



Helicopters, stock boom and bust, intrigue, and ultimately achievement – **this story has it all!**

This 6th and final installment of PGO's 25th Anniversary series of articles is authored by Dr. Bill Pearson, P.Geo., founding President of APGO (PGO). Bill takes us back to the origins of PGO starting with the changes at PEO in the 1980's that prompted action, and through the herculean efforts to criss-cross the Province in the 1990's to instill an awareness that geoscience has a pivotal role for all people in our society. He takes us through a winding journey of enlightenment, to the devastating "last dinner" when all seemed lost, and then confronts us with one of the most dramatic events in Canadian history that made it impossible to ignore any longer that geoscience is intensely important to the public interest.

Now with the story in print, it becomes all of ours to take pride in, all of ours to own, geoscientist or not. Sincere thanks to Bill and so many others named herein for their persistence and for sharing this important origin story. For those (like us) that have followed the initial cohort of leaders, figuring out how to navigate the changing regulatory environment has been made clearer by having the founding principles laid out so visibly and with such care.

With these early efforts and the ongoing dedication by geoscientists and non-geoscientists alike, PGO not only exists, we are proud to say that it is thriving these 25 years later.

Happy Silver Anniversary, PGO!

Sincerely,

Kristin Hanson, P.Geo.(Non-Practicing), FGC - PGO Past President

Melanie Siewert, P.Geo.(Limited), FGC - PGO Past President

Paul Hubley, P.Geo., FGC – PGO Past President

# GEOSCIENTISTS NEWSLETTER

Prepared by the  
Committee for the Professional Registration of Geoscientists in Ontario (CPRGO)



Association of  
**GEOSCIENTISTS**  
of Ontario

No.15a  
March 2000

## THE WINDING PATH TO LICENSURE OF GEOSCIENTISTS IN ONTARIO

**Bill 86**

**A Look Back  
25 Years Later**

*An Act to establish  
the Association of Professional  
Geoscientists of Ontario*  
**By Dr. Bill N. Pearson. P.Geo., Founding  
President, Association of Professional  
Geoscientists of Ontario (APGO).**

**Projet de loi 86**

*(Chapitre 13  
Lois de l'Ontario de 2000)*

**Loi visant à établir  
l'Ordre des géoscientifiques  
professionnels de l'Ontario**



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*Professional Geoscientists Ontario  
(PGO) is the largest geoscience-only  
self-regulatory organization in Canada*

It is remarkable that 25 years have passed since the Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000 received Royal Assent on June 23, 2000 officially forming the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (APGO). The Honourable Tim Hudak, then Minister of Northern Development of Mines (MNDM) appointed the Transitional Council on August 23, 2000 and the new Council began on September 8, 2000 the long process of developing regulations, by-laws and a registration procedure to implement the Act culminating in registration of the first P.Geo.s in May 2002. By the end of the Transitional period in May 2003, a total of 820 practicing members had been registered with APGO on the path to a self sustaining financial footing with an elected Council in place. Today Professional Geoscientists Ontario (PGO)<sup>1</sup> is the largest geoscience-only self-regulatory organization in Canada with a membership of 3,656 including 2,558 practicing P.Geo.s , a strong balance sheet and a bright future – a truly impressive achievement which is important to celebrate. Registrants come from 81 countries reflecting the global reach of PGO (Figure 1).

Twenty-five years is a significant anniversary and an important time to reflect on the history and the important contributions of the many geoscientists and those that gave generous financial support which built APGO into what is a major success story. The path to success, however, had many twists and turns and much was learned; these lessons are important to keep in mind for the future. The major milestones are summarized in this paper.

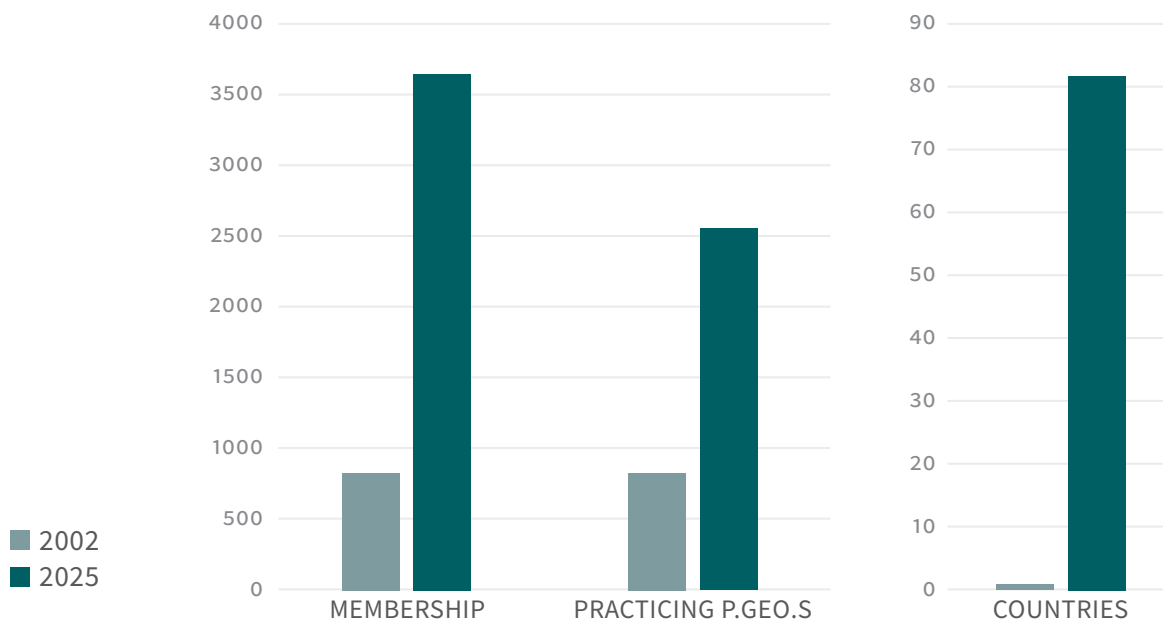


Figure 1: Comparison of membership 2002 to 2025

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<sup>1</sup> The business name Professional Geoscientists Ontario (PGO) was adopted by APGO on June 14, 2019. The legal name set out in the Act continues to be the legal name.

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*Licensure of geoscientists in Canada is a relatively recent global phenomenon that began gradually to become the standard across Canada starting in the late 1980s.*

## Growth of Licensure of Geoscientists in Canada and Formation of CPRGO

Licensure of geoscientists in Canada is a relatively recent global phenomenon that began gradually to become the standard across Canada starting in the late 1980s. Alberta was the first province to license geologists and geophysicists in 1966 due to the high concentration of these professionals in the oil and gas industry. It was not, however, until 1978 that the next geoscientists were registered in the Northwest Territories (and later including Nunavut), and subsequently in Newfoundland in 1989. Momentum for licensure of geoscientists grew in the 1990s so that in the first part of the new millennium, the only jurisdictions lacking licensure in Canada are Yukon Territory and Prince Edward Island.

In Ontario prior to the 1980s, many geoscientists became members of the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario (APEO) now Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO). However when the Professional Engineers Act was amended in 1984 and the definition changed to exclude natural scientists, it became very difficult for geoscientists to qualify for membership in APEO unless they had an undergraduate engineering degree. The lack of a satisfactory avenue for geoscientists to become licensed became a major concern to senior geoscientists who were P.Engs, and ultimately led the formation of the Committee for the Professional Registration of Geoscientists in Ontario (CPRGO) which I was selected as Chair as I was the only non-P.Eng., at the original meeting.

The inaugural meeting of CPRGO was held March 5, 1989 at the Royal York Hotel in conjunction with the Prospectors and Developers Association (PDAC) Annual Convention. The first task of the Committee was to survey geoscientists in Ontario to gauge their views on seeking registration and to ensure that the Committee had a mandate from the geoscience community to pursue registration on their behalf. The survey was sent out to almost 3,000 geoscientists in the summer of 1989. The response to the survey, which was published in November 1989, was overwhelmingly in favour of seeking professional registration. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the 1,042 respondents were in favour of professional registration. A lower percentage of 51%, albeit still a majority, favoured seeking registration in conjunction with the professional engineers (Figure 2). With this strong mandate from the geoscience community in Ontario, CPRGO began work to achieve legislation for registration of geoscientists in Ontario.

1989 SURVEY

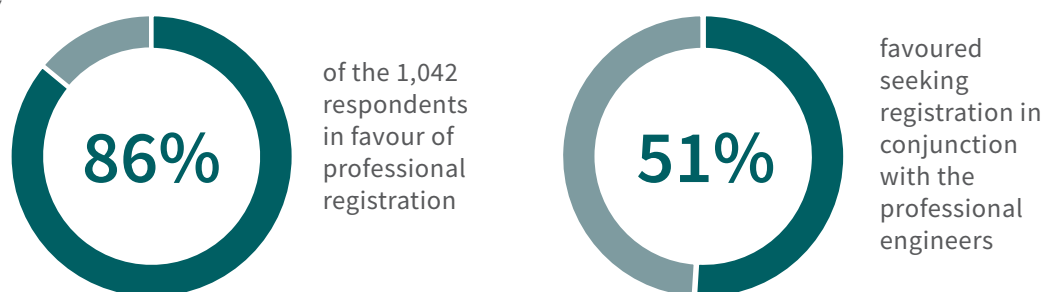


Figure 2: Results of 1989 survey of geoscientists in Ontario.

# PEO Mining and Energy Minerals Committee

Governments do not like creating new Acts if they can avoid it so the logical first avenue to achieve registration of geoscientists in Ontario was through a combined act with engineering following the well established precedent in other provinces and territories.

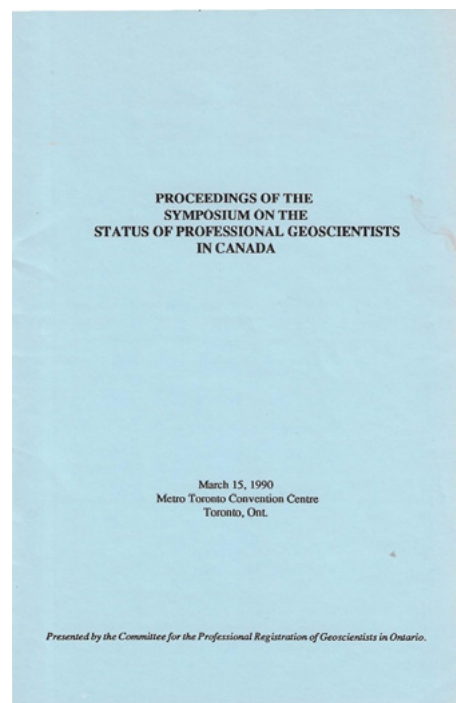
CPRGO's initial contact with PEO was through one of PEO's Standing Committees known as the Mining and Energy Minerals Committee (MEMC) PEO President George Piper, P.Eng., briefed PEO Council on September 8, 1989 in his President's Report on the desire by geoscientists to obtain licensure.

On March 15, 1990, CPRGO sponsored a very successful "Symposium on the Status of Professional Geoscientists in Canada" that was attended by 150 people in the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (Figure 3). Generous financial support for the symposium was provided by the MNDM. The attendees learned a lot about professional registration, particularly the difference between licensure (restricted practice) and right-to-title (restricted use of title only). The event also had an important impact on the attendees from PEO who realized that we were a disciplined professional group.

On February 5, 1991, the MEMC voted to create a subcommittee to investigate admitting geoscientists into PEO. Subsequently on March 5, 1991, the PEO Executive Committee was briefed on the work of the MEMC subcommittee and on April 3, 1991, was further briefed on the proposed membership and terms of reference of the "PEO Task Force on Geoscientists" which was to produce a report in early 1992. This Task Force consulted regularly with CPRGO. While a number of concerns did arise about whether poor geoscience practice had the potential to have a major negative impact on the public, these were addressed and the Task Force recommended that: "1. PEO work with the geoscientists to prepare "arguments to show how the public interest would be better served by expanding the Professional Engineers Act to include the licensing of geoscientists" and 2. PEO conduct its own investigation on the regulation of the environmental field of practice."

The final Task Force report was presented to the PEO Executive Committee on February 3, 1993, who approved the following motion: "That the Case for Professional Regulation of Geoscientists be received and that it be submitted to the Fundamental Review Task Force to aid in defining the jurisdictions of the applied scientists in multi-disciplinary areas, such as the environment, under the Professional Engineers Act."

On February 26, 1993, PEO Council approved the same motion approved at the February 3rd Executive Committee meeting. The report was then referred to the Fundamental Review Working Group and, subsequently, to the External Networks Task Group set up under its auspices.



On March 15, 1990, a very successful symposium on the status of professional geoscientists in Canada was held in Toronto. This symposium, which was attended by approximately 175 people, was organized by the Committee for the Professional Registration of Geoscientists in Ontario to inform geoscientists in Ontario on the status of registration in other provincial jurisdictions.

Generous financial support in presenting the Symposium was provided by the Canadian Geoscience Council, the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, the Toronto Geological Discussion Group, Cominco Limited and Teck Corporation. The production and mailing of these proceedings was made possible by Falconbridge Ltd.

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Figure 3. Proceedings volume and contents for symposium on Status of Professional Geoscientists in Canada, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, March 15, 1990

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*Since you're here,  
you may as well  
stay for dinner*

## PEO Fundamental Review and the “Last Dinner”

Little happened for the balance of 1993 and the first half of 1994 pending completion of PEO’s Fundamental Review. This was a major study undertaken by PEO Council to determine a roadmap for the future of engineering in Ontario and specifically the role that PEO should play. As this review progressed, it was evident that there was a large divergence of opinion in the engineering community on what direction to take.

In June 1994, CPRGO representatives were invited to meet at PEO’s office. The assembled group of geoscientists was told in very clear terms that “Geoscientists do not fit into the proposed new model for engineering.” This meeting was dubbed the “Last Dinner” because we were then told after the announcement that “Since you’re here, you may as well stay for dinner”. This marked an abrupt end to the first major phase of studies and deliberations with PEO.



# Formation of Association of Geoscientists of Ontario (AGO) and PEO/AGO Task Force on Geoscientists

In June 1994, following the “Last Dinner”, the mood of CPRGO was very low. The avenue to professional registration through the Professional Engineers Act appeared to be cut off and the government had shown little interest in pursuing an independent act. However, the Committee did not have to wait long until a major issue arose that brought licensure of geoscientists back to the forefront with not only PEO but also the government.

In August 1994, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) released recommendations for sign-off on contaminated sites. It was proposed that only P.Eng.s be recognized which brought a storm of protest from environmental geoscientists, especially hydrogeologists. PEO’s response to MOE acknowledged that other groups of professionals may be qualified to sign-off on contaminated sites and highlighted geoscientists as the most significant of these other groups (Figure 4). In December 1994, discussions with PEO were re-started in conjunction with re-assessment of the Fundamental Review document which had not been well received by the PEO membership.

While CPRGO had played an important role in lobbying for licensure of geoscientists from 1989 to 1995, it was evident by early 1996 that the organization could no longer operate as an ad hoc committee. It was necessary to have a more formal association and begin the process of building a nascent professional association.

The Association of Geoscientists of Ontario (AGO) was formed on March 19, 1996 at a meeting held in conjunction with the annual PDAC Convention almost seven (7) years to the day after the first meeting that formed CPRGO. AGO was formally incorporated on July 29, 1996. The operation of AGO was much more formalized than CPRGO with issuance of paid

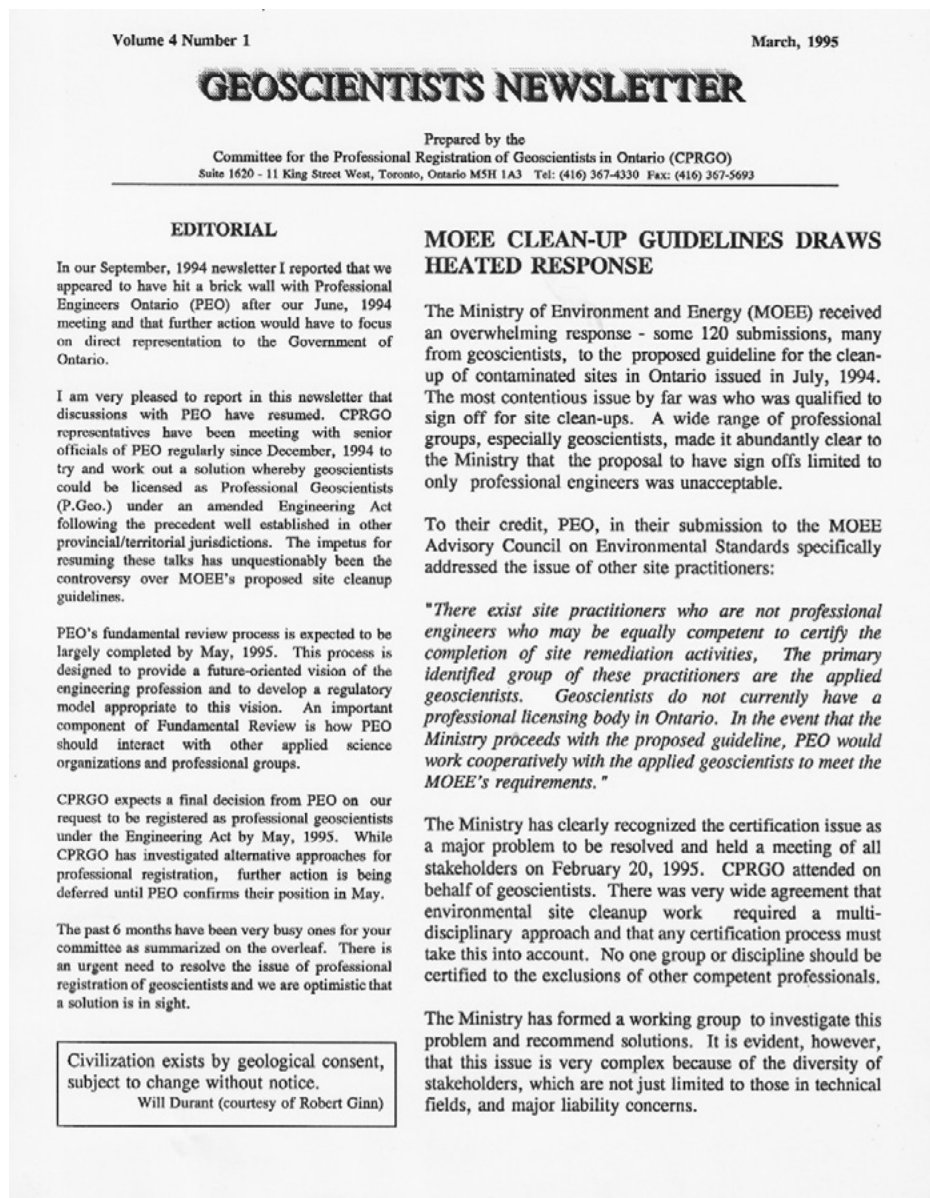


Figure 4. CPRGO Newsletter of March 1995 highlighting heated response to proposed MOEE Clean-up Guidelines

memberships to those who were practising geoscientists. Over the next three years, membership would grow to over 1000, giving AGO considerable credibility in presenting the case for licensure of geoscientists to both PEO and the government.

The initial meeting of the PEO/AGO (originally PEO/CPRGO) Joint Task Group on Geoscientists was held in January 1996. PEO provided significant staff time to support the work of the Joint Task Group. It was agreed that AGO would contribute \$10,000 to assist in financing the project. These funds were raised by AGO through membership fees and member contributions. In the February/March 1996 issue of the PEO Link, there was a front page news item on formation of the Fundamental Review Task Groups including a task group working on licensure for geoscientists.

The May/June 1996 issue of Engineering Dimensions included an advertisement inviting comments on the licensure of geoscientists under the PEO regulatory umbrella. A progress report on the Fundamental Review Task Groups, including the PEO/AGO Task Group on Geoscientists, was presented to PEO Council on June 20-21, 1996. At the September 19-21, 1996 PEO Council meeting, the Chair of the PEO/AGO Task Group, J. Fisher, CET, presented the report entitled “A Proposal for Licensure of Geoscientists in Ontario” to Council. PEO Council unanimously approved the following motion:

*“That the Professional Engineers Act be amended to include a definition of the practice of geoscience and licensure of geoscientists; and that the revision create a licensing regime for professional geoscientists in Ontario that is parallel to the licensing of professional engineers in Ontario and to the licensing of geoscientists in professional practice in other Canadian jurisdictions.”*

After many years of lobbying, it appeared that geoscientists were finally on track to achieving licensure. At a presentation to PEO Council on June 20, 1997, the Hon. Jim Flaherty, then Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney General, stated that a detailed proposal from PEO to license geoscientists would likely be well received by the government. PEO Council was briefed on the plan to submit amendments to the Professional Engineers Act to enable licensure of geoscientists; and in the fall of 1997, separately from other proposed changes to the Act. Council approved the following motions:

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### *A Combined Act?*

*After many years of lobbying, it appeared that geoscientists were finally on track to achieving licensure.*

*“That Council support and approve using the Ontario Government’s Red Tape Improvement Bill approach to proceed with the Act and Regulation changes to provide licensure of geoscientists in Ontario; and*

*That Councillors forward to the Registrar comments and/or concerns about the proposed amendments to the Act no later than July 31, 1997*

*so that alteration may be considered and Council approval secured in time to accommodate the government’s Red Tape Improvement Bill timetable.”*

Over the summer of 1997, the AGO Executive worked with PEO to develop a draft Amended Professional Engineers Act. This was relatively easy to do following precedents in other provinces with combined Acts required a definition of the practice of professional geoscience and the licensing term for professional geoscientist (P.Geo.) but other requirements were the same as for professional engineers. A major sticking point was how much professional geoscientists would have to contribute towards equity in PEO which had built up considerable resources over its long history.

On August 12, 1997, PEO Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding between PEO and AGO setting out the basis for proceeding with proposed amendments to the Professional Engineers Act to incorporate licensure of geoscientists. However, Council declined to approve the proposed changes to the Act, deciding to defer consideration to September so Councillors could have more time to review the detailed text. PEO Council on September 20, 1997, by a vote of 16 in favour and 10 opposed, approved the proposed Act amendments to enable licensure of geoscientists under the PEO regulatory umbrella. The Recommendations for Preparation of An Act to Amend the Professional Engineers Act were sent to the Ministry of the Attorney General by PEO on September 26, 1997. Maureen Jensen at the time was on PEO Council as a representative for geoscientists. I recall meeting her shortly after the vote at a function at the Hockey Hall of Fame where she congratulated AGO and myself on the result. I remember feeling unsure if we really had won as there seemed to be storm clouds brewing.



# Storm Clouds Brewing and the End of the Combined Act

It was at this time that two separate events occurred that would have a major impact on the direction of licensure for geoscientists in Ontario. The first was the Bre-X scandal which broke in March 1997 and rocked the Canadian mining industry causing a catastrophic collapse in confidence in everyone involved in the industry including exploration geologists. The second was the rise of a group of dissident engineers known as “Engineers for Engineers” who were strongly opposed to the changes recommended by the PEO Fundamental Review Committee, particularly to bringing in outside groups such as geoscientists.

On October 1, 1997, the PEO Executive Director received a “Notice of Motion on Incorporating Geo-Scientists in the APEO” moved by President-Elect Walter Bilanski, P.Eng., and seconded by Councillor Nick Volf, P.Eng., as follows: “Be it resolved that confirmation by membership be obtained through referendum on this issue of incorporating Geo-Scientists in the APEO and resulting changes in the name and title.”

At the PEO Council meeting of November 21, 1997, this motion was narrowly passed by a margin of one

## Separate Act

vote. While technically not binding, it was clear that in order for the legislation to proceed, the support of PEO

*“Only if all options with engineers are exhausted.”*

membership would be required. The period of the referendum marked a low point in the relations between AGO and PEO with several insulting articles and letters being published in the Engineering Dimensions vehemently opposing incorporation of geoscientists under the Professional Engineers Act. The results of the letter ballot were published in the April/May issue of The Link – the referendum to incorporate geoscientists had been defeated by a vote of 60% against. The new PEO Council moved quickly to overturn the previous motions to incorporate geoscientists and the proposal for an amended Act was dead.

Many geoscientists had commented to me over the years before the collapse of the joint Act, that they would much prefer to have a separate Act. My standard response was always “Only if all options with engineers are exhausted.” As events unfolded in the coming weeks and months, it was evident that with the combined Act being dead, the only viable route forward was an independent Act but clearly we needed a champion (Figure 5).

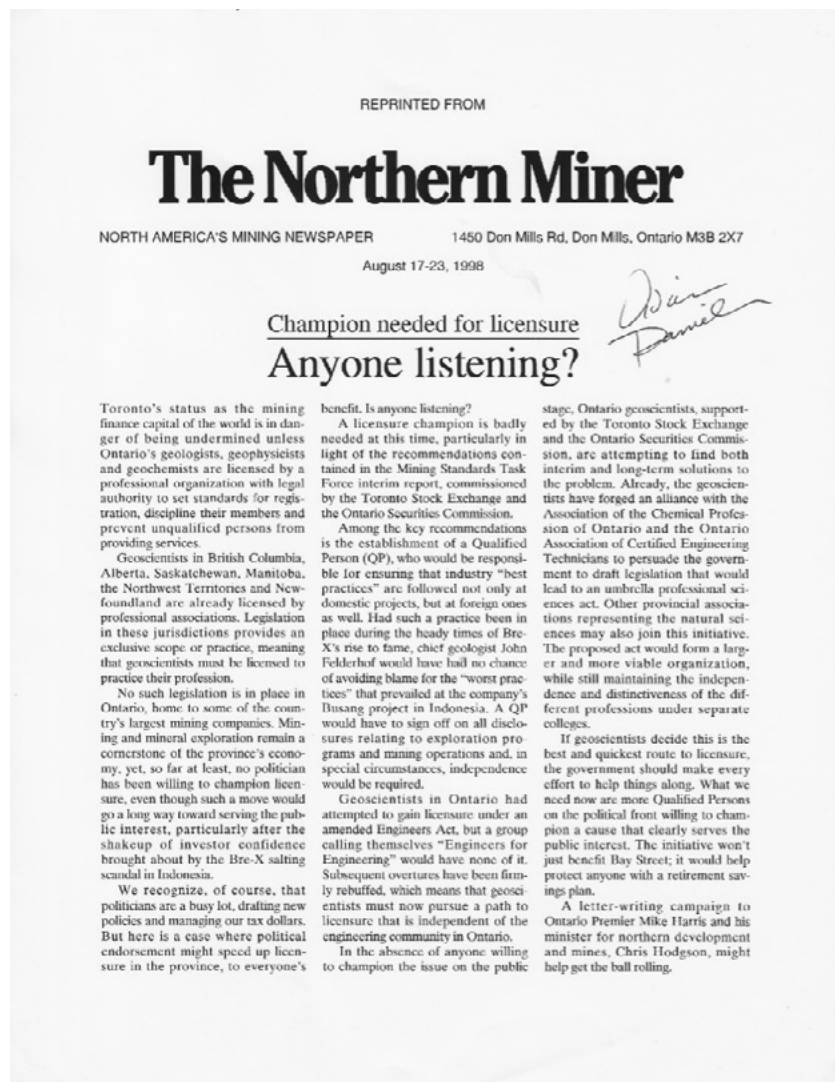


Figure 5. Article in Northern Miner written by Editor Vivian Daniels “Anyone Listening” highlighting the need for a champion for licensure of geoscientists August 17-23, 1998

# Bre-X and The Mining Standards Task Force (MSTF)

As Virginia Heffernan reported for CIM in March 2019, *“Even for a convention known for its parties, the 1997 PDAC was a grand affair. The March event in Toronto attracted a record number of participants, cash was flowing into exploration, and Canadian junior Bre-X Minerals was winning awards for finding one of the largest gold deposits in the world. Champagne corks could be heard popping throughout the hallways of the Royal York hotel as the industry succumbed to Bre-Xphoria.”*

*But shortly after the revellers disbanded, Bre-X’s exploration manager fell to his death from a helicopter. Mounting evidence suggested that the junior’s Busang project in Indonesia was a hoax and that samples had been salted with gold from other sources. In May 1997, Bre-X was delisted from the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSE), wiping out \$3 billion in investments as the company’s shares – trading for nearly \$200 apiece a year earlier – became worthless.”*

A scam on this scale was unprecedented and was a major black eye on the Canadian mining industry and capital markets. The Toronto Stock Exchange (TSE) and the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) moved quickly once the scam was exposed to form the Mining Standards Task Force (MSTF) bringing together industry and government experts to instill professionalism and restore investor confidence in the Canadian mining industry and public markets. Maureen Jensen who joined the TSE in 1998 and was a member of MSTF commented at the time: *“Before Bre-X, the public rules for disclosure were very nebulous. When it came to reporting on technical matters, it wasn’t necessary for companies to use any common definitions and there were no standards.”*

MSTF solicited feedback from industry, regulators, government and investors, issuing an interim report in June 1998 with a number of key recommendations, of which the most important was the introduction of the Qualified Person (QP) concept. A cornerstone of National Instrument 43-101 is the Qualified Person (QP) who writes the technical reports and is responsible for signing off on any news releases or other public disclosure. The QP has to be a qualified engineer or geoscientist with experience relevant to the project and in good standing with a professional organization.

In their interim report, MSTF noted that no such professional bodies existed in some provinces, most notably in Ontario and Quebec, the two largest mining jurisdictions in Canada. Once the Interim report was released, I wrote the Minister of MNDM urging him to proceed with licensing of geoscientists. The letter in response was rather lukewarm which surprised me. It seemed clear to both Maureen Jensen and me that the importance of the situation had not been fully appreciated. A meeting with the Minister’s policy advisor soon cleared this problem up. The government asked if the QP recommendation would change – when I met with the Assistant Deputy Minister in the fall of 1998, I had letters from the President of the Toronto Stock Exchange and the Manager of MSTF clearly stating that it would not change in the final report. We were finally heading to the finish line (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Special Edition of AGO Update Newsletter in February 1999 highlighting the announcement of the Ontario government to work with the province’s geoscience community to establish a self-regulatory professional association for geoscientists in Ontario.

# Development and Passing of the Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000

Once the Ontario government had agreed to proceed with an independent act to license geoscientists, the pace increased considerably. In March – April 1999, AGO carried out a consultation, financially supported by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM), with the Ontario geoscience community to determine a consensus on qualifications that should be required for licensure and features that should be incorporated into an independent act. Meetings were held across the province to obtain input directly from geoscientists and individuals were encouraged to send in submissions.

Based on input from the consultation and an extensive review of legislation and procedures in other jurisdictions in Canada licensing geoscientists, AGO prepared and released a Backgrounder document in October 1999 outlining a detailed proposal for licensure of professional geoscientists in Ontario. Included in this document were detailed knowledge requirements based on an extensive consultation led by John Bowlby from 1996-1999 with the Ontario university geoscience departments.

At the request of MNDM, a meeting was held with PEO. While both sides agreed that a combined Act was no longer an option, PEO agreed to support AGO in seeking an independent act for licensure of geoscientists provided that there would be no impact on professional engineers who practiced in the area of geoscience.

During the same period, AGO worked on developing a detailed business plan for formation of the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (APGO). This work was aided immensely by the AGO Advisory Committee, appointed on February 9, 1999. Members of this committee included a diverse cross-section of seasoned industry and regulatory professionals to provide experiential advice to the nascent professional association.

The Advisory Committee was directly responsible for raising the initial \$100,000 seed capital with a kick-off donation of \$25,000 from Falconbridge. This was

followed by donations of the same amount from INCO and the Toronto Stock Exchange. Over the next two years this committee would help AGO and APGO raise over \$300,000 for the startup financing of APGO.

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*We soon learned that the real work was about to begin.*

On January 15, 2000 the phone rang in our office at Watts, Griffis & McOuat who kindly provided AGO with office space – it was the Corporate Policy arm of MNDM – “*Can you develop a draft Act and Regulations for a proposed Professional Geoscientists Act?*” We said, “*Yes we can, when do you need it by?*” The response was “*January 30th would be good.*” We got on the phone right away to Michael Bourassa LLP, a top mining lawyer and a member of our Advisory Committee, then with Aird & Berlis (now with Fasken) who had been advising us through the entire process of seeking legislation on a pro-bono basis. Michael, whom we owe an enormous debt of gratitude, jumped in on the task and along with our extensive review of legislation in other professions and jurisdictions, we were able to produce a draft act and regulations in the requested time frame.

From there things started to really move. I had my first meeting in MNDM Minister Hudak’s office and Legislative counsel took over the work of drafting the legislation. What I learned from this process was make sure your intent is very clear - legislative counsel will change your wording. In April 2000, I went around the province for a series of consultations on the Act which overall was well received. I was in the drawing room of Cabinet when the Act was presented for approval which I am told is a rare privilege. Parliamentary Secretary Mr. Oullette, on behalf of Minister Hudak, rose in the House to introduce Bill 86, The Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000, for 1st reading on June 20, 2000 (Figure 7).<sup>1</sup> On June 22, 2000 it was unanimously passed and received Royal Assent on June 23, 2000. We soon learned that the real work was about to begin.

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<sup>1</sup> See full article on PGO’s website for Minister Hudak’s enthusiastic introduction for first reading of Bill 86.





1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION, 37<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO  
49 ELIZABETH II, 2000

1<sup>RE</sup> SESSION, 37<sup>È</sup> LÉGISLATURE, ONTARIO  
49 ELIZABETH II, 2000

## Bill 86

*(Chapter 13  
Statutes of Ontario, 2000)*

**An Act to establish  
the Association of Professional  
Geoscientists of Ontario**

**The Hon. T. Hudak**  
Minister of Northern Development and Mines

1st Reading	June 8, 2000
2nd Reading	June 20, 2000
3rd Reading	June 22, 2000
Royal Assent	June 23, 2000

Printed by the Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

## Projet de loi 86

*(Chapitre 13  
Lois de l'Ontario de 2000)*

**Loi visant à établir  
l'Ordre des géoscientifiques  
professionnels de l'Ontario**

**L'honorable T. Hudak**  
Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines

1 <sup>re</sup> lecture	8 juin 2000
2 <sup>e</sup> lecture	20 juin 2000
3 <sup>e</sup> lecture	22 juin 2000
Sanction royale	23 juin 2000

Imprimé par l'Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario



Figure 7. Cover of Bill 86, the Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000



# Implementation of The Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000

Minister Hudak appointed the Transitional Council on August 23, 2000 and the first meeting of the Council was held on September 8, 2000 in the offices of Gartner Lee. Members of this First Council were Adriana Benoit; John Bowlby; Andy Cooper; Shirley Cordiner; Mike Cosec; Maureen Jensen; Dean MacEachern; Greg Finn; Sandra Garofolo; Arsalan Mohajer; Ken Petersen; Bill Stiebel; Val Spring; Steve Usher; Neil Westoll; John Buckle; Richard Puntis and me.; Scott McLean was later appointed to the Transitional Council to replace Dean MacEachern, who resigned. Council appointed myself President, John Bowlby Vice President, Andy Cooper Treasurer and Val Spring, Secretary.



Figure 8. First meeting of the Transitional Council with Minister Hudak, September 8, 2000

The Annual Report of 2000-2003 goes through the details of the key points of the Act which the reader is referred to for details. The Act, Regulations and Bylaws are available on the PGO website at [www.pgo.ca](http://www.pgo.ca)

One of the most difficult challenges to forming APGO was to raise sufficient startup capital and to build up the membership to ensure that the Association would be financially self-sufficient once fully established. Council found that as work proceeded on developing APGO, the original business plan had to be constantly revised. Council was able to reduce overall operating costs by \$100,000 however revenue projections were

still significantly lower than those in the original business plan because of the slower than anticipated buildup of membership.

In September 2002, the membership numbers had improved considerably but the financial picture was still grim. Council held its first meeting in Northern Ontario in Sudbury and finances dominated the agenda. It was evident that the original membership fee set at \$275 had to increase because the membership numbers were much lower than projected in the original business plan. In addition, it was determined that the application fee was not set high enough to cover costs of the registration process. Council made the tough decision to increase the annual membership fee to \$400 per year and to significantly increase application fees. Arsalan Mohajer, one of our Transitional Council members, helped immensely by loaning us \$25,000 which allowed us to continue operations while we worked on raising additional funds.

While there was a predictably negative reaction amongst the membership, many accepted that this rate increase was essential to ensuring a successful startup. APGO had to be properly funded to ensure that it could meet its mandate. A year and a half later this would prove to be one of the most pivotal decisions made by the Transitional Council which paved the way for reaching financial stability by the end of the First Elected Council's term.

From 2000-2003, APGO was able to raise almost \$600,000 in donations and in-kind contributions from senior and junior mining companies, the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSE), technical and industry associations and many individuals to whom APGO is enormously grateful. All donations helped considerably including several

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*One of the most difficult challenges to forming APGO was to raise sufficient startup capital and to build up the membership to ensure that the Association would be financially self-sufficient once fully established*

which came at very critical times in APGO's development:

1) Initial seed capital of \$75,000 cited above from Falconbridge, INCO and the TSE in March 2000; 2) \$100,000 from Placer Dome Inc. in March 2001 which allowed APGO to complete implementation of the membership process and to function when membership revenue was very limited; 3) \$25,000 grant from MNDM in December 2001 to support sending out application packages; and 4) Grant by MNDM of \$50,000 in December 2002, which was matched by a \$50,000 loan from PDAC in January 2003, which allowed APGO to get "over the finish line". All loans were paid back the following year.

In September 2002, the previously separate positions of Executive Director and Registrar were combined and a full time Executive Director/Registrar, Oliver Bonham, P.Geo. was appointed after a wide ranging search process. This marked a significant maturing of the organization.

The final task of the Transitional Council was to hold the first elections for Council in the spring of 2003. All councillors except public appointees were required to stand for election with staggered terms of office so that in subsequent elections only one-third of councillors would be changed in each election. As set out in the Act, two Lieutenant Governor Appointees (LGA) and

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*While there were many challenges along the way, overall the Transitional Council believes that the job was very well done, a testament to the hard working men and women on Council, the dedicated staff and strong support from the membership.*

one non-member LGA were appointed by the government.

In May 2003, at the end of the term of the Transitional Council, APGO was now a fully established self-regulatory professional association with an elected Council three (3) years after the Act was given Royal Assent. The mandate of the

Transitional Council was now complete.

While there were many challenges along the way, overall the Transitional Council believes that the job was very well done, a testament to the hard working men and women on Council, the dedicated staff and strong support from the membership.

At the time I wrote: "*The foundation had been laid to develop what the Transitional Council believes will become one of the strongest professional geoscience Associations in Canada and one of the best in the world. It was now up to the members and their elected Council to take APGO forward and build on the successes of the Transitional Council.*"

25 years later I look back with great pride on what we all collectively accomplished. Today PGO is a thriving self-regulatory professional organization serving the public very well with a bright future ahead of us just as I had hoped for those many years ago.

## References

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Final Report of the TSE/OSC Mining Standards Task Force, Setting New Standards: Recommendations for Public Mineral Exploration and Mining Companies, February 9, 1999.

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## Appendix A

### Summary: The Winding Path to Licensure of Geoscientists In Ontario From 1980-2003

1980s	<b>ACROSS CANADA</b> Movement for licensure of geoscientists accelerates in provinces and territories across Canada.
1984	<b>PEO ACT AMENDED</b> The Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) Act is amended to exclude natural scientists, causing problems for geoscientist registration in Ontario.
1989	<b>CPRGO FORMED</b> In response, a group of geoscientists and engineers form the Committee for the Professional Registration of Geoscientists (CPRGO). They survey geoscientists and find 86% of respondents in favour of professional registration.
1990	<b>CPRGO PRESENT THEIR CASE</b> 150 people attend the “Symposium on the Status of Professional Geoscientists in Canada” at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. CPRGO presents papers about the importance of registration. Attendants from PEO see that CPRGO may have a point.
1991	<b>TASK FORCE CREATED</b> The Mining and Energy Minerals Committee vote to create a subcommittee, the Peo Task Force on Geoscientists, to investigate admitting geoscientists into PEO. Engineers are generally still unconvinced of the importance of geoscience regulation.
1992	<b>WHY DOES IT MATTER?</b> At a Task Force meeting, Bill Pearson presents concrete evidence of the importance of licensure-- using examples of poor geoscience practice and it's potential to harm the public.
1993-94	<b>ONE STEP FORWARD</b> The PEO Task Force submit a positive recommendation to the PEO Executive Committee to include geoscientists in the Professional Engineers Act and a motion is passed to that effect.
1994	<b>TWO STEPS BACK</b> PEO propose a new model for engineering, one that does not include geoscientists. Deliberations with PEO come to an end over a meal, dubbed the Last Supper. Later this year, the Ministry of the Environment propose that only P.Eng's be allowed to sign-off on contaminated sites, leading to backlash from environmental geoscientists.
1996	<b>CPRGO BECOMES AGO</b> In March 1996, CPRGO formalizes to become the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario (AGO), 7 years after its formation. PEO agrees to join with AGO to form a Task Force to research licensure of geoscientists after backlash on the new PEO act.
1997	<b>AN UNDERSTANDING</b> PEO Council approve a motion to proceed with regulation changes to provide licensure of geoscientists in Ontario under the PEO Act. A Memorandum of Understanding is established between PEO and AGO to go ahead with proposed act amendments.
	<b>ALL HOPE IS LOST</b> PEO members vote 60% against the referendum, influenced in part by a group called Engineers for Engineers who vocally oppose the change. PEO overturn previous motions and abandon the proposal for an amended Act. AGO decide that an independent act for geoscientists is the only way forward.
1997-98	<b>BRE-X SCANDAL</b> Bre-X, a young mining company, fake gold findings and \$3 billion in investments are lost. This scandal rocks the geoscience world. In response, the Mining Standards Task Force (MSTF) introduce the concept of a Qualified Person to sign off on all public disclosure, in order to restore lost confidence in the Canadian mining industry.
1998	<b>OPINIONS START TO CHANGE</b> MSTF notes the lack of a professional geoscience act in Ontario. Talks are held with the Assistant Deputy Minister and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to urge them to proceed with creating an independent act for Ontario.
1999	<b>RESEARCH AND PLANNING</b> The AGO consult the Ontario geoscience community to determine what qualifications should be required for licensure and release a document detailing their proposal. They develop a business plan for the formation of the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (APGO) and raise much needed funds. PEO agree to support AGO in this endeavour.
2000	<b>SPRINT TO THE FINISH LINE</b> In just 15 days, the AGO creates a draft of the proposed Professional Geoscientists Act. Consultations with geoscientists garner support and on June 23, 2000, the Professional Geoscientists Act is unanimously passed in the Ontario legislature and receives Royal Assent. 11 years of work is compressed into 38 seconds!
2000-02	<b>THE REAL WORK BEGINS</b> Ministry of Northern Development and Mines Minister Hudak appoints the Transition Council to implement the new Act on August 23, 2000. The rest of 2000 to early 2002 is spent working intensely on developing regulations for registration/complaints and discipline along with corporate bylaws and registration procedures for AGO/APGO.
2002-03	<b>THE START OF AN ERA</b> By spring 2002, the registration process is well underway with the first registrants being admitted in May 2002. AGO/APGO raises over \$600,000 from companies, government, industry organizations and members to fund development. At the end of the Transitional period in May 2003, a total of 820 practicing members have been registered with an elected Council and a full-time Executive Director/Registrar in place.
2025	<b>PRESENT DAY</b> Today APGO, now renamed PGO, is the largest geoscience-only self-regulatory organization in Canada with a membership of 3,656 including 2,558 practicing P.Geo.s, a strong balance sheet, a global reach with registrants from 81 countries, and a bright future serving the public well – a truly impressive achievement.

## Appendix B

In deep appreciation to everyone who made the drive to achieve professional registration of geoscientists in Ontario a reality.

*On behalf of its members, the APGO (PGO) would like to express its deepest appreciation to the many volunteers who donated countless hours to make APGO a reality. Many thanks to employers who generously allowed the volunteers to spend time working for the benefit of the geoscience community. Thank you!*

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