

Indira Kulafi
Senior Project Officer, Skilled and Business Migration
Global Victoria
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
Level 33, 121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

5 April 2019

Dear Ms Kulafi,

Re: Victorian Visa Nomination Occupation List Review

Thank you for the invitation to participate in the Victorian Government's review of the visa nomination occupation list.

Engineers Australia is the peak body of the engineering profession. We are a professional association with about 100,000 members that was established in 1919 and constituted by Royal Charter to advance the science and practice of engineering for the benefit of the community.

This submission draws on the organisation's experience as the authorised assessing authority for skilled migration visa applicants who use engineering as the basis for their application. It is also informed by our engagement with industry and engineering professionals, which provides us with insight to skills supply and demand issues.

This letter will address the three questions posed in your email to Engineers Australia, regarding the occupations of *Engineering Professionals Not Elsewhere Classified* and *Engineering Technologist*.

1. How are these occupations utilised by employers of engineers?

It is noted that we do not have any hard data because visa applicants who are assessed by Engineers Australia rarely provide feedback on their eventual employment outcomes. We do however understand that Engineering Professional NEC is used to fill niche or specialised roles. Until recently, the occupation was not on the applicable list for independent migration, so the only people who migrated in the category of Engineering Professional NEC were employer-sponsored.

Engineering Technologist is a valuable occupation because it enables employers to better allocate engineering staff to tasks of varying complexity. Engineering Technologists exercise ingenuity, originality and understanding in adapting and applying technologies, developing related new technologies or applying scientific knowledge within their specialised environment. By comparison, Professional Engineers apply lifelong learning, critical perception and engineering judgement to the performance of engineering services. They challenge current thinking and conceptualise alternative approaches, often engaging in research and development of new engineering principles, technologies and materials.

2. Are there specialised skill sets not elsewhere classified in ANZSCO that these occupations are used to capture?

Engineering Professionals NEC is often used to capture Mechatronics Engineers and Product Design Engineers. These are listed as specialisation of Professional Engineer NEC in the ANZSCO dictionary.

There are several other types of engineer that we have seen captured within the scope of NEC:

- Metallurgical Engineer
- Polymer Engineer
- Ceramic Engineer
- Ocean Engineer
- Subsea Engineer
- Photovoltaics Engineer
- Renewable Energies Engineer
- Sustainability Engineer
- Systems Engineer
- Railway Engineer (*note that the Railway Signalling Engineers are covered by Electrical Engineer 233311*)

These occupational categories are used for instances where an applicant is expecting to be classified under a more generic occupation, such as Materials Engineer or Electrical Engineer, but are too specialised to meet the requirement in Australia. Therefore, they get an assessment as something reflecting their specialisation under the NEC category.

Due to the occupation of Engineering Professional NEC not being on the list for independent visas for many years, only very small numbers of applicants for this category are seen by Engineers Australia. Our estimate is that there are about 20 per year.

3. In the case of Engineering Professionals NEC, how does Engineers Australia undertake a skills assessment for this occupation?

The assessment process is the same for every engineering occupation, with the same base criteria applied. Unless the candidate provides Engineers Australia with explicit instruction to assess them in a very specialised occupation, we try to fit them into one of the standard categories available.

The assessment process for all occupations is as follows:

- If it is an application based on an accredited qualification the outcome is given in accordance with the discipline of the degree. For example, an accredited bachelor's degree in civil engineering would lead to the outcome Civil Engineer, 233211. An accredited bachelor's degree in Mechatronics engineering would

lead to an outcome as Mechatronics Engineer within the ANZSCO category of Engineering Professionals NEC, 233999.

- If the qualification is not accredited or if it is accredited but the candidate would like to be assessed for a different occupation than what he/she would normally get (for example, a holder of a mechatronics degree wanting to be assessed as an electronics engineer), the candidate will have to do a competency demonstration report. In this pathway, the assessment is more holistic and considers the qualification(s), experience and professional development of the applicant.

Suitability for a specific discipline—whether it is explicitly defined in the ANZSCO dictionary or not—is made by using various resources, such as:

- The country education profile (provided by the Department of Education and Training)
- The ANZSCO dictionary when available
- Comparability with accredited qualifications either nationally or internationally
- Technical reference material that is publicly available
- Technical reference material or expertise available via Engineers Australia's Colleges and Technical Societies.

If you would like to discuss the issues raised in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch on (02) 6270 6565 or JRussell@engineersaustralia.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Russell
National Manager, Public Affairs