



2020/2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



ENGINEERS &
GEOSCIENTISTS
BRITISH COLUMBIA

WHO WE ARE

Engineers and Geoscientists British Columbia is the regulatory and licensing body for the engineering and geoscience professions in BC. To protect the public, we maintain robust standards for entry to the professions, and comprehensive regulatory tools to support engineers and geoscientists in meeting professional and ethical obligations. If these standards are not met, we take action through our investigation and discipline processes.

ABOUT US

OUR VISION

Engineering and geoscience professionals creating a better future for all.

OUR MISSION

To serve the public interest as a progressive regulator that supports and promotes the engineering and geoscience professions.

OUR VALUES

In our governance, administration, and delivery of service, we are guided by the following values:

Integrity: We mean and do what we say.

Accountability: We are responsible for our actions.

Innovation: We will explore new ideas to make things better.

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM ANN ENGLISH



Looking back on 2020/2021, it was a year like no other. While COVID-19 brought changes and challenges, it also showcased our ability to be resilient and execute on our public safety mandate during a milestone chapter in our organization's history.

Our staff worked incredibly hard to implement the *Professional Governance Act*, new legislation that will set us up for success as a strong, progressive regulator. Much of this work is reflected in this Annual Report, but I'd like to touch on a few highlights:

- We completed the development and delivery of two new programs: mandatory Continuing Education and the regulation of engineering and geoscience firms, with both launching in July 2021. These programs will improve public safety and confidence in the professions.
- Significant time was dedicated to finalizing our Bylaws with the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance to ensure this new legislative framework supports strong and agile regulation and public protection.
- We produced program guides, manuals, and hosted a webinar series to support registrants in understanding their new obligations under the *Professional Governance Act*.

Alongside efforts to prepare for new legislation, we provided guidance to registrants through practice guidelines and advisories and ongoing support from our practice advisors who responded to over 2,000 inquiries from registrants and the public this year. We also published our Climate Change Action Plan, the first of its kind created by an engineering or geoscience regulator in Canada.

We examined our organizational structure and made changes to remove the Registrar responsibilities from the Chief Executive Officer role and place them with the Chief Regulatory Officer. This proactive shift ensures senior leadership roles are designed to support strong regulation and sets the organization up for long term success in delivering on our public safety mandate.

Lastly, and perhaps most meaningfully to me, this year, Engineers and Geoscientists BC was recognized as one of BC's Top Employers. This is an incredible achievement, especially in a year that required so much of our staff.

Last October I announced my retirement, and a taskforce was formed to conduct a comprehensive national search to find the most qualified individual to lead our organization into the future. I'm pleased to welcome Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.) as Engineers and Geoscientists BC's CEO. Heidi stepped into this role on June 1 and brings a strong vision for the future of engineering and geoscience regulation in BC.

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to staff, Council, and our volunteers for their tremendous commitment each day towards protecting the public. It's an honour to have served as CEO of this incredible organization. As this chapter of my career closes, I'm grateful for the opportunity to have led us through a pivotal point in our history—and I know you are well positioned for the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann English".

Ann English, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.), FCSSE

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic this past year brought unprecedented change and challenge for all of us. For Engineers and Geoscientists BC and our registrants, new legislation and a new governance framework for the engineering and geoscience professions resulting from the *Professional Governance Act* also brought significant change.

In addition, three of our senior staff members went on to well-earned retirements: Chief Executive Officer Ann English, Chief Regulatory Officer Tony Chong, and Director of Registration Gillian Pichler.

Through all this change, Council ensured that Engineers and Geoscientists BC remained resilient and agile. We collaborated with staff to ensure regulatory, governance, and oversight work could proceed uninterrupted in a remote environment. From virtual Council meetings to online learning and discipline hearings, regulating in a virtual world quickly became the new norm.

We know the transition to the *Professional Governance Act* and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic created a challenging year for our professions. We worked hard to support registrants manage this change and understand

their new requirements under the *Professional Governance Act*. Council focused on developing policies, reviewing bylaws, and supporting staff in their work with the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance to ensure a smooth transition to the new legislation. We also oversaw the introduction of the Regulation of Firms program, a major milestone in our mandate that increases the confidence government and the public have in our self-regulatory system that was a result of countless hours of effort by staff, and significant contributions from engineers and geoscientists who volunteered on the task force now known as the Regulation of Firms Advisory Group.

As we reflect on this year and look to the future, I would like to thank Ann English for her strategic vision, tireless efforts, and dedication to Engineers and Geoscientists BC, and for working alongside Council over the past eight years to uphold strong regulation focused on public protection.

I also want to extend a very warm welcome to our new CEO Heidi Yang. Over the past few months, I have seen firsthand how registrants, staff, and Council will grow under her leadership and vision for modern regulation to support BC's communities and economy.

To our volunteers and Council, thank you for your service and commitment. Your dedication to the professions makes our organization stronger and our province a safer place.



Finally, my gratitude to registrants: thank you for entrusting me to serve as your president. It has been my honour and privilege to help our professions navigate this whirlwind year.

With the *Professional Governance Act* now in place, we can move forward with confidence. Our mandate is clear—to protect the public. That is our promise to the people of BC, to government, and to our stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry Spence'.

Larry Spence, P.Eng.

REPORT FROM THE CEO

It is an honour to join Engineers and Geoscientists BC as CEO as we embrace the future of engineering and geoscience regulation. Leadership and guidance from Ann English, our previous CEO, has been invaluable as I have come into this role. Much of the work reported here took place during her tenure, and I am grateful for her input into this year's Annual Report.

We took big strides forward this year, opening a new chapter as a modern, progressive regulator with the introduction of the *Professional Governance Act*, which came into force in February 2021. This new legislation is positive, providing tools for strong, progressive regulation and a new governance structure that provides a resilient and strategic foundation for our central work of protecting public safety.

Our team also worked hard this year to advance the new Climate Change Action Plan, harmonize regulatory processes with other Canadian jurisdictions, and prioritize equity, diversity, and inclusion actions that demonstrate our commitment to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment that empowers a skilled and diverse engineering and geoscience workforce to flourish.

After an unprecedented year of change, I want to acknowledge the resiliency of our staff and Council. They supported registrants and provided strong regulation while adapting to the challenges of COVID-19 and advancing the *Professional Governance Act* and many other important areas of work to serve British Columbians now and in the future. I also want to recognize our many incredible volunteers and the essential work they do for Engineers and Geoscientists BC in supporting our regulatory mandate. We are grateful for the invaluable service you provide.

The work over the past year has set the stage for the challenges of tomorrow and for us to be singularly focused on our mandate to protect the public interest. We've evolved as a regulator to be ready to address the big issues confronting society and our registrants: climate change, equity, diversity and inclusion in our professions, and respectful engagement and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

This year also marks the final year in our 2017-2022 strategic plan. We will soon begin work on a new strategic plan to bring forward a strong vision for the future of engineering and geoscience regulation and our collective goal of enhanced public protection.



With the *Professional Governance Act* now in force, we are optimistic about the future. I look forward to building relationships with key stakeholders in my new role as CEO, and I welcome the opportunity to lead the organization as we continue to move forward in the public interest.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Yang".

Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.)



GOVERNMENT APPOINTEES' REPORT

The Province of British Columbia appoints four members of the public to Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Council. As independent members of the public, our duty is to represent the public interest in how professionals authorized to practice engineering and geoscience in BC are regulated.

We work alongside elected members of Council to govern Engineers and Geoscientists BC in its mandate to protect the public interest. This report is our observation on how the organization has met this mandate in the past year.

Many Council actions demonstrate a commitment to upholding and protecting the public interest, including:

- Review and approval of Bylaws that support and align with the *Professional Governance Act*;
- Discussion on ensuring an appropriate mechanism for independent practice rights and regulation for technologists, aligned with public safety;
- Planning and implementation of firm regulation;
- Review of organizational programs to ensure compliance with advocacy guidelines, including consideration of a separate advocacy body;
- Practice regulation, and providing support and guidance to registrants;
- Promotion of diversity initiatives;
- Promotion of Climate Change Action Plan; and
- Review of revenues, expenditures, and other financial assessments.

We saw progress on areas previously noted as requiring improvement. The process to regulate firms and corporate entities engaging in engineering and geoscience work is complete, with corporate practice

regulation commencing July 2021. Mandatory continuing professional development reporting and verification is also now in place. Significant activity continues on two other priority areas for resolution: systematic practice reviews and risk assessment.

Council also adopted new governance structures and processes to meet the Council size and composition requirements of the *Professional Governance Act*, with important dialogue on term lengths and the effective operation of a smaller council. New Council nominations and selection processes, role definition for leadership positions and committees, and conduct and transparency guidelines were also completed.

Engineers and Geoscientists BC has continued discussions with the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance on the most appropriate mechanism for engineering technologists to practice independently. The organization is committed to working with all interested parties to resolve this complex situation.

Despite the continued disruption from COVID-19 and the retirement of key personnel, including the Chief Regulatory Officer and Deputy Registrar, and the CEO and Registrar, Engineers and Geoscientists BC continued to deliver on its mandate in a changing environment. Professional registration remained strong, and despite financial pressures, transparent, accountable financial management prevented a previously projected deficit. The organization also completed a comprehensive leadership search that led to the hiring of CEO Heidi Yang.

We look forward to the vision put forward by the new CEO and we believe Council understands its responsibility to uphold the public interest; maintaining this focus, with an eye to future regulatory changes, should enable the continued, successful self-regulation of the engineering and geoscience professions. We look forward to our continued service to this organization and to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Andison, LLB

Suky Cheema, CPA, CA

Leslie Hildebrandt, ICD.D, LLB

Emily Lewis, CPA

David Wells, JD

Note: Alan Andison, LLB completed his term on December 31, 2020.

Emily Lewis, CPA, CMA began her term on March 22, 2021.

