

Journey of an Engineer of Record - What the last 10 years has taught us

The Engineer of Record (EoR) concept was not well defined nor consistently or effectively applied before the 2014 Mount Polley Tailings Dam failure. An EoR framework was under development in North America when the dam failed. However, the failure of the Mount Polly Tailings Dam forever changed how we view the EoR role. The subsequent fallout generated a wide range of responses, from dramatic local regulatory acrimony to a careful deep and introspective step change initiated by owners and consultants. Owner-initiated programs were accelerated, culminating in new governance frameworks developed by various owners and establishing robust guidance for the EoR by industry associations.

The mining industry now recognizes the importance of the EoR role and the considerable beneficial contributions that this position provides during the design, operation, and closure of tailing storage facilities. The Global Industry Standard on Tailing Management (GISTM) placed the EoR the essential centerpiece of its guidance, and thereby, assuring the EoR will remain a vital piece of the governance team critical for the safe operation of the tailing storage facility for the foreseeable future.

This keynote lecture reviews the history of the EoR and its development in the last ten years. The interaction of the EoR with critical stakeholders is discussed, and the essential elements and requirements for being a successful EoR are presented. Among its many accomplishments, the USSD/CDA EoR working group has established a draft term of reference (ToR) for engaging the EoR. The ToR will be discussed, and a draft copy will be provided. The future challenges facing the EoR will also be reviewed and discussed.