MUTUAL RECOGNITION
AND TEACHER REGISTRATION IN QUEENSLAND

Background

- Applicants who are registered with other Australian teacher registration agencies are eligible for registration (subject to a satisfactory criminal history check) under the *Mutual Recognition (Qld) Act 1992*. At the present time, the other registering authorities in Australia are the South Australian Teachers Registration Board, the Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board and the Victorian Institute of Teachers.
- Applicants who are registered with the New Zealand Teachers Council are eligible for registration (subject to a satisfactory criminal history check) under the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1999*.
- Applicants for registration are asked to indicate on the application for registration form whether they are registered with another authority. Applications are considered under mutual recognition where the applicants confirm that they are registered elsewhere.
- In cases where applications are considered under mutual recognition, the applicants will be granted the same registration status in Queensland as they hold with the other registering authority. Conditions cannot be imposed that are more onerous than those that existed with the other registering authority.
- All applications considered under mutual recognition are checked with the relevant registering authority to ensure that there are no issues outstanding that may mean that the person should not be registered in Queensland. (The other registering authorities make similar checks with Queensland.)
- In 2002, the following applications were considered under mutual recognition:

South Australia	62 cases
Tasmania	7
Victoria	117
New Zealand	107

Issues

- From an administrative point of view, dealing with applications under mutual recognition proceeds smoothly, with efficient assistance being received from (and given to) the other registering authorities.
- Some applicants who do not have either a four-year Bachelor of Education (including two years of professional studies in education) or a two-year postgraduate preservice qualification may receive registration in Queensland under mutual recognition. However, it is also the case that not all Queensland registered teachers who become registered elsewhere under mutual recognition will clearly meet the standard academic requirements set by another registering authority.
- A key issue is that of equity. An applicant with (for example) a degree and a one-year Graduate Diploma in Education and about one year's teaching experience from a State that does not have registration may be required to undertake additional studies and teach for one year in Queensland in order to gain full registration. However, an applicant with similar qualifications and experience from a State that has registration may be eligible for full registration in Queensland on application.
- English language proficiency is another possible area of concern. Until recently, New Zealand had no requirements for any level of English proficiency as a prerequisite for registration. It is therefore possible for teachers with a low level of proficiency to

obtain registration in Queensland (and other Australian states) through these provisions.

- Most States/Territories will have registration in the relatively near future. Mutual recognition will ensure portability of professional recognition across State/Territory borders, and will prevent delays in teachers being able to practice their profession in their new State/Territory of domicile. The challenge for the registering authorities will be to ensure that mutual recognition does not diminish professional standards.