

# United States Engineering Council

Official Outline of the Aims, Field and Progress of the Joint Organization of  
American Civil, Mechanical, Mining and Electrical Engineering Societies

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**E**NGINEERING COUNCIL held its first meeting June 27th, 1917. In the months which have elapsed, useful services have been rendered to the government, to engineering societies and to individuals, and progress has been made in perfecting Council's organization. Offices have been secured in the Engineering Societies Building, New York City, the focus of engineering activities in America. A permanent secretary has been engaged and several important committees have been created.

Engineering Council is an organization of national technical societies of America created to provide for consideration of matters of common concern to engineers, as well as those of public welfare in which the profession is interested, in order that united action may be made possible. Engineering Council is now composed of the American Society of Civil Engineers, American Institute of Mining Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers and American Institute of Electrical Engineers, having a membership of 33,000 and known as the Founder Societies.

A patents committee, to investigate reforms in the United States patent system and in the use of experts in litigation wherein the validity of patents or other technical matters are involved, was also created. The committee was instructed to co-operate with any committee of the National Research Council, and with committees of other technical societies organized for a kindred purpose.

Limitation of financial resources has been and still is one of the greatest handicaps. At the beginning of this year, an appropriation of \$16,000 by United Engineering Society, contributed equally by the four Founder Societies, became available for the period ending October 31st, 1918. Although this sum provides for the usual expenses of the secretary's office, for inaugurating several permanent lines of service and for a few special items in connection with the war, it is far from adequate.

Engineering Council is still forced to go slowly on work already undertaken and to decline or defer other meritorious projects. That Engineering Council has accomplished as much as it has is due chiefly to the fact that individuals, societies and government bureaus have informally contributed services and means. Additional income must be had if Engineering Council is to bring to pass within a reasonable time many of the things rightfully expected of it for the benefit of professional engineers, the country, the government and the public.

Restriction of membership in Engineering Council to the four societies just mentioned is not intended. Quite to the contrary, it is planned and earnestly desired that other national engineering and national technical societies shall become affiliated, thus making Engineering Council truly representative of the hundred thousand engineers in all branches of the profession throughout the United States. Conditions and methods for the admission of additional societies have been developed. Henceforth, a chief aim of Engineering Council will be to increase the number of member societies and thus gain not only an en-

largement of its capacity for usefulness along its chosen lines, but also greater technical and financial support.

So extensive is the field of possible activity for Engineering Council that even yet it is unwise to set its bounds. Nevertheless, some of the proposed activities may now be outlined. Foremost among these is the fostering of a sense of solidarity throughout all divisions of the profession in all parts of the country—the increasing of a sense of common interest and of the strength that results from unification. To this end, subordination to the general welfare of the preferences and pride of organizations and of persons may be necessary; but it is confidently expected that even through difficult places the right paths will be found. Patience and good sense will win full and effective co-operation.

Publicity of a high order, but of a practical sort, must be devised that both engineers and the public may be informed not only of engineering achievements in physical work, but also of the services which peculiarly pertain to engineers, in mental realms, those which they are performing and those which they should perform. Engineers and engineering must be made more comprehensible to the people up and down the land, and kept instructively and interestingly in the public prints. A most important service is the standardization of definitions, methods, requirements and tests for all varieties of engineering materials and work. Others are the improvement of the methods and requirements of engineering colleges, the standardizing of the meanings and values of the degrees given to graduates, and the broadening of the engineer through knowledge of humanitarian subjects, in which other professional men take interest.

Mutual helpfulness in getting the right engineer for the empty niche of usefulness and in finding an empty niche for the unemployed engineer, or for the one seeking advancement has for years been a need of engineering societies, widely voiced, especially by the younger men. Many endeavors have been and are being made to meet this need, with more or less success; but most of them have been limited. Engineering Council has already given this matter much thought and has put it in the hands of the American Engineering Service, one of its committees. To meet these demands, this committee has been assembling in its offices in the Engineering Societies Building, New York, comprehensive lists and much detailed information concerning engineers in all branches of the profession.

During the past few months, there have been supplied to government departments and bureaus several thousand names of engineers, from which men were selected to fill a great variety of positions in uniformed and civilian service for the army, the navy and other branches of the government's activities in connection with the war, as well as for manufacturers and contractors engaged upon government war work. Hitherto, these war demands have absorbed most of the energies of this committee and its staff, but incidentally there have been accumulated great masses of live material which can in the near future be