

Board of Engineering Excellence

Annual Report

2025–26



Acknowledgement of Country

The Board of Engineering Excellence acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and their continuing culture and contribution they make to the Canberra region and the life of our city.

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A message from the Chief Engineer

The continued growth and transformation across the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) reinforces the vital role of engineering in delivering safe, sustainable and resilient outcomes for our community.

Over the past year, the ACT Board of Engineering Excellence (the Board) has provided valuable independent advice, supporting the maturation of the Professional Engineers Registration Scheme and contributing to improvements in infrastructure governance, standards and project delivery.

I thank the Board members for their expertise and commitment. Their collaboration has strengthened connections between government and industry, helping to advance a capable, accountable and forward-looking engineering profession across the Territory.

Gillian Geraghty



A message from the Chair

The ACT Board of Engineering Excellence was established to provide independent expertise and trusted advice to the ACT Chief Engineer, creating a strong connection between government, industry and the engineering profession.

Over the past year, the Board has continued to mature in this role, drawing on the diverse experience of its members to provide practical guidance on issues affecting the engineering sector and the delivery of infrastructure across the Territory.

Throughout the year, the Board has supported the implementation of the Professional Engineers Registration Scheme, contributed to improvements in engineering standards and governance, and provided a forum for informed discussion on specific infrastructure projects as well as broader Directorate level policies.

Looking forward, the Board will remain available to government and industry as a vehicle for advising on emerging challenges and opportunities as well as strengthening the ACT's engineering workforce through a renewed Engineering Workforce Plan. I thank my fellow Board members for their ongoing commitment and contribution, which continues to strengthen the Board's role in advancing engineering excellence in the ACT.

Dr Therese Flapper



Introduction

In 2024, the Board was established as a body of expert representatives who guide, support and collaborate with the ACT Chief Engineer on engineering activities in the ACT. The Board connects the ACT Government and industry, particularly in relation to the following activities:

- advocacy for the engineering sector
- strategic advice to government on emerging engineering issues
- promoting innovation and current industry trends in the engineering profession
- providing strategic advice on engineer workforce planning for the ACT Government and industry, and
- supporting the implementation of the ACT's Professional Engineers Registration Scheme, as required by the Professional Engineers Registrar.

This report highlights the most notable outcomes from the Board for 2025-26.

Membership

The Board comprises seven members, reflecting a broad spectrum of expertise and representation across the engineering sector. The Board includes:

- Four independent members appointed for their professional experience and leadership
- The ACT Chief Engineer, who provides strategic direction and oversight, and
- Invitee representatives from Engineers Australia and the Civil Contractors Federation ACT, ensuring strong industry and professional engagement.

This diverse composition enables the Board to provide informed, balanced guidance, advice and support to the ACT Chief Engineer in advancing engineering excellence across the Territory.



Figure 1: The Board of Engineering Excellence. From left to right: Professor Patrick Heffernan, Jacqueline Wei, Professor Robert Care AM, Gillian Geraghty, Dr Therese Flapper, Stuart Ritchie, and Angela Harrison.

Table 1: Board member positions

Board position	Individual	
Independent Chair	Adrian Piani (JULY-NOV 2025)	Dr Therese Flapper (JAN-JUNE 2026)
Independent Deputy Chair	Professor Robert Care AM	
Independent Member	Professor Patrick Heffernan	
Independent Member	Dr Therese Flapper (JULY-DEC 2025)	Jacqueline Wei (APR-JUNE 2026)
Engineering Australia Invitee	Angela Harrison	
Civil Contractors Federation ACT Invitee	Stuart Ritchie	
ACT Chief Engineer	Gillian Geraghty	

Administration

Remuneration

The ACT Remuneration Tribunal reviews remuneration levels for part-time public office holders, including members of the Board, on an annual basis. Each year, the Tribunal issues updated determinations that outline per diem rates and other entitlements for these roles.

In Determination 13 of 2025 Part-time Statutory Office Holders, the Tribunal set the following rates for the Board:

- Chair: \$650 per diem
- Deputy Chair: \$605 per diem
- Members: \$560 per diem

Meeting attendance

The Board held six formal meetings between July 2025 and June 2026. This was complemented with out of session meetings on project specific topics and site visits.

Formal meetings:

- 21 August 2025
- 21 October 2025
- 16 December 2025
- 19 February 2026
- 16 April 2026
- 18 June 2026

Site visits:

- 25 July 2025 - Molonglo River Bridge project
- 12 June 2026 - Canberra's Main Outfall Sewers

Table 2: Board member meeting attendance and appointments.

Name of Member	Formal meetings attended	Appointment expiry
Adrian Piani	2	30 November 2025
Dr Therese Flapper	6	30 June 2028
Professor Robert Care AM	6	30 June 2027
Professor Patrick Heffernan	4	30 June 2028
Jacqueline Wei	2	30 June 2028
Angela Harrison	6	N/A
Stuart Ritchie	5	N/A
Gillian Geraghty	6	N/A



Figure 2: The Board of Engineering Excellence at an industry engagement roundtable. From left to right: Paul Sutton (secretariat), Stuart Ritchie, Professor Patrick Heffernan, Angela Harrison, Dr Therese Flapper, Adrian Piani, Gillian Geraghty, and Professor Robert Care AM.

Appointments

The independent members of the Board were appointed on 1 July 2024 for an initial two-year term. During the reporting period, the appointments of Professor Robert Care AM, Dr Therese Flapper and Professor Patrick Heffernan were extended. Professor Care's appointment has been extended until 30 June 2027, while Dr Flapper's and Professor Heffernan's appointments have been extended until 30 June 2028.

Adrian Piani, the inaugural independent Chair of the Board, resigned in November 2025. In February 2026, the Board elected Dr Flapper as Chair. Professor Care continued in the role of Deputy Chair. The Board acknowledges and thanks Mr Piani for his leadership, expertise and significant contribution in establishing and guiding the Board during its formative years.

Jacqueline Wei was appointed as an independent member in March 2026 for a two-year term.

Industry representatives are invited to participate in Board meetings at the discretion of the Board, enabling ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and ensuring the Board remains informed by contemporary industry perspectives. Current invitee representatives include Engineers Australia and the Civil Contractors Federation ACT. These invitee positions are not subject to fixed terms.



Figure 2: Members of the Board of Engineering Excellence attended a site visit to Canberra's foundational utility services, exploring the engineering infrastructure that enabled development of the ACT and continues to represent an important part of the city's engineering heritage.

Board activities

With the guidance of the Board, the Professional Engineers Registration Scheme continued to mature over the past year, consolidating its role as a cornerstone of professional accountability and public confidence in engineering services in the ACT. Building on its successful establishment, the Board provided sustained expert advice on the Scheme's operation, reviewed emerging implementation issues, and supported ongoing engagement between the Registrar, Infrastructure Canberra and industry stakeholders.

The Board contributed to strengthening the practical application of the Scheme, including consideration of discipline coverage, mutual recognition arrangements and the ongoing evolution of registration requirements. The Board also provided advice on complex regulatory matters, including Commonwealth application and cross-jurisdictional alignment. Through this work, the Board reinforced the Scheme's overarching objective to ensure that professional engineering services in the ACT are delivered by appropriately qualified, competent and accountable practitioners.

The Board also played a key role in the development of the next ACT Engineering Workforce Plan. Drawing on lessons learned from the first Plan, the Board reviewed its outcomes, achievements and areas requiring further attention, and provided strategic advice to inform the development of the second Plan. This included guidance on future priorities, workforce capability needs, education and skills pathways, emerging engineering disciplines, and the broader risks and challenges facing the profession. The Board's advice helped shape a forward-looking approach to building engineering capability and capacity to support the ACT's long-term infrastructure pipeline and economic development objectives. The new ACT Engineering Workforce Plan is expected to be released in the 2026–27 financial year and will provide a renewed framework for addressing current and future engineering workforce opportunities and challenges across the Territory.

The Board also continued to provide technical and strategic advice across the ACT Government's infrastructure program. The Board completed governance and technical reviews of projects, contributed to infrastructure prioritisation reforms, supported workforce and education initiatives, and acted as a trusted advisory body on engineering standards and design quality. During the year, Infrastructure Canberra project teams presented project updates to the Board, providing opportunities for independent technical review and advice at critical stages of project development and delivery. This engagement strengthened project governance, supported informed decision-making and promoted engineering excellence across the Territory's infrastructure program.

The Board also provided advice on a range of engineering practices and assurance initiatives, including updates to engineering certificate templates associated with design review and asset acceptance reforms, and the ongoing implementation and review of the Infrastructure Design Requirements. Through this work, the Board helped strengthen professional accountability, support consistent engineering standards and contribute to continuous improvement across the ACT infrastructure sector.

Together, these activities demonstrate the Board's commitment to fostering a capable, ethical and future-focused engineering profession. They also reflect the Board's increasingly established role within Infrastructure Canberra's governance framework, providing independent expertise, supporting the successful delivery of infrastructure projects, and enabling early and meaningful engagement on matters critical to the Territory's infrastructure program, workforce capability and long-term prosperity.



BOARD ACTIVITIES

Key projects and policies reviewed to support quality and sustainability across the built environment.

PROJECTS REVIEWED



Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector

Progressing a vital transport connection to support Canberra's growth.



Canberra Aquatic Centre

Delivering a world-class facility for sport, recreation and community.



Northside Hospital Project

Supporting the delivery of a new hospital to meet the community's healthcare needs.



Canberra Theatre Redevelopment

Enhancing a cultural landmark for the future.



Public Housing Program

Advancing quality, sustainable homes and vibrant communities.

POLICIES REVIEWED



Professional Engineers Registration Scheme

Reviewed to strengthen competency, integrity and public confidence.



Prequalification requirements for professional engineers

Reviewed to ensure capability, value for money and effective risk management.



Infrastructure Design Requirements

Reviewed to promote consistent, safe, sustainable and future-ready infrastructure.



Asset acceptance

Reviewed to ensure assets are fit for purpose, meet required standards and deliver long-term value for the community.



Through rigorous review, independent advice and strategic guidance, the Board contributes to stronger infrastructure projects, improved engineering policy and better outcomes for the ACT community.



Contact the Board

The Board invites industry leaders, innovators, and stakeholders to join us in shaping the future of engineering in Canberra. Your insights, collaboration and commitment are vital to driving excellence, fostering innovation, and ensuring our engineering standards remain world-class.

Whether you're seeking guidance, proposing partnerships, or contributing to policy development, we welcome your voice. Together, we can build resilient infrastructure, advance sustainable technologies, and empower the next generation of engineers.

Let's connect, collaborate, and create impact.

Email: ChiefEngineer@act.gov.au

