

**Submission  
No 11**

## **PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS REGISTRATION BILL 2019**

**Name:** Dr Eric Dale

**Date Received:** 18 December 2019

## **Inquiry into the Professional Engineers Registration Bill 2019 - Submission**

Dear Committee Members,

I write to lodge a submission to your Inquiry into the proposed Engineer Registration Bill. I support engineer registration in NSW.

I retired in 2014 as a Senior Process Risk Engineer, with 36 years experience in the chemical, petrochemical and explosives industries. I graduated BE (Chem Eng - Hons 1) in 1972 and PhD (Chem Eng) in 1978 and gained wide industrial experience in a variety of roles during my working life. With my background in technical risk engineering, I am fully aware of the potential for serious consequences if faults and errors occur in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of hazardous industries. The involvement of engineers with the right training, skills and and experience throughout the life of any project whether in the hazardous industries or elsewhere is essential in minimising risks to the public and workers.

Registration of engineers in New South Wales is long overdue. Right now, anyone can call themselves an engineer in NSW, which is not the case with any other related profession or in many other states.

Other professions have had licensing and registration regimes in place for many years to guarantee professional standards, protect the profession from unscrupulous and unqualified operators and protect the public, such as architects, builders, electricians, plumbers, doctors and nurses.

It underlines how absurd the current situation is, when engineers are at the apex of the building and construction process as they scope, design and oversee the work of other trades and professionals, but have no requirement to be suitably qualified, skilled and experienced to carry out these tasks.

While recent high-profile residential construction failures at Mascot and with the Opal towers have been the focus of media attention, these crises are symptomatic of a wider problem that goes well beyond the vertical building sector. Major projects such as roads, bridges, rail, water and energy utilities should not be exposed to unqualified people who can only call themselves engineers because there is no registration system.

Introducing engineer registration is a matter of public safety and protection and closes a long-time regulatory gap which makes no sense and exposes the public to risks.

Also, there is plenty of evidence that a lack of qualified engineering input is affecting project outcomes. This includes the problem of public safety, but this lack also blocks innovation and contributes to major projects running over time and over budget. Not only are there recent examples of public and worker safety being compromised, but also there is a litany of issues where cost overruns and delays are attributable to poor scoping of engineering-dependent critical projects.

People deserve to know if they are employing a properly qualified and experienced engineer, whether they are building a bridge, an apartment or a new energy generator, and the public deserve to know that the infrastructure and services they use are safe. I urge you to support the Engineer Registration Bill to give the public confidence and workers in the profession the respect they deserve.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Eric B Dale, CEng (UK), MIChemE  
Senior Process Risk Engineer (retired)

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