

*For immediate publication*

### Better protection of the public

#### A preliminary assessment of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec's progress in fulfilling its commitment

**Montreal, December 12, 2013** – In an effort to find the means to fulfill its [commitment to better protect the public](#), this afternoon the Board of Directors of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec adopted by resolution a supplementary assessment for 2014-2015. This measure, which was adopted under section 85.1 of the Professional Code, will enable the OIQ to meet its disciplinary and professional inspection obligations. This additional contribution will be invoiced during the annual registration process that begins on February 1, 2014 and take effect on April 1, 2014.

"Reinforcing the disciplinary process is a key concern of the OIQ. To complete inquiries within acceptable timeframes and bring the offending engineers before the Disciplinary Council, measures have to be taken, and they come with a price tag. This exceptional measure is intended to respond to an exceptional crisis," explains Daniel Lebel, Eng., FEC, PMP, President of the OIQ.

#### **Resources and results: a preliminary assessment**

The OIQ's Office of the Syndic, whose staff was increased to around forty employees in 2013, has a key role in the efforts to strengthen the disciplinary process. A special unit was created this year to handle mainly 3C cases (collusion, corruption and illegal political party contributions). This multidisciplinary team includes outside resources (seasoned economic crime investigators) and current in-house staff members.

The unit's activities are yielding results. More than 550 3C inquiries are now underway, including 140 involving collusion or corruption and over 400 involving illegal political party contributions. To date, approximately thirty 3C inquiries have led to complaints filed with the Disciplinary Council:

- 5 complaints in connection with the Charbonneau Commission announced in September;
- 3 complaints involving a different type of scheme announced in November;
- 25 complaints involving illegal political party contributions.

The resources put in place will help speed up the process so that complaints can be filed more quickly in 2014.

The OIQ's professional inspection program was revamped in 2013 to focus more on engineers who work in the municipal sector and sectors related to the construction of public infrastructures.

The OIQ is also taking action against illegal engineering practice. In 2013, 87 inquiries were opened on offences that ranged from unlawful use of the title and misleading advertising to illegal practice and misrepresentation. During 2013, 16 penal proceedings were instituted.

#### **Increased training and prevention**

At the same time, the OIQ increased its training and prevention efforts in 2013. More than 400 people attended two ethics workshops in the fall as part of the "Matingénieurs" series. This series will continue in 2014 with workshops on business practices and construction work supervision. Ethics will also be discussed during a one-day conference in March and at the OIQ's Annual Conference in May. The 1 877 ETHIQUE hotline has also proven its worth to engineers and the public. Over 1 200 calls were processed by the OIQ in 2013, which is about 15% more than in 2012.

In addition, the OIQ has continued its research on best practices in public contracts with a view to proposing concrete solutions in 2014 to the Charbonneau Commission, with which it is actively working thanks to its intervener status. In 2013, the OIQ also contributed to the National Assembly consultations on bills related to integrity or to the professional system's efficiency.

#### **2014: on our way to a truly ethical system**

In addition to its primary mission of supervising engineers, the OIQ will continue its efforts in 2014 to push the boundaries of the professional system by supervising the business practices of consulting engineering firms through the audit program that it announced earlier this year. The voluntary program, which will be entirely funded by the consulting engineering firms, should be offered to all firms starting in the fall of 2014.

In 2014, the OIQ will continue to review the idea of an independent integrity institute, an organization that would act as a centre of expertise for public contract providers and help them better manage their contracts. The OIQ recently proposed that the government consider the possibility of funding the creation of this institute from a portion of the funds that will be recovered after the adoption of Bill 61, *Act to mainly recover amounts paid unjustly by public bodies in relation to certain contracts in the construction industry*.

Overall, the OIQ's actions and proposals are aimed at establishing a coherent system in which engineers are better trained and more responsible, companies are more effectively monitored and public contract providers are better equipped.

#### **About the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec**

Founded in 1920, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec has a membership of more than 60,000 engineering professionals in all fields, except forest engineering. The mission of the OIQ is to ensure the protection of the public by supervising the practice of the profession within the framework of its constituent laws and ensure that the profession serves the public interest. For more information, go to <http://www.oiq.qc.ca>.

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