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**HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL
TRAINING

Reference: Teacher education

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Thursday, 1 December 2005

Members: Mr Hartsuyker (*Chair*), Mr Sawford (*Deputy Chair*), Mr Bartlett, Ms Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Fawcett, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Henry, Ms Livermore and Mrs Markus

Members in attendance: Ms Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Hartsuyker, Mr Henry, Ms Livermore, Mrs Markus and Mr Sawford

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

The scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools.

Specifically, the Inquiry should:

1. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting students for teacher training courses.
2. Examine the extent to which teacher training courses can attract high quality students, including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
3. Examine attrition rates from teaching courses and reasons for that attrition.
4. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting and rewarding education faculty members.
5. Examine the educational philosophy underpinning the teacher training courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure and materials, and methods for assessment and evaluation) and assess the extent to which it is informed by research.
6. Examine the interaction and relationships between teacher training courses and other university faculty disciplines.
7. Examine the preparation of primary and secondary teaching graduates to:
 - (i) teach literacy and numeracy;
 - (ii) teach vocational education courses;
 - (iii) effectively manage classrooms;
 - (iv) successfully use information technology;
 - (v) deal with bullying and disruptive students and dysfunctional families;
 - (vi) deal with children with special needs and/or disabilities;
 - (vii) achieve accreditation; and
 - (viii) deal with senior staff, fellow teachers, school boards, education authorities, parents, community groups and other related government departments.
8. Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.
9. Investigate the appropriateness of the current split between primary and secondary education training.
10. Examine the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the workforce.
11. Examine the adequacy of the funding of teacher training courses by university administrations.

The Inquiry should make reference to current research, to developments and practices from other countries as well as to the practices of other professions in preparing and training people to enter their profession.

WITNESSES

BATEMAN, Mr Michael, Director, Human Resources, ACT Department of Education and Training..... 1

BRADY, Mr Michael, Manager, Teacher Registration and Standards, ACT Department of Education and Training..... 1

Committee met at 9.38 am**BATEMAN, Mr Michael, Director, Human Resources, ACT Department of Education and Training****BRADY, Mr Michael, Manager, Teacher Registration and Standards, ACT Department of Education and Training**

CHAIR (Mr Hartsuyker)—I declare open this public hearing of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training inquiry into teacher education. I welcome representatives from the ACT Department of Education and Training. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and, as such, warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. I now invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Mr Bateman—Thank you for the opportunity to present our point of view. I know we did not put in a very full or detailed submission, but I am assuming that a lot of the detail will come through the universities, DEST and some of the larger jurisdictions. Being a small jurisdiction, we have to be a little bit circumspect about what we get involved in and our capacity to do those sorts of things. But we have some comments that may help influence or guide some of the debate that you will have about how to come to the final resolutions, and we would like to make those comments.

The focus that we have put on it is really an HR management focus. I guess it is a fairly operational focus in some ways, because we see ourselves as an end user of the product of the universities—a sort of purchaser of that product. A lot of what I have tried to cover in the dot points that I have given you is around some of those sorts of things, rather than some of the policy stuff that sits behind.

Just in terms of up-front comment, from where we sit we are relatively happy with the product overall. That is a generalisation—there will be areas where we have concerns—but, in terms of the output that we see in our recruitment processes, I think we would say that we are quite comfortable with what happens in the majority of cases. I will go through some of those things as we go through. Do you want me to just go through some of these things and you can ask questions as I go?

CHAIR—We will ask questions at the end.

Mr Bateman—One of the things I have tried to give is an overview of the ACT work force context, so you can see where we fit in some of the picture and where some of our recruitment difficulties or areas that we are going to have to look at in the near future are. One of the graphs I have put on the back is an age profile of teachers in our service—this is the ACT government, not the Independents and Catholics—from 1997 through to 2005. If you look at the 1997 one, which is the dark blue one, you can see that the shape of the graph was heavily skewed towards the top end, and the age profile of our teaching work force was centred around the 45 to 49 mark, so we had an ageing population at that point in time, with an average age of about 47. That

is when we started to get a bit worried about what was happening, and we started to take some action to address that. That included working with the universities to try and help us do that.

Since then we have been able to move the profile, as you can see, to the orange, 2005 one, which is now becoming bimodal, in a sense. We are starting to develop a hump at the earlier stage and reduce the top end of it. I think it was to our advantage in 1997 that we were marginally in front of the other jurisdictions in terms of that age profile. I think I have read recently that the average age of teachers across Australia is now about 47, which was our average age at that time. Ours is now down to about 43, so we have changed that distribution quite dramatically. That is part of our recruitment, and I will talk about our recruitment strategy a bit later. But that just gives you some idea of what our work force looks like and where we have been recruiting.

Our recruitment has been heavily around those exiting from the universities, so their performance has been of great interest to us in the way we recruit our staff. There are other things there that you can see from the graphs. We have a heavily feminised work force, the same as all the other jurisdictions. I think the key difference between us and the other jurisdictions is probably at the principal level. We are tracking closer to the general work force distribution of males and females in the principals than most of the other jurisdictions, which are still heavily male from the figures that I have seen.

The other thing that I think is important for us to look at in our work force is the age profile across our various sectors. We have a primary sector, a high school sector and a college sector—years 11 and 12—and that is on one of those other graphs. The dark blue one is the college one. As you can see, that one is very heavily skewed towards the top end, the end of the 50s age group, and our average age in that area is close to 50, which indicates to us that we are going to have to heavily recruit in that area.

That is where the biggest pressure is in terms of strict subject discipline, because of years 11 and 12 getting ready for university study and those sorts of things. So we are moving to a critical point, where we must ask how we fill the gap that we see developing in that area. I think that is one of the concerns that we may have to talk about in terms of the universities' response to the data that is available to them in these areas. That is just the general context, so you can see where we have been focusing our recruitment.

In the dot points in the presentation I have mentioned a couple of other things that you may be interested in. You have probably heard the same things from other states. One of the pressures we have is the CSS pressure of the 54 years and 11 months retirement point. I think Victoria and the Northern Territory would have spoken about the same things, if they have already given evidence to the inquiry. That pressure is not as dramatic as we expected it to be. The number of people leaving at that stage is not quite at the level we anticipated, although our exit rate at the moment is around 10 per cent of the work force each year.

CHAIR—Are you finding that people are exiting and then looking to come back in as casuals?

Mr Bateman—No. I think there are a lot of people—and it could be because of the feminisation of the profession—who are going past 54 years and 11 months. Initially, we used to

see 54-11 and see red lights, in a sense, but we know the 54-11 point is there but the number of people going past that point is in excess of what we expected. It could be an outcome of the feminisation of the work force, in that a lot of women left the work force in the eighties and were not involved in super; they came in again later but they are still in the CSS because they got in before the close. But it is not the pressure that we expected it to be in a real sense. It is a pressure, but not the main one.

We have a mobility policy. You may be interested in that. It is a policy that enables us to move our staff from school to school. They are put in schools on a tenure basis, in a sense. They have permanency to the service, but not necessarily to the school. That applies at all levels of the service. It is not comprehensive, in that it only applies to classroom teachers who have been employed since 1999 as part of the recruitment strategies, but it will gradually grow. The reason why I mention it is that it is actually something that is a topic of some discussion from time to time, in terms of our work force management. You may have picked the issue up through other channels.

We are the only jurisdiction currently without a teacher registration process. Our own legislative assembly report asked us to look at that particular thing, and we are currently looking at whether or not to move towards a teacher registration process. We are working on the basis that we will, and we have just got to go through all the steps to get there.

On the subject of salary rates, we regard our salary rates as highly competitive. The entry level salary is currently \$46,565. We are involved in negotiations at the moment for a new certified agreement. We would expect that that increase will be around nine per cent over three years—three by three. The union are not happy with that, but that will probably be the minimum at this stage. The other salaries are in the presentation.

The other thing which I think is important for us in terms of looking at our salary structure and our attractiveness as an employer—and this is common across the ACT and the Commonwealth—is that the employer contribution rate of 15.4 per cent is higher than that of any of the other jurisdictions. I think the next closest rate is about 12.5 per cent, but the majority are around 9 per cent. While that is probably not something that young people are necessarily thinking about, it is a long-term gain that they need to consider.

With regard to your terms of reference, there are some of them that we have some side interest in and there are some that we probably have no comment at all about. In terms of selecting teacher education students, I would say that we are not unhappy with the current selection process per se. I think that you have probably had a fair bit of discussion around the value of interviews. My sense is that the main thing is that we need a broad course sieve of some sort at that entry level.

I am not convinced of the value of interviews at that stage. If we are basically attracting the bulk of the students directly from school into the university stage, I am less inclined to support interviews. If we are talking about mature age entry, I am probably more inclined to think about interviews at that particular stage. The main things for me in all of this concern their passion for learning and teaching and their ability to engage students. I do not know that you can necessarily test that at that particular point in time.

Where I think we can add some value in the selection process is in identifying applicants who are obviously not suited, rather than the other way around of identifying applicants who are suited. One of the paradoxes of the whole thing is that when you have your entry-level salary at our level, which is quite high for graduates—according to our research it is up around the very top—you can lock people into careers in terms of their income when it is not the best place for them to be. I think the best career advice you can give people is to not go into a job or occupation that is not suited to them. If we could just focus on that side of things, it would probably help quite a bit. In fact, one of the things that we talk about at our induction is that if you find that this is not what you want to do, make sure you start talking to people about how to decide whether it is the right job, because the quicker you make that decision the better off you are and the kids are.

In terms of attraction, my view is that it is more around the marketing of the profession than the marketing of teacher education. I think that generally in the jurisdictions the employers do most of the marketing. The universities rely heavily on their open days, career days and those sorts of things. There are not a lot of obvious press advertisements for the marketing of teacher education by the universities. That could vary from state to state; I am talking from an ACT perspective. To me, the focus of any marketing should be on the profession, building the profession and the benefits that come from being a teacher in influencing the lives of young students and those sorts of things. I think the key marketing strategy is around the influence that a good teacher has on the life of a student. I think that we should look at those sorts of things.

The other thing from an ACT perspective that we would market is our recruitment strategy. I brought along a copy of some of the marketing that we do. I will talk about the recruitment process in detail because I think it is part of what is important to us. We have competitive salaries. Salaries are very good in teaching at the moment; I do not think anyone could deny that. In our service, we have very good promotional opportunities—that is in terms of promotion through the service rather than advertising the job. At the moment, we would be promoting people within their first five years of service. That is a challenge for us as well as a plus. People in their first five years of service could be moving from the classroom teacher salary range to the senior teacher salary of \$76,000, which is a pretty reasonable outcome.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—How is that actually possible?

Mr Bateman—We have a strict merit process, so that any permanent job that we have we will advertise and anyone from inside or outside the service can apply to enter at that point. You do not have to be a classroom teacher with us to be a senior teacher with us. You can be a classroom teacher in New South Wales, Queensland or anywhere else and apply for a job with us. Similarly, inside the service, you do not work your way up through the seniority; you can apply for a job at any time.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Sorry, I thought I heard you say that there was a trend for that to happen, which sounds remarkable.

Mr Bateman—That is part of the age profile trend. One thing we are experiencing—and I do not know whether the other jurisdictions are the same—is that, because there had been some blockage at the top end of the classroom teacher scale, a number of people on that top salary do not see promotion as part of their current life plan. At the moment 52 per cent of our classroom

teachers are on the very top salary of \$66,000. Those teachers are sitting there and people lower down are taking the opportunities to apply for promotion; they are actually going over the top. I think on the front page of the *Canberra Times* this morning Lynelle Briggs was talking about some quick promotion in the Australian Public Service. We are experiencing the same thing. The outcome is that people with less experience are getting to that level and then trying to supervise these other people, so there are some obvious tensions there. In effect we are promoting enthusiasm at the expense of wisdom and experience.

There are good promotion opportunities for young people coming in. We recognise prior service; I think some of the other states are doing the same thing. That is not just about teaching experience: if a person comes to us with experience in any profession, we will look at how we can reasonably count that for salary purposes. Not everybody comes in at the base level. It is a sliding scale. For straight school teaching experience, it is a one-for-one recognition; for other education experience, it is a two-for-one recognition; and, for other work experience, it is a three-for-one recognition. There is some capacity within our system to do that sort of thing. We see that as part of our marketing strategy.

As it says there, the universities should look at more innovative ways—that is, ways of training other than the traditional degree followed by the Diploma of Education—of attracting teachers to secondary. I think Newcastle may have run a program when they were retraining some BHP workers, where they did their education and degree studies concurrently. We need to encourage universities to think a bit more laterally about the way they offer teacher education, particularly at a secondary teacher level. At the moment it is generally a three- or four-year degree of some description followed by a 12-month Diploma of Education, and into that is packed all the practicum work and that sort of thing. If they could do some of that work concurrently and get more opportunity to spend time in schools, we may get a better outcome for secondary teaching.

Attrition rates is always a good topic. As I guess you picked up from some of my earlier comments, I do not see attrition rates as necessarily a sign of a problem. Attrition is an important part of any employment. Whether it is too high or too low is the challenge. Within your terms of reference, looking inside the teacher education programs, I do not know what the level is but, as I said before, my view is this: if someone should not be in teacher education they are better off out of it, and the sooner they can get that right advice and make that decision the better off they are. If the attrition rate reference is to do with that, I think that is very important.

The other area where I think discussion of attrition is important is in the first part of a teacher's working life. A lot of mileage has been given to the first five years of teaching. The ACT figures, as it says there, show that our loss rate of new teachers in our service since the beginning of 2003 to this point was two per cent. Overall in the first five years it is three per cent. Some of the national figures I have seen in the press put it at around 25 per cent; I do not know the basis for this. That figure seems far too high to me. I do not know that we are measuring the same thing. Oftentimes when you get a disparity in the figures of that description the answer is not that one is doing better or worse than the other but that you are measuring different things. I guess the thing is to know what is being measured to get the 25 per cent.

The comments I would make around that are these. From our exit survey of teachers who leave us in those early years of teaching, they talk about support at the school level, what is

happening in the school, behaviour management, workload and what they see as preventing them from teaching—that is, the crowded curriculum, their expectation that these other things are not part of their job, the social work, the counselling and all the other things that are outside the actual teaching side of things.

So our response to some of that support need is that it is critical that it is addressed around the time of the induction programs that you run. We claim to have—and I think we do—a very good probationary process in that first 12 months in terms of support in schools. Every new teacher to the service goes through probation. They must have a panel of advisers consisting of their principal or a deputy, their supervisor and a peer at their level. They get regular reports on what they are doing and on their performance. They are involved in those discussions. At the end of that time we get a report to see whether they should be continued in the service or not.

We have a professional pathways program for all teachers. That is our performance appraisal program. Again, that is based around a discussion between the teacher and their supervisor or a senior colleague about their performance, what they are going to achieve for the year and what the school's goals are. This is all documented.

We also have a program of beginning-teacher support. This is not as liberal as some of the other ones, where a lot of the focus is on a line allowance or a class off or something to reduce their teaching load. Ours is more around giving access to professional development. It is based on 15 days but it can be extended according to need and those sorts of things. It is more a support thing; it is not a reduction in teaching load. I am not saying that our programs are perfect. In all these things, we get reports that things are not always happening as we had hoped they would. I think that is an important part of the effort.

The other thing I have here is a concern—it is more a gut feeling from discussions with my colleagues in other states—that one of the things we talk about in addressing particularly some of the secondary areas is the career change graduates. I think it would be worth looking at the attrition rate for career change people as opposed to people who come through from school into teacher education and so on. The sense we get from our experience is that they are more difficult to keep in the service than those who go from school to university to teaching. It is around what the different expectations of young people are at this particular point in time.

CHAIR—Do you track them as separate cohorts in your management?

Mr Bateman—We do. Generally, they are most interested in teaching in our college area. If we cannot offer them positions in the college area with the year 11 and 12 students, it is difficult to attract them. That is on the secondary side of things. On the primary side, it is a different picture all together. Generally, on the primary side of the business, the passion around teaching and engagement with the kids is very important to those people, and they are very highly valued in the primary schools. But I get the sense that we have some work to do if we are going to see career changers as the answer on the secondary side.

Ms BIRD—Can you describe your secondary system? We are all from different states which have different systems so I would like to clarify that.

Mr Bateman—Secondary is high school, which is year 7 to 10; college is years 11 and 12. They are separate schools. We are running some schools now that are K or P to 10 with a middle-school component—that is generally, in our system, 6, 7 and 8, but you may find that some other ones are running 5, 6, 7 and 8 in their middle school.

Ms BIRD—So you do not run any 7 to 12?

Mr Bateman—No. It has its advantages and disadvantages.

Ms BIRD—I know. Coming from New South Wales my reflection would be that I would have been horrified at not having access to years 11 and 12 while I was teaching years 7 to 10. I was wondering whether that was a component.

Mr Bateman—I think there are a few trained teachers on the committee, and I am a trained teacher. In terms of preparedness, there are lots of things in your eighth term of reference that in lots of ways are not part of teacher education. They are more about employer training responsibilities than teacher education programs. It is probably time, for us anyway, to put the IT capacity to bed. It is fully addressed for most of our new teachers coming through teacher education. It may not be fully addressed for the long-serving teachers.

CHAIR—Keeping up with the clever nine-year-olds will always be a challenge for a teacher.

Mr Bateman—It is addressed probably as best we can. We actually have it in the process of our selection criteria. Point No. 1 and possibly point No. 2 are concerns around teacher education, but a lot of the others are really more to do with the training that should happen in practicums or when they are in service and that sort of thing. The debate around this is a bit like that about the crowded curriculum. If we want good teacher education we have to be careful that we do not overburden the universities with doing all those other things that are more around teacher training. So, as I said in the notes, the focus should be on teacher education, understanding the learning process, and pedagogy for the teacher education side of things. That is why literacy and numeracy are important on that side of it. There also needs to be some balance in the course content, regarding the expectation of us as employers. We have a responsibility in those sorts of things.

One dot point that I have been giving some thought to in talking with our local university regards the way to combine study with work. In terms of the training side, if there were a way that we could have more on-the-job training during the teacher education process—and one extreme would be spending six months doing things in schools and six months doing study over a two-year period, so they are not losing salary but they are doing some study and then some practice—I think that would be beneficial in the shortened process. The bachelor of education program is a four-year program that is interspersed anyway, so there is not the same pressure.

One thing I mentioned in the notes is the ACT internship program. It is a program that we set up with the University of Canberra. At some point—it is on one of the graphs, around the 1997 mark, I think—we started talking about it because part of our recruitment process in the late nineties was showing us that, whilst the University of Canberra was on our doorstep, the number of recruits we were taking in from the University of Canberra was very low. We went to them and said, ‘Either we’ve got a problem with our process or you’ve got a problem with your

course. We think it's you and not us.' We talked a lot about what to do and out of that grew the internship program. At that point it was focused on primary schools.

The first semester of the last year of their program—in the second school term—involves being located in schools, working with teachers and gradually taking over the teaching role. They are assessed at the end of that program against the beginning teacher competencies, which were around in the nineties. We have probably updated them a little bit, but it is essentially the same thing. Anyone who was involved in the Australian Teaching Council at that time will know about those things. Following that we give them permission to work with us, even though they are not qualified. So, during the final semester of their course, they can work for us in what we call an internship program. We pay them a salary of about \$150 a day, fully negotiated with the union and so on. They combine their study and work. We have some rules around that, because we do not want them to completely forget their study and not qualify, so we limit the amount of work that they can do. A lot of them are highly sought after by the schools, particularly the ones where they did their internship program. In terms of our primary recruitment, we would now recruit most of our people from the University of Canberra—a much higher percentage than previously. Doing that has been beneficial for both of us. I think it is also beneficial to other jurisdictions who would recruit those students as well.

In terms of input from the profession, the eighth term of reference, I have focused on just our input in particular. We have a very good relationship with the University of Canberra and we work fairly closely with them. I would expect other jurisdictions would say the same. We have a department-university liaison committee, which is at a high level, the chief executive, the head of school and others. We have a field experience committee, which does the practicum work. Principals, classroom teachers and university staff are involved in that side of things. There is the intern program. The university is represented on the qualifications committee, so they are well aware of what our qualification requirements are and what the changes are. That is where we negotiate a number of changes in courses where we have a need. For example, we have developed a middle-school program with them. As part of their teacher education program students can come out with a middle-school focus. We helped them to negotiate and channelled them to a partnership with the CIT for the training of industrial arts teachers and so on. I think they are quite productive and we are able to have an influence.

Also, the university is represented on our curriculum renewal task force and they are involved in our senior accreditation program. So I think there is a fair bit of influence and dialogue between the two. As I said, the change in recruitment in terms of numbers has helped quite a bit. I think the mix of primary and secondary is the crunch issue because, in terms of our recruitment—which I will talk about in detail in a minute—we find there are a lot of students available to us coming out with a primary training background but there are not so many with a secondary background. I do not know what the reason for that is. The data is available to the universities; you might want to get a copy of some of the things that we have suggested in terms of the supply and demand that is produced through MCEETYA with assistance from DEST and the jurisdictions, which tells everybody all those sorts of things. So the data is available and is fairly explicit as to where the needs are. But there does not seem to be a coordinated response or a response from the universities to that. I am not too sure where the disconnect is between the data, the courses and the funding. That is something I guess you will find out. The worry for me is that we are not using what is available to us to tell us what to do. I think that is the crunch for the future and getting that right.

Even when you find places where there are a lot of secondary students, they are not necessarily in the identified areas of need—maths, science, technology and, for us at the moment, languages. They tend to be more humanities based and economics where the demand is fairly low. We have talked with the University of Canberra about ensuring that anyone who is doing economics backs it with maths and those sorts of things. Their PE program was just focused on PE, so we talked to them about making sure that they had a second string in the bow. That is important for the way we do things. I think that is one that is going to be a challenge.

Mr SAWFORD—Numerate economics. That is a bit of a problem. That will be a change of the future.

Mr Bateman—The 10th term of reference is professional learning. I think we wrote about it in our submission, probably not in a lot of detail but there was at least some comment. It is an interesting one for us because of some of the things I talked about before—the issue of people being promoted early. I took your terms of reference to be the relationship with and the way the universities provided ongoing learning for teachers rather than what we did internally, although some of what I will talk about relates to us as well.

In terms of that relationship and ongoing learning for teachers, we have a leadership program with the University of Canberra, which we fund and they offer. That has been quite productive for us. I think it articulates into a Masters. We have had some retraining programs with them as well—one in mathematics, one in school counselling and one in youth work. The last one, youth worker, may have been with the Catholic University as well as the University of Canberra.

CHAIR—What was the duration of those retraining courses?

Mr Bateman—They varied. The maths one was intensive. I did not bring it along but we got the AAMT, the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, to do a report on it. It was expensive and short. It was a single semester, six months on full salary. We set up the course with them. We actually ran part of the course as well because, much to the retrainees' surprise when they got involved in the program, it was not just going to university. When they were not at university doing lectures, we had them on one of our sites doing work with us in terms of maths teaching and helping with their assignments and making sure they were doing things. So it is not like we paid them a full salary and said 'Bye, bye' for the semester; we kept them on task and sent them off to lectures and those sorts of things. We got a very good report from the review.

Ms LIVERMORE—I am curious; what kind of people were taking up that course?

Mr Bateman—This was retraining primary school teachers to teach mathematics from years 7 to 10. Not for the top end. We probably focused more on the middle school and year 9. It was, as I said, expensive for us. It served a need at the time. Our chances of repeating it are probably relatively slim in terms of costs. The other ones—school counselling and youth worker—were more longer term and it was more a funding arrangement to individuals to go into a program to get the qualifications up. But it was an identified program that we needed to do.

Ms LIVERMORE—Could you just explain the funding? Was it to cover their HECS costs or just resources?

Mr Bateman—We have three funds that we use for some of these things. There is what we call our professional learning fund, which is available for teachers, senior teachers and deputies. It is not a lot of money. If you say it fast it probably sounds all right—a million dollars—but it does not go very far. That is available for those sorts of programs.

Ms LIVERMORE—By application by those people?

Mr Bateman—Yes, and by areas such as ours if we identify a need. We also have a principal's professional learning fund, which is solely for principals, around the same idea. We also have a teacher scholarship fund, and some of it is done through that. In total probably about \$1.5 million is identified that way. Again, those sorts of things have pluses and minuses. One of the difficulties of all this is that you think you are doing a good thing but you also create problems along the way. When we set those ones up, they were done through a certified agreement. We set them up. What it means is that it is now difficult to get people to spend money on professional learning unless it comes from that fund.

Schools previous to that—and this is a generalisation—would have, in my view, set aside more money for professional learning out of their own resources than they do now because they all expect—and we all expect on our side of the fence as well—to have it funded through these funds. When you talk about replacement costs of teachers at a minimum of \$300 a day, it does not go very far. That is the difficulty. You think you are doing one thing and it has a downside. It is getting all those things to work properly that makes it very hard. But they are important. There are people who have been able to do things through having those funds that would not have been able to do them previously.

One of the things I think we have to do a lot of work on is mentoring and supervision skills. This is in terms of the things that I talked about before: the younger teachers jumping up the scale very quickly into those initial promotion positions and supervising the old hands. What is becoming more and more important for us is how to get those people to have the right skills to do that and then how they should use them to supervise those people. In this particular area of professional learning and the mapping of it and what is happening, I think there is a role for the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership—the old NIQTSL. This is a key thing.

As a department dealing with our work force there are a number of challenges for us, and I have spoken about those on the way through. Time is a big factor. One of the things that we require our teachers to do, and I will not say it is necessarily well received but it happens, is a certain amount of professional development and professional learning during what we call stand-down. Our school teachers do not have holidays in the same sense as most other jurisdictions have. Our teachers have 20 days of recreation leave and the rest of the time that is generally school holidays in other jurisdictions is paid stand-down. Under the legislation we are able to recall them to duty if we need to.

We require them to do some professional development during that time. As I said, there is tension from time to time. We require principals to do 10 days, we require teachers to do five days and if things go well in the current certified agreement we expect that we will have our senior teachers and deputy principals required to do seven days. So that is all about some of the time things, but that also has a downside in that they say, 'If I've got to do five days then that's it. I don't have to do any more.' That is not good either. So time is a big factor—when do the

teachers get the time to do those things when they are teaching in their classrooms? That is their goal and their passion—that is where they want to be—and to take them out of their schools is not always the best thing for them or their students. We would possibly say that our principals spend too much time out of school, but that is a bureaucratic point of view and maybe not a principal's point of view.

We have differing needs in the work force, so we have got to change the way we look at all the sorts of things and the sorts of programs we have been running over the years to cope with the way the new work force works. We have to have a real focus on building the capacity within our work force to take on the leadership roles of the future. I think that, on the attraction side of things, engaging and building the profession is the key to the continuation of the profession—and I will talk a little bit more on what I see as some of the professional things a little bit later.

CHAIR—We probably need to go to questions shortly.

Mr Bateman—Yes, Chair. We approach recruitment slightly differently from what a lot of the states do—or we claim we do anyway; they might have a different view. We spend time on marketing in universities. We go to universities and present—and we visited 35 campuses this year to get our 1,400 applicants. We process all those applicants in terms of interviews, referees and ratings. Every applicant puts in an application against a set of selection criteria—and that is in the pack that was going around this room—and then they are interviewed, refereed and so on. That involves our people going to universities to do the interviews. All the people that do the recruitment are school based people. They are principals, deputies, classroom teachers and senior teachers. Our HR role is to manage the process and make it happen for them. So they recruit to the service. The applicants are ranked by the teachers and then the principals choose their staff from the pool of the highest ranked people. There is ranking on a five-point scale. We provide feedback to the universities on the performance of their students in the program. That is sometimes received well and sometimes not.

One thing I will say is that we get some strange responses from some of the universities in terms of our involvement. Many of the universities—this is mainly lecturing and field staff—see themselves as arms of the local employer. If we go into Queensland, where we have been in the press a couple of times as the people from the south coming up to pinch all the students, and various areas in New South Wales—universities—it is very much that we are an arm of the New South Wales Department of Education. That view changes as you work your way up the hierarchy. When you get to the dean level or the head of school level, you get a more global view of the role of teacher education. The way you get into those things and interpret them is interesting. But there are some figures there and we have been quite successful around them. I have quickly gone through those sorts of things. Do you have any questions?

CHAIR—I will start with one and I know that my deputy chair will have a number of questions for you. In your recommendation No. 2, you refer to strengthening the collaboration between the universities and the schools. The mechanisms you note there are very much by way of liaison. What we have found in our travels is that those universities had a very strong association with the school, and they had been developing partnerships with schools in their area, producing some great results. I am just wondering what your thoughts are on the development of those sorts of partnerships and collaboration. You have mentioned the internship that you have had. What are your thoughts on that point?

Mr Bateman—I do not know that there is a formal process that does a lot of this directly with the schools. We have the things I have mentioned in terms of committees and the sorts of things which are formal, but generally a lot of it is based on the people who are involved in each of the institutions rather than on something that is programmed to happen. We have some very strong links between the University of Canberra and a number of our schools, and over the years we have had some good strong links with the University of Wollongong as well in PE education. But it is generally based more on an individual in the school or an individual in the university. It is not something that happens because it is the right thing to happen or a good thing to happen.

CHAIR—As an employer organisation, do you see that there could be some benefit from your point of view in fostering much stronger links on a much more formalised basis?

Mr Bateman—One thing we did for 12 months, and we have not done it this year, is that we had a deputy principal who was designated and employed jointly by the University of Canberra and us to manage these links. They were instrumental in setting up the maths retraining program with us. They did some lecturing in the teacher education program and so on, but we have not maintained that beyond the last 12 months. We do have guest spots where we go out and talk with students at the University of Canberra and the Catholic University about their teacher education at various points—about some of the things in terms of reference No. 7—but that is not necessarily programmed in. We do it and it is not necessarily maintained long term, but I think there is a great capacity to do that. The problem is finding a formal way of doing it in terms of the time of university lecturers and our teachers, because there are time commitments around that.

Mr SAWFORD—During the last 25 years there have been scores of inquiries about teacher education or teacher training—call it what you like—and here we are again. There has been some legitimate criticism: ‘Here they go; here’s another one.’ It is the first time we have ever done it at a federal level. We have got to a stage where the committee secretariat has put the recommendations into some sort of hopefully coherent hole, and we received that this week. I do not want to be overcritical, but in looking at this particular inquiry I cannot find an identifiable framework in which it operates—and I will go into that in a moment. That, I think, reflects what happens with the recommendations: they are not coherent either. It just seems that we avoid being explicit and avoid any analysis but that we are always implicit and always synthesise information.

Is the reason for this that the state of teacher education is okay and we are fiddling around at the edges? If we are doing that, perhaps we are suffering from some delusions about the impact we are having. Or is it because no-one has got to the guts of the issue? I am starting to believe that in the last 20-odd years these reports have failed because, largely, they have not been taken a great deal of notice of—simply because they are not coherent, they are not analytical, they are not explicit, they avoid philosophy and they avoid hard issues. One of the issues is, as you mentioned, about promotion. Isn’t the reason for that the fact that we have a feminised teaching force and a lot of teachers do not want promotion, because they have other responsibilities? That causes a problem. Yet when we come here and look at the section on the recruitment of male teachers, there is no recommendation. It is very carefully avoided. We hear from some universities that the Dip Ed is not worth the paper it is written on and that the activities are pretty ordinary. We get others who subscribe to the view that it is a great thing to have. What I am asking is this: is there a reason why there is not a framework there?

Mr Bateman—Well, I might take—

Mr SAWFORD—Why do we avoid educational philosophy? I cannot understand why. If you cannot identify the purpose of what you are doing, then I cannot see how you can get all the attributes and come up with the recommendations. That is what this does.

Mr Bateman—To answer your question I will take off my department jacket and put on my private jacket. Some of the things I would comment about were in my general comments—in the very last point. These are very personal views rather than bureaucratic views. I think you are quite right: education in particular has never become a mature profession in a real sense. What education is very good at is planning yesterday; the challenge is planning tomorrow. We are nearly at the stage where we are planning today. I have some comments there around issues of the profession versus industrial. One of the vehicles we have used to drive a lot of our change is industrial. We have got to move on to how to get the profession doing that. There is a lot of talk at the moment about the profession doing things for the profession, but what is the profession? We do not have a definition of those things; we do not use a common language. Until we can get to the point where we can do those sorts of things we will not get to where we want to be. I agree with you: we need those frameworks. We need to know what the purpose is. You cannot do things if you do not know what the purpose is.

Mr SAWFORD—I might put you on the spot, Mike. I appreciate you are saying this as a private individual rather than putting a departmental point of view, but we are struggling—I am as an individual, although the other members of the committee may not be—to come up with an identifiable framework which reflects the mass of evidence we are getting from all over the place. What would you advise us to do? What sort of framework would you be looking at if you were doing this as an individual? You might want to take that on notice and come back to us.

Mr Bateman—I would start where I just was. Part of it is around the profession. We need to work out what the teaching profession is. I think the teaching profession needs a champion or champions to do that. We need to engage teachers in the debate on standards, not just talk about it and think that because we have involved a number of professional associations—which have very low membership across the profession—we have engaged the teaching work force. As I said, we are grappling with teacher registration at the moment. I am fairly confident that if I went and surveyed teachers in every other jurisdiction that has it, they would say, ‘What on earth are you talking about?’ And if I asked them what it has done for them I would not get a very positive response. We have got to go through a consultation process with our teachers which will be part of convincing them that it is a good thing to do. When we have driven a lot of these changes through the industrial side of things it is quite beneficial. On the industrial side of things they generally do not read a lot of the detail. They read the salary chart. If the salary chart convinces them to vote for the agreement then the other stuff just comes along and a lot of them do not notice it is there. That is not a good way for a profession to be.

I do not think that teachers in their classroom areas have the time to worry about these sorts of things, and it becomes a very inwardly focused thing. The difficulty with that framework is getting the profession to accept that there is a need to do this and to really understand what we are trying to do either nationally or jurisdictionally in things like this.

Mr SAWFORD—Can you see the problem we have? If we do not come up with a framework in this report—

Mr Bateman—It's going to gather dust.

Mr SAWFORD—it will just be another has-been report. That is what it will be, despite all our best efforts.

Mr Bateman—I agree.

Mr SAWFORD—Why are we any different or more special than the 25 or 35 groups that went before us? When it comes to the question of what the teaching profession is, everybody runs away from defining anything. Even in your very good presentation this morning, you avoided educational philosophy like the plague as well.

Mr Bateman—But I put upfront that I was going to take an HR focus.

Mr SAWFORD—I know, but you know what I mean.

Mr Bateman—Yes, I know.

Ms BIRD—Can I ask you to address one think that Rod did mention, which I think is important: do you as an employer body see a major problem with the quality of teachers? Taking aside all the things that you have said about what should and should not happen after that point, do you have any evidence of that as a problem?

Mr Bateman—The reason I thought our recruitment process was important to the discussion is that—and I will say yes to you—I believe we get to pick the eyes out of what comes out. We only recruit people who we rate as 'outstanding' to permanent positions. Of our 1,400 applicants—

Mr SAWFORD—Are they outstanding teachers, outstanding personalities or outstanding academics?

Mr Bateman—If you look at our selection criteria and our approach to it, we are interested in their teaching. The first two selection criteria are about their teaching. Our focus is not—and this is a weakness that some people see in our process, particularly at the college level—on the academic, necessarily. It is on whether those people can teach. That could be a part of my influence. When I was a mathematics senior teacher in a school, my focus was not necessarily on getting good mathematicians but on getting good people to who could teach. A lot of that was getting people out of primary schools who had an interest in mathematics, and then I would do the training and the mathematics content with them. So the focus is on teaching.

Ms BIRD—So you are talking about 1,400 applicants and you get to pick the best performers according to your criteria. Therefore, you are not picking up those who you do not feel meet those criteria, but you would say that, yes, they exist and that would be a problem?

Mr Bateman—We get some fairly ordinary applicants.

Ms BIRD—That is across-the-board recruitment. Are there specific areas of recruitment? You have been talking about maths, science and secondary where you cannot recruit enough people to fill your vacancies.

Mr Bateman—Two things happen. One is that, with maths and science, we may not recruit anybody permanently; we may recruit people temporarily. That is not a good thing necessarily in terms of student outcomes. A couple of years ago we got a bit panicky about it in a sense, and we offered jobs in some of those areas down our recruitment scale. The level of support that we have had to put in place to maintain some of those people in terms of our probationary processes and other things is not good for our principals or for us in the long term. Some of it is short-term thinking, in that we have a need to get someone in that classroom teaching those kids, so we will take the easy option in that case. But it is at a level where we can break the employment arrangement if and when we can find a highly rated person in that area. This year in mathematics, of those 1,400 applicants I think only about 15 of them were maths. That will cover our need, but the depth and the quality is the issue. That is what I am saying. The universities are not, for some reason, looking at the data and saying, ‘There’s an identified need in mathematics.’ It could be that they are, but they cannot get the people in. For us, we think the data is there. We go to the well, in effect, to get the result, and it is dry.

ACTING CHAIR (Mr Sawford)—The obvious implication then is why don’t the department and the schools get together to do something about it?

Mr Bateman—That is what we did with the maths retraining. That is why we did it at that particular point.

ACTING CHAIR—Then that needs to be done on a continuing basis. You just cannot do that as a one-off and think that you have done that and can tick the box on that.

Mr Bateman—It is not that we just tick the box. We would like to do it and we would like to do it in other areas from time to time.

ACTING CHAIR—Some Commonwealth money ought to come your way for doing that.

Mr HENRY—I apologise if you have covered this but I missed the early part of your presentation. It seems to me that in just looking at attrition, your attrition rates are incredible in the ACT generally. Going on your figures here, they run at about a three per cent loss in the first five years, compared with other evidence we have had of something like 50 or 60 per cent over the first five years. Yet there is quite a dropout during the course, which is probably a preferable way of managing this. Could you comment on that and what might cause that?

Mr Bateman—There are a couple of things. I think the first question is: are we measuring the same things? I think that is important. I think our recruitment process is fairly rigorous and fairly thorough. We involve classroom teachers rather than us as bureaucrats—we put our overlay on it—and I think they are reasonably good judges of who is a good teacher and who is not.

Mr HENRY—So you involve them in the selection process?

Mr Bateman—Yes. They do all the assessment.

Mr HENRY—So the teachers actually assess the applicants?

Mr Bateman—Every applicant is interviewed. They have to write to selection criteria and we referee them and, based on that, we give them a rating.

Mr HENRY—So the applicant for the job—

Mr Bateman—It is a global application for employment with us. It is the same selection criteria irrespective of what sort of teacher you are. Within the recruitment teams we get as broad a representation as we can—diversity is very important in education. There will be primary principals, secondary principals, VET teachers, librarians, counsellors and so on involved in the selection process. We do a bit of training with them and then we set them loose. We moderate heavily. There are continuous meetings with people. We sit in on interviews, watching other people do it and all those sorts of things. I think that it is fairly thorough and that is part of it. We pick the eyes out, so that is a step in front.

The other thing that possibly hides our figures a little bit is that we have an attitude to this, in that we do not deny people access to leave without pay to travel overseas or to do other things, and the length of that access to leave without pay is dependent on their engagement in education while they are away. If we have a young teacher come to us and say, 'I am thinking about going to England for 12 months or two years to teach,' we will say that that is a good thing. You have more chance of getting them back if they have got a hook than if you let them loose. The other jurisdictions will probably say, 'No, you have to resign.' In our numbers we will be carrying around about 260 people who are not working in our schools at any particular time.

Mr HENRY—Do you have any idea of the average length of leave without pay in those circumstances?

Mr Bateman—It will vary depending on what it is for. We have fairly generous maternity leave and parenting leave. Maternity leave is 14 weeks on full pay and then there is 40 weeks leave without pay for the mat leave side of it. In addition to that there is up to seven years of parenting leave. The maximum is seven years and that is on a needs basis. That is one thing, and that keeps a particular cohort engaged in terms of access to employment.

On the other side, generally I will not refuse someone 12 months leave without pay for any reason. Once it goes beyond 12 months it is a matter of what they are doing and what advantage there is for us and them in terms of the future employment relationship. For example, we had a teacher who had gone to visit her relatives in one of the Scandinavian countries. She picked up teaching work while she was there and got into a promotion position. The contract was for 2½ years, because of the difference in education systems, so we accommodated her in terms of leave to allow her to fill that contract.

Australian teachers are very sought after overseas. That is the important evidence about the outcomes of teacher education, although people might say it is doom and gloom. We work with international recruiters on some of this. We come across them on our university visits and we present at the same time. They are after Australian teachers. I think Great Britain has said it is after 10,000 Australian teachers in the next little while. So they cannot all be that bad.

Mr HENRY—No, I would not think so. Have you done any valuation of the benefit of teachers returning from overseas with overseas experience?

Mr Bateman—No, we have not done any evaluation of that. There are lots of things we would like to evaluate. A lot of what I have said here this morning comes from the gut and from observation rather than from the empirical data.

Mrs MARKUS—I have three questions. I am sorry if you covered some of this in your earlier discussions and I missed out. You talked about the attrition rate and the importance of students who are not suited to teaching being encouraged to transfer to other studies as soon as possible. How do you currently approach that? If you were to make any changes to improve that, what would that look like practically?

Mr Bateman—That was a comment at the university level, so we would not necessarily be doing that. In our practicum work—and it depends on when you get them—we would provide, through the practicum report, advice along those lines.

Mrs MARKUS—So how would you recommend that universities approach that?

Mr Bateman—I think that is part of that initial induction. I think there should be induction in the university program in terms of teaching. You would need the lecturers or field supervisors to be looking for this rather than trying to maintain people in the program.

Mrs MARKUS—Are you saying that part of the induction period would include the initial part of university?

Mr Bateman—Not our induction. We have a different need for induction.

Mrs MARKUS—I mean the university induction.

Mr Bateman—In terms of university induction into teaching, I think it is important that students in teaching in particular—and probably any other profession—understand what the profession is about before they go into it and start training in it. I understand the medical profession, for example, talks very strongly about ethics and what it is to be a doctor. I do not know that this necessarily goes on early in a teacher education program. I think it is a matter of being fairly blunt with the students. Teaching is a great job, an exciting job, but you have to want to do it, because it is important to kids that you want to do it. The passion has to be there, and it is about engagement. If they cannot do that then there is no point in being there.

Mrs MARKUS—You talked about the maturity of the profession. How can you measure that this is happening and do you have any ideas on how you think the profession needs to get there?

Mr Bateman—Again, it is a personal view. There was an earlier dot point around the standards debate. Some might say that I have been involved in this game for too long; I have been involved in the standards debate since about 1992. The debate has gone around the world and so on, but we are getting to the point where teachers are more confident and able to talk about their practice than they were before. One of the reports we suggested you look at was by Connell and Skilbeck. One of the things that they raised was an inability of teachers to talk about

their practice. A lot of teaching has gone on inside closed classrooms. That is changing—for us, anyway—particularly in the primary area. We have some way to go with secondary, but primary teachers are more engaged these days in sharing, observing and understanding practice. That is a lot of what a profession is about.

Mrs MARKUS—So you are talking about definitions of best practice and that being more defined?

Mr Bateman—Those sorts of things, yes. I was also thinking about our professional pathways program. In the late 1980s, we tried to do a teacher review and development program, and it fell flat on its face. We think our professional pathways program is achieving much of what we want it to in the majority of our schools with the majority of our people. It is a performance management program badged as a professional pathways program. It is a negotiation between the supervisor and the teacher around personal, school and system goals, what their professional development is and those sorts of things. I would confidently say that it operates extremely well in our primary schools. I would say it operates pretty well in our high schools. I would not go out on a limb about our colleges. Some of it is to do with the age profile stuff. I have given you the average ages of the various sectors. In colleges, the average age is 50. In high schools and primary schools, the average age is about 42. If you look at the graphs, you can see we are recruiting a lot down in those other areas but there is hardly any dip with the colleges. There is a different mind-set in these people about what they expect in their employment. A lot of the people in the blue graph are like me. They are all the people I taught with. We are not comfortable with the same things in the same way.

I have had a lot of opportunity to be involved in the debate around standards and those sorts of things. But the standards debate teeters between the professional development side and the measurement side. You have to get the mix right. It cannot be one or the other; it has to be both, in a way. The measurement stuff, the observing and all that sort of thing are critical to ongoing development and performance improvement. That is where education and teaching are at at the moment—for us, anyway. We are sufficiently far enough along the continuum to keep pushing to do that. The more we get there, the better the professional debate will be about some of these things. The challenge is, as I said before, how to involve the profession. We are still a bit at the stage where they are allowing it happen to them rather than engaging with it and making it happen for them.

Ms BIRD—Chair, do we have a time limit?

CHAIR—We need to wrap up pretty soon.

Ms LIVERMORE—Hiring 200 out of 1,400 indicates a pretty fierce, competitive process. Are you able to distil, in broad terms, what makes those 200 stand out? Is there a link to particular kinds of courses that are throwing up those 200 successful applicants?

Mr Bateman—Do we have favourite universities and those sorts of things?

Ms LIVERMORE—Yes. And what is it about the courses?

Mr Bateman—It is a challenging question to answer. Yes, we do see that some universities perform better than others but, on the other side of it, one year it could be that a particular university does extremely well and the next year it does not. We even get variations between different campuses at universities. We will go to one university campus and we will be closed out and told we can only come in providing we meet the students down at the back car park. Whereas if we go to the other campus they can be all over us because on that campus they see value in other jurisdictions being interested in their students. They do that in that campus but they do not do it at the other one. I would not like to necessarily name—

Ms LIVERMORE—It is not so much about naming, but are their particular elements of courses that you have found that come up all the time?

Mr Bateman—The ones that are more involved and have better practicum experience—that is the most important. It is a challenge for all of us. The universities have trouble getting people into practicums. Our teachers—and this is part of the professional thing—do not necessarily see that they have a responsibility to nurture their profession by getting new people in. I think we are one of the few professions that pay for practicum. For a while, we did away with payment for practicum. We negotiated through the certified agreement to have all the practicum payments from students coming into our schools go into professional learning. So the teachers did not get the money for themselves; the school got it as part of their professional learning fund. Unfortunately, from my point of view because I thought it was a good program, I had to give it up in the last certified agreement.

Mr SAWFORD—Just following up on Kirsten's question and your response, some of the universities that have come across to me as the most impressive have been the ones with a balance between practicum, scholarship and research, almost in some sort of sequence. Others have the emphasis on one and not on the others and so on. Is that what you were saying?

Mr Bateman—Yes. You have to get the balance right. You cannot just have teacher training because the understanding of what learning is about, how people learn, what pedagogy is, what curriculum is and all that sort of thing is very important. You have to know what that is and you have to pay attention to that side of it. But you cannot do the theory stuff without having some of the practice stuff. You are right; to get the balance right is the important part. But the ones with strong practicum and internship programs and those sorts of things are where we would find the most joy in terms of recruitment.

Ms LIVERMORE—I am curious in this as a Queenslander: is your retention in the ACT made easier because people are not required to teach out in the middle of nowhere? You cannot really send them that far.

Mr Bateman—I would agree. We have many advantages and we will exploit those when we go to the universities, yes.

Ms LIVERMORE—I cannot imagine why everyone would not want to teach in the ACT!

Ms BIRD—Of course, in New South Wales it is country service.

Ms LIVERMORE—In Queensland, you could be sent anywhere.

Mr Bateman—Surprisingly, our teachers would still talk about remote schools. That means you drive more than—

CHAIR—More than a 10-minute drive is remote!

Mr Bateman—To be honest, we push those advantages, yes.

Ms BIRD—I think you have raised a really important point for our inquiry in identifying what teacher education is and what employer training responsibilities are. I think that has clarified for me some really important discussions. Would you see a role for national guidelines or something like that which say, 'Here is an accepted professional standard'? The registration bodies are saying that is what they want coming in, but there is a vast difference between that and what then happens after that point. Would you see the next step as perhaps being some national guidelines?

Mr Bateman—I think the question about best practice examples is the way to do some of those things because I think there are some best practices in induction and some best practices in support and things like that.

Ms BIRD—Nobody really does that at a national level yet, do they?

Mr Bateman—I cannot remember in the Skilbeck-Connell report whether there was any comment on those sorts of things, but we suggested a couple of documents and I think other people will have suggested the same ones. As Mr Sawford said, this thing has been done to death. MCEETYA had Lawrence Ingvarson do some work. I do not know what the status of that report is so I do not know whether that is available to you at this point in time, but we can point you in the right direction to get it.

Ms BIRD—I think there is a lot of data in that, but what is now lacking is some direction.

Mr Bateman—Yes. I do not know whether any details in those reports would help to—

Ms BIRD—inform that.

Mr Bateman—I think the best practice approach is a good way to go and I think teachers respond quite well to that.

Ms BIRD—I am talking about guidelines for employer bodies not for teachers.

Mr Bateman—I think we respond to the same thing. One of the difficulties of having lots of jurisdictions—I do not want to get into a federal-state debate—is that often we are all inventing the same wheel. You might not think it, but we do share ideas and those sorts of things, but I think some guidance along best practice lines rather than saying, 'Thou shalt do this,' would be beneficial.

Mr SAWFORD—Just before we finish, can I just say one thing? My first point is probably just confirming what Sharon was saying. I have found your private comments very frank and very useful. I think you have given the committee some direction that possibly we were humming around a bit. So I thank you for that because people are not always prepared to do at a

public hearing what you have done. I can say as an individual—and I am sure on behalf of the committee—that I very much appreciate it.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee.

Mr Bateman—Thank you for the opportunity.

CHAIR—We will contact you if we need further information. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence and a copy of the transcript will appear on the parliamentary web site. Is it the wish of the committee that the document tabled by the ACT government be received as an exhibit and be included in the records of the committee? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

Resolved (on motion by **Ms Livermore**):

That this committee authorises for publication the evidence given before it today.

Committee adjourned at 11.01 am