

Government and IPENZ work to improve regulations governing engineers

28th March 2013

Moves to strengthen powers regulating engineers are underway following a meeting between government and the Institution of Professional Engineers last night (Wednesday 27th March).

After last night's meeting with Housing and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson, IPENZ chief executive Andrew Cleland said he understood changes by Government will be underway soon to offer greater public accountability to the public for engineers' work.

"We support this move by the Minister, but in the meantime, IPENZ will continue using the powers it has to conduct internal investigations into engineers involved with the CTV building which collapsed killing 115 people. If there has been a breach of the IPENZ code of ethics then disciplinary action may be taken including fines and costs, expulsion of membership and publicly naming the engineer and their failings.

"However, the primary issue is that the regulatory regime is too weak," Dr Cleland said.

Under the current system, there is no legislative requirement for practicing engineers to be chartered or IPENZ members, requiring them to follow the code of ethics and meet competence standards, Dr Cleland said.

Mr Williamson told IPENZ last night that he will recommend the changes to Government, providing greater accountability to the public, Dr Cleland said.

Details of the proposed model were still to be finalised.

"Until any change occurs, IPENZ will continue using the powers it has, albeit limited. We are already doing this with the improvements we can within the current legislative environment e.g. the code of ethics review which started this month, looking at the extent to which IPENZ members are obliged to report any substandard work they observe," Dr Cleland said.

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