

Productivity Commission Draft Report  
REVIEW OF LEGISLATION REGULATING THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

MY COMMENT IN DEFENCE

The work of building design and very many aspects of settlement and environmental design today more than ever is very serious work which must be carried out to the highest pragmatic standards and where possible to the highest value of cultural impact.

Society currently acknowledges that people who so wish can do their own work in this field provided it meets certain base standards. This naturally leaves scope for the development of various degrees of competence in the carrying out of this work. Commercial enterprise produces a variety of instinct and experience based operations to undertake various aspects of this work. These enterprises are sometimes refined by self-education and genius and so the standard of work increases. The standard of work possible is proportional to the client's ecological and cultural bents against the 'designer's skill and salesmanship. (Society itself is a problem here.)

The standard of work logically is improved by substantial disciplined education and institutional fellowship or an equivalent. This in association with commercial experience confirmed by appropriate assessment is guaranteed to produce an optimum expertise.

If the product of this 'education/traineeship' is judged, by an appropriately skilled process/body, to bear no benefit from the education/traineeship then there is something wrong with the judgment or the education/traineeship or both.

The goal though for to fulfill the urgencies of settlement development, in the face of ecological and aesthetical concerns, must remain to foster maximum expertise. And as we say the "education/traineeship' system is the only way to do this.

The concern of the Productivity Commission must be to improve productivity. This must include protection of the province of peak expertise. Some means of social identification of the peak is required.

The fact that education/traineeship requirements and the means of social judgment of these may need to face review is incidental to the logic that both are mandatory for best product; and that the possessor of resultant credential must be identifiable as such in the market place, public service, charity and by responsible bodies requiring benchmark performance.

It may be that today we need to refine the broad peak that is Architecture into a number of peaks as is the case in Medicine. The peaks though are necessary.

Do not deny our peaks. Design regulations and standards will never ever be a full substitute for a professional peak. And in fact removal of the peak will deplete the standard of regulation and standards.

There is a lot more to Architecture than building. Never-the-less the great buildings of the world were not put there by other than peak expertise.

**Monte John Latham**

Urban Community Townscape and Building Architecture

Post Office Box 54

**SORELL**

Tasmania 7172

Phone/Fax 03 6265 1420 jbra@eisa.net.au

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