was sent to deans concerning this, about five years ago.

The Board discussed the activity of putting the Continuing Education requirements back on the licensure renewals. This will help the good recordkeepers with their renewals. The on-line system will be free-of-charge. When a licensee takes a qualifying course, they will be able to log on through the Board website, and enter the information instead of waiting till the end of the year.