



NEWSLETTER

# ISSUE 32

## FEBRUARY 2017

THIS ISSUE:

1. **A WORD FROM THE REGISTRAR**
3. **UNAUTHORISED USE OF SIGNATURES ON CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS**
4. **RPEQ CHAMPIONS**
5. **REGISTRATION ROADSHOWS AND QUEENSLAND BUILDING PLAN**
6. **WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST RPEQS**

### A WORD FROM THE REGISTRAR

Since joining BPEQ, I have prioritised engagement with our stakeholders, most importantly RPEQs. Over the last two years, RPEQs have been invited to take part in a survey regarding BPEQ and its services, the PE Act and registration system. RPEQs would have recently received an email with a link to the 2017 survey; the information you provide is valuable and important and I urge RPEQs to take a few minutes to complete the survey. RPEQs have until 27 February 2017 to complete the survey.

On another note, thank you to all the RPEQs who completed the CPD survey; BPEQ will provide results from that survey soon.

Another way BPEQ has engaged with engineers is through the registration roadshows and the Queensland Government's Building Plan consultation – which BPEQ has been involved in. Over the last few weeks, BPEQ representatives have had the chance to meet and talk with engineers in Brisbane, Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville and Yeppoon. Keep an eye out for when the registration roadshow is expected in your [city or town](#) and contact BPEQ to arrange a seminar for your workplace.

A recurring issue BPEQ's legal team have encountered lately is the issue of electronic signatures. Unauthorised use of a RPEQ's signature is fraud and can carry significant penalty.

Electronic signatures will be the basis of this month's legal discussion.



Next Wednesday – 8 March – is International Women's Day. Ahead of International Women's Day it is an opportune moment to mention the [Back in the Workforce bursary](#) for current and former female RPEQs, and female non-practising RPEQs, to go to toward the costs of continuing professional development. The bursary will help more women stay in the profession, or re-enter the workforce

We trust you enjoy and find the e-news useful; and please feel free to contact BPEQ at [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000 if we can be of assistance.

**Kylie Mercer,**  
Registrar



## UNAUTHORISED USE OF SIGNATURES ON CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

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It is important to remember that third parties often rely on a RPEQ's signature as absolute evidence of the engineering services having been undertaken by a RPEQ in a professional and competent way.

An issue, for which BPEQ is receiving increasing notifications, is the allegation of unauthorised use of RPEQ signatures on (among other things) designs and certification documents. The most common (but not only) examples relate to Forms 15 and 16 under the Building Regulation 2006.

While there are numerous scenarios, the allegations frequently involve the attachment of a RPEQ's signature (either digitally signed or 'scanned and snipped') to documents by persons other than the RPEQ, without the knowledge, consent or authorisation of the RPEQ. It also appears common there may be some pre-existing professional relationship between the alleged perpetrator and the RPEQ, through which the person who attached the RPEQ's signature obtained a copy of it (e.g. from a previous certification or similar).

BPEQ consider that this type of conduct is very serious with potential catastrophic consequences.

### CRIMINAL OFFENCES

Where RPEQ signatures are used without authorisation, it is possible that a number of offences are committed against the Criminal Code and the PE Act.

BPEQ has and is continuing to liaise with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) about the seriousness of this type of conduct.

The QPS has the jurisdiction to investigate any offences against the Criminal Code, and BPEQ has jurisdiction to investigate offences against the PE Act. There are both current Police and BPEQ investigations in relation to these allegations.

Where BPEQ receives a notification of unauthorised use of a RPEQ's signature, BPEQ notifies the QPS. BPEQ will recommend to the RPEQ whose signature has been fraudulently used that they make a formal complaint to the QPS, which is a requirement in relation to most

Criminal Code offences.

BPEQ will also decide whether to investigate any potential offences against the PE Act, which may apply in some circumstances.

A perpetrator may be subject to prosecution under both the Criminal Code and the PE Act.

### PROTECTIVE MEASURES

The best possible solution is the avoidance of this issue in the first place. This can be challenging in the current electronic environment and with the increasing use of electronic rather than 'wet' signatures.

While there are currently no easy or conclusive solutions, there are a range of protective measures that can be used. These will inevitably evolve over time and ideally, the issue may be resolved by way of a standardised protocol, whether technological or practice based.

In the meantime, the key issue is for RPEQs to retain control of their signature to the extent possible and to maintain detailed and secure records in relation to any activity to which they have certified by way of signature. In essence, RPEQs should be in a position to identify with certainty any engineering tasks and certifications in which they have (and have not) been involved and the nature and extent of that involvement.

The following are relevant considerations:

1. Be highly protective of your signature and RPEQ title. Maintain an awareness of the possibility that RPEQ signatures may be used without your authorisation.
2. Never provide to any person any authority to attach your signature to any document without your express and, preferably written, authorisation.
3. Never allow any person out of convenience or convention to form a practice or belief that they can use your signature or RPEQ title without your express authorisation, regardless of the urgency or alternatively routine nature of the matter.
4. Maintain comprehensive records in relation to all engineering jobs to which you have been involved and provided any certification for, including details of design versions.



5. If possible, introduce a unique reference system in relation to any signatures that you apply to certifications.
6. Ensure that your contact details on the BPEQ register are current so that any person or entities wanting to confirm any matter, including BPEQ, can immediately contact you.
7. Ensure that your records are in a format that is reliable, accessible and portable, so that you have a record of jobs undertaken even after you leave an organisation.
8. If you become aware of the possibility that your signature has been used without your authorisation, take immediate action including obtaining independent legal advice, making

a complaint to the QPS and notifying BPEQ. If you believe that there is a possibility that the unauthorised document may have been relied on by another party or entity, consider advising that party or entity.

### CONCLUSION

Further information about BPEQ policies and processes is available on BPEQ's website or by contacting BPEQ directly at [legal@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:legal@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or calling (07) 3198 0000.

While BPEQ staff will endeavour to provide assistance about processes and procedures, staff will not provide legal advice.

## RPEQ CHAMPIONS

BPEQ is looking for more RPEQs to take on the mantle of RPEQ Champion in their workplace.

The RPEQ Champion initiative was started by BPEQ as a way of connecting early career and graduate engineers with experienced and knowledgeable RPEQs.

As a RPEQ Champion you volunteer to be an on-the-ground contact for general questions about registration, offering practical advice on the registration process and guiding early career and graduate engineers through that process.



The RPEQ Champion initiative is a way to give back to the profession and build relationships with your peers.

Contact BPEQ via [admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au](mailto:admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3198 0000 for more information.

## REGISTRATION ROADSHOWS AND QUEENSLAND BUILDING PLAN

BPEQ's registration roadshows are underway for 2017. BPEQ staff have this month been to Mackay, Mount Isa, Richmond, Rockhampton and Yeppoon.

During the roadshows, staff held registration seminars with engineers from various city, regional and shire councils, engineering firms and other stakeholders.

The feedback from engineers suggests the seminars are valuable, and engineers in regional Queensland appreciate the time taken to visit these areas outside South-East Queensland. BPEQ staff was also made aware of important issues effecting the profession in regional centres, which requires further attention by BPEQ.

Closer to home, BPEQ held a 'Lunch and Learn' with engineers from Downer Group. Downer is delivering several high profile solar power projects in Queensland.

BPEQ also took part in the Queensland Government's Building Plan consultation program in Cairns, Rockhampton and Townsville; speaking with engineers, council staff, builders and plumbers.

The Building Plan consultation is ongoing and engineers can still get involved and [have their say](#).



## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST RPEQS

BPEQ extends a warm welcome to the following engineers who became registered in the last month:

Daryl Speight	Simon Janson	Dornor Ariko	Jammie Wallis	Joshua Goodall
Nicholas Plant	Nolan Nel	Craig Watkins	Robert Barnes	Karl Zeller
Alexander Head	Danny Cheung	Samir Saric	Firdaus Jamal	Stephen Tully
James Murphy	Hasan Wijaya	Samnang Kry	Ming-Hung Chen	Anil Shrestha
Cornelius Van Deventer	Hesaan Karim	Lachlan Christie	John Conroy	Florenda Dassios
Malcolm Barrett	Russell Wallace	Brendan Nieslen	Sheikh Faiz	Benjamin Treagus
Han-Yang Chiu	Yasmin Freschi	Elchin Akhundov	Thomas McCracken	Shyam Ambati
Ferdinand Glavimans	Matthew Ponomarenki	Michael Donald	Timothy Fan	Wesley Bailey
Maria Terzakis	Andrew Moore	Dirk Schneiderheinze	Jonathan Buckland	Daniel Ross
Jeffery Wark	Nelson Evans	Davin Brown	Monika Balicki	Daniel Field
Ian Halse	Ken Fung	Aleacia Olm	Willem Lombard	Bruce Botha
Andreas Laubi	Zubair Ahmad	Paul Carnavas	Michael Hughes	Bill Weston
Melanie Olsen	Christopher Eager	Sylvain Jossierand	Dawson Courneya	Andrew Keegan
Ashima Choudhry	Stephen Driver	Tin Lu	Shazil Saleem	Kelly Dhgle
Heath Camilleri	Chi Wing Tsang	Leal Minnis	Md Wadud Salim	Stuart Leach
Aaron Sexton	Torrie Bradshaw	Darren Geake	Chuanfa Wei	Stephen McGachie
Lane Steffensen	Jonathan Mahon	Russell Bowden	Christina Green	Ajay Anand
Brandon May	Michael Hopp	James Cooper	Stuart Baker	Allan Kewming
Dominic Yeo	Anson Segall	Richard Dale	Wing Kai Chai	Martin Ling
Mathew Gaskin	Mika Porter	Linglei Gu	Paul Brandis	Daniel Hooper
Aed Phaidin	David Walker	Michael Callan	Simon Crank	Mitar Miskovic
Mohd Zahari	Andrew Wheeler	Guilherme Barboza	Robert Leedham	Timothy Davidson
Aaron Gibson	Philip Hutchison	George Thomas	Chi Wai Wong	Omar Hilli
Turaj Nuralishahi	Rita Jivan	Matthew Gibbs	John Piper	Mohamed Amine Attia
Brenton Wakem	Gaya Bulathsinghala	Damian Birkin	Brendan Walsh	Honglin Cao
Gustinna De Silva	Darren Roberts	Duncan Stegmann	Jason Hoolihan	Peter Volesky
Brendan Henry	Mohammad Zaman	Dennis Tien Lung Loi	Robert Phelan	
Robert Tredger	Percy Kabamba	Simon McPherson	Michael Larsen	
Christopher Muller	Roneel Singh	Dallas Lee	Nabil Mikhail	
			Brendan Guazzo	

## CONNECT WITH BPEQ ON LINKEDIN



Don't forget BPEQ is on LinkedIn. To keep up to date with the latest news and events from BPEQ or to start a discussion on registration or engineering issues generally, click [FOLLOW](#).

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