

News Release

For Immediate Release
June 10, 2009

ASET members to get legal right to self-regulate, practice engineering independently **Alberta first Canadian province to recognize critical role of province's engineering technicians and technologists in protecting public safety**

Already a pioneer in the area of scope of practice change, Alberta is poised for another Canadian first in giving the Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET) the right to self-regulate, and its qualified members the right to practice engineering independently without supervision by professional engineers, within existing codes and standards.

Expected this summer, the proclamation of the Engineering, Geological and Geophysical Professions Amendment Act (EGGPA) will see the evolution of ASET from registration under the Societies Act – the same status usually conferred to community leagues and sports groups – to a full-fledged, self-regulating professional association. It will also see the emergence of a new professional designation, P.Tech (Eng.) under which ASET members will be able to practice engineering independently.

ASET members represent almost 17,000 engineering technicians and technologists who work in a range of disciplines and sectors. They are responsible for everything from designing engineering plans for building construction to keeping gas pipelines working and transportation and postal systems moving.

“Many people may not know exactly what these technicians and technologists do, but I can assure you they *would* know if they weren't on the job, doing what they do. Nothing works without them. They are the behind-the-scenes, hard-working men and women who keep this province safe,” said ASET CEO Barry Cavanaugh.

EGGPA will be critical in ensuring public safety by giving ASET the responsibility to guarantee the qualifications of those holding ASET titles and protect against title misuse, and the ability to exercise disciplinary and legal action to ensure competence of ASET members.

“The upcoming proclamation of EGGPA is another example of Alberta law catching up with workplace reality. ASET members are already at the top of their field, having achieved certification by meeting ASET's already rigorous standards. Employers and the general public will feel even more secure, knowing that ASET members will be accountable for public safety under the law,” said Cavanaugh.

“Proclamation of EGGPA is also good news for Alberta's economy which depends on this profession in many areas, including resource management, because it will be employed to the full scope of its potential. Availability of these qualified professionals is likely to increase in a province where labour shortages in this area have often been the norm, and where technologists are cost-effective, integral members of engineering teams,” added Cavanaugh.

In 2007, Alberta brought into force a similar scope of practice change for pharmacists as the first Canadian province to give pharmacists the legal authority to prescribe some medications and administer drugs by injection.

Representing approximately 17,000 technicians and technologists across Alberta, ASET provides its members the certification that top employers demand. ASET members play an integral role in driving the Alberta economy and their innovation is one reason why the province maintains its competitive advantage. ASET members represent a wide range of sectors including avionics, biomedical, chemical, computers, electrical, environmental, geological, instrumentation, oil and gas, and telecommunications. www.aset.ab.ca

-30-

Media Contact:
Michele Penz, Calico Communications for ASET
778.888.2249

