



August 2015

*Georgia Board of
Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors*

Board Matters

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Thank you for taking the time to read this semi-inaugural edition of our newsletter. I say “semi-inaugural” because there have been newsletters in the past, but they ceased due to a lack of funding or interest by the professional licensing division of the Secretary of State’s office. The very first item of business must be to recognize and thank three of our Board members who persisted on the need for a newsletter and stepped up to spear head it. They are Dan Davis, PE, Bill Womack, PE, and Julie Busbee (public member of the Board and previous applications supervisor with the Board staff). Thanks also to Board staff who have helped to compile the information, and for the volunteer hours that these Board members have contributed to creating this. We plan to compile and send the newsletter twice per year. It will be delivered only through email to the licensees whom the Board has an email address for, and will also be made available on the Board’s website.

Registrants need to be aware of current Board rules and laws affecting their practice. The most overlooked and ignored law is the requirement of a firm to obtain a Certificate of Authorization (“COA”) before engaging in the business of Professional Engineering or Land Surveying. The resident registrant that qualifies the firm must be a full-time professional and be engaged “a majority of the working hours.” A registrant cannot qualify more than one firm. Each branch office must be similarly qualified by a different registrant. Individual registrants who work and issue reports, plans or maps as an individual are not required to obtain a COA but cannot indicate a firm affiliation. For example, “John Doe, PE” is fine but “Doe Engineering” is not, even if not indicated as an LLC or corporation. Starting in 2013, surveys issued by Land Surveyors must bear the COA number if prepared by a firm. The laws on COA are available on the Board’s website. Each registrant should be familiar with these laws and rules that govern the profession which we practice.

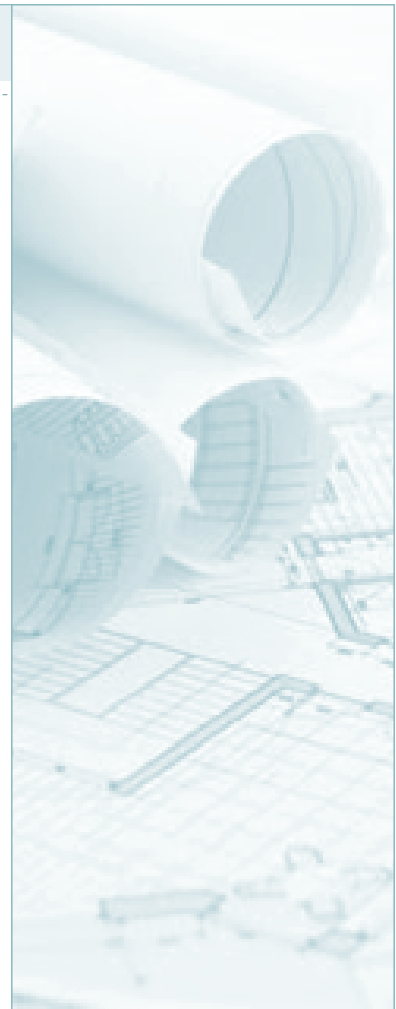
As you will see elsewhere in this newsletter, the Board has been responsive to complaints. In fact, the response and management of cases is better now than

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BOARD MEMBERS

Mark E. Chastain, LS, Board Chair
Brian K. Upson, PE, Vice-chair
Russ Pennington, PE
Elmo A. Richardson, PE, LS
Dan Davis, PE
William Womack, PE
Darien Sykes, PE
Neil Wyche, PE
Julianne Busbee, Consumer Member
Darren Mickler, Executive Director





NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN *(continued)*

any time that I've experienced since my appointment to the Board in 2003. There is still plenty of room for improvement, and additional staff would be nice, but complaints don't go ignored for years any longer. The Board has also been more aggressive with fines and sanctions for violations. However, I'm still surprised at the relatively low number of complaints that the Board receives, especially when considered in context with the amount of grumbling that is heard from the professional community. One common misconception is that the Board has some kind of random patrol throughout the state that is supposed to round up all violations and bring them to Macon for prosecution. Thus the typical statement, "everybody knows about Fred's work, why doesn't the Board do something about him?" The fact is that the regulatory framework creates a responsive only enforcement stance, so we need actual complaints to act on. Another misconception is that the Board might not act on a complaint filed by another registrant. This is hardly the case. We are well able to sort through trivial or "sour grapes" complaints. But we recognize that when a violation or bad situation needs to be handled by the Board, the registrants involved are the best source of information.

"I'm still surprised at the relatively low number of complaints that the Board receives."

STATS

Licenses Issued

- Professional Engineer — 1,238
- Engineer Firm — 238
- Engineer In-Training — 361
- Land Surveyor — 24
- Land Surveyor Firm — 32
- Land Surveyor In-Training — 5

GEORGIA LAW, RULES & POLICY

RULE CHANGES

In 2014 and 2015 the PELS Board posted and adopted two Rule changes. Rule 180-3-.01, "Education" and Rule 180-11-.03, "Continuing Professional Competence-Requirements" were amended as follows:

Rule 180-3-.01 (d) was amended to read: "In a curriculum of four or more years in engineering technology or related science curriculum from a school or college approved by the Board" as used in O.C.G.A. 43-15-8(2)(A), means a four year curriculum leading to a bachelor of science degree in chemistry, physics, mathematics, biology or similar related science curriculum. Those curricula may, in individual cases, be accepted by the Board upon review of the applicant's educational transcript.

Rule 180-11-.03 (2) was amended to read: Land Surveyors. Every land surveyor is required to obtain fifteen (15) PDH's each twenty-four (24) month biennial renewal period. In addition, every land surveyor must ensure that, once every four (4) years, at least six (6) PDH's in "Minimum Technical Standards" be included in their PDH's acquired. The "Minimum Technical Standards" material shall include a review of all board rules and applicable state laws pertaining to the practice of and surveying specific to the state of Georgia. If a land surveyor exceeds the requirements in any biennial period, a maximum of seven and one-half (7.5) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period.

NCEES INFORMATION

We recommend that all licensed Engineers and Surveyors in the State of Georgia go onto the NCEES web site and become familiar with the issues being debated at the NCEES meetings.

For more information go to <http://ncees.org> to see the current items that are being discussed. We would also like your feedback on issues that you are concerned with or want more information.

NCEES NEWS

NCEES (National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying) is located in Clemson, SC. Many exciting things have been put in place recently by NCEES. One of the biggest changes is the change from pencil and paper testing to computer based testing (CBT) for the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and the Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) which began in January 2014. The Professional Surveyors examination will move to CBT in October of 2016. The Professional Engineers examination will remain pencil and paper testing for the near future. NCEES is working towards CBT for the PE exam within the next few years.

There are several issues presently being discussed by NCEES at various Zone Meetings and at the Annual Meeting, being held in Williamsburg, VA this August. Of the important items, one dealing with licensing of Structural Engineers has major impacts on the licensing of Structural PEs. The issue is if a higher level of qualification/expertise is needed for the design of certain types of structures, referred to as “significant” or “essential” structures, and do these designs require a higher level of expertise due to the structures’ complexity and high potential for harm in the event of a failure. Presently there are several states that are imposing the higher level of regulation and/or have separate structural licensure systems, like the State of Illinois. Presently there are five different approaches to this issue: Generic PE Licensure; Generic PE Licensure Plus Protected SE Title; Generic PE Licensure Plus Protected SE Title and Restricted SE Practice; Discipline-Specific Licensure and Separate SE Licensure. The Board would like to hear from the Structural PEs as to their thoughts on this subject.

Another hotly contested issue is the future educational standards being proposed for Engineering Licensure. It has been proposed, but not approved, that the minimum education standard be revised to require an applicant for the PE exam to have:

- A. A bachelor’s degree in engineering from a program accredited by EAC/ABET and a master’s or earned doctoral degree in engineering in the same technical area from an institution that offers EAC/ABET accredited programs, or the equivalent
- B. A bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in engineering for a program accredited by EAC/ABET
- C. A bachelor’s degree from a program accredited by EAC/ABET that has a minimum of 150 semester credit hours of which at least 115 semester credit hours are in mathematics, science or engineering combined and at least 75 of these semester credit hours are in engineering
- D. A bachelor’s degree from a program accredited by EAC/ABET and at least 30 additional semester credit hours of upper-level undergraduate or graduate level course work in engineering on topics relevant to the practice of engineering

Also being considered is the “de-coupling” of the engineering experience with taking of the PE exam. This issue has not been approved. The issue is whether a candidate must have the four or more years of engineering experience prior to taking the PE exam or can a candidate who has passed the FE exam then take the PE exam, if passed, then must still gain the four or more years of engineering experience before the individual state will award the candidate a PE License.

LAND SURVEYORS QUALIFYING A FIRM FOR COA

A firm that offers land surveying services in Georgia is required to obtain a Certificate of Authorization (commonly referred to as a COA) through the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. One of the requirements for the COA is a full-time licensed land surveyor must qualify the firm, and each branch office of that firm offering services in Georgia must have at least one full-time licensed land surveyor on site.

Frequently, the Board is asked if a land surveyor has his own business, is he's allowed to also work for and qualify another firm? The answer is that the land surveyor can only qualify one firm at the time. He could work for a larger firm and qualify it, but would not be able to also qualify his own firm. He could however practice land surveying as an individual without a COA, not listing a firm name on the plat.

For more information regarding COA's for Land Surveying firms, please see O.C.G.A. 43-15-23.1.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Elmo A. Richardson, Jr., PE LS was appointed to the Georgia State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors in 2006 and has served in various roles including Chairman from 2010-2012. His board appointment represents civil engineering and land surveying disciplines.

He attended the Georgia Institute of Technology where he received a Bachelor of Civil Engineering Degree (co-op). He is a licensed Professional Engineer in Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Arizona, Kentucky, Illinois, Oklahoma and Michigan. He is also licensed with the National Council of Engineering Examiners and is a licensed Land Surveyor in Georgia.

Mr. Richardson began his career with Cherokee Engineering Company in Macon, Georgia in 1955. In 1959, he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Combat Engineers where he served until 1962 completing his services as a Company Commander and 1st Lieutenant. He returned to Macon where he joined Tribble & Associates as a project engineer and project manager. In 1970, he became a co-founder of Tribble & Richardson, Inc. where he served as Executive Vice President. In 1978, he became President and served until 1997. In 1997, Tribble & Richardson merged with DSAtlantic Corporation of North Carolina creating a seven office firm located in five southeastern states with Mr. Richardson becoming the Chairman and later the Chairman and



Elmo A. Richardson, Jr., PE LS

Chief Executive Officer. In November 2000, DSAtlantic merged with Stantec creating the U.S. Southeast Region, with Mr. Richardson becoming Vice President and Manager for Georgia and Tennessee. In March, 2005 Mr. Richardson retired from Stantec. Mr. Richardson has received numerous awards throughout his career including the Arthur Sidney Bedell Award presented by the Water Environment Federation, Engineer of the Year in Private Practice, and Georgia Consulting Engineer of the Year.

Mr. Richardson has been very active in the community at the local and state levels. He has served on many boards including being elected as a Bibb County Commissioner from 2002-2012. He has been involved with numerous civic organizations and is an active member of Vineville United Methodist Church.

**Georgia Board of
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DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

ACTIONS BY THE BOARD

NAME	LICENSE #	CITY/STATE	DISCIPLINARY ACTION	DATE
Lee J. Johnson	LS002846	Dacula, GA	Public Consent Order	05/13/15
Payne Copeland	LS002692	Alma, GA	Public Consent Order	03/10/15
Patrick Carey	LS003077	Lawrenceville, GA	Public Consent Order	12/09/14

CEASE AND DESIST ORDERS

NAME	CITY/STATE	DATE
Ricky Barnett	Monroe, GA	08/12/14
John Schaeffer aka Jack Schaeffer	Clearwater, FL	08/12/14
Otis Bryan Smith	Canton, GA	08/12/14

HOUSEKEEPING

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Effective July 20, 2015 the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will be joined in the Trades 1 section by Architects and Interior Designers, Landscape Architects, Geologists and Foresters under the supervision of Executive Director Darren Mickler. The Board of Residential and General Contractors and the Construction Industry Licensing Board will move to a newly created Trades 4 section under Executive Director Deborah Beard. Some former Trades 1 staff members will be moving to Trades 4, and Trades 1 will be hiring a new Licensing Analyst.

The December 31, 2014 renewal deadline should mark the last time Secure and Verifiable Documents or Affidavits of Citizenship will be required for a license renewal, except in the case of a licensee who did not complete a renewal in 2014 or previous renewal periods. These items will continue to be captured from initial and comity licensees.