aaca
Architects Accreditation Council of Australia Incorporated

PO Box 236
Civic Square ACT 2608
Telephone: (02) 6230 0506
Facsimile: (02) 6230 7879
Email: registrar@aaca.org.au
ABN: 83 465 163 655

14 MAR 2003

Mr. Tony Hinton
MRA Review
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Mr. Hinton

Productivity Commission Study: Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) is appreciative of the opportunity to make written submission to the Commission's study into the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

In general AACA believes the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition legislation is working well. AACA endorses the value of the scheme in relation to both the mobility it allows architects between Australia and New Zealand, and in terms of the accessibility it provides for the export of Australian architectural services into an overseas market.

There are two issues however that AACA believes require further consideration by the Commission:

1. Potential for 'back-door' entry
   Registration requirements for architects are similar in both Australia and New Zealand, and in general the academic qualifications obtained from New Zealand schools of architecture are well regarded by Australian registration authorities.
   However there is a growing concern regarding the system by which New Zealand recognises academic qualifications in architecture from 'third' countries, as these qualifications may not be recognised by Australia. This procedure has potential for creating a 'back-door' entry method into Australia by those whom the Australian authorities do not regard as being suitably qualified.

2. Currency of registration
   The Trans Tasman legislation provides that those who are registered for an occupation in one country are entitled to registration in the other.
   In Australian jurisdictions, registration as an architect is renewable annually. In New Zealand, on the other hand registration is a once-only requirement upon entering the profession; a Practice Certificate is issued annually. This has become an issue in regard to the eligibility of those coming from New Zealand with only evidence of initial registration (no current Practice Certificate) and seeking registration as an architect in Australia under TTMRA. No one from New Zealand should be considered for registration in Australia unless they have a current Practice Certificate.

It is understood that other occupations have similar concerns to those expressed above. Accordingly AACA suggests the Commission's consideration of these issues in its study into the efficiency and effectiveness of the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition legislation. Please contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely

Brian Wright
PRESIDENT AACA
11 March 2003