

IPENZ CODE OF ETHICS – ADVICE, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

12 September 2012

The Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission has requested IPENZ supply it with a dossier of advice provided to IPENZ Members on the Code of Ethics.

Advice provided to Members generally takes one of four forms:

- Practice guidance issued in the form of practice notes or codes of practice
- Continuing professional development training programmes
- Published articles in IPENZ's regular publications
- Verbal advice given to individual Members enquiring about specific issues from time to time.

The following is a summary of the written advice provided to IPENZ Members in recent years.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Practice notes offer guidance to practising engineers by exploring issues of importance to the profession and setting out good practice methodologies. They are written by practitioners and subject to peer review by IPENZ Members.

All practice guidance is developed with the Code of Ethics' principles firmly in mind. A number of published practice notes provide guidance on specific ethical values. The need to act with professionalism, integrity and competence, for example, is included in Practice Note 06 *Developing and Maintaining Client Relations* and the responsibility for safety in design is in Practice Note 07 *Designing for Safety in Buildings and Other Structures*.

However, the following two practice notes provide more general advice on the Code of Ethics' application:

- Practice Note 08 *Engineers and Ethical Obligations*, February 2007. This practice note examines the principles of the Code of Ethics and provides guidance on how they should be applied.
- Practice Note 02 *Peer Review – Reviewing the work of another engineer*, June 2003. This practice note covers the purpose and ethics of peer reviewing another engineer's work, assisting in disaster or failure reviews and acting in the role of an expert witness.

A copy of Practice Notes 02 and 08 are in Appendix 1 of this document.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IPENZ has been delivering continuing professional development training for many years, including training on the ethical responsibilities of engineers. Although face to face courses on professional ethics are offered annually in all the main centres the numbers attending these courses have traditionally been low as illustrated in the following table:

	2006	2007	2009
Course: Avoiding Ethical Dilemmas			
Auckland	16	6	9
Wellington	5	7	
Dunedin		6	
Course: Ethics & Professional Engineers			
Wellington	6		

In late 2011 a webinar format “Professional Ethics for Engineers” training course was developed. The webinar format allows users to access the course on-line (from anywhere in New Zealand or conceivably in the world) in a real time environment. The webinar sessions are interactive, with students being able to post questions to the facilitator which all participants can monitor. The ethics webinar is currently presented by Piet Beukman, an Associate Professor from the University of Canterbury. The uptake on this form of training has been encouraging with around 25 engineers participating in each of the two webinars offered to date. A copy of the webinar presentation material is in Appendix 2 of this document.

As a further initiative IPENZ has recorded the “Professional Ethics for Engineers” webinar and will market it to Members as an off-line training resource.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

IPENZ publishes a number of regular journals both in hardcopy and electronic format.

Engineering Dimension is a monthly journal which aims to keep Members informed about IPENZ plans and activities at a national level, Member activities, and developments in the wider profession that are of interest to Members.

Engineering Direct is a weekly electronic newsletter that is emailed to fully financial IPENZ Members and other subscribers (those with either a commercial or professional interest in IPENZ and/or engineering issues).

The following articles relating to the Code of Ethics or ethical issues have appeared in IPENZ publications since 2002. A hard copy of each article has been reproduced at Appendix 3.

- 22 March 2012, *Engineering Direct*: Chief Executive’s Message – providing advice to engineers on their ethical responsibilities to take steps to safeguard safety when assessing heritage buildings in Christchurch
- 1 March 2012, *Engineering Direct*: Manager Investigations and Discipline, reminding engineers to read the Code of Ethics as part of keeping up to date with their professional obligations
- June 2011, *Engineering Dimension*: “President’s Message”, reminding Members of their obligations under IPENZ Code of Ethics; Quotes parts of Part 1, 2 and 3 of the Code
- July 2010 *Engineering Dimension*: “Regulatory review – The Horns of a Dilemma”: “nine tests of a profession”; “governing body must set the ethical rules and professional standards which are to be observed by the Members”
- March 2010, *Engineering Dimension*: “Role of an Ethics Advisor”; “Engineering Disciplinary Process”

- February 2010, *Engineering Dimension*: Complaint Upheld : “actions fell short of duty of care required of a professional engineer”; “performed engineering services in a negligent or incompetent manner”; “failed to take reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of people”
- December 2009, *Engineering Dimension*: “President’s Message – Celebrating Excellence but Dealing with Poor Performance”
- August 2009, *Engineering Dimension*: “IPENZ and Sustainability” – article states Code of Ethics includes sustainable management and care for the environment as one of five ethical values
- June 2009, *Engineering Dimension*: “The Engineering Practice Board” – IPENZ Director of Engineering reminds Members they are bound by Code of Ethics
- February 2009, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, examples of complaints against engineers which led to disciplinary action
- December 2008, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, discussion of ethical obligations for members of Technical Interest Groups of IPENZ
- November 2008, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, Neville Beach DistFIPENZ looks at ethical dilemmas in the engineering profession where there is no clear solution and advice should be sought
- July 2008, *Engineering Dimension*: “Bounding our Ethical Responsibilities” – President’s message
- June 2008, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at consequences of ignoring processes and procedures
- May 2008 *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline discusses reasons for the Code of Ethics
- March 2008 *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at sustaining engineering knowledge
- February 2008, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at sustainable management and care for the environment in regards to the Code of Ethics
- December 2007, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at commitment to community well-being in regards to the Code of Ethics
- November 2007, *Engineering Dimension* - “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at five values underpinning Code of Ethics
- October 2007, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at protection of life and safeguarding people in regards to the Code of Ethics
- September 2007, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Talk”, IPENZ Manager of Ethics and Discipline looks at professionalism, integrity and competence, in regards to the Code of Ethics

- February 2006, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Advisers – a New Initiative to Assist Members”
- September 2005, *Engineering Dimension*: “Understanding our Disciplinary Process” – reminder of obligation to act ethically
- June 2005, *Engineering Dimension*: “Are you Committed to an Ethical Profession?” – advertising an IPENZ course on ethics
- May 2005, *Engineering Direct*: “Is the Risk of Engineering Failure Acceptably Small in 2005?”
- December 2004, *Engineering Dimension*: “Board Approves Changes to IPENZ Code of Ethics”
- November 2004, *Engineering Dimension*: “Engineering Practice Portfolio Revamped” – Members reminded to read Code of Ethics, and where to find it online
- October 2004, *Engineering Direct*: “Code of Ethics Reminder”
- September 2004, *Engineering Dimension*: “Responding Better to Complaints”; “Disciplinary Order Made Against Member”; “Ethics for Professional Engineers”
- August 27 2004, *Engineering Direct*: “Potential for Dangerous Buildings and Ethics” – CEO’s message
- August 20 2004, *Engineering Direct*: “Members’ Poll” – Are ethical standards in decline?”
- June 2004, *Engineering Dimension*: “From CPD Approval to Current Competence – What Does this Mean for IPENZ Members?”
- December 2003, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethical Breaches – Your Views” about proposed change to Rule 4
- October 2003, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethics Matter” – President discusses Code of Ethics in relation to competence assessment
- May 2003, *Engineering Dimension*: “Ethical Obligations and Structural Engineering Safety”
- March 2003, *Engineering Dimension*: “Notification of Revised Regulations for Investigation and Determination of Complaints Against Members”
- December 2002, *Engineering Dimension*: “Joining the International Professional Engineer Register (IPER)”; “Registered Engineers – the Value of MIPENZ”
- December 2002, *Engineering Direct*: “Review of Complaints Procedure”
- August 2002, *Engineering Dimension*: “Three Registers, Three Competency Profiles”
- June 2002, *Engineering Dimension* 002: “Regulations for Hearing Complaints and Disciplining Members”

- May 2002, *Engineering Dimension*: “Aspiration vs Legislation” – President discusses Code of Ethics in relation to new CPEng system
- 2000, IPENZ Transaction published paper: Coates, Gerry (a past President) “Developing a values-based code of engineering ethics”, Trans IPENZ, 2000, vol 27, No 1/Gen.

IPENZ would be pleased to provide further information in relation to the Royal Commission’s request. Please contact:

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Appendices

1. Copies of Practice Note 08 *Engineers and Ethical Obligations*, February 2007 and Practice Note 02 *Peer Review – Reviewing the work of another engineer*, June 2003.
2. Webinar Slides “Professional Ethics for Engineers”
3. IPENZ published articles