

For immediate publication

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

Montreal, November 14, 2017 – The Office of the Syndic of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec has reached a settlement with a group of 29 engineers and ex-engineers from DESSAU and its subsidiaries who, between 1998 and 2010, received a refund from their employer as compensation 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 contribution 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. As set out in section 123.6 of the *Professional Code*, the conciliations will be added to the files of the engineers concerned and are confidential.

In response to inquiry requests and as part of its own inquiries, between 2011 and 2016, the OIQ's Office of the Syndic opened a series of inquiries on political contributions made by engineers and ex-engineers from DESSAU and its subsidiaries. These inquiries were concluded with a settlement in a context where the issue of political contributions was strongly criticized by both the media and the Chief Electoral Officer, 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 some cases, 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 some 63,000 engineering professionals in all fields, except forest engineering. The OIQ strives to be a reference for professionalism and excellence in engineering as well as a unifying organization. Its mission is to protect the public by acting to ensure that engineers serve society with professionalism, compliance and integrity in the public interest. For more information, go to www.oiq.qc.ca.

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