

**ECOSA**

ENGINEERING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL  
**RELATIONS**  
**HANDBOOK.**



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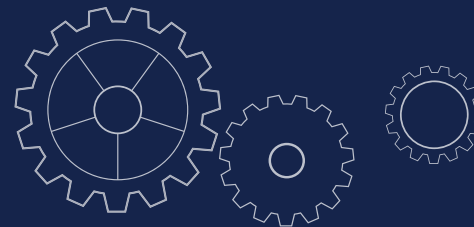
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## INTRODUCTION

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) is a statutory body established in terms of the Engineering Profession Act (hereinafter the EPA), 46 of 2000. The Act mandates ECSA to perform a multiplicity of functions among others, accreditation of engineering programmes, registration of engineering practitioners which includes professional engineers, technologists, technicians, certificated engineers, practitioners under specified categories and candidates for all the above categories of registration, and regulation of the practice of Registered Persons.

## LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Engineering Profession Act enjoins ECSA to execute several functions and to perform numerous duties which among others include the following:

- + Establish mechanisms Registered Persons to gain recognition of their qualifications and professional status in other countries. Section 13 (e).
- + To Enter into an agreement with any person or body of persons, within or outside the Republic, with regard to the recognition of any examination or qualification for the purposes of this Act. Section 13 (h).
- + Take any steps it considers necessary for the protection of the public in their dealings with registered persons for the maintenance of the integrity, and the enhancement of the status of the engineering profession. Section 14 (g).
- + Take any steps it considers necessary for the improvement of the standards of services rendered by Registered Persons. Section 14 (h).
- + Take any measures it considers necessary for the proper performance and exercise of its functions, duties or powers or to achieve the objectives of this Act. Section 14 (k).

The above is the genesis of ECSA's mandate in international relations. In a quest of fulfilling this mandate and to be globally competitive, ECSA is engaged in several international bilateral and multilateral relations. These are international relations and partnerships with like-minded international counterparts, bodies and regulators for the promotion of global professional mobility of engineering practitioners and the acceptance of their engineering educational qualifications and professional competence by other countries.

Section 13 and 14 of the Engineering Profession Act 46 of 2000 assist ECSA to develop and maintain authoritative, independent international standards for engineering education and competence and promote wider recognition of ECSA registered persons. ECSA's membership to different international organisations translates to ECSA's accredited qualifications being recognised globally. Which result in ECSA's accredited engineering qualification to be globally competitive.

Furthermore, ECSA's participation is also informed by its long-standing commitment to equip its Southern African Development Communities (SADC) counterparts and capacitate them to meet the international standards pertaining to education, registration Continuing Professional Development and competencies to allow for international mobility of their engineering professionals and their consequential acceptance by the global community of nations.

These participations are informed by South Africa's foreign policy and the country's domestic imperatives as captured and amplified in various government policy documents, legislatures and Acts such as the White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy, National Development Plan, Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure's (DPWI) International Relation Strategy to mention few. This is done closely working with the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) as the custodian of and principal advisor on South Africa's foreign policy matters.



## PURPOSE

This handbook serves to provide a clear understanding of ECSA's international relations policies and provides guidance to stakeholders on some of the initiatives undertaken by the ECSA International Relations Business Unit. The handbook depicts the importance of ECSA's participation on global forums that ensure that it is on par with its international peers and regulators concerning engineering education, competencies and practice.

### Strategic guidance on international affairs:

As alluded in the introduction, ECSA takes guidance from DIRCO as the custodian of and principal advisor on South Africa's foreign policy matters in accordance with the **Vienna Convention on the Law Treaties and the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Immunities**. The Engineering Councils strategic participation in the international relations sphere is to fulfil the following strategic priorities which are also informed by South Africa's foreign policy priorities. It does so through/by:

-  Fostering and multilateral interactions, protect and promote South African national interests and values.
-  Conducting and coordinating South Africa's international relations and promote its foreign policy objectives.
-  Protecting South Africa's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
-  Contributing to the formulation of international law and enhance respect for the provisions thereof.
-  Promoting multilateralism to secure rules based international system.

ECSA's meaningful contribution in the international arena is to take advantage of the available engineering opportunities internationally. It is therefore essential for ECSA to align with the above key priorities of government of consolidating Africa's Agenda, deepening South-South cooperation and the enhanced North-South relations.



## ECSA's INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STRUCTURE

The Engineering Councils International Relations function is located under the Regulatory Services and International Relations Division (RSIR). This Division is charged with the management, administration and day-to-day operations of all the international relations related activities and engagements on behalf of ECSA. RSIR is expected to provide briefings as well as advice on ECSA's international engagements including protocol matters to ECSA in respect of international engagements. The RSIR Division works closely with relevant ECSA divisions on all international matters that require contribution and inputs from all other relevant ECSA functional divisions.

In addition, RSIR is responsible for managing and systematically coordinating all ECSA's international engagements and activities to deliver to its full potential and to ensure consistent and orderly engagement with international stakeholders.

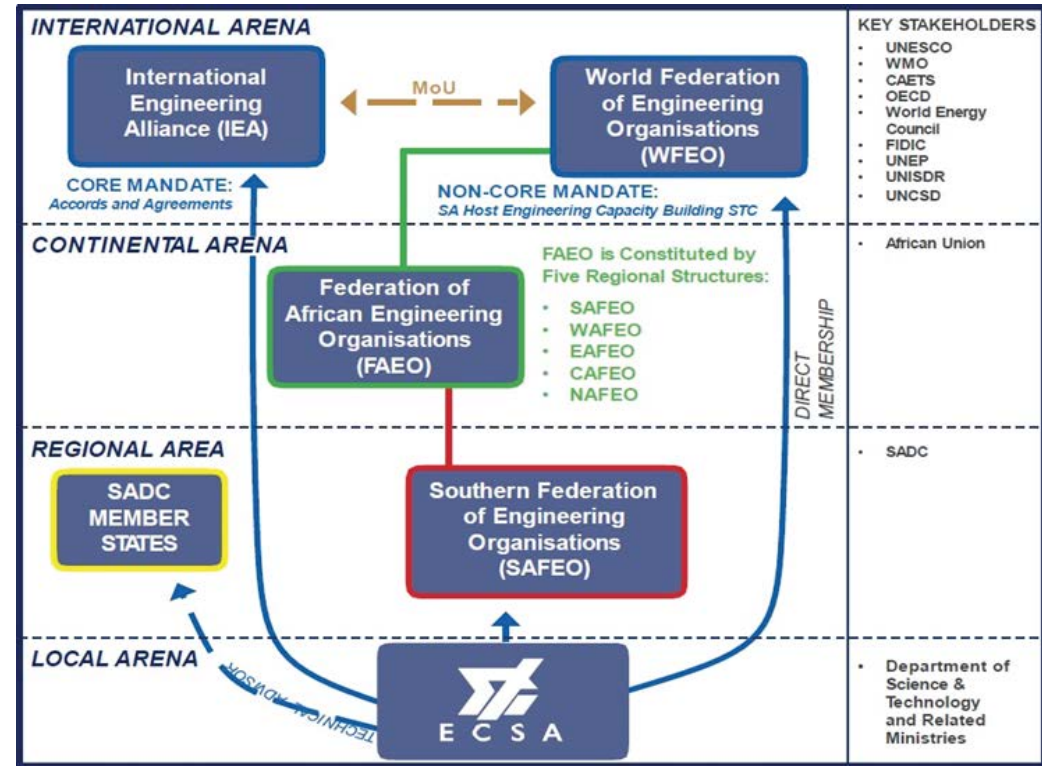
The Governing Council assumes overall executive authority of ECSA as the governing body. The President is the leader of Council and together with the Vice-President, they provide strategic guidance to the ECSA's Administration headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and supported by executive management that forms the Executive Management Committee (EMCO).

The Council is responsible for setting strategic and policy direction of ECSA's international engagements, while the CEO advises Council on all international relations related activities of the organisation.

## ECSA's INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

ECSA is a member of engineering bilateral and multilateral bodies in a jurisdictional representative capacity representing South Africa. The figure below is a synopsis of the multilateral organisations with which ECSA is affiliated.

**Figure 1: Multilateral organisations with which ECSA is affiliated**



The above international organizations that ECSA is affiliated to differs by their responsibilities within the engineering framework.

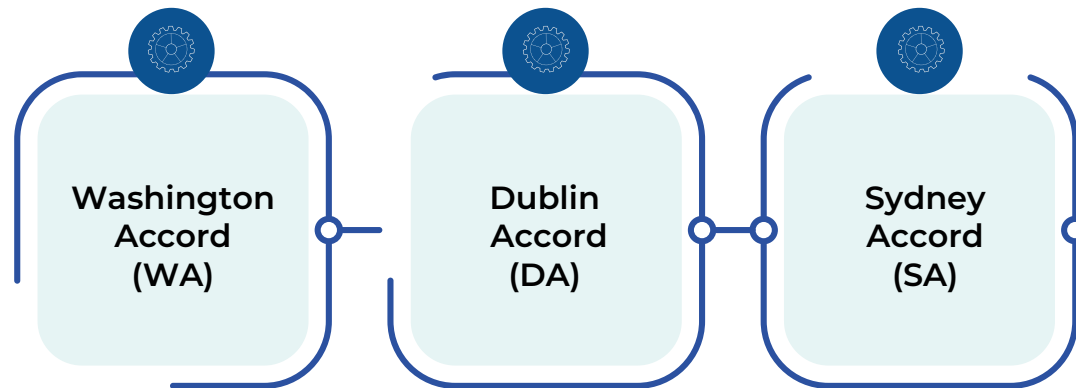
## INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING ALLIANCE (IEA)

The IEA is a global association of like-minded engineering regulatory bodies from 41 jurisdictions within 29 countries, across seven international agreements. It promotes global professional mobility in engineering educational qualifications and professional competence. ECSA is one of the first countries to have become signatory to the IEA Educational Accords and Competency Agreements.

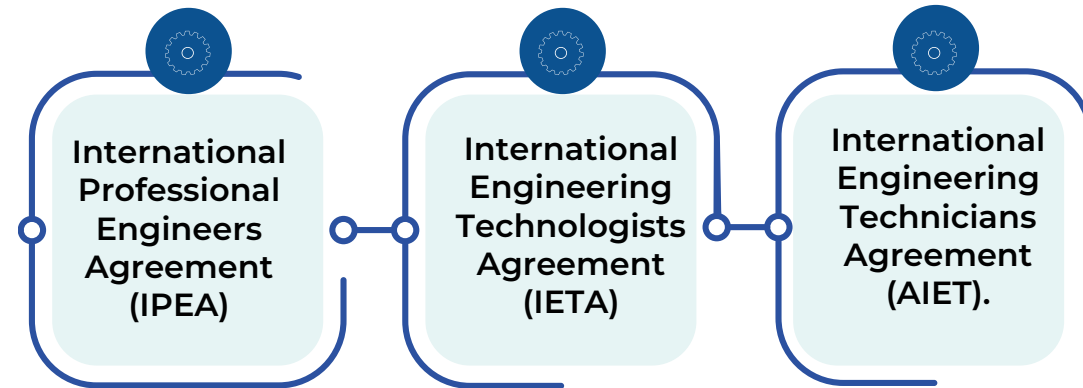
These international agreements govern the recognition of engineering educational qualifications and professional competence. Through the educational accords and competence agreements, members of the IEA establish and enforce internationally benchmarked standards for engineering education and expected competence for engineering practice. To date, the IEA has seven international constituent agreements that govern mutual recognition of tertiary qualifications in engineering and professional competence. Three agreements cover mutual recognition of tertiary qualifications in engineering referred to as the Accords and the other Four Competency agreements where in registrants from member countries receives credit when seeking registration or licensure in the jurisdiction of another member or signatory.

Ever since and to-date, ECSA is the only African engineering body that is a full member and signatory of the three IEA Educational Accords and three Competency Agreements. These are listed below:

### Educational Accords



### Competency Agreements



**Figure 2: Locating the IEA Agreement by Engineering Occupation and Level**

Professional Engineer		Engineering Technologist	Engineering Technician	
Washington Accord		Sydney Accord	Dublin Accord	Graduate Level Education Foundation
International Professional Engineer Agreement	APEC Engineer Agreement	International Engineering Technologist Agreement	Agreement International Engineering Technicians	Independent Practice Competence

Signatories to the above IEA agreements assist ECSA to develop and maintain authoritative, independent international standards for engineering education and competence and promote wider recognition of ECSA registered persons. ECSA's membership to the IEA translate to ECSA's accredited qualifications that are recognized under the IEA Accords to be globally recognized.

## WORLD FEDERATION OF ENGINEERING ORGANISATIONS

WFEO is an international organisation for the engineering profession. Founded in 1968, under the auspices of UNESCO, WFEO brings together national engineering institutions from some 100 nations and represents more than 30 million engineers. ECSA has been a member of WFEO since 2007 and is represented by the President of Council as well as the CEO or any nominated Official. ECSA has played a meaningful role at WFEO in the past, including chairing the Committee on Engineering Capacity Building (CECB) which is responsible to identify needs for capacity building within the engineering professions and for areas associated with engineering as well as to provide guidelines and ideas for capacity building activities, events, projects and programmes.



## FEDERATION OF AFRICAN ENGINEERING ORGANIZATIONS (FAEO)

FAEO is the only continental, central united home for African engineering organisations managed by all the member states through various leadership structures. It represents the African Engineering Agenda at WFEO, the African Union and any other international organisations.

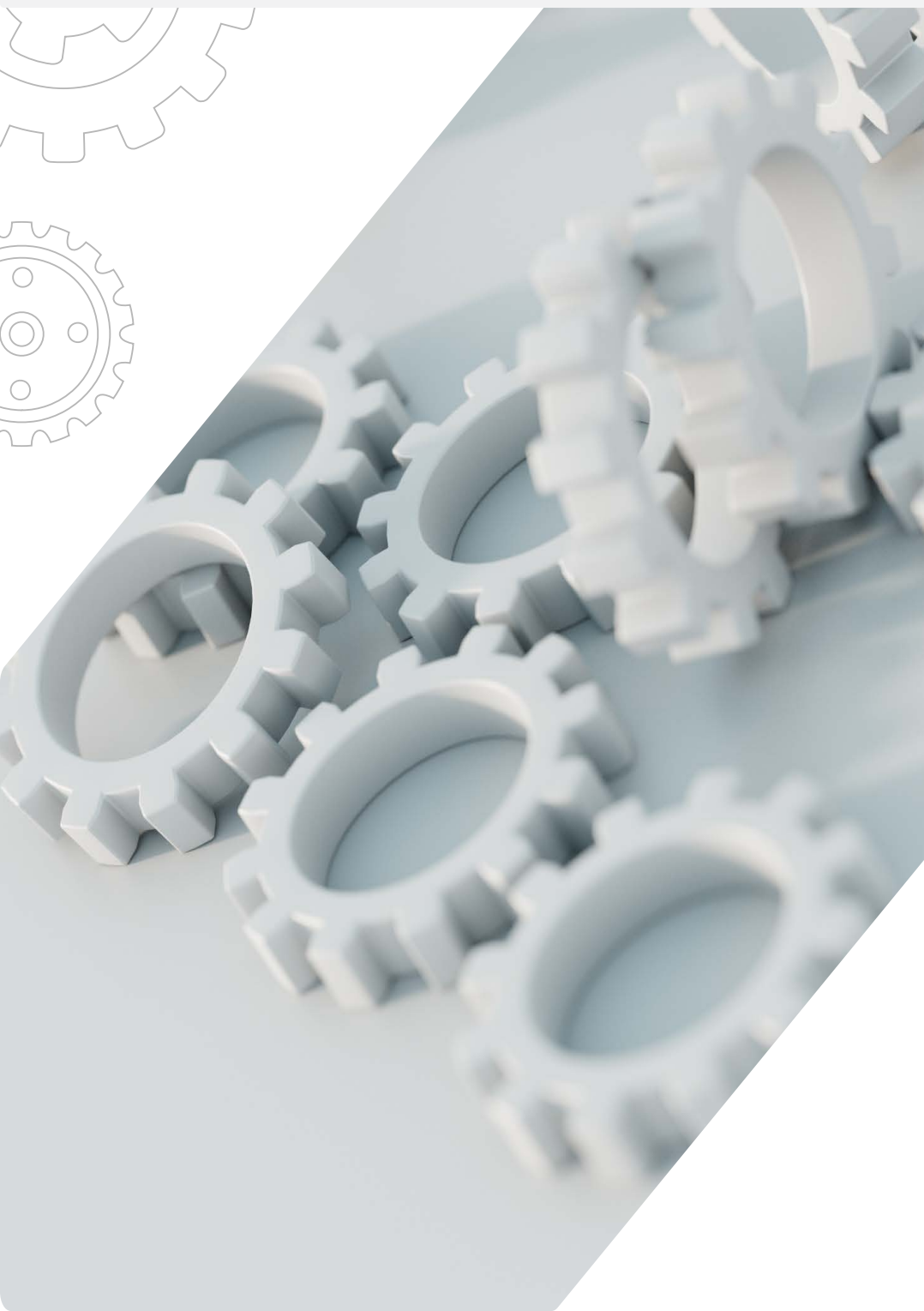
FAEO recognises five regional groups to work under FAEO:



FAEO's highest decision-making structure is the General Assembly, which is made up by the member countries' leaders. The ordinary business of the organisation is conducted by the Executive Director, under the responsibility of the President, in accordance with the directions of the General Assembly and the Executive Council. While decision-making is by consensus, member countries are entrusted with the leadership of the organisation through the chairing of all its structures for a period of 2 years. ECSA is set to take over FAEO's Presidency from January 2025 to December 2027.

## SOUTHERN AFRICAN FEDERATION OF ENGINEERING ORGANISATIONS (SAFEO)

SAFEO is a body of engineering regulators from different countries within the Southern African Development Communities. The organisation comprises legislatively mandated organisations to serve the wider interests of the African community as they continually contribute their expertise, resources and guidance towards the development of the region. SAFEO membership currently consists of six member countries from 16 SADC countries that namely, **Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mauritius** and **Malawi**. ECSA has a strategic roadmap in place aimed at mobilising the member countries who are not yet within the formal structures of SAFEO.



## SAFEQ's ROLE IN THE ENGINEERING FRATERNITY

### SAFEQ aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- + Excellence in engineering technology in Africa.
- + Informed and intelligent decision-making about built environment infrastructure by all.
- + Government structures and private sector entities by utilising human capacity-building orientation programmes and projects.
- + Promotion of interest in mathematics and science at higher grades in primary and secondary schools.
- + Offering career guidance programmes and activities.
- + Promoting consistent investment mechanisms for infrastructure and promoting fair and reasonable remuneration for all engineering practitioners.
- + Facilitating mentorship.

### ECQA's participation in SAFEQ's structures:

ECQA has over the years entrusted with leadership role in SAFEQ with the latest appointment being that of Secretariat between 2019 and 2022, where we had responsibility to facilitate operations for the organisation. We continue to participate and support the work of SAFEQ in both leadership and non-leadership positions.

## CONCLUSION

ECQA's participation in international relations is a legislative requirement in terms of both section 13 and 14 of the Engineering Professions Act 46 of 2000. ECQA is the only regulator of the engineering profession in South Africa and at the same time is the only full member, from the continent of Africa, in the International Engineering Alliance (IEA).



## Contact Us

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### Address:

**Engineering Council of South Africa (ECOSA)**  
Waterview Corner Building, 2 Ernest Oppenheimer Avenue,  
Bruma Lake Office Park, Bruma, 2198 Johannesburg.

**Tel:** 0861 225 555

**Email:** [engineer@ecsa.co.za](mailto:engineer@ecsa.co.za)

     **Engineering Council Of South Africa – ECOSA**

Please follow the engineering discourse and become a role player.

Please contact us with feedback on improving our communication. Feedback and comments may be emailed to [ecsa-comms@ecsa.co.za](mailto:ecsa-comms@ecsa.co.za)