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DEAR READERS!

The current issue explores the procedure of professional and public accreditation of engineering educational programs in Russia and abroad. Our foreign partners share their experience in engineering educational program accreditation in Turkey, Italy, the USA and France. Russian authors represent the universities of Saint-Petersburg, Tomsk, Penza, Novosibirsk and Krasnoyarsk.

High quality of engineering education is one of the important factors that contribute to sustainable economic development. At the same time, Russia is presently experiencing a great shortage of specialists capable of generating, developing and implementing competitive engineering solutions. Inadequacy of engineering training quality and employers' needs gives rise to engineering problems and requires additional efforts not only for engineering curriculum and training method revision, but also for the enhancement of engineering education quality control system. Professional-public accreditation of engineering educational programs and professional certification are proved to be effective tools for engineering education quality assurance in the developed countries.

Such tools have been successfully applied in a number of developed countries, such as the USA, Japan, Great Britain, Singapore, South Korea, most European countries and other countries all over the world, for many years. The organizations and professional associations providing independent and voluntary educational program accreditation and professional certification are recognized and supported by government, employers and academic

community. The activity of the above-mentioned accrediting bodies allows employers and representatives of academic and professional communities to actively participate both in design and implementation of engineering educational programs and training quality control. The existing international alliances (IEA, Washington Accord, ENAEE, APEC, FEANI, EMF) insure international recognition of educational programs and engineering qualifications by means of mutually approved accreditation and certification criteria and procedures.

In Russia, the system of professional-public independent accreditation of engineering educational programs established by Association of Engineering Education in Russia (AEER) has been successfully at work for more than 10 years. AEER is a member of such alliances as: WA (Washington Accord), ENAEE – European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education, IPEA – International Professional Engineers Agreement, APEC Engineer Register. Therefore, the criteria and procedures applied by AEER for engineering educational program accreditation are recognized by the signatory countries of these agreements (more than 25 countries). For the last years AEER has accredited more than 220 educational programs in 30 Russian and 7 Kazakhstan Universities. 141 of them were awarded with the international recognition label of ENAEE.

Apart from AEER, there are AKKORK (the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development) and industrial associations of employers that accredit engineering educational programs in Russia.

The development of professional-public accreditation of engineering programs in Russia faces a number of challenges, the most

crucial of which is a weak motivation of Universities for independent accreditation. Unfortunately, the Federal Law "On Education" (in particular article 96) passed by the State Duma of the RF in December 2012 doesn't encourage the universities to submit their programs for independent professional-public accreditation and raises contradictions in the law interpretation. That became the reason for public hearings held in St. Petersburg in May, 2013, which were initiated by AEER, National Research Polytechnic Universities of Tomsk and St. Petersburg. The proposals and recommendations approved at the hearings are published in the present issue. The Editorial Board relies on positive response of the organizations and bodies for which these proposals are addressed.

The articles published in the issue provide valuable information for engineering organizations, academic and professional communities to better understand the results and procedure of public-professional accreditation of engineering educational programs.

Editor-in-Chief
President of the Association
for Engineering Education of Russia
Professor Yu. P. Pokholkov

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