

# PUBLIC HEARINGS “PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC ACCREDITATION OF ENGINEERING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES”

## May, 28, 2013 – St. Petersburg

### **Organizers:**

*Association for Engineering Education of Russia  
St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University  
Tomsk Polytechnic University*

The main purpose of the public hearings was to draw the attention of professional society to development of professional and public accreditation of engineering programmes as the key element of quality assurance system in engineering education.

More than 40 participants such as members of the Council of the Federation, rectors and vice-rectors of universities implementing engineering educational programmes, industry, scientific and educational community representatives took part in the event.

Among the key-note speakers were Prof. Yury Pokholkov, President of the Association for Engineering Education of Russia, Mr. Viktor Kress, Deputy Chair of the Committee on Education, Culture and Information Policy of the Council of Federation.

Participants of the public hearings had an opportunity to get acquainted with international and Russian experience in professional public accreditation of engineering educational programmes. Some legislative aspects, advantages and disadvantages of the current system of professional public accreditation, its important role in improving the quality of engineering education were considered within the hearings.

The need to hold the hearings was also associated with the adoption of the Federal Law “On Education in

the Russian Federation” № 273FZ on 29/12/2012 enter into force on 1st September 2013. The participants of the hearings noted imperfection of the Article 96, which describes the basic principles of public accreditation of educational programmes in higher educational institutions of Russia, in particular:

- lack of clearly stated requirements to the accrediting organizations;
- foundation of National Register of accrediting organizations is not foreseen;
- no measures to encourage engineering universities in Russia to present educational programmes for undergoing the procedure of professional public accreditation.

As a result of discussions, a number of proposals were made to amend the existing revision of Article 96 of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” № 273FZ, and some recommendations on how to improve the system of professional public accreditation were developed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC HEARINGS “PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC ACCREDITATION OF ENGINEERING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES”

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The public hearings were attended by members of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, heads of universities implementing engineering education programs, members of the Association for Engineering Education of Russia, representatives of employers and academic and research community.

### General characteristics of the problem

Professional and public accreditation is one of the main elements of the quality assurance system for training in the field of engineering and technology. Association for Engineering Education of Russia has been conducting professional public accreditation of engineering educational programmes since 1997 in accordance with international requirements. AEER membership in the world’s most influential alliances such as Washington Accord, ENAEE is the best confirmation for this fact. Within the recent years 222 engineering educational programmes were accredited by AEER (including awarding of the common European quality label – EUR-ACE® label to 141 Programmes) in 33 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Russia and 7 HEIs of Kazakhstan.

The relevance of the work to improve the system of professional public accreditation is mainly caused by the need to improve the competitiveness of engineering education due to Russia’s accession to the WTO. At the same time, today there is not any National Register of those organizations conducting professional public accreditation in Russia.

Analysis of the state-of-the-art indicates a number of difficulties the system of professional public accreditation has faced, which are caused by:

- low motivation of universities to undergo professional public accreditation;
- inadequate representation of the processes of professional and public accreditation of educational programmes in the approved version of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” (Article 96);
- lack of Russian system for certification of professional qualifications.

Given the seriousness of the problem being discussed and the need to take effective measures for the development and improvement in the National system of professional and public accreditation of engineering educational programmes (internationally recognized), participants in the public hearings recommend:

**Government of the Russian Federation:**

1. To take measures to form the National Register of organizations conducting professional public accreditation and Register for certification of professional qualifications.

**Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation:**

1. To take measures to improve the motivation of engineering universities of Russia to undergo procedures of professional public accreditation.

2. To develop instruments, considering legislative issues, regulating the recognition of the results of an independent evaluation of educational programmes in engineering and technology within the process of state accreditation.

3. To consider allocating funds in the budget funding of universities for the costs of preparing and carrying out professional and public accreditation of engineering educational programmes by accrediting organizations included in the National Register and international alliances.

4. To provide access to the data of National Register on engineering educational programmes that have received international professional public accreditation on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation Registry.

**Federation Council of the Russian Federation,  
State Duma of the Russian Federation:**

1. To develop amendments to the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" and the new draft law (Law "On the engineering profession"), contributing to the enhancement of professional and public accreditation of engineering educational programmes, including:

- To provide a number of preferences in passing state accreditation procedure to those Higher Educational Institutions that have successfully obtained internationally recognized professional public accreditation of educational programmes.
- The results of professional public accreditation of educational programmes should not just be considered (according to the Federal Law "On Education" Art.96), but taken into account within the state accreditation process.

**Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, involving stakeholders:**

1. To ensure and promote towards development of professional and public accreditation in Russia, including:

- Contribute to national and regional centers of professional public accreditation of educational programmes and certification of professional qualifications.
- To sign agreements to authorize national and international accrediting organizations and professional associations, members of the National Register, to carry out professional public accreditation of engineering educational programmes.
- To develop requirements for accrediting organizations that may be delegated powers (authorized) to carry out professional and public accrediting activities of engineering educational programmes.
- To continue efforts in developing professional standards (quality requirements for training in the field of engineering and technology).

**Heads of HEIs training engineers and specialists in the field of engineering and technology:**

1. To submit educational programmes in engineering and technology to domestic and international accreditation agencies (members of the national Register) for public and professional accreditation.

**State and public organizations interested in improving the quality of engineering education in Russia (Association of technical universities, Association of civil engineering universities, etc.):**

1. To contribute to enhancing ideas and mechanisms of national and international professional and public accreditation of engineering educational programmes.

**Mass media:**

1. To promote scientific and educational programs and publication of papers that explain the principles of professional and public accreditation, the need for and effectiveness of the independent evaluation of engineering educational programmes as a tool to ensure the quality of training in the field of engineering and technology.