


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: January 18, 2017

RE: Board Update: December 20, 2016 – January 15, 2017

The purpose of these updates is to look forward and keep you informed of what's happening and what is on the horizon ahead. But the new year is also an opportunity to look back and take stock of the year just ended. For a brief overview of the year just ended, take a look at the [Year in Review 2016](#).

Championing the PE License

NSPE released its [2017 Legislative and Regulatory Watch List](#) on December 28th, offering members an opportunity to weigh in on what they feel are the legislative and regulatory threats professional engineers face in 2017. Every year, PEs face challenges to the practice of engineering. And every year, in response, NSPE works to protect the PE license and promote continuous focus on the public health, safety, and welfare. For 2017, NSPE identified four key issues to watch out for. This list is not exhaustive but highlights key issues we expect to impact the profession in 2017.

Scrutiny of Occupational Licensure: The debate over the role of government in regulating occupations and professions has recently come to the forefront. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, occupational licensing directly affects nearly 30% of US workers. Barbers, cosmetologists, florists, interior designers, naturopaths, manicurists ... and the list goes on. While the work of professional engineers—like that of doctors, registered architects, and attorneys—clearly affects the public health, safety, and welfare, it is not uncommon for policymakers to categorize highly educated and trained PEs with barbers and cosmetologists in the debate over eliminating occupational licenses. Federal and state elections have set the stage for a new era of deregulation. For the last several years, momentum to roll back occupational licensing has been growing. NSPE expects 2017 to be a watershed year for this issue. Learn more [here](#).

Changes to Licensing Board Composition and Oversight: The 2015 US Supreme Court decision in *North Carolina Board of Dental Examiners vs. Federal Trade Commission* has led some states to consider changing the oversight and composition of their licensing boards to ensure compliance with the decision. An increasing number of states are expected to introduce legislation and regulations to ensure that states and state boards do not subject themselves to increased liability. These changes increase oversight and supervision of licensing boards, often by the state attorney general.

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](#).

They also, in some instances, change the composition of the state board to include non-active market participants. Learn more [here](#).

Attempts to Erode Qualifications-Based Selection of Engineering Services: In 2016 there were several legislative and regulatory attempts to erode or eliminate qualifications-based selection of engineering services. In a political environment of deregulation, NSPE anticipates that there will be increased threats to QBS in 2017. Learn more [here](#).

Weakening Licensure Requirements for Federal Engineers: The past year was an extraordinary one for strengthening requirements for licensure of federal engineers, a top and longstanding NSPE priority. Regulatory advocacy initiatives yielded strengthened requirements for professional engineers in engineering projects across the country, particularly in the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior. The Trump administration and leaders in the 115th Congress have pledged to deregulate and roll back many of these regulatory requirements, which has the potential to impact the strengthened requirements already enacted as well as prospects for further requirements in these and other federal agencies. Learn more [here](#).

The posting has already generated lively discussion on the NSPE online communities.

NSPE and the West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers extended their sincerest congratulations to longtime NSPE and WVSPE member H. Wood “Woody” Thrasher on his appointment as [West Virginia’s secretary of commerce](#). NSPE President Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE, and WVSPE President David Weaver, P.E., noted that “The PE license demonstrates an engineer’s commitment to the highest standards of engineering practice and ethical conduct and shows that the individual has the proper education, experience, and qualifications to provide vital engineering services to the public.... [Thrasher’s] appointment as Secretary of Commerce for the great state of West Virginia has delivered this assurance to the citizens of the state. Further, the important role and responsibilities of this office clearly call for a leader who has proven qualifications attained only through a PE license.” NSPE and WVSPE look forward to working with Secretary Thrasher to champion the PE license and protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

NSPE has worked with MultiState Associates to add executive orders to the list of state initiatives it tracks on behalf of national and our state society partners. NSPE is now tracking state legislation, regulations, *and* executive orders.

NSPE advocacy staff has been advising and assisting the Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers as it prepares to promote legislation strengthening education requirements for taking the PE exam. NSPE also advised Professional Engineers of Oregon (PEO) on its response to proposed legislation that would waive the Fundamentals of Engineering exam for Canadian engineers. NSPE and PEO oppose this attempt.

New proposals to change licensing requirements for [structural engineers](#) have also emerged in Georgia and Minnesota. NSPE is coordinating with the respective state societies to ensure these do not damage or splinter the PE license.

Following up on an invitation from NSPE President Verhalen early this fall, NSPE has scheduled a meeting at NSPE on February 16th with the various representatives of structural engineering interests (the Structural Engineering Institute of ASCE, the National Council of Structural Engineers Association, the Structural Engineering Certification Board, the ACEC-Council of American Structural Engineers and the Structural Engineering

Licensure Coalition). The purpose of the meeting is to explore whether there are areas of common ground we can work on cooperatively, without compromise to our position on licensing by discipline.

Ethical Guide to the Profession

Each year, the National Academy of Engineering and American Association of Engineering Societies (of which NSPE is a founding member) hold an engineering convocation at the National Academies building, on the Mall in Washington. This year, the convocation programming (April 24th) will address the ethics of artificial intelligence, and NAE has reached out to NSPE to provide a speaker for the panel on autonomous vehicles. We look forward to participating.

And if you thought the ethical implications of engineering decisions was a dry topic that no one outside the profession cares about, the [boingboing](#) website recently made the argument that the hit film, *Rogue One* is “an ‘engineering ethics’ case-study disguised as a Star Wars movie.” (If you haven’t seen the movie: spoiler alert before you read the article.)

Powering Professional Advancement

The “[15 free PDH](#)” offerings for 2017 went online and were promoted in an e-blast on January 17th. Topics covered include roles and risks in construction management, the ethics of autonomous vehicles, future engineering trends in rail and manufacturing, the consequences when engineering ethics are ignored, public health and safety communications issues, and more. Much effort was made to ensure these offerings would be of maximum value to members requiring continuing education for license renewal purposes. 11 of 15 meet and have been pre-approved by New York’s highly restrictive approval standards.

An interesting (and short) video on strategic foresight came to my attention from a blogger I follow. Consultant Seth Kahan drew a distinction between:

- **Strategy:** the activities you engage in to get you from where you are to where you want to be; and
- **Strategic foresight:** the activity you engage in to be sure you are aware of the things outside your established paradigm that have an impact on the relevance and viability of strategy.

The critical foresight function at national is a priority, including the important work of the Future of the Profession Task Force. (The task force’s work was the focus of a recent [cover story](#) in *PE* magazine as well as several [blog](#) posts.) At its upcoming face-to-face meeting in March, the NSPE board will again have an opportunity for in-depth engagement with the task force’s work, ensuring we continue to pursue our mission and strategies with foresight.

A professional engineer and adjunct professor at the University of New Hampshire recently requested to use the November/December 2016 *PE* magazine feature “[Team Engineering](#)” as a resource for his sophomore-level course on project engineering. The class introduces students to engineering economics, scheduling, management, and licensure, and the article will be used to introduce the importance of the project team. As the article says, “To tackle the engineering challenges of the 21st century, professional engineers need help. They need teams. And teams mean teamwork.” (We of course granted the request, although the

professor is a former, but-not-current member. We will be working to see what we can do to correct that deficiency!)

Uniting the PE Community

In the first episode of the *NSPE Speaks podcast* for 2017, the podcast crew talks about resolutions and how professional engineers can make their mark in a new year. The crew also gives a shout out to the Future City Competition, which is celebrating 25 years of sharing engineering with middle schoolers in 2017; introduces a new segment on engineering in popular culture; and provides the usual roundup of engineering and Society news. You can access and subscribe to this and earlier episodes on the NPSE [website](#) or through [iTunes](#).

In addition to the discussions on the legislative and regulatory watch list, the Open Forum on NSPE's Community Platform has generated some very insightful and interesting discussions. To highlight just a few recent hot topics:

- President Kodi Verhalen shared survey responses and asked [what additional NSPE research and publications are you interested in?](#)
- [Defining competency](#). Past President Tim Austin, P.E., F.NSPE, kicked off this discussion about competency. Is it merely technical, or is it more?
- [Is it unethical not to charge for services?](#) If a PE provides engineering services but doesn't bill the client for these specific services, is this an ethics violation?
- [Greatest engineering achievement](#). Nuclear power, the Internet, the cell phone.... what do you think has been the greatest engineering achievement of the last century?

You'll notice that some of these topics were started by members of leadership, but like the title says, this is an open forum. And rank-and-file members can, and increasingly are raising issues directly.

Much work is being accomplished on the NSPE Membership Restructuring/Integration project that was presented to the House of Delegates last June, resulting in a directive to have a proposal for the HoD in Atlanta this July. (The plan will be another of the major strategic dialogues, which will engage the board at its upcoming March meeting.)

Working Group 1, a group of state executives, state leaders, national leaders, and staff, supported by McKinley Advisors, continues to evaluate feasibility data, potential impacts to all states and national, develop a state capacity rubric criteria, and identify additional national resources that will be available to states under the unified, single price-point concept.

In working with state societies and the NSPE Board of Directors to gather feedback on the project, we learned that there is some misinterpretation of the state capacity rubric criteria. It is NOT the intention of the rubric to grade or place a value on state societies in a negative sense. ***To the contrary, the rubric is being developed for states to do a self-assessment and to indicate where they want and need assistance from national, and where they have sufficient state resources to do it on their own.*** A second document is also in development by the working group, to show which resources will be available to which tiers of states at no cost, from the national dues dollars that NSPE receives.

This is a large, complex and mission critical project affecting all elements of the NSPE community. **NSPE will be hosting a webinar for the House of Delegates and state leaders on February 2nd at 2 pm eastern** to bring them up-to-date on where things stand and where they are heading. More details on the webinar will follow. I encourage you to be sure your liaison groups and your own state society are aware of this important opportunity to learn and provide feedback. We are encouraging not just HoD delegates, but all state society board members to participate.

Additional information on the membership model project can be found [here](#).

Twenty-one state societies have now formally adopted [new logos](#) based on the national brand family.

Fall 2016

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN RESULTS

Campaign dates: October 17 - December 20



NSPE staff created a campaign highlighting NSPE as it relates to the identity of all PEs, showing NSPE as the face of the professional engineer.

A multimedia rollout included direct mail, videos, emails to prospective members, social media promotion, and a website landing page.



236
new
members

\$29,489 State revenue
\$ 0 State cost
\$26,180 Nat'l revenue
\$27,194 Nat'l cost

35,808

Postcards mailed to non-member PEs through lists acquired from state licensing boards.

2,430

Page views at specific landing page established for the campaign: www.nspe.org/join.

1700+

Number of views for the 16 videos of NSPE Board members posted on social media.

EMAIL RESULTS



Four emails were sent to 10,000 prospects:

- "Connect With PEs and Advance Your Career"
- "We Are the PE Champions, My Friend"
- "Always Let Your Conscience (and NSPE) be your Guide"
- "Are You Ready to Climb the Ladder?"



Average email open rate was 26.75%



Average click-through rate was 1.4%

#JoinNSPE

The hashtag was used on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram throughout the campaign, along with the videos, resulting in numerous retweets, likes, and shares.



nspe.org/join

1420 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 703-684-2800 www.nspe.org

The January 2017 Membership Report has been distributed to the board and is available in the [board community page](#). Progress on renewals has also been reported directly to the State Society Executives Council (SSEC) on their [community page](#).

An enlightening summary of results to-date from the Fall 2017 recruitment campaign in graphic form is included to the left.

NSPE staff Communications Director Dave Siegel was invited by the American Society for Engineering Education to take part in an outside review of the organization's communications efforts on January 9th.

During the day-long meeting, ASEE staff gave presentations about their work in editorial, art and production, government relations, as well as communications to the eight invited members of the Visiting Committee (representing the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine; the Boston Museum of Science; IEEE; ASME; the American Association of University Women; the American Medical Writers Association; and the Society for Science and the Public). Committee members had the opportunity to ask questions of ASEE staff, discuss its observations, and provide feedback to ASEE Executive Director Norman Fortenberry, and Immediate Past President Joe Rencis, who serves as dean of engineering at Tennessee Technological University. The Visiting Committee will provide formal

recommendations to ASEE by January 23rd.

Finally, nominations are still open but the deadline is approaching for the 2017 [NSPE Honor Awards](#) and [Fellow nominations](#).

The deadline for submissions for the three NSPE Honor awards is **January 31st**. The [Young Engineer of the Year Award](#) is presented to a young NSPE member who has made outstanding contributions to the profession and their community during the early years of their career; the [Distinguished Service Award](#) is presented to a licensed NSPE member for exceptional contributions to the profession, their community, and specifically to NSPE; and the [NSPE Award](#) is presented to an engineer who has made outstanding contributions to the engineering profession, the public welfare, and humankind.

The deadline for NSPE Fellow Member nominations is **February 1st**. Instructions and guidance for completing the nomination form and the nomination form itself can be found [here](#).

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](#)."