

**Submission  
No 32**

## **PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS REGISTRATION BILL 2019**

**Name:** Alexander Stewart

**Date Received:** 23 January 2020

Submission from Alexander C. Stewart, [REDACTED]

To [environmentplanning@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:environmentplanning@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

23 January 2020

Thank you for opportunity to comment. I have some experiences and expertise:

- I graduated B.E with 1<sup>st</sup> class Hons & the University Medal from Sydney Uni
- 1977-89 I was in charge of most areas of pollution control in what is now called EPA (in charge of most areas not simultaneously, but sequentially; inter alia as Chairman of a National committee it was I who chose 91 as the octane for the new unleaded petrol)
- 1990-1997 I was Road Safety Manager in what is now called RMS, which I left in 2000
- I have worked for six MPs (3 Canberra, 3 NSW) including a Minister and a Senator.

For the following reasons, the most appropriate way to regulate professional engineers in the building and construction industry is to register Engineers in ALL industries as per the **Professional Engineers' Registration Bill** introduced into NSW Parliament on 24/10/19.

#### HARMONISATION

This would bring NSW into line with Queensland (which has had Engineer Registration for a long time) and Victoria, which decided recently to do it. I think WA is considering it.

#### COVER ALL INDUSTRIES, NOT ONLY HIGH-RISE

In my view, it is absurd to regulate only the building industry as per the **Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019** (which I have read, and it is clumsy) and not to also extend regulation to all other industries. We need proper Engineering design, supervisory control, inspection and certification in dams, rail projects, ports, bridges, roads, energy projects etc

#### ENHANCE THE STATUS OF ENGINEERS

Lack of engineering inputs have, in my experience, often affected State Gov't and other project outcomes (time delays and cost over-runs) and public safety. When I was in the NSW Public Service almost 23 years, I was alarmed at "DeProfessionalisation", the removal from Job Specifications of the requirement for engineering or science degrees for senior positions. This led to economists, geographers, even sociologists etc, being put in charge of technical areas that really needed an Engineer or Scientist, and this caused great problems that I saw.

Registration of Engineers would assist in ensuring that Engineers' inputs are adequately respected and acted upon, because ignoring such advices has had huge adverse effects.

#### SAVE TAXPAYERS' MONEY

Registration of Engineers could save taxpayer money. I could name many projects (e.g. trams down George Street) where sensible engineering advice was ignored by politicians, Liberal Party staffers and senior government officials who had no engineering capabilities.

#### IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY

It is not only in high-rise buildings where you need expert engineering inputs and some sort of registration system; it is also in railways, culverts, dams, bridges etc

#### HARMONISATION WITH OTHER TRADES AND PROFESSIONS

Registration of Engineers is long overdue. I note that other professions have registration, e.g. accountants, solicitors, electricians, doctors, motor vehicle repairers etc.

Yours sincerely

Lex Stewart

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]