



March 26, 2020

Honorable Denis King,
Premier of Prince Edward Island

Re: Assistance with the COVID-19 mitigation and recovery

The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies of Prince Edward Island (ACEC-PEI) and our member firms would first like to take this opportunity to express our support for all levels of Government and applaud the outstanding leadership you are all demonstrating in taking measured and appropriate steps to protect the health and safety of residents at what is a difficult and uncertain time.

ACEC-PEI is the voice of P.E.I. consulting engineering companies and represents the commercial interests of businesses that provide professional engineering services to both the public and the private sector. Our members' services include planning, designing and implementing all types of engineering projects, and providing independent advice and expertise in a wide range of engineering-related fields. Our member firms provide support to maintain essential services through the use of critical infrastructure such municipal systems, transportation systems, food processing and of course health care facilities and hospitals. Financially they contribute approximately \$3.3 million in taxes annually and \$17.5 million annually to provincial GDP.

Our industry, like many others, is now facing a critical disruption for an unspecified period of time. We also acknowledge that just as many businesses and industries are impacted greatly by this crisis, so too are Government revenues. That said, ACEC-PEI, believes that governments have a unique opportunity, right now, to support the consulting engineering industry while at the same time completing necessary design work.

We and our members are taking appropriate precautions to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Member firms are embracing the remote office concept, primarily working from home and using virtual meetings, electronic signatures, online collaboration, etc. to assist our clients in keeping projects moving while keeping both staff and clients as safe as possible. As we focus on the present and supporting our membership in staying safe, we strongly encourage municipal, provincial and federal governments to:

1. Do everything possible to ensure that current and recently awarded design projects and studies move forward as planned.
2. Encourage staff to move planned projects out to the consulting industry as quickly as possible through applicable procurement procedures.
3. Encourage staff to divert projects, which were previously planned to be executed by internal resources, to the consulting industry.

To effectively leverage infrastructure as stimulus, the design process usually requires anywhere from six months to two years before there are shovels in the ground. Therefore, consulting engineering firms need to continue working through this crisis to ensure that they retain the capacity to deliver on



projects during the recovery. This, hopefully, will avoid significant layoffs in both our industry and the construction industry and to allow governments to complete necessary work so that we all emerge from this present crisis prepared for the economic recovery that will follow. This is why ACEC-PEI agrees with and are supportive of the PEI Public Health definition of engineering as an “essential service”.

ACEC-PEI will directly encourage our members to do whatever they can to facilitate collaboration among firms to enhance the speed of this recovery, however we need your support during this time to maintain the viability of our member firms in the interim.

ACEC-Canada has also been in contact with leadership within the federal government and with key stakeholder partners. Based upon those discussions, ACEC has written the Prime Minister and several key cabinet ministers with specific recommendations as to how the consulting engineering sector can and needs to retain its capacity in order to help the government mitigate the current crisis and support the post-crisis recovery. A copy of the letter is attached for your information and reference.

Thank you again for all you have been doing to attempt to contain the spread of this virus and ‘flatten the curve’. We appreciate your consideration and understanding of the predicaments that many businesses and entire industries now find themselves in and look forward to your continued support. If you would like to discuss any aspects of the above, please don’t hesitate to contact us at the coordinates below.

Kind Regards,

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Cc:

Hon. James Aylward, Minister of Health and Wellness
Hon. Darlene Compton, Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance
Hon. Jamie Fox, Minister of Fisheries and Communities
Hon. Ernie Hudson, Minister of Social Development and Housing
Hon. Natalie Jameson, Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change / Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Hon. Matthew MacKay, Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture
Hon. Steven Myers, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy
Hon. Brad Trivers, Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning
Hon. Bloyce Thompson, Minister of Agriculture and Land / Minister of Justice and Public Safety
Dr. Heather Morrison, Chief Public Health Officer

Enclosure: ACEC-Canada Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau