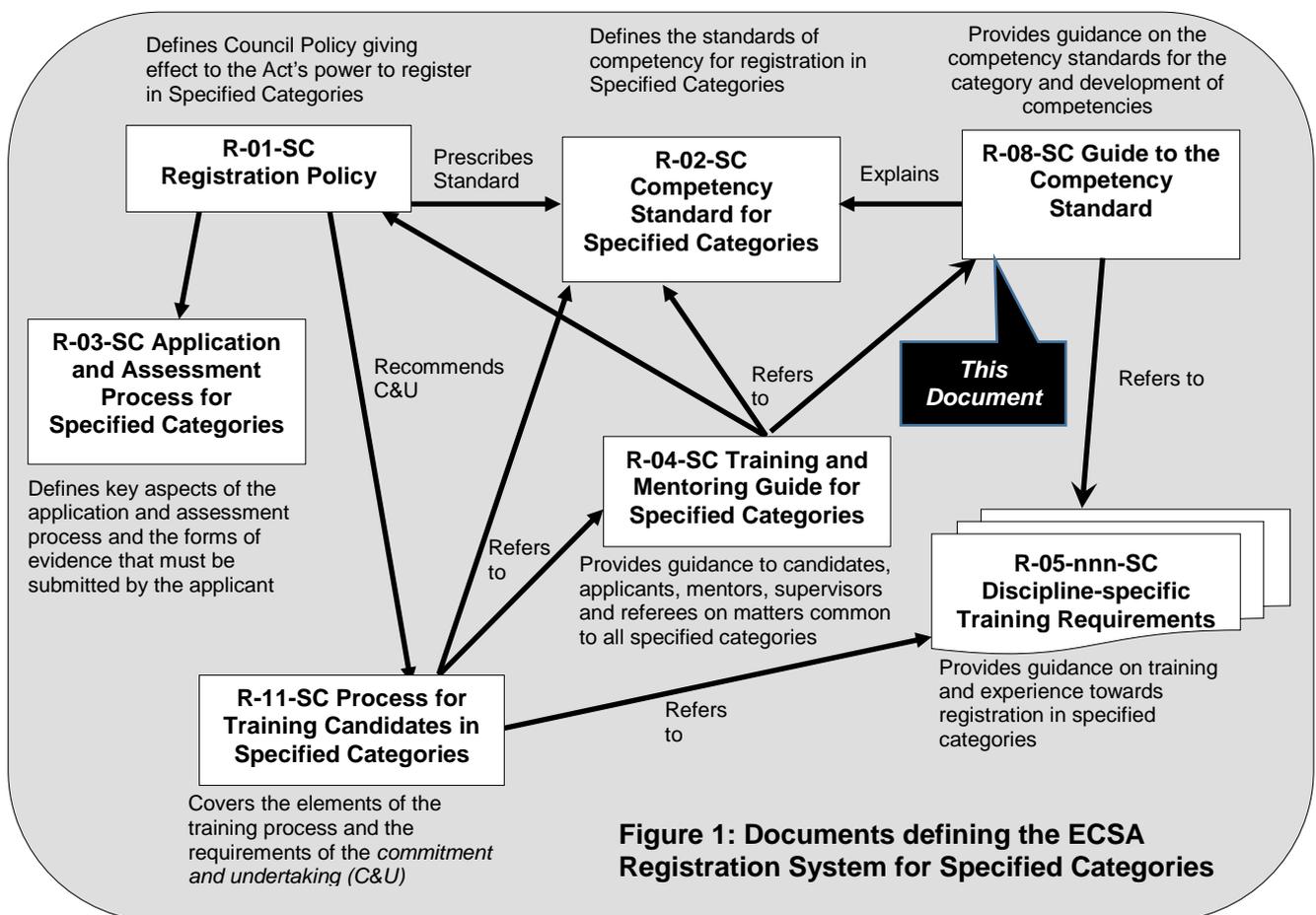


<b>ENGINEERING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA</b> <i>Standards and Procedures System</i>			 <b>E C S A</b>
<b>Guide to the Competency Standards for Registration in a Specified Category</b>			
<b>Status: Approval by Council</b>			
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## Background: ECSA Registration System Documents

The documents that define the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) system for registration in specified categories are shown in **Figure 1** which also locates the current document.



### 1. Purpose of this document

1.1 This *guide* amplifies the general training and mentoring guide **R-04-SC**, concentrating on an understanding of the competency standards for Specified Categories defined in document **R-02-SC**. This guide also indicates ways of developing the requisite competencies, and how the competencies can be demonstrated through engineering work. This guide may, in turn, be supplemented by Discipline Specific Training Guidelines, if they exist for the trainee's discipline.

The intended audience of this guide includes candidates undergoing training toward professional registration, mentors, supervisors as well as assessors of applicants for registration.

## 2. Navigating the document

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## 3 About competency, standards and performance

What is the competency of a Registered Specified Category Practitioner? In general *competence* is the possession of the *knowledge, skills* and *attitudes* necessary to perform the activities within the specified category to the standards expected in independent employment or practice.

The knowledge component of competency consists of knowledge from the engineering education process and knowledge subsequently acquired, which is likely to be specialised and related to the engineering work context. The skills and attitude component are defined by a set of assessable outcomes.

What is the standard of competence for registration as a Specified Category Practitioner? ECSA document **R-02-SC** provides the formal definition of the competence that must be demonstrated. That document states the requirement for registration in its section 2.1 in the following terms:

Competence must be demonstrated:

- within *specifically-defined engineering activities*, (defined in **R-02-SC** section 2.1.1),
- by *integrated performance* of the outcomes (defined in **R-02-SC** section 3), and
- at the *level defined* for each outcome (see **R-02-SC** sections 2.1.1 and 3.1.1).

The standard applies across all engineering disciplines and sub disciplines. Contexts and functions in which competency may be developed and the outcomes demonstrated may be described in the applicable Sub Discipline Specific Training Guidelines.

This guide enlarges on the outcomes, level of performance and integrated performance required of an applicant for registration in a Specified Category.

The competency standard defines eleven outcomes, conveniently grouped as follows and in nested form in **Figure 2**:

**Group A:** Knowledge-based Engineering Problem Solving (**Outcomes 1, 2, 3**)

**Group B:** Managing Engineering Activities (**Outcomes 4, 5**)

**Group C:** Risk and Impact Mitigation (**Outcomes 6, 7**)

**Group D:** Exercising Judgement and Taking Responsibility (**Outcomes 8, 9, 10**)

**Group E:** Developing Own Competency (**Outcomes 11**)

Essential Activities of Registered Specified Category Practitioner	Using Enabling Knowledge	Taking Account of Consequences	Exercising Personal Attributes	Maintaining and Extending Competence		
1: Define, investigate and analyse <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering problems.	3: Comprehend and apply knowledge embodied in established engineering practices and knowledge specific to the field in which he/she practices.	6: Recognise the reasonably foreseeable social, cultural and environmental effects of <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering activities.	8: Conduct engineering activities ethically.	11: Undertake professional development activities sufficient to maintain and extend his or her competence.		
2: Design, develop, plan or practice solutions to <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering problems (tasks).					7: Meet all legal and regulatory requirements and protect the health and safety of persons in the course of his or her <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering activities.	9: Exercise sound judgement in the course of <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering activities.
4: Manage part or all of one or more <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering activities.						
5: Communicate clearly with others in the course of his or her <i>specifically-defined</i> engineering activities.						

**Figure 2: Nesting of the outcomes specified for registration as a Specified Category Practitioner**

### 3.1 How does one Visualise the Outcomes?

The outcomes do not stand alone. Competent engineering work invariably requires the simultaneous performance of several of the actions embodied in the outcomes. **Section 2.1** of the standard (**R-02-SC**) therefore calls for *integrated performance* of the outcomes. The outcomes can be thought of as nesting as shown in **Figure 2** of this document.

The set of 11 outcomes have a logic that flows through them as suggested by the column headings in **Figure 2**.

- **Outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5** capture the essential things that Registered Specified Category Practitioners do: analyse and solve problems, manage processes, projects and operations to deliver results, all supported by communication.
- To perform these four core functions, they rely on fundamental and specialised engineering knowledge as well as knowledge of the context in which the work takes place. **Outcome 3** reflects the importance of engineering knowledge: this is what makes the work engineering!
- While solving problems and managing processes, the Registered Specified Category Practitioner must be able to identify and handle the impacts of the solutions and applicable regulatory requirements as reflected in the grouped **Outcomes 6 and 7**.
- A number of attributes are essential at a personal level: the Registered Specified Category Practitioner must act ethically, exercise judgement and take responsibility as reflected in the grouped **Outcomes 8, 9 and 10**.
- The single **Outcome 11**, shown as an underpinning layer to all the other outcomes, brings out the need to be able to develop professionally, that is increase knowledge and the competencies required for effective performance of engineering work

An alternative visualisation of the set of 11 outcomes is given in **Figure 3** of document **R-04-SC**, where problem solving (analysis and synthesis) is seen in a central position with competencies represented by other outcomes are in a supporting role.

### 3.2 At what Level must Achievement of Outcomes be demonstrated?

All of the outcomes defined in **R-02-SC** and summarised in **Figure 2** of this document may arise from work of varying levels of demand. At what level must a person demonstrate the defined outcomes to be judged competent to register as a Specified Category Practitioner? Two level-defining phrases are defined to have specific meanings in the standard **R-02-SC**:

- Section 3.1.1 defines as set of level descriptors for a *specifically-defined engineering problem*; and
- Section 2.1.1 defines the level descriptors that allow engineering activity to be classified within *specifically-defined engineering activities*.

What are engineering activities? The standard takes a broad view of engineering activities, listing a number of possible functions: design; planning; investigation and problem resolution; improvement of materials, components, systems or processes; implementation, construction, manufacture, engineering operations; maintenance; project management; research, development and commercialisation. This list is not exhaustive. Sub Discipline Specific Training Guidelines may elaborate on types of activities in which a person may or must demonstrate competence

In summary, evidence of competent performance has two essential requirements: first, a capability to *perform a number of defined actions* must be demonstrated, and second, the performance must be at or exceed a *specified level of demand*. The defined actions are the outcomes and the level is defined by a specification for the demands of the engineering activities and the nature of problem solving. In a specified category practitioner field, evidence of competent performance is obtained from the competent performance of substantial specific engineering tasks by the person being assessed. Typical tasks provide evidence of several outcomes, and assessment is holistic.

### 3.3 Introduction of Competency Standards

The Competency Standards in document **R-02-SC** are being introduced via the adoption of the set of documents shown in **Figure 1**. The intention is not to change the previous standards required for registration as a Registered Specified Category Practitioner, but to better express it to support focused training, effective presentation of evidence and assessment. Section 3 of document **R-03-SC** identifies areas of change from the training-based requirements to output-based competency standards and the accompanying changes in preparation of applications and assessment of competency.

## 4. Group A: Knowledge-based Engineering Problem Solving

### 4.1 What is Engineering Problem Solving?

*Problem solving* is a process carried out by individuals or teams to bring about a change between a given state and a desired state by means of multi-step or multipath activities having barriers that must be overcome using knowledge and abilities and taking situational requirements into account. Engineering problem solving is distinguished by requiring engineering knowledge, that is, it relies on the fundamental engineering sciences and specialised engineering knowledge. Proficiency in solving engineering problems at the level described as *specifically-defined* is a characteristic of the competency of a Registered Specified Category Practitioner.

Problem solving is the common thread that runs through engineering activities and is required in many engineering activities including design, planning, implementing and constructing, operating and closing engineering systems, infrastructure and plant. Competent problem solving has two phases: analysis and solution synthesis as captured in outcomes 1 and 2 of **R-02-SC**. Because engineering problem solving is knowledge-based, outcome 3 is grouped with 1 and 2. However, outcome 3 supports other outcomes as well, as depicted in **Figure 2**.

The test for a *well-defined* engineering problem stated in section 3.1.1 of **R-02-PN** is based on the four logical steps, illustrated in **Table 1**:

- Step 1:** Item a) establishes whether a problem is, in fact, an engineering problem by virtue of requiring engineering knowledge. For example, a person performing only project management functions with no role in the engineering aspects of a project would not be solving an engineering problem.
- Step 2:** Items b), c) and d) establish the factors describing complexity of the initial state and the desired end state of the problematic situation; how many factors are known or specified, what is unknown, are there multiple goals?
- Step 3:** Factors e) to h) test the complexity of the solution path or process from initial state to the goal state.

**Step 4:** Factors i) and j) test the level of decision making needed in the process and the possible consequences for which responsibility must be taken.

**Table 1: Illustrating the test for a *specifically-defined engineering problem***

Is the problem an engineering problem? Does it:	a) be solved mainly by specific practical engineering knowledge, underpinned by related theory;
What is the nature of the problem? Does it have one of characteristics b, c or d?	b) are fully defined but require feedback; c) are discreet, specifically focused tasks within engineering systems; d) are routine, frequently encountered and in specified and sustainable context;
What is encountered in the solution process? Do solutions have one of characteristics e, f, g or h? Solutions:	e) can be solved by standardised or prescribed ways; f) are encompassed by specific standards, codes, legislation and documented procedures; requires authorisation to work outside limits; g) information is concrete, specific and largely complete, but requires checking and possible supplementation; h) involve specific issues but few of these imposing conflicting constraints and a specific range of interested and affected parties;
What is involved in decision making while solving the problem and in evaluating the solution? Does it have one of characteristics i or j? Do decisions:	i) requires practical judgement in the specific practice area in evaluating solutions, considering interfaces to other role-players; j) have consequences which are locally important but within a specified category (wider impacts are dealt with by others).

If there is one or more affirmative answer at each step, the problem is classified as a *specifically-defined engineering problem*.

#### 4.2 How will I know when I am performing adequately at problem solving?

Considering the problem of assessing a person's performance against learning outcomes 1 and 2, we would ask whether the person performs a creative, systematic analysis of problems (at the required level) and works systematically to synthesise a solution to the problems.

Systematic analysis would follow a schema such as the following. The applicant:

1. Interprets the client's requirements, leading to an agreed statement of requirements;
2. Clarifies requirements, drawing issues and impacts to the client's attention;
3. Identifies specific design aspects standards, codes and procedures to be followed;
4. Gathers information required for problem analysis;
5. Identifies acceptance criteria for work product;
6. Verifies that the specific design problem is amenable to solution by candidate's techniques;
7. Documents functional solution requirements and gains client acceptance.

A similar schema would apply to the synthesis phase. The applicant:

1. Identifies and analyses alternative approaches to meeting the problem specification;
2. Seeks advice on aspects of the of the proposal or design process that fall outside established practice or standards;
3. Plans tasks and selects methods to complete the design process;
4. Performs design or solution, synthesise tasks;

5. Assembles the complete solution and reviews to check the compliance with client's requirements;
6. Checks solution and impacts of solution on interested and affected parties;
7. Reviews documented design with client to obtain formal acceptance.

What kind of problem could be offered to demonstrate problem solving ability? Many types of problem would suffice; the problem may be a design requirement, a development requirement or a problematic situation in an existing component, system or process.

The solution may be the design of a component, system or process or a recommendation of the remedy to a problematic situation.

The level of the problem analysed must be gauged by the test described above to test its suitability for presentation as evidence of competence.

### **4.3 Developing knowledge-based Engineering Problem Solving**

Problem solving is the core activity of engineering. A wide range of engineering functions are either specific manifestations of problem solving or rely on problem solving at different levels. Some examples follow:

- Design is the systematic process of conceiving and developing materials, components, systems and processes to serve useful purposes. Design involves a transformation from an initial requirement to produce the documented instructions on how to realise the end product. On the way to a solution, barriers must be overcome. A design assignment therefore is an engineering problem and involves sub-problems that must be addressed.
- Product or Process Improvement: It frequently happens that an existing piece of infrastructure, plant or process is in need of improvement. A proper process is to analyse the existing state and define the desired final state. A process for moving from the initial to final state must be worked out. Again the investigation is a problem-solving activity as is the solution synthesis phase.

Other engineering activities have problem solving based on engineering knowledge at their center: Planning; development and technology transfer; quality assurance; risk analysis; domain specific project management; managing engineering processes, safe work practices; environmental protection; sustainability analysis and systems engineering

At the end-point of training the candidate must demonstrate these three problem solving competencies through his or her work. The starting point of training is the level of problem-solving ability of the new graduate. The graduate is expected to produce the same level of problem solving but in an academic rather than work environment. The candidate must develop problem solving abilities in an environment where the consequences of engineering decisions and actions are significant.

At graduation, the knowledge of the applicant centers on the scientific basis of engineering, engineering technologies, some contextual knowledge and some specialist knowledge. During candidacy, knowledge must develop in the candidate's practice area and about the context in which the candidate practices.

Mentors, supervisors and candidates must plan the progression of tasks and responsibility to ensure the development of these competencies. They are advised to use suitable planning, recording and assessment tools. The candidate's progress should be evaluated against each outcome using the scale in **Table 4** of document **R-04-SC**. It should be noted that the same body of work may serve to develop competencies in other groups.

The strategy for developing problem solving competence to the level required in the workplace and degree of responsibility suggested in **Table 4** of document **R-04-SC** is useful: *being exposed, assisting, participating, contributing and performing*. Initially, the candidate assists experienced engineering personnel in their problem-analysis and solution activities, receiving detailed guidance and being monitored. The candidate then progresses to contributing individually and as a team member to the solution of engineering problems. Finally, the candidate must develop to the level of performing individually and team member to solve problems at the required level. In this last phase, the candidate must perform over the entire problem life cycle.

The candidate should be given the opportunity to experience specifically-defined problem solving in contexts such as design, investigation, process or product improvement or planning. The candidate should be encouraged to apply first principles to specifically-defined problems, to develop and apply specialist and contextual knowledge.

## **5. Outcome 3: Using Engineering and Contextual Knowledge**

All engineering activity and problem solving in particular relies on a body of knowledge. The statement of outcome 3 recognises three components of the knowledge of a Registered Specified Category Practitioner. First, knowledge is rooted in principles, that is the general laws of the natural and engineering sciences and the principles of good engineering practice. Second, it is recognised that individual Registered Specified Category Practitioners develop specialised knowledge that may be in a generally recognised area or may be a particular combination of topics. Third, knowledge which is specific to the environment in which the person practises is essential. This includes knowledge about the society, economy, regulatory system and physical environment in which the person practises engineering.

Engineering knowledge is too diverse to allow a detailed specification of knowledge for every discipline, sub-discipline or practice area. Rather, it is recognised that each engineering practitioner develops a practice area. This may be a commonly understood area such as lifting machinery inspection or engineering management or may be a particular blend coming out of the individual's experience. Knowledge requirements in **Section 3.3.1** of **R-02-SC** are therefore stated in generic terms.

For the Registered Specified Category Practitioner, the technical knowledge acquired in the undergraduate programme is the base for practice area knowledge and the Registered Specified Category Practitioner must be capable of practical analysis. Technical knowledge may be used explicitly or tacitly.

Registered Specified Category Practitioners invariably work in teams with specialists from other engineering disciplines, other engineering role-players, contractors and other parties. It is therefore essential to have a working knowledge of the discipline and other areas with which interaction is necessary.

Engineering work does not occur in isolation and knowledge of the regulatory requirements, health and safety, environmental, contractual, quality and risk is essential.

## 5.1 How would I display my application of knowledge?

This outcome is normally demonstrated in the course of design, investigation or operations. The applicant typically:

1. Displays mastery of established methods, procedures and techniques in the practice area;
2. Applies knowledge underpinning methods, procedures and techniques to support specified category activities;
3. Displays working knowledge of areas that interact with the practice area;
4. Applies codified knowledge in related areas: financial, statutory, safety, management;
5. Uses information technology effectively as required by the practice area.

## 6. Group B: Manage Engineering Activities

Groups B, C and D reflect competencies that are both linked to problem solving and are essential to engineering activities at the practitioner level. For example, taking impacts into account is an important stage in the solution of a problem. Similarly, an engineering operation also has impacts that must be assessed and managed.

### 6.1 What are Engineering Management Competencies?

Competent engineering practitioners must not only perform technical functions but must manage engineering activities. Two statements of management competency are in group B in **R-02-SC**. Competency to manage *specifically-defined engineering activities* must be demonstrated. Linked with management is the ability to communicate with those involved in the engineering activity.

*Engineering management* can be defined as the application of the generic management functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling, applied together with engineering knowledge in contexts including the management of projects, construction, operations, maintenance, quality, risk, change and business. The level of engineering management that a person is involved in or is sufficiently experienced to do is of necessity limited at the stage of applying for registration as a Registered Specified Category Practitioner.

Engineering management is more than project management. Project management is in most cases supportive of technical engineering activity. Work that is predominantly project management with minor technical engineering content is not acceptable as a demonstration of performance at degree of responsibility E.

### 6.2 What level of Activities Must I be Able to Manage?

Section 2.1 of the competency standard **R-02-SC** provides a test of whether a given engineering activity is classed as a *specifically-defined* engineering activity. The tests are applied to the activity itself to test the complexity of its scope and operating environment, resource intensiveness, and severity of constraints, risks and consequences. This test is not independent of the test for *specifically-defined* problem solving; most of the factors are those that give rise to barriers in the problem-solving process also render the problem *specifically-defined*.

The definition of the required level of activity in **R-02-SC** does not imply that practitioners in every category work at that level all the time. Rather, the practitioner in each category must demonstrate ability to practice at the required level. Similarly, an applicant, at the culmination of training, must

demonstrate that he/she is capable of performing the required actions at the required level by having actually done so in the work situation.

### **6.3 Developing Competency to Manage Engineering Activities**

The progression of levels of engineering work and degrees of responsibility defined in **Table 4 of R-04-SC**, namely, *Be exposed – Assisting – Participating - Contributing and Performing*, also applies to the management outcomes. It is feasible for an applicant to demonstrate the communication **Outcome 5** at the stage of applying for a professional engineering technician.

Various candidate phase activities assist in developing the ability to plan, organise, lead and control. The candidate must be able to perform these functions, alone and in a team. Conducting engineering work on one's own or in a team requires planning and organising to attain the required technical outcomes. Team participation and contribution as a team member and as a leader give the opportunity to demonstrate leadership and the ability to control on a limited scale

Technical communication at a level that supports analysis, synthesis and implementation of solutions is an inherent part of engineering work. The applicant needs the opportunity to communicate orally and in writing not only about engineering matters but also financial social, cultural, environmental or political aspects of engineering activity

### **6.4 How do I Know when I am Managing and Communicating at the Required Level?**

The applicant is expected to display personal and work process management abilities:

1. Manage self;
2. Work effectively in a team environment;
3. Manage people, work priorities, work processes and resources;
4. Maintain professional and business relationships.

Effective communication could be demonstrated by:

1. Write clear, concise, effective, technically, legally and editorially correct reports using a structure and style which meets communication objectives and user/audience requirements.
2. Read and evaluate technical and legal matter relevant to the function of the Registered Specified Category Practitioner.
3. Receive instructions, ensuring correct interpretation.
4. Issue clear instructions to subordinates using appropriate language and communication aids, ensuring that language and other communication barriers are overcome.
5. Make oral presentations using structure, style, language, visual aids and supporting documents appropriate to the audience and purpose

## **7. Group C: Risk and Impact Mitigation**

### **7.1 What are the Group C Outcomes?**

Engineering activities deliver benefits to society and the economy in the form of infrastructure, services and goods. Engineering involves harnessing or controlling natural forces or the use and control of information. The actions inherent in engineering activity have accompanying risks. These risks must be mitigated to a level acceptable to the affected parties. The management of risk accompanying engineering activity is the very rationale for the regulation of the profession. Some risks are well known and understood and the means of addressing them may be embodied in

regulation, for example pressure vessel design. Other situations may not occur frequently, may occur for the first time with the application of new technology and may not in consequence be regulated. Risks may have objective technical measures while others are subject to the judgement of individuals and communities. Some may be ethical (**Outcome 8 in Group D**). The ability to assess and deal with all prevailing risks is integral to the competency of an engineering practitioner. The Registered Specified Category Practitioner is expected to be able to identify and deal with wide-ranging risks associated with engineering work.

The two outcomes in Group C, **Outcomes 6 and 7** defined in **R-02-SC**, deal respectively with the impacts of engineering activity that are not subject to regulation but rely on the professionalism of the practitioner and those which are subject to regulation, both specific and general.

**Outcome 7** is concerned with explicitly regulated aspects of engineering practice and more general legislation that may apply. Each candidate should ascertain the legislation that applies in his or her work environment. **Appendix A** provides a list of Acts that apply generally and in specific areas. Applicants are reminded that this list is provided for information, is not exhaustive and the onus rests on each candidate to identify applicable legislation.

Of particular importance is occupational health and safety legislation. There are two principal Acts: the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No 85 of 1993), its various Regulations and the Mine Health and Safety Act (Act No 29 of 1996) as amended. While Certificated Engineers have specific responsibility under these Acts, all engineering practitioners must be cognisant with and act in accordance with the Acts.

## **7.2 Developing the Competency to Analyse and Manage the Impacts, Benefits, and Consequences of Engineering Activity**

**Outcomes 6 and 7** in the competency standard are relevant to this cluster of competencies:

The applicant should be given the opportunity to study, analyse and recommend measures for:

- Social/cultural impacts
- Community/political considerations
- Environmental impact
- Sustainability analysis
- Regulatory conditions
- Potential ethical dilemmas

## **7.3 How do I know when I am Performing at the Right Level?**

To show that you are competent in impact analysis and mitigation you would do the following

1. Identify interested and affected parties and their expectations;
2. Identify environmental impacts of the engineering activity;
3. Identify sustainability issues;
4. Propose measures to mitigate negative effects of engineering activity;
5. Communicate with stakeholders.

To show that you are competent in regulatory aspects you would typically:

1. Identify applicable legal, regulatory and health and safety requirements for the engineering activity;
2. Select safe and sustainable materials, components, processes and systems, seeking advice when necessary;
3. Apply defined, widely accepted methods to identify and manage risk.

#### **7.4 Developing Group C Competencies**

**Outcomes 6** (impacts of engineering), **7** (legal and regulatory aspects) and **8** (ethical behaviour in Group D) reflect the professional behaviour and attitudes expected of a Registered Specified Category Practitioner. These are supported by knowledge of the context in which the individual practices (aspect of **Outcome 3**). It is recognised that, during candidacy, the exposure to these issues may not be as intensive as for an experienced registered specified category practitioner. Applicants are therefore expected to supplement experience by reading and reflecting on these issues before applying for registration. The Sub Discipline Specific Training Guidelines lists material that should be consulted, including the relevant legislation. Applicants should also make use of suitable CPD courses in these areas.

#### **8. Group D: Exercising judgement and taking responsibility**

Engineering practitioners must make technical and managerial decisions related to risks arising from their activity. Three outcomes in Group D are concerned with competencies exercised at a personal level.

As in other professions and business situations ethical problems arise in engineering activity. These may relate to business practices, inducements or an unregulated impact, for example the use of a rare unsustainable material for a solution that will be required well into the future. The Registered Specified Category Practitioner must be capable of detecting, analysing and handling ethical dilemmas and problems that arise in the course of engineering activity. This is a non-negotiable aspect of the Code of Conduct and the Registered Specified Category Practitioner must handle any ethical problems that arise.

The Registered Specified Category Practitioner is expected to make decisions where the information to underpin the decision may be complex, that is it has more than one part with interactions between the parts, or may be incomplete. Such decision making requires due care by the practitioner and may be informed by experience. The Registered Specified Category Practitioner must therefore have the ability to think of more than one matter at once, their interdependence, their relative importance and their consequences. This process is known as exercising *judgement* within *specifically-defined engineering activities*, or equivalently in the solution of *specifically-defined engineering problems*.

Specified Category Practitioners are accorded professional status in society by virtue of their competence, the fact that the profession self-regulates and that professionals are accountable for their actions. The person registering as a Specified Category Practitioner must therefore understand the obligation to be responsible and have experience of making decisions which, if wrong, could have adverse consequences. Subject to the limitations on taking responsibility as a candidate or unregistered person discussed in **Section 7.4** of **R-04-SC** the applicant for registration as a specified category practitioner must have demonstrated the capacity to make recommendations that display responsible behaviour.,

## 8.1 Developing Competency to Make Ethical Decisions

**Outcome 8** has the simple statement: Conduct engineering activities ethically. The baseline for ethical behaviour is the ECSA Code of Conduct<sup>1</sup>. The Code of conduct covers the need to practise competently and with one's competency, to work with integrity, to respect the public interest and the environment, and uphold the dignity of the profession, including one's relationship with fellow professionals. There is also a section on administrative matters that relate to ethical practice. The candidate must study the Code of Conduct and be aware of its implications in situations that arise in engineering work.

## 8.2 Developing Competency to Exercise Judgement and take Responsibility

The applicant should be given the opportunity and be challenged to:

- Make decisions when full information is not available.
- Take due care that the outputs and impacts of an assignment are handled.
- Self-assess their competence from time to time.

## 8.3 How do I Know when I am Performing at the Right Level?

To show that you are sensitive to and capable of handling ethical issues you would adopt a systematic approach to resolving these issues typified by:

1. Identify the central ethical problem;
2. Identify affected parties and their interests;
3. Search for possible solutions for the dilemma;
4. Evaluate each solution using the interests of those involved, accorded suitable priority;
5. Select and justify solution that is best resolves the dilemma.

An indication that a person exhibits judgement is typically by:

1. Considers a limited number of factors, some of which may not be specifically defined;
2. Considers the interdependence, interactions, and relative importance of factors;
3. Foresees consequences of actions;
4. Evaluates a situation in the absence of full evidence;
5. Draw on experience and knowledge.

Being responsible would be evidenced by:

1. Demonstrates a professional approach at all times;
2. Has due regard to technical, social, environmental and sustainable development considerations;
3. Takes advice from a responsible authority on any matter considered to be outside area of competence;
4. Evaluates work output, revises as required and takes responsibility<sup>1</sup> for work output.

## 9. Group E: Developing Own Competency

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout a Specified Category Practitioner's career. A registered

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<sup>1</sup> Published as *Rules of Conduct for Registered Persons*, Government Gazette No. 37123, 13 December 2013 and available on the ECSA website.

Specified Category Practitioner is required to maintain and extend competence and must complete at least the required level of CPD to maintain registration.

Candidates training toward registration do not have to satisfy a formal CPD requirement. However, at the time of applying for registration as a practitioner, candidates will be assessed as to their ability to manage and complete CPD-type activities. This is an integral part of competence required to practice safely and effectively in engineering. CPD-type activity carried out before registration is often termed initial professional development (IPD).

The ability to develop and maintain competency is an essential and demonstrable competency and is embodied in **Outcome 11**, namely the ability to undertake professional development activities sufficient to maintain and extend his or her competence. This is more than completing courses or other activities. The emphasis falls on the individual's ability to self-develop. This capability has several dimensions: taking responsibility for one's own development, reflect on strengths and weaknesses, recognise needs, plan and execute development activities and overcome obstacles.

The range of methods of prosecuting IPD open to the candidate is substantial: reading, researching, in-house training, accredited CPD courses, credit-bearing courses in higher education institutions or even higher qualification studies that complement the individuals training and work experience. The essential test is: is the activity appropriate to the specific developmental needs of the individual? Also, the role of the candidate in planning learning activities is important, rather than just leaving it to the employer.

The ability to continually develop one's skills is seen as sufficiently important in an engineering practitioner to be enshrined as an outcome that must be demonstrated in order to attain registration.

### **9.1 At what level must I manage my development**

For a Registered Specified Category Practitioner, it should be noted that boundaries of practice areas change over time, new engineering principles are formulated, new procedures, standards or codes are developed, or engineering practice is advanced. IPD should be planned with these factors in mind.

### **9.2 Managing Own Development**

Any of the activities listed below or combinations constitute CPD (and hence IPD):

- Attending courses, seminars, congresses and technical meetings organized by Engineering Institutions/Institutes, universities, other professional bodies and course providers.
- Actively participating in conferences, serving on technical or professional committees and working groups.
- Undertaking structured self-study (i.e. using textbooks with examples).
- Studying technical literature (e.g. journals, magazines)
- Taking correspondence courses and studying other supervised study packages.
- Taking in-house courses provided by employers.
- Enrolling for formal post-graduate studies (limited credits).
- Writing technical papers or presenting papers or lectures at an organized event.

Pre-registration IPD is not subject to an annual points requirement. IPD involves learning activities that are initiated by the applicant as distinct from structured learning activities required by the employer.

### **9.3 How do I know when I am performing at the right level?**

A person typically demonstrates that he or she manages his or her own professional development by:

- Plans own practitioner development strategy;
- Selects appropriate practitioner development activities;
- Keeps record of professional development strategy and activities;
- Displays independent learning ability;
- Completes professional development activities.

## **10. Notes on Special Cases**

### **10.1 Applicants who are in Academic and Research Positions**

This guide is written for applicants who are training and working in the engineering academic and research industry. It is recognised that applicants for registration have in particular cases, worked in teaching and research positions during their development toward registration. While teaching and research do not conform to the normal industry employment situation, they do nevertheless offer opportunity to develop toward meeting the competency standards.

Applicants proceeding via this route are also likely to have completed higher education programmes beyond the HCert educational level required for registration as a Registered Specified Category Practitioner. The registration policy allows such applicants to offer appropriate aspects of the advanced programme as part of the evidence of competence against particular outcomes.

Applicants employed in teaching and research positions should be alert to opportunities in their work experience that demonstrate competence against the outcomes. For example, the planning, execution and commissioning of a new substantial laboratory may provide evidence against a number of outcomes. Applicants should seek opportunities to assist senior colleagues, who are themselves registered with ECSA, with consulting work. This engagement, while never full time, should be sustained over a long period. The senior colleague, who should fulfil a Mentorship role, should allow the applicant to take on increasing responsibility, moving up to level E on the responsibility scale.

It is likely that the time required for the lecturer or researcher to obtain the necessary experience at the required level may be longer than in a conventional industrial situation.

### **10.2 Applicants who have completed advanced qualifications**

Applicants who have completed higher education programmes beyond the HCert or equivalent educational level required for registration as a Registered Specified Category Practitioner should identify opportunities to present evidence at the required level against the outcomes defined in the competency standards. The registration policy allows such applicants to offer appropriate aspects of the advanced programme as part of the evidence of competence against particular outcomes.

## Appendix A: Examples of Legislation Applicable Generally to Engineering<sup>2</sup>

Legislation
Engineering Profession Act (Act No 46 of 2000)
Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No 85 of 1993) General Machinery Regulations
Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No 85 of 1993) Construction Regulations
Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No 85 of 1993) Driven Machinery Regulations
Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No 85 of 1993) Pressurised Equipment Regulations
Mine Health and Safety Act (act No 29 of 1996) Design of underground dam walls, plugs and barricades Regulations on use of water for mining
Environmental Conservation Act
National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977: Certify structural system of a building or home
National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977: Certification of fire protection system
National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977: Certification of artificial ventilation systems
National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977: Geotechnical site investigations, Stability of excavations, Geotechnical investigations on sites underlain by dolomites
National Water Act 36 of 1998: Various measures relating to pollution of a water resource; Waterworks process controller
Water Act 54 of 1956 Determination of persons permitted to design dams
Health Professions Act 56 of 1974 (Check?)
Municipal Management Act??

<sup>2</sup> This table is a selection that is to be developed further and amendments added.

## Revision History

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<hr/> <b>ECSA</b> <b>CONTROLLED COPY</b> <hr/>	<b>Executive: Policy Development and Standards Generation</b>	<hr/> John Cato <b>2016-08-26</b> <hr/> Date	