

## **Activities of APEC Engineers Project in Korea**

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### **1. Definition of APEC Engineers**

An APEC Engineer is defined as a person who is recognized as a professional engineer by satisfying the criteria and procedures of the Monitoring Committee approved by the APEC Engineer Coordinating Committee, that they have

- completed an accredited or recognized engineering program ;
- been assessed within their own economy as eligible for independent practice ;
- gained a minimum of seven years practical experience since graduation ;
- spent at least two years in responsible charge of significant engineering work ;
- maintained their continuing professional development at a satisfactory level.

### **2. Activities of APEC Engineers Project in Korea**

#### **2.1 Disciplines of APEC Engineer**

Korea has 15 disciplines of APEC Engineer including Civil Engineering, Structural Engineering, Geo-technical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mining Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Information Engineering, Bio-Engineering, Fire Engineering, Building Services Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, Aerospace Engineering as of May, 2004. Agricultural Engineering is included at the Civil Engineering discipline.

#### **2.2 Operation System**

The competent Ministry for APEC Engineers Project is Ministry of Labor, and APEC Engineer Mutual Recognition Project is entrusted to the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea) in Feb. 1999. The Korea APEC Engineer Monitoring Committee was established by the government concerned (Ministry of Labor) in June 1999, and the Committee consists of fifteen members including chairman.

The Korea APEC Engineer Monitoring Committee nominated two organizations as Korea APEC Engineer Register; the Korea Construction Engineers Association (KOCEP) for Civil & Structural Engineering disciplines, and Korea Professional Engineer Association (KPEA) for the other 13 disciplines. Those two organizations are also in charge of continuing professional development. The main evaluation and registration processes for APEC Engineers in Korea are as follows.

- ① Announcement for the application for the APEC Engineer registration
- ② Application for APEC Engineer

- ③ Evaluation with documents submitted by applicants
- ④ Oral test for recognized engineers (but Professional Engineers to get a certification of professional qualification by National Engineers Qualification Act are exempted from oral test)
- ⑤ Confirmation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits
- ⑥ Formally registration as a APEC Engineer

It is compulsory for APEC Engineers to get over 150 CPD credits every three years.

CPD's criteria is stated at the APEC Engineers Evaluation and Registration Regulation, and the criteria of CPD is included training courses, on-job-training, research and academic activities, lectures, etc.

### **2.3 Present Korean APEC Engineers**

Expectant APEC Engineers were selected three times since 2000. So far, 1,101 engineers (civil 932, structure 169) out of 1,441 applicants were selected as expectant APEC Engineers in civil and structural engineering disciplines including 3 Professional Agricultural Civil Engineers and 8 Professional Water Resources Development Engineers. As of 1 Aug. 2004, 440 engineers (40%) out of expectant APEC Engineers were certified and formally registered as APEC Engineers, and the others would be transferred into formal APEC Engineers as soon as they get the confirmation of the required CPD credit.

## **3. Issues**

### **3.1 Mutual Exemption Agreement**

So far, there is no countries or economies to conclude Mutual Exemption Agreement with Korea for recognizing APEC Engineers for civil and structural disciplines. Many of registered Korean APEC Engineers are complaining because there is little merit to get the APEC Engineer's qualification. This is supposed to be a main cause that many expectant APEC Engineers don't try to register as formal APEC Engineer, and the number of applicants to be an APEC Engineer is reduced rapidly although some engineers to get a certification of APEC Engineer are recognized from foreign countries to carry out the projects.

### **3.2 Institutional frameworks for management of Professional Engineers in Korea**

Institutional frameworks related with Professional Engineers can be largely divided into three systems.

- Examination and registration for Professional Engineers Qualification by National Engineers Qualification Act (competent ministry : Ministry of Labor)
- Implementation of policy for management and fostering of Professional Engineers by Professional Engineers Act (competent ministry : Ministry of Science and Technology)
- Use of concerned Professional Engineers by individual Acts (Ministries concerned)

Korea Professional Engineer Association (KPEA) and Ministry of Science and Technology raise an issue in argument that present dual system for management of professional engineers is inefficient and should be merge into single system. It is expected this issue may be debate continuously for a long time.