

# The Practice of Structural Engineering Finds a Voice

October 2005. The Structural Engineers Certification Board (SECB) granted its first round of certifications in the practice of Structural Engineering. Over 500 structural engineers were certified through the SECB Grandfathering Provision.

In an effort to promote the public welfare and to aid stakeholders in selecting professional engineers qualified to practice structural engineering, the National Council of Structural Engineers Association (NCSEA) recommends certification of structural engineers as the current solution to the lack of separate licensing of structural engineers. Certification for structural engineers was first proposed and discussed at NCSEA's 1998 Annual Conference in Portland, Maine. An ad hoc committee was formed to research and recommend the framework for a certification program. The program was approved at NCSEA's 2003 Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. With approval of the NCSEA Member Organizations, NCSEA proceeded to form the autonomous Structural Engineering Certification Board.

By submitting to the certification process, an engineer can demonstrate possession of the unique qualifications necessary to be certified in the practice of Structural Engineering. Certification is not intended to supplant the licensing and regulatory rights of States and other legal jurisdictions of the United States. In fact, licensure by a recognized legal jurisdiction is a prerequisite

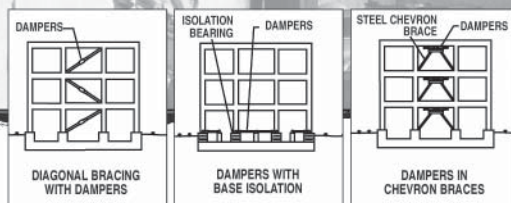


to becoming certified in the practice of Structural Engineering. Presently (2005), only ten States recognize the unique practice of Structural Engineering. In the future, it is envisioned that certification will facilitate licensure in states where the Structural Engineering discipline is not recognized.

By November of 2005, the SECB will have gone through two rounds of approval and will have granted certification in the practice of Structural Engineering to approximately 1,000 applicants. Certification gives the profession a much-needed voice in establishing appropriate qualification standards for the practice of structural engineering. As a side benefit, it is expected that certification will reaffirm that structural engineering is a profession, not a technical avocation. The profession is expected to continue to grow in stature through the recognition of those qualified to practice. It is anticipated that this program will continue to grow as well, as engineers across the country learn of its mission and realize its importance for the good of the profession as a whole.

SECB is now accepting applications under the Grandfathering Provision as well as the Regular Provision. Engineers already licensed that meet the requirements of certification under the regular provision may apply by submitting the \$350.00 fee with the completed application. Structural engineers licensed by examination in Illinois, California, and Washington State, just to name few of the states, may become certified under the Regular Process, provided they meet the requirements stated in the application form found at [www.secbcertboard.org](http://www.secbcertboard.org). Alternatively, application via Grandfathering is also available through submission of the application form and the \$450.00 fee. ■

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