


**TO:** NSPE Board of Directors

**cc:** NSPE House of Delegates  
NSPE Committee, Task Force, Council and Interest Group Chairs  
State Society Presidents and Presidents-elect  
State Society Executives Council  
NSPE Past Presidents

**FROM:** Mark J. Golden, FASAE, CAE   
Executive Director

**DATE:** April 3, 2017

**RE:** Board Update: March 2017

The center piece of the past month was the intensive and productive two-day meeting of the board, March 17-18<sup>th</sup>. Minutes will be posted shortly, but the meeting included in-depth strategic discussions and actions on:

- The Future of the Profession Task Force’s work on both mid-term and long-range opportunities and threats to the PE license and the professional practice of engineering, and plans to ensure the organization maximizes its impact driving positive outcomes for the profession;
- Initial development of the FY2018 budget, consistent with the Strategic Plan and the three-year business plan adopted last year;
- Engagement and recognition of NSPE past presidents;
- Approval of the 2017 class of NSPE Fellows;
- Adoption of a new [Position Statement](#) on “peer review” legislation;
- A strategy for ensuring the integrity and credibility of the PE in the face of continued pressure for discipline-specific licensing from structural engineering organizations<sup>1</sup>;
- Future opportunities to shore up and expand operational support for at-risk state societies; and
- Analyzing feedback collected from rank-and-file members, state leaders, and state executives on preferences and concerns, as well as market and business analysis from McKinley Advisors, to refine the proposed, new membership business model to better meet the needs of the state societies, national, and the members we collectively serve.

*NSPE encourages states to use the information in this report in newsletters or other updates to their membership to inform members on the activities of NSPE. As a suggestion, it may be most useful to take the bullets of most interest from the transmittal email. The full report (and past reports) can always be found [online](#).*

This last item consumed the bulk of the board meeting.

The membership business model study group’s report<sup>2</sup> (which included recommendations for a unified, \$299 dues price point, with the division

<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the board approved continued discussions with structural engineering interests regarding identifying possible areas of agreement on licensure policy that could be jointly pursued, without compromise to any fundamental principles.

<sup>2</sup> Study Group I was a task force of state executives (staff and volunteer) from across the country, representing state societies of all sizes. They have been engaged in an intensive work effort over the past 7 months, supported by McKinley Advisors, to gather data, socialize the concepts, secure

of dues revenue between national and state based on the division of operational responsibilities) were accepted by the board, with some modifications to implementation.

It should be stressed that this is a change in *business* and *administration* responsibilities for national and the state societies as operational entities. Going back to the discussion and direction ratified by the House of Delegates at last year's General Assembly, the purpose of pursuing such a business model is multi-purposed:

- Provide consistency to members, no matter in what state they reside, both in price and services;
- Streamline the on-boarding membership process for all prospective members;
- Simplify the join options for members, providing states and national a simplified membership marketing message;
- Increasing the intensity and effectiveness of continuous membership marketing;
- Provide much-needed support for state societies who are struggling under the current business model; and
- Support membership decisions that are best for the *whole* of NSPE (national and the state societies) and not respond to only one specific need.

Consistent with that direction, the proposed, new membership business model offers state societies two options for partnership with national: integrated and non-integrated. The board was unanimous in its commitment to the sustainable operations, growth and effectiveness of *all* state societies and the preservation of an effective partnership of national, state and territorial organizations, *regardless* of the form of affiliation each state society selects under this two-option model.

The path forward for discussions, debate, improvements and action on the proposal includes:

- NSPE Regional Director engagement with state leaders on their regular, regional conference calls in April, May and June;
- NSPE House of Delegates conference calls in May, June and July;
- The two-option partnership model will be presented for approval by the House of Delegates at the General Assembly, July 22<sup>nd</sup> in Atlanta, Georgia;
- If the two-option partnership model is approved at the House of Delegates, state societies will be required to choose either the integrated partnership option or the non-integrated partnership option as their intended form of affiliation under the new model by January 1, 2018. (States are encouraged to state their selection earlier if possible.);
- No later than January 31, 2018, based upon the level of state society support, the NSPE Board of Directors shall take final action on whether to proceed with implementation of the two-option model;
- If approved, the new model will be implemented for members joining or renewing July 1, 2018 and forward.
  - Existing, state-only members in states electing the integrated partnership option will be grandfathered;

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feedback, and develop a proposal for a single price point, integrated membership model. Study Group I was limited to states that have NSPE bill for three-tier memberships (some offer state-only membership and bill that at the state level) or those actively investigating NSPE taking over three-tier billing.

- Integrated partner states will begin receiving new distribution reports and old distribution reports, starting April 1, 2018.
- Non-integrated partner states will become responsible for billing and administration for all state memberships as of July 2018 renewals.

This coming week, each state society will receive a state-specific analysis of how the integrated partnership option impacts dues and revenue, from the perspective of both the dues paying member and the state society.

We are making great progress in developing a viable proposal, but much heavy-lifting remains to be done. It will require leaders at all levels of the organization to continue to stay informed and engaged, working hard, in good faith, and with open minds, to find a path forward that best serves the needs of professional engineering. The ultimate decision on whether or not to replace the failing, status quo membership business model (national and state) remains where it always has resided: in the hands of the House of Delegates. Regardless of the final outcome, we all owe it to our members and the profession to ensure that decision is made in an informed manner and in the best interest of us all.

### Championing the PE License

Proposals that threaten elimination of the PE license continue to surface across the country, and NSPE (national and state) continues to be the first line of defense. We continue to be successful, but constant vigilance and aggressive action are needed to turn back the tide of this pernicious trend. Each victory in a state strengthens us to defeat proposals elsewhere; should we lose one, the damage would have repercussions nationwide.

- NSPE alerted the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers to GA HR 744, which would task the Georgia Occupational Regulatory Review Council to reassess occupational licenses for possible changes. Given recent nationwide efforts to undermine occupational licensure, NSPE is working with GSPE to oppose any efforts that might undermine engineering licensure. The bill itself died with the legislature's adjournment on March 30<sup>th</sup> but NSPE is advising GSPE on advocacy strategies to build support for engineering licensure and preempt introduction of similar bills in the next session.
- NSPE alerted the Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers to occupational licensure provisions within the Governor's budget bills. NSPE and WSPE are discussing next steps to ensure engineering licensure is preserved and enhanced.
- Montana SB 365 proposed to eliminate the state engineering licensure board. The state professional engineering community overwhelmingly opposed and successfully had the recommendation rescinded from the bill.

Following submission of its preliminary report, the NSPE Future of the Profession Task Force met to consider the feedback received during the NSPE Board of Directors March meeting. Among the issues being considered by the Task Force include reaching out to public policy makers, examining new and innovative project delivery systems and education models with input from NSPE interest groups, and conducting surveys of NSPE members and non-members. The Task Force has been extended into the 2018 administrative year and will be presenting its preliminary findings at the NSPE July 2017 PECon in Atlanta.

NSPE sent a public comment to the Florida House Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee in opposition to a bill that would eliminate QBS and replace it with a "best value selection process."

If enacted, H.B. 789 would allow price to influence as much as 50% of the selection process. This would create a procurement system in which price is given priority over the competence and qualifications of the provider in making procurement commitments. [In the letter](#), NSPE President Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE, cited a Florida Department of Transportation analysis of the bill. She stated, "imposition of price would outweigh innovation as a selection factor, and encourage selection based on the cheapest proposal or design. This may result in higher transportation project life cycle costs, since the cheapest design is not always the most efficient or sustainable design."

NSPE has been collaborating with the Florida Engineering Society to defeat this legislation. The legislation passed out of committee on March 28. An amendment was added to exempt transportation projects to ensure continued federal funding. However, it still impacts non-transportation projects. NSPE continues to work with FES on next steps to defeat the bill.

In the past month, NSPE has worked with [South Carolina](#), [Michigan](#), and now [Ohio](#) to defeat legislation that would limit the professional engineer's independent judgment when making decisions about the proper type of material for piping projects. Similar versions of this legislation are popping up across the country. NSPE's first and foremost concern is to ensure that the professional engineer can exercise independent judgment, based on experience, expertise, qualifications, and the applied knowledge of engineering principles to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. In a [letter](#) to the chairwoman and vice chair of the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee, NSPE President Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE, asserted, "If H.B. 121 is enacted, professional engineers would not have the final decision on the selection of appropriate piping materials for projects. It is the professional engineer who protects citizens' safety and the professional engineer who must make this decision."

In February, NSPE and the Oklahoma Society of Professional Engineers sent a [joint letter](#) to the Oklahoma Speaker of the House and the Senate President Pro Tempore in opposition to structural engineering provisions included in legislation. In the past month, NSPE and OSPE have expanded outreach efforts and NSPE sent the joint letter to the full Oklahoma Senate Business, Commerce, and Tourism Committee at the end of March to further demonstrate opposition to the language.

NSPE advised Professional Engineers in Oregon to oppose legislation that would allow interior designers to perform functions that constitute the practice of engineering.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, President Verhalen and I represented NSPE at the annual NCEES Participating Organizations Liaison Council (POLC) meeting in Phoenix. We pressed NSPE's agenda on countering challenges to licensure, the future of the profession, and advanced dialogue on the issue of discipline-specific licensure.

NSPE issued a [public statement](#) on PEs vital role in infrastructure revitalization: The poor condition of the nation's infrastructure has been grabbing headlines around the country, and NSPE is speaking out about the role professional engineers must play in making the much-needed improvements. "Infrastructure is the framework that supports virtually every aspect of our lives: transportation, commerce, public health, safety, and security," said President Kodi Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE. "We need to be sure we're adequately investing, managing, and caring for it, and as we continue to progress, that professional engineers play a critical role in ensuring its safe development and improvement." (In recent

weeks, ASCE's [2017 Infrastructure Report Card](#) handed out a D+, and federal and state legislators have been grappling with how to pay for it all.)

On March 28-29<sup>th</sup>, NSPE participated in the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB) Annual Meeting in Alexandria, VA. CESB is an independent, voluntary membership body created for its member organizations to recognize, through specialty certification, the expertise of individuals practicing in engineering and related fields. CESB, as an accrediting body, serves as follows:

- Provides basic criteria and guidelines for the establishment and operation of specialty certification programs for engineers, technologists, technicians, and related scientific;
- Serves as a recognizing body for organizations that certify individuals;
- Represents its members in communications and, when appropriate, in negotiations with public and private agencies, groups, and individuals with respect to matters of common interest; and
- Informs employers, specifiers, public officials, the public, and engineering and related practitioners of the benefits of specialty certification.

NSPE (along with NCEES) is an Associate Member of CESB.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles has issued a new rulemaking on autonomous vehicles. They are proceeding with rolling out a system to enable fully autonomous testing and deployment. Contrary to NSPE's position and advocacy on the issue, they will *not* be utilizing any third-party certification. In the Initial [Statement of Reasons](#) it states:

“The department considered prohibiting the testing of vehicles capable of operation without the presence of a driver inside the vehicle; however, the rapid advancement in the development of autonomous technology and the desire to commence testing of vehicles that could provide mobility options led the department to conclude that regulations should be developed to permit the testing of driverless vehicles on public roads.

“The department considered requiring manufacturers to have a vehicle demonstration test conducted by an independent third party to assess the vehicles' capability to perform driving tasks and the submission of a demonstration test report certifying that the vehicles performed as necessary to operate safely on public streets. The department conducted two workshops in which the proposal was discussed and received numerous comments regarding the difficulty of performing demonstration tests that would provide an assurance of vehicle safety. The department concluded that the inability to formulate a pass/fail criteria that would be used by all third-party demonstration testers would lead to anomalous results and, therefore, the third-party demonstration tests would not uniformly determine the safe operation of all vehicles.

“The department considered requiring that manufacturers certify that their vehicles will be maintained to the FMVSS [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards] to which they are originally manufactured. However, compliance with this requirement would be difficult in situations where a manufacturer has no control on how a vehicle is maintained by its owner.”

The NSPE AV Task Force is discussing appropriate response. There is a public comment period open until April 24<sup>th</sup> and a [public hearing](#) scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Ethical Guide to the Profession

The [NSPE Code of Ethics](#) is one of the most frequently viewed resources on the NPSE website. A redesigned PDF is now available, offering a much more professional look to this critical document. The new document is an example of the new look NSPE has been implementing in all electronic and print resources, since the launch of the new logo last June.

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) quarterly magazine [The Bridge](#) dedicated its Spring 2017 issue to the subject of engineering ethics. The magazine includes a series of articles on a variety of important issues (ethics in business, protecting dissent, legal protections, risk, environmental justice, global issues, etc.) including an article by NSPE Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Arthur Schwartz highlighting engineering codes of ethics, the historic foundation, structure and enforcement, content and other issues.

NSPE Board of Ethical Review (BER) Chair, Francis Stanton, P.E., F.NSPE posted an ethical case study on off shore engineering drawings in the Open Forum of NSPE communities. Several members have responded to the case study with considerations, and it remains an open discussion in the community. The BER continues to explore topics for additional case studies to be posted to the NSPE communities to help engage and inform members on ethical considerations.

## Powering Professional Advancement

In preparation for the launch of registration the [PE Conference Website](#) is being updated daily with information including the list of sessions that is now live on the [Conference at a Glance](#) page. State and National leaders have also been encouraged to support and promote the conference. PE Conference promotional materials can be found in the [State and National Leaders Community Library](#) under the PE Conference folder.

Hard to believe, but we're only five months away from our second annual Professional Engineers Day on August 3, 2017! The NSPE Communications Committee is working with staff planning the event, including the generation of new ideas and ways to publicize the day. We are just beginning the planning phase, so I'm hoping to get some initial thoughts and ideas on ways we can expand on last year's success, and/or new audiences or different ways we can increase publicity and recognition of the event.

To get your creative juices flowing, here are a few new ideas we are considering for this year:

- Requesting video submissions from PEs on their typical "day in the life" or visits to job sites;
- Creating a "toolkit" of graphics (logos, web banners, flyers) to have available for download and reproduction on our website; and
- Reaching out to our partner organizations and encouraging them to help promote PE Day among their members.



Please take a few minutes to think about Professional Engineers Day and what might resonate with you in celebration of this special event. You can send your thoughts and ideas directly to Stacey Ober at [sober@nspe.org](mailto:sober@nspe.org).

## Uniting the PE Community

The current and updated membership marketing materials have been posted to an online resource repository. State and National leaders can find electronic versions of marketing collateral materials in the [State and National Leaders Community Library in the Membership Marketing Folder](#). A new membership promotional flier has been created outlining member benefits for current and prospective members. This Member Benefits at a Glance flier can be found in the [State and National Leaders Community Library in the Membership Marketing Folder](#).

The NSPE staff content team created a content and communication calendar to serve as a central hub of planned NSPE communications being published through various channels (emails, social media, NSPE community posts etc.). Key items on the calendar that are going out in the next few weeks are:

- A Call for Volunteers announcement (offering an online tool for members interested in service on NSPE committees to make that interest known, and provide information on their qualifications;
- Opening of PE Conference registration;
- Ongoing promotion of the Spring Webinar series (featuring April webinar offerings); and
- Regular bi-weekly Job Board postings, averaging 150+ employment opportunities for PEs.

The [NSPE Speaks podcast](#) is now available on Stitcher and Google Play, in addition to iTunes and the website. This allows us to reach a broader audience with different types of mobile technology and different personal podcast listening preferences.

NSPE is in the early stages of revamping the navigation on the website. The current navigation, which is made up of numerous links on the left side of the site, will be consolidated and put in a “mega-menu” format at the top of pages. The two main goals of the project are to help visitors find the information they’re looking for and create more space for content. These changes will make the thousands of pages of useful information and resources now available easier for users to find. The changes are far more than merely cosmetic, reflecting months of analytics and application of website best practices.

With the addition of the Wyoming Society of Professional Engineers, 23 state societies have now decided to adopt the new logo and join the brand family. Although adoption of the logo is not a requirement, it is promising to see this level of acceptance in the nine months since its unveiling.

We continue to get a very positive reaction from individual members, who now receive a personalized email on their birthdays, thanking them for their continued support through membership, and entering them into a monthly prize drawing. It is a small gesture, but one that is having an impact on maintaining a connection with members. In the months ahead, we will add additional personalized greetings on membership anniversary dates and other significant dates.

An interesting story appeared in the [Omaha World Herald](#) earlier this spring on “Women making headway in engineering.” It focuses on Paula Wells, the first woman to serve as a president of an NSPE state society and the first woman national officer of NSPE. She was elected an NSPE vice president in 1981.

NSPE officers, board members and volunteers were busy this month visiting state societies and participating in events hosted by partner organizations.

- President-elect Tom Roberts, P.E., F.NSPE, represented NSPE at the 2017 SEABEE/CEC/NAVFAC anniversary ball which was a celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Navy SEABEES, the 150<sup>th</sup> year of the Civil Engineering Corps, and the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NAVFAC.
- Immediate Past Director of the Western & Pacific Region, Greg Brands, P.E., F.NSPE, represented the NSPE president at the Alaska Society’s 2017 annual meeting and state MATHCOUNTS competition.
- Vice President Michael Aitken, P.E., F.NSPE, attended the 2017 Annual Conference and Expo of the Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration (SME) in Denver.
- Vice President Aitken also attended the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual West Virginia Construction & Design Expo in Charleston, WV which included a meeting with the Board of Directors of the West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers. This Expo is the only West Virginia trade show for the construction, engineering, and architectural industries.
- And, at the end of the month Jon Nelson, P.E., and I will be attending the spring ABET Board of Delegates assembly and area delegation meetings. Jon represents NSPE not only on the Board of Delegates but also on the engineering, engineering technology and applied sciences delegations. Outcomes from the ABET meetings will be included in my April 15 update.

The NICET Board of Governors met March 24-25<sup>th</sup> and continued work on its portion of the NSPE budget for FY2018. (In addition to its mission-driven service in providing state-of-the-art certifications of engineering technicians, NICET activities are the major source of non-dues revenue to NSPE and are critical to our shared success in achieving our mission.

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And remember, you always have access to NSPE leadership resources in the [Leadership Toolbox](#). This includes [talking point](#) scripts and presentations for use by NSPE officers, board members, and other leaders during state visits, chapter meetings, or other venues to promote NSPE and its activities, updated on an at least quarterly basis. Current board members can access an online library of board meeting materials (past, current and future) through the online board book site, ([BoardBookIt](#)).

If you want to review NSPE’s history and how that has been translated into current plans with a future-focus, NSPE’s purpose, mission, vision and a history of the *Race for Relevance* and the resulting Strategic Plan is summarized in a section called “[Who We Are and What We Do](#).”