

Productivity Commission
23 June 2000

Dear Professor Sloan and Dr Byron

Draft Report on Legislation Regulating the Architectural Profession

Thank you for giving me the time to make my comments yesterday. I will commit them to paper and give more thought to the matter over the next few days. It would assist me to have a copy of the Draft Report. Could a copy be sent to me at PO Box 1313 Carlton 3053?

Overnight I gave more consideration to my main concern - "AACA Pty Ltd" and the potential for several versions of this entity to emerge - thus fragmenting the level of training implicit in the public's perception of the skills of qualified architects.

One way of overcoming his problem would be to use enabling legislation to constitute an 'Architects Education and Accreditation Bureau' with the duty of offering accreditation to Schools of Architecture, of keeping registers of qualified architects, of licensing individuals and entities to practice architecture (ie those with the professional practice skills to do so), of mandating continuing education programmes for architects, and of conducting disciplinary proceedings in relation to the registers (with the power to award damages).

This 'AEAB' would be governed by a Board, initially specified by the legislation but, after an initial period, elected in appropriate ways. Various constituents such as architects, the public, allied professionals, health and safety organisations etc should be represented on the Board.

It would be funded by levies on the members of the registers at the level necessary to effectively discharge its functions, either directly, or by delegation to appropriate institutions. For example, continuing education programmes could be delegated to the RAIA and/or tertiary institutions and disciplinary proceedings referred to existing legal tribunals.

By going down this path it would be possible to create an entity with sufficient market power for an effective monopoly on the key task of accreditation. It would thus fulfil a similar role to the Institution of Engineers.

The RAIA does not represent all architects and, more importantly, does not have a constitution or philosophy which would enable it to take on the role of the 'AEB'. I also believe it would benefit architects if a new entity was established rather than trying to transform the conservative and rather club like existing AACA.

I hope this idea is of some interest to you and I would be happy to develop and/or refine it if that was of interest to you.

Sincerely

Andrew Begg