NSPE Releases Autonomous Vehicles: A Public Regulatory Policy Guide

To promote public safety for all who interact with autonomous vehicles, NSPE has adopted a policy guide providing public policy decision-makers, regulators, manufacturers, and others with outcome-based standards to measure the safety readiness of autonomous vehicles under consideration for deployment. NSPE has submitted the policy guide to the Department of Transportation to consider for incorporation into its anticipated next version of federal guidelines for autonomous vehicles. NSPE urges DOT to incorporate these outcome-based standards as a starting point for adopting requirements that protect public safety.

NSPE Successfully Champions Federal Legislation to Strengthen QBS Requirements

NSPE successfully advocated for the inclusion of an important provision in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 4) to strengthen QBS requirements for airports. NSPE and other associations sent a letter to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) urging that the bipartisan amendment offered by Rep. Bruce Westerman, P.E. (R-AR) and Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL) be incorporated into the legislation. The Westerman-Lipinski amendment clarifies existing rules to ensure that airports follow a uniform QBS process for airport projects that utilize Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds. The amendment would expand existing requirements to cover any airport project that uses federal AIP program funds at any stage. As a result of this initiative, the amendment was incorporated into the legislation. The House of Representatives approved the FAA reauthorization on April 27 by a vote of 393 to 13.

NSPE Urges Nuclear Regulatory Commission to Ensure Professional Engineers Approve Design Reports

In October 2017, NSPE urged the NRC to launch a thorough and complete investigation into events leading to the shutdown of construction of two nuclear reactors in South Carolina. In its investigation, the NRC evaluated concerns that unqualified and unlicensed individuals were involved in the design aspects of two nuclear reactors at the V.C. Summer site, placing the public’s health and safety at risk. The NRC conducted the investigation and did not identify any violations of the commission’s requirements. However, according to the NRC’s response, the commission’s staff is considering adding a specific step to its inspection procedures that requires inspectors who are reviewing design reports and design specification documents to ensure the documents have been approved by a professional engineer when required by the applicable ASME code. NSPE is urging the NRC to approve this specific step as soon as is expedient.