

For immediate publication

Political contributions: the OIQ's Office of the Syndic reaches a settlement with a group of engineers and ex-engineers from Axor

Montreal, March 10, 2016 – The Office of the Syndic of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (OIQ) has reached a settlement with a group of engineers and ex-engineers from Axor and its subsidiaries who received a refund between 2006 and 2008 from their employer to compensate them for a political contribution. In its inquiries, the Office of the Syndic found that neither the professional competence nor the diligence of the engineers concerned were at issue. However, according to the Office of the Syndic, these engineers' participation in a political party funding process involving a refund from their employer constitutes an act derogatory to the honour and dignity of the profession that must be brought to the public's attention and penalized in order to maintain the transparency required in political contributions. The settlements will be entered in the files of the engineers concerned.

In response to inquiry requests and as part of its own inquiries, the OIQ's Office of the Syndic began, between 2010 and 2013, a series of inquiries on political contributions made by engineers and ex-engineers from Axor and its subsidiaries and lodged disciplinary complaints against the engineers concerned. These complaints ended with a settlement approved by the Disciplinary Council, at a time when the political contribution issue has been strongly criticized by both the media and the Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec, thereby resulting in greater awareness of the importance of respecting the principles set out in the *Election Act*.

The main task of the Office of the Syndic is to make sure that OIQ members uphold the provisions of the *Code of Ethics of Engineers*, the *Engineers Act* and all regulations adopted under the *Professional Code*.

As a reminder, disciplinary law does not seek to punish professionals, but rather correct deviant conduct. When the Office of the Syndic is reassured that the public is protected after conducting an inquiry on one of its members and that the possibility of an ethical offence has been removed, its role is not necessarily to lodge a complaint with the Disciplinary Council. In such situations, it may settle cases through conciliation or a formal commitment by the engineer concerned to change his or her professional practices.

About the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec

Founded in 1920, the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec has a membership of approximately 62,000 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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Source: Patrick Leblanc
Communications Advisor
Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec
Tel.: 514 845-6141 or 1 800 461-6141, extension 3108