

Awarding and managing public contracts: the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec will suggest potential solutions to the Charbonneau Commission

Montreal, September 3, 2013 – With the resumption of the Charbonneau Commission's activities, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (OIQ) is now turning its attention to the two components of its contribution to preventing the collusion and corruption schemes uncovered by the Commission from recurring in the future. In other words, the OIQ is not only stepping up its efforts to impose sanctions on the engineers involved in these schemes, but also working on a series of concrete proposals that will be submitted to the Commission in the next few months to ensure that engineers and the businesses that hire them observe ethical and professional conduct rules throughout the process of awarding and managing public contracts.

In doing so, the OIQ will be assisting the Commission in the coming months with the progress report ordered by the Québec government for January 2014. The OIQ's proposals for countering the schemes will focus on two main issues.

The first issue is the professional supervision of the engineers themselves: The measures proposed by the OIQ (training, inspection, etc.) will be designed to provide tools and support to engineers so that they give priority to their ethical obligations over their employment or business obligations.

The second major issue will be the supervision of clients and organizations that hire engineers (infrastructure managers, engineering consultants, construction contractors and their sub-contractors). For that matter, the OIQ will propose specific measures to improve the operations of the selection committees that are set up for the process of awarding public contracts. Procedures, as well as administrative, financial and quality controls will also be discussed in the OIQ's recommendations.

Sanctions for the offending engineers

The OIQ has also committed to deploying the necessary means to ensure that thorough, unsparing inquiries are carried out by the Office of the Syndic, which should soon announce a number of disciplinary complaints in relation to the Commission.

This is a complex task for the Office of the Syndic. It is currently conducting about one hundred inquiries in connection with the collusion and corruption schemes. It also has more than 300 other active inquiries involving cases of illegal political contributions.

"We are committed to punishing the offending engineers and we will keep our word. Parallel to the disciplinary process, mechanisms need to be set up to spare Québec society from being subjected again to costly crises such as the one we are now experiencing," concluded OIQ President Daniel Lebel, Eng., FIC, PMP.

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>.