COPE Recommendations related to the
Software Engineering Code of Ethics and Professional Practice.

A.   COPE has reviewed the Software Engineering Code of Ethics and Professional Practice (version 5.1) and its development and review process. COPE supports the recommendation by the Joint Task for the Professionalization of Software Engineering for the adoption of the Software Engineering Code by the ACM as their approved Code for the practice and teaching of Software Engineering.

The Code represents an international effort by representatives from multiple domains -- academe, governments, military, profit and non-profit organizations, private consultants and researchers. The Code reflects the international flavor of the ACM and of the heterogeneous nature of software engineering. Because of the involvement of multiple societies, the Software Engineering Code has benefited from a review process which was more extensive than the review process for the current ACM Code. The adoption of this Code would be a positive step for the ACM and software engineering.

B.   Both the ACM and the Computer Society have recognized that codes of ethics are only effective if they are known about by the memberships. To meet this and other needs the ACM established COPE. The Computer Society has a similar support and education organization.   Software Engineering is an emerging profession and as an emerging profession there is an even greater need to educate aspiring and practicing software engineers about their obligations. Given software engineering's emergent character, there is also a need to educate those effected by the products of software engineering about their rights.

> "The Code is not simply for adjudicating the nature of questionable acts; it also has an important educational function. As this Code expresses the consensus of the profession on ethical issues, it is a means to educate both the public and aspiring professionals about the ethical obligations of all software engineers." (Preamble to SECEPP)

To meet this need, COPE recommends the establishment of a standing committee reporting to the proposed SWECC in Dennis Frailey's proposal. This recommendation will be presented to the SWECC at their first meeting in January.