
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

**Reference: Teacher education**

THURSDAY, 25 MAY 2006

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

**Thursday, 25 May 2006**

**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 Fawcett, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Hartsuyker, 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**

**Committee met at 9.38 am**

**BUGDEN, Mr Tony, General Manager, Human Resources, Office of Resources Management and Strategy, Department of Education and Training Victoria**

**GUEST, Ms Dina, Acting General Manager, School System Development, Office of School Education, Department of Education and Training Victoria**

**TANGAS, Dr Jim, Manager, Research and Workforce Planning, Office of Resources Management and Strategy, Department of Education and Training Victoria**

**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. The inquiry has covered a broad range of issues with regard to the preparation of teachers for their complex, demanding and critical role in educating our children. It has generated a considerable amount of interest across Australia. To date we have received over 160 submissions and we are continuing to receive more. We have now almost completed our scheduled public hearings, having visited Victoria, Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. During the proceedings we have also had several proceedings in the ACT.

We certainly welcome the opportunity to discuss with you issues relating to the very comprehensive report that you have put in. I now call representatives from the Victorian Department of Education and Training. May I remind you that the public hearings are recorded by Hansard and that a record is made available to the public through the parliament's website. 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 the parliament. I would invite you to make some introductory remarks.

**Ms Guest**—I would like to start by thanking the committee for giving us the opportunity to present this morning. What I would like to do is set the context of our submission to the national inquiry, because it has implications for our position, if you like. Firstly, the Victorian state school system is devolved to a greater extent than any other state school system in Australia. Our principals have control of resources, infrastructure, curriculum and so on at the local level. Obviously this is within the state-wide policies and framework, but they are more autonomous than they are in other states and territories. It makes it imperative that we work with our education providers, the Victorian Institute of Teaching and of course our stakeholders to ensure that teacher education courses are aligned with our educational goals and objectives and what we want our students to learn.

This brings me to the second point: our reform agenda, which has significant implications for teacher education. The major reform, if you like, is the Blueprint for Government Schools, which we outlined briefly in our report. I have provided a copy. The Blueprint contains 21 initiatives grouped around seven flagship strategies but it really centres on three critical areas of reform. The first reform is about responding to diverse learning needs—so, responding to the needs of all our students. The Blueprint contains a number of initiatives that relate to student

learning: the first is that we have a new funding model for schools which distributes funding much more equitably to students that need more support; the principles of teaching and learning; our new student report cards; and, last but not least, our Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

I would like to focus on the learning standards for a second, because I think that they have a significant impact on teacher education. Again, I have a bit more information. The Victorian Essential Learning Standards are, in fact, our new curriculum. They were the result of an extensive consultation across the Victorian education community. They are standards based curriculum, and they are coherent so they show progression through the standards. They are able to be measured, assessed and reported on. At the primary level they are focused on developing the fundamental knowledge, skills and behaviours in literacy, numeracy and social and physical capacities. As we go up the schooling level, they also build on discipline based and interdisciplinary studies. But importantly the standards also include skills like communication and problem solving.

But the curriculum and student learning that we are focusing on will not give us the outcomes that we need unless we have teachers and leaders that can appropriately deliver our outcomes. So the Blueprint has a range of initiatives that focus on teacher and leader learning. I will not go into the extensive program of professional learning support we provide them, but I do have a document which includes the whole range of professional learning support we provide for beginning teachers right through to our high-performing experienced principals. We are providing extensive professional learning to bring our teachers up to where we need them to be. We are developing our principals to be effective leaders.

This brings me to the third area of reform in the Blueprint, which is driving a culture of continuous improvement. Probably one of the most significant initiatives within the suite of Blueprint initiatives relating to school improvement is our new school accountability and improvement framework, which provides an opportunity for the system to support schools that are at different stages of development. Our imperative is to reduce the variation in student performance and to significantly increase the expectations of all our learners. The Blueprint is a really significant reform agenda that requires sustained effort as it aims to drive significant cultural change across the education community.

Our Blueprint is complemented by Building Tomorrow's Schools Today, which is a program which is aimed at comprehensive school infrastructure renewal. It is about changing what our buildings look like; it is about making the buildings align with our education needs and not fitting the kids into the spaces that are there because they have been there for centuries. That is a little bit about our Building Tomorrow's Schools Today initiative.

I turn to the implications for teacher education. The role of schooling in equipping our students for the knowledge economy is more complex and the demands are much more varied. The challenges schools face require more flexible and creative responses. No-one leaving a school today with a static body of knowledge can be prepared for work and life, so how can we ensure that our future teacher and school leader knowledge base is contemporary? How can we build the knowledge base of our current and future teachers? As I indicated earlier, we have pursued a range of strategies to ensure that our graduate teachers are well prepared. We have a range of programs for our more experienced teachers and our school leaders, but a major

challenge still remains. If we are to promote lifelong learning and adaptive learners, the nature of teaching and teacher education must reflect those qualities. Teachers need to learn about and respond to diverse learning needs, they need to have a deep understanding of the learning process and they need to be able to use a greater number of assessment techniques. The challenge is how to ensure that our trainee teachers are taught the skills and knowledge and the techniques to maximise the learning opportunities for our students.

Before I pass on to Jim, who will talk about our submission, what I would like to emphasise is that what we are trying to do is to establish an education system which caters for every student and their different learning needs, a system that caters for all students regardless of their background and socioeconomic status. That is the context of our submission.

**Dr Tangas**—Just to add to what Dina was saying, the basic approach in our reform agenda goes to combining infrastructure, curriculum and human resources in innovative and productive ways. The message we are trying to get across—the message that Dina was trying to get across—is that we have an integrated approach to educational reform, particularly system reform, in Victoria. The VELS, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, are the curriculum side of it, Building Tomorrow's Schools Today is the infrastructure side and, of course, we have the workforce development initiatives, which we are primarily concerned with and will be talking about today. They form the other third of the triumvirate.

I am particularly concerned, as I indicated, with workforce issues. In Victoria, we are pleased to say that we have done quite a deal of work in terms of recruiting teachers to the system but also in engaging with universities to ensure that the graduates coming out of universities are the people whom we need and who have the qualities and attributes that are going to be useful for the system. One of our major initiatives in recent years has been the *Teacher supply and demand for government schools* statement which was released in February 2004 and which you may be aware of. This is the ministerial statement I am referring to. I am happy to leave this with you before we leave.

Our submission outlines the programs contained in this statement, and you may be familiar with these. I will just quickly remind you of the programs, and these are to do with teacher supply, in the main. We can talk a bit more about why we need programs such as these, but obviously ensuring that we have enough teachers in the right areas, at the right time and with the right sort of qualifications is the main objective. I will run through them. We have the Career Change Program, refresher training, the promotion of teaching, the Student Teacher Practicum Scheme, the Rural Retraining Program, the teaching scholarship scheme and the teacher graduate recruitment program. They are the main ones. This is not an exhaustive list, but it will give you some feel for what we are doing in the teacher supply area.

In particular, we are very proud of all of these programs, but the Career Change Program is a bit of a path breaker, because I do not believe there is an equivalent to the Career Change Program in Australia; there are overseas. As you may be aware, it aims to attract professionals from other industries into teaching. So they have been out there and worked in other professions, whether it is as an engineer or as a plumber, and, if they are keen on a teaching career, we provide the pathway for them through the Career Change Program. This is a very unique sort of program, because it basically provides on-the-job training, so the professional comes into the school and, with some preliminary preparation, undertakes teaching duties while they are

completing their teacher education qualifications. We have implemented two cohorts, at this stage, in 2005 and 2006, with a total of around 60 participants. The indications are that it is going very well, and it has been very well received by the public and the professionals out there and by the principals in schools, particularly rural and hard-to-staff schools. It is a bit of a flagship for us.

Refresher training is for qualified teachers who are out there but who are, for one reason or another, not teaching at the moment—and there can be any number of reasons for that. If they are considering a return to teaching, we provide the pathway for them—we provide refresher training. We bring them up to date in latest developments in curriculum teaching methods and changes in demographics et cetera. That is a fairly concentrated program, and it is now in its second year with an intake of about 300 each year. The promotion of teaching is pretty obvious, I suppose, but that means working with all the stakeholders, particularly universities, to make sure that they are aware of teaching as a career and the benefits of that career. We can talk about that a bit more later.

On the Student Teacher Practicum Scheme, again I am not sure whether there are equivalents of this, but I guess there are. We provide incentives for student teachers, generally in the final year of teacher education studies, to undertake a practicum in rural and remote areas. We offer in the area of $900, for example, for a three-week practicum as support for those students, because they are leaving their home basically to do a practicum in a remote area. We are finding that that is extremely popular. The Rural Retraining Program is aimed at retraining existing teachers in the system in subject areas which are difficult to staff. That is a three-year program which has now been running for two years, and we have a year to go. It has been very well received, and we are not going to have any problems achieving our putative targets.

The teaching scholarship scheme is the longest running of our programs. What we do there is offer a monetary incentive for student teachers in their final year of teaching to come to work with us, basically, but in difficult to fill vacancies or in difficult to staff geographical and subject areas. Again, we are finding that it has been very well received. An element of this which I should refer to, and it also is an element of the Career Change Program, is the retention bonus. So if you stay with us for three years, in the case of teaching scholarships, you will receive a monetary reward. It is the same with the Career Change Program, although that is after two years.

Finally, the Teacher Graduate Recruitment Program targets not necessarily graduates or teachers in their final year of teaching studies but recent graduates from the universities to come into the system. Graduates may want to go overseas or something like that after they have completed their studies, but when they come back we want to offer them a pathway, an entry to the teaching force. That is a brief summary of what we are on about. As you will note in those descriptions, a lot of these programs are targeted to graduate teachers, or to graduating teachers, which is a priority for us.

I will briefly mention a couple of other aspects of our submission, without going into the detail. The selection of students into teacher education courses is obviously an issue that needs to be considered and is being considered. Currently, universities rely mainly on the enter scores. We believe there is scope for perhaps considering additional selection measures, including interviews for example. We note that other professions use other types of psychometric tests,

including the UMAT, as you would all be aware, for entrance into medicine, veterinary science, physiotherapy and those sorts of disciplines. I think we need to give a bit of thought to our selection procedures.

Additionally, with regard to the structure, the form and the content of our teacher education courses, we think it is worth certainly discussing and considering the flexibility and the diversity in courses that are available to student teachers. I think this is becoming increasingly imperative because we have a variety of pathways into teaching now, and I mentioned the Career Change Program, for example. Your traditional pre-service teacher education course may not suit those sorts of people, so I think it is worth while for us to be looking at a range of course structures, course contents and course delivery, including online delivery and concentrated module based type delivery. Perhaps there is a case for 365 days per year delivery rather than a semester based type delivery. There are a whole lot of other issues of concern there, but I think it was worth pointing to that. One of the things that should be said is that there are pay-offs in doing that. We are going to attract a more diverse range of entrants into teaching, such as the career changers, with the probable favourable impact of their being more mature and more prepared for teaching, and that is going to have a pay-off in terms of retention and in the quality of teaching delivery in the long term.

Our submission points to certain perceived gaps in teacher education courses in regard to course content. In particular, we point to the need for pre-service teacher education courses to address not just the academic, professional and/or technical aspects of teaching but the interactive, interpersonal communication aspects. We are finding these are absolutely vital for new teachers, because that is the nature of the job. We would like to see a bigger emphasis on those attributes in teacher education courses. In addition, we would like to see a greater profile given to ICT, because ICT is having a huge impact in our system in teaching and learning, and we think that needs to be reflected in teacher education courses.

Also a priority for us is to ensure that the learning needs of a diverse range of students, as Dina mentioned, are met. For example, those from different cultural backgrounds or Indigenous backgrounds should be reflected in teacher education courses as well. As you are aware, in Victoria we have alternative pathways, particularly at the upper secondary level in the form of VCAL and VCE VET studies. We think teacher education courses are probably underweight in terms of the time or content ascribed to those areas. We would like to see those programs reflected more in teacher education courses.

Student teacher practicums have been a major initiative. I spoke about our own program, the Student Teacher Practicum Scheme, which targets rural placements. An issue has been raised in our state parliamentary inquiry report *Step Up, Step In, Step Out* in terms of the teacher practicum and its role in teacher preparation. One of the things to emerge from that discussion is the length of the teacher practicum. That is something we are considering at the moment—and obviously you would be—and it needs to be considered carefully. Aside from the length, one needs to consider the type of experience which a practicum entails, the structure of it and the range of experiences that teachers are exposed to. We are currently engaged in discussions with the Victorian Council of Deans of Education and the Victorian Institute of Teaching about this matter. In a sense, we are trying to reconceptualise the teaching practicum to bring it up to date with the needs of the system, not just our system but the private school system as well.

Finally, we would like to encourage further cooperation in the relationships between universities and schools and the system. We work very closely with the Victorian Council of Deans of Education and the Victorian Institute of Teaching. We work closely with principal and teacher associations. One of the recommendations coming out of this report is that perhaps the influence of practitioners in the field of teacher education should be increased. That is something that needs to be considered. What happens in teacher education in schools is that often practice runs ahead of theory, in many senses. We have a big system in Victoria and a lot of the things happening out there are very innovative. We think it is really important that universities and university lecturers keep in touch with what is happening in the field and then make sure that that is reflected in teacher education courses. I might leave it at that for now, and I am happy to take any questions.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. I welcome to the hearing our deputy chair, Rod Sawford. The first question that comes to mind is one that we have been battling with for some time and it concerns the crowded curriculum. We have received much advice on what to include in teacher training courses but far less advice on what perhaps could be left out to make way for the required inclusions. You have identified a number of issues relating to classroom management, interpersonal skills et cetera which you just mentioned. What are you thoughts on the current balance? You have put forward a document in relation to ongoing professional development. What are your thoughts on the mix between what is currently offered in the undergraduate course and what is proposed for professional development? Do you think that that mix is appropriate or do you think that perhaps some items that are currently being dealt with at an undergraduate level perhaps could be better dealt with during ongoing professional development? What are your thoughts on that in a restructure of the way lifetime learning for teachers is delivered?

**Ms Guest**—It is an interesting question. I think it needs to be looked at as a continuum. It is not what is not taught; it is how it is structured and fitted in. You have raised the issue of the crowded curriculum, for instance—what goes and what does not. That is not necessarily about what goes and what does not; it is about how it is reconfigured. For instance, you are dealing with class management issues in the context of a real situation. It is not, 'Now we're dealing with class management,' and 'Now we're dealing with literacy,' and 'Now we're dealing with whatever.' I would tackle the issue of the crowded curriculum really by rethinking how it is delivered.

Then there is what is delivered at the pre-service and post-service level. Most of our professional learning programs, as shown in the document I have handed out, are delivered by our universities. But it is almost as though it is a different breed. I will try to put that in other words. It is almost that they respond to our needs in terms of professional development because we set the parameters. 'This is what we want' and we contract them so that they deliver what we want. But, at the pre-service level, they are much more autonomous. As an employer, obviously we can say, 'We would like more of this or that,' or 'Could you rejig this?' but we do not have the control that we have with the post-service, because we are paying them to deliver it.

**CHAIR**—You buy it.

**Ms Guest**—We are buying these services. We can say, 'We want these lecturers to deliver, supported by practitioners.' We can provide the sort of mix that we would like in post-service education because we are setting the parameters.

**CHAIR**—Perhaps I can pose an example. Would you say that one approach perhaps would be to place a greater emphasis on classroom management at the undergraduate level so that, when the beginning teacher fronts the classroom, they are experienced in that area; but perhaps another area, such as dealing with students with special needs, could be better dealt with once that beginning teacher has had a year or two's experience under their belt?

**Mr Bugden**—Could I just add a point? One of the concerns from the employer perspective is that, on entering our employment, teachers be as fit for purpose as possible because, from day one, graduates take on a class of children with the full range of obligations. We need as much preparation as possible to have occurred prior to them graduating and our employing them. If that person is not ready, other resources within that school have to be taken away to prepare them. Whilst there may be elements around non-classroom parts of their role that perhaps could be taken out of pre-service and put into post-service, in terms of their preparedness to be in front of and teach a class of children, any of our graduates could have any one of a range of kids in that class. There is no way to say to them, 'You won't have a child with special needs,' or 'You won't have a child of diverse ethnic background.' The guarantee is that they will and that teacher will be in that classroom alone with that group of children. From the employer perspective, we have a duty of care to ensure that we employ only people who are fit for purpose. One of the real challenges for us is to make sure that the pre-service education contains everything a graduate needs to manage a classroom, understanding that there will be the full spectrum of kids in that classroom.

**Ms Guest**—Specialisation could be handled post service. If you want to specialise as an English as a Second Language teacher or a teacher for students with disabilities, you can do that specialisation post-service. But you do need, as Mr Bugden indicated, to have the skills to be able to support the needs of all kids.

**Ms BIRD**—Perhaps I can follow up on that issue. There seems to be an inherent contradiction going on in all of the submissions—it is in yours as well—in that there is a recognition that, because the demographics of students in schools is so much more challenging than it was, there is a value to mature age people coming in. That is reflected in your Career Change program and so forth. In addition, when we talk to mature age students, they often reflect greater satisfaction with their choice. At the same time, we are asking that the course be made longer and that more be put into it.

The reality, mature age students tell us, is that they are trying to hold families together, and they cannot take a long time out of the earning workforce. Particularly I notice, for the graduate diploma, that your submission makes reference to the one-year diploma being under review. I take on board what you are saying—that you will have a classroom and you will be bound to get children with diverse needs—but the reality of providing any sort of serious preparation to deal with a kid in a wheelchair in your classroom or a kid from a particular cultural group that you did not happen to cover when you were at university is always going to be there. I think the real challenge that I am coming to for our report is: what do you really mean by 'job ready', and is it

viable for universities alone these days, or should we be looking at an internship model, something after the graduation point?

You can probably tell from my tone that I am coming to a very strong view that employer bodies also will have to buy into some sort of internship program, or—as the chair said—we are just going to keep lumping stuff back into the curriculum, making courses longer. I have a son doing science, and most of the people in the course who have come straight from school have dropped out. It is the mature age people—and by 'mature' I mean 21 and over—who are staying, but they are also going, 'Jeez, it's hard not earning money,' and that sort of thing. You can see the dilemma I mean.

**Mr Bugden**—On the issue of our Career Change Program: that is what I would describe as probably the intern model, where they are employed by us and we provide study leave for them to complete their training. That is possible across a number of positions. In terms of our graduate intake, which might be as high as 2,500 per annum, and the employer group taking on the responsibility of having that number of persons in their schools who are not actually qualified at that point and then providing parents with the confidence that their children are getting a good education and they are not being put off to the trainees to get their education, that is a very difficult balance.

As I understand it, the University of Melbourne is pursuing intern programs and those types of things where those people will work in schools, but they are not paid. That may suit the young graduate types who are working at McDonald's or somewhere for income, but it is unlikely to suit our IT professionals who say, 'I want to go and work in a small country town as a teacher in IT, and I'm prepared to take pay cuts to do that but, hello, I do have to live and feed my family, so I need an income. I need a job.' So whilst employers can accommodate a certain element of that need, and we are hopeful of expanding our Career Change Program to try and make it as big as we can afford, the fact is that we could still only afford way too little to make it a mainstream way of education.

I would argue that there is still a need. The study part of the graduation has to be very strong on the classroom part of the training. They need to be ready going in because the schools are not going to be able to provide that 100 per cent support to those individuals as they go through their first and second year of teaching.

**Ms BIRD**—You are saying that a variety of models is critical.

**Mr Bugden**—That is what we advocate. That is what Victoria advocates a lot about the whole education system—that is, the devolution of the system creates diversity and that means that different things happen in different places, and similarly with teacher education. There should be 10 different ways of becoming a graduating teacher.

**CHAIR**—With regard to the devolution—and you mentioned mentoring and also the issues of partnerships with schools—is there strong support now from a range of principals who essentially are in many ways far more autonomous? Is that working well for you?

**Ms Guest**—The mentoring program?

**CHAIR**—Mentoring and the partnerships with schools that have developed between universities and various schools. How is that travelling forward?

**Ms Guest**—The mentoring program is certainly working extremely well, and Jim will pick up on the other. In terms of the mentoring program, one of our initiatives, which is the Performance and Development Culture initiative, the Blueprint, actually requires schools to go through a process of self-assessment over a number of years, and mentoring is one part of it: having mentoring not only for beginning teachers but as a means of supporting teachers in the school. We actually work in conjunction with the Victorian Institute of Teaching to provide mentor training for our teachers, who will then support beginning teachers to become fully registered with VIT but also take on the mentoring of other teachers in their schools. All of our schools are required to embrace mentoring, and by 2008 all our schools have to be accredited in terms of Performance and Development Culture and, as I have indicated, mentoring is one component of that. Do you want to talk about partnerships with schools?

**Dr Tangas**—Picking up the points in relation to pre-service education and starting in the system, induction and mentoring is obviously a big component of that, because we attempt through that program to integrate the experience of the student teacher with their experience as a beginning teacher. Part of that integration, of course, relies on the professional standards that the VIT oversee. They guide, to a certain extent, the activities in the pre-service education courses, and they also guide their experiences in terms of the induction and mentoring of the beginning teachers. So there is an attempt to integrate as far as possible, notwithstanding what Tony said, that it is in fact the responsibility of the universities to produce teachers who are fit for purpose. The other thing I would say is that we absolutely agree that lengthening courses is not necessarily the answer. In fact, we are looking in some cases to compact them and to make them more concentrated to suit people, like career changers, who are in the circumstances of having financial commitments, families and so forth and not having the flexibility that students might have, as Tony mentioned.

We do have good examples of partnerships in Victoria. It is something that we encourage between schools and universities. One thing that we have noticed is that the principals who see the opportunities in our teacher supply initiatives, for example, are very active in seeking out graduate teachers or graduating teachers. They will go to the universities and say: 'This is what we're looking for. What have you got?' They will use the Student Teacher Practicum Scheme, for example. If you are a principal in the country and you have an eye to recruitment, you will be aware of the incentives which are available to student teachers. So you will say to the university: 'Is there anyone interested? Come along. We want you here.' There are real pay-offs because those student teachers, in many cases, will return as teachers to that school. The entrepreneurial, innovative principals can see the opportunities and are beginning to work in that way anyway. We have examples. Victoria University works very closely with a cluster of schools around Mildura, in probably the remotest part of our state, and provides a large number of their students—

**Mr SAWFORD**—The people from Mildura would not like to hear you say that!

**Dr Tangas**—In terms of distance, I meant.

**Ms Guest**—From Melbourne.

**CHAIR**—Melbourne is remote from Mildura.

**Dr Tangas**—Deakin University is working with a cluster of schools in the Barwon South-Western region as well. There are examples there, and we are certainly encouraging them, and that is part of the discussion that we are having at the moment with the Victorian Council of Deans of Education and the Victorian Institute of Teaching in relation to how we can accelerate that sort of partnership. As I said earlier, it has pay-offs in terms of the relationship between practitioners in the field and lecturers.

**Mr SAWFORD**—I have one comment on Tony's comment about the devolved diversity that is happening in Victoria. That is an admirable move, in a sense, and it is quite a distinct change from what has happened with the constraining unilateral policies of the last 30 years. So that is a move in the right direction. But my specific comments are about the Career Change Program. In tech studies right across Australia there is a huge problem, in that most of the age group are in their 50s, from what I understand, in most states that we have been to. They are on the cusp of retirement, so there is a huge problem confronting all state departments of education in terms of replacing those teachers. I think the Career Change Program that you have initiated is fantastic, but I worry about the 61. It is a very small number. I would have thought that, even in Victoria, you would need 10 times that many, maybe even twenty-fold that number. What is the intention over the next three or four years in terms of a quantum for that particular group?

**Mr Bugden**—The Career Change Program started, as Jim indicated, as one of the initiatives under the teacher supply and demand statement. The original proposal was to fund a single intake of 30 and review the success of it. We actually had no idea how it would be, whether it would be attractive et cetera. It turned out to be oversubscribed. There was much more interest in that particular pathway than we thought was there, so it has been extended now to a second intake, which is why it is still only the 61. The task before us now is to do a better review of that and to persuade both our department and our government that it is worth investing some money in that program. Obviously we would encourage the Commonwealth to give us money, and we will spend it wisely for you.

**CHAIR**—We have heard that line before.

**Mr Bugden**—But certainly the people at this table believe it is worthy of significant expansion. Victoria University have been running an excellent program for us. They run a summer school to prepare the teachers for their first preparation with us, when they are still not qualified, and then they do their studies to become fully qualified. At the moment it is still at the stage of us doing a proper review of it and actually being able to persuade those who provide the funds that it is a program and a viable pathway.

**Mr SAWFORD**—I will come back to that in a moment. The other specific question I would like to ask before asking a general one is: in the previous inquiry that we had in this committee on the education of boys, one of the things that shocked us was going around to secondary schools and having principals tell us that no boys in their school wanted to be a teacher. Like in Scot's College, where there are 3,000 boys and not one wanted to be a teacher. The reasons the boys put up were: lack of remuneration, lack of status and fear of child protective behaviours. They were the three main ones. There were others. That is a problem in terms of getting males into teaching. But there is also another problem in the sense that, allied to that, compared to

other occupations teachers' salaries in the last 20 or 30 years have dropped between 10 per cent and 20 per cent. So those boys knew exactly what they are saying. Actually, the remuneration has dropped alarmingly compared to similar occupations a long time ago. Have you come across this? Have you dealt with this problem in terms of attracting males, particularly into the areas where there are huge losses—maths, science, tech studies and language?

**Mr Bugden**—In terms of the gender issue, primarily our experience is that it is a primary phenomena. In our secondary workforce it is generally a 45-55 balance approximately. In the primary workforce it is approximately 75-25 and getting worse. So the hardest group of males to attract is, in fact, the primary male teacher. The issues there are that those individuals are not entering at the graduate level. There are a whole range of reasons, and it is not a new phenomena. The make-up of our primary workforce is as it was in 1870. It has been predominantly a female occupation for all of that time, and a range of initiatives have been put in place to try and attract men. The interesting phenomena, though, is that when we go to the principal level of primary schools the balance is reversed. We have had quite a strong focus on trying to encourage as many women as we are able to take on the role of principal in primary schools. We are not as concerned about that in the primary sector in terms of the balance, because the balance for us is not shifting greatly. It is of concern in schools where there is no male primary teacher at all, and we try and focus on that as best we can.

**Mr SAWFORD**—That is what they say. That sends the message to the young boy, 'I am not going to work in a total female staff.' That is what they say. They say that at age 14 and 15. They are not saying that as undergraduates. They understand that that is not a viable proposition for them.

**Mr Bugden**—Our information is that that is not driven by a remuneration conditions of service issue but is driven by a perception of that occupation not being a male occupation.

**Mr SAWFORD**—But the remuneration has fallen.

**Mr Bugden**—Interestingly, according to our information, the graduate entry of teachers is third or fourth in terms of all occupations, so we have done a lot of work in the last five years.

**Mr SAWFORD**—We are also losing a lot after the first three or four years too.

**Mr Bugden**—That is also said, for instance, in an article in this morning's *Herald-Sun*. Our resignation rate is 1.6 per cent across a workforce of approximately 37,000 teachers. We are not losing the numbers that are being reported. Most of our separations are in fact retirements as the workforce ages. The bigger concern for us is making sure we have enough to resupply the population going at the top—

**Mr SAWFORD**—I have a general question, to cut to the chase, on Commonwealth-state funding. By the way, we admire that report from the parliamentary committee. I will come to the government response in a minute. Much of the government response was that it agrees with everything in principle. We all know what that is code for: it means, 'Yes, okay, but we're not going to do anything about it.' I think there needs to be some specification in terms of what are Commonwealth and what are state responsibilities and this little dance that goes on between the two should be stopped. In regard to the Career Change Program, in terms of encouraging

university undergraduates, and career change people, to consider maths-science, languages and tech studies—just taking those three; there are other areas, of course—I think that is a Commonwealth responsibility and I think the funding to improve the initiatives that you have taken up in Victoria ought to be supported by the Commonwealth.

In your government response I think there was a cop-out on a whole range of issues for which funding is clearly the responsibility of the employing body—the Victorian state government. I was a bit disappointed, to be quite honest, by the government response. Even though it is a positive response, in reality it does not do anything. In the words of the *Jerry Maguire* movie, 'Show me the money.' There are a lot of suggestions as to what the Commonwealth should take up, some of which I agree with, and I think this committee will agree with. But I would put it to you that the Victorian government has to come clean, too, and show a little bit more responsibility in taking on some of those issues. They talk about partnerships and practicum between the employing body, the schools and the universities. I think that is not a Commonwealth responsibility; it is a state responsibility. You should not be dancing around on the outside trying to farm it off.

There are definitely Commonwealth responsibilities in funding that are lacking and I think there ought to be a much stronger move by the state education departments in pushing the Commonwealth, and even pushing this committee, to take on responsibilities where national leadership is clearly needed. But in order to do that and to stop this silly state-federal stuff, which everybody is sick and tired of hearing in regard to health, education and welfare, the state government has to take a little bit more responsibility, too.

**Mr Bugden**—In terms of the practicum issue, for instance, Victoria has a larger proportion of students in the non-government sector because of the historical way in which the Victorian education system grew.

**Mr SAWFORD**—I understand that.

**Mr Bugden**—We have around 64 or 65 per cent of the students and the workforce of teachers in Victoria. However, Victorian government schools take approximately 75 to 80 per cent of the practicums; that is, the Victorian government sector is taking the vast majority of all practicum places for students. The comment that the Victorian government is not playing its part as an employer to meet that part of the equation is not a fair comment because Victoria does take the lion's share of the practicum places. The issue with the practicum, though, is that the Commonwealth funds the student supervision component of that element, and those rates have remained unchanged since 1990. It is $12. If we could encourage an increase in those rates, which comes through the universities via the Commonwealth, that would do much more to encourage teachers in the private sector and other parts to take on that role because there is a tangible reward for taking that responsibility.

**CHAIR**—Do you think, though, there are other ways to reward those teachers—self-esteem, professional advancement et cetera—rather than a straight financial reward?

**Mr Bugden**—Yes. We have been strongly pursuing the mentor scheme, which we think has been relatively successful.

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—Can I just add to the chair's comment to say that a lot of the evidence we have taken suggests that teachers were not looking for the financial benefit of $12; even if you doubled it to $24, it would not really make much difference.

**Mr Bugden**—That is true. In Victoria, unlike in any other state, there is a national industrial award covering the payment of that supervision rate. We ran a case in the Industrial Relations Commission to have the arrangements varied for Victoria to enable the payment not to be made to individuals but to the schools and for the schools to enter into direct arrangements with the universities for professional development and other like services. We understand that a number of schools have entered those arrangements with the Commonwealth.

However, there are other teachers who say, 'I won't do it unless you pay me.' Teachers, like a lot of other employees in a lot of places, say, 'The amount you pay me is a direct recognition of me, and that is the only recognition I can see you tangibly giving me.' Whether it helps or not, I actually share your view. I think most teachers do their craft not for the money. We find from research that if you pay people the right amount, they do not notice it and they do not feel any recognition. It seems just right; it is sort of background. However, they notice it when you do not pay them correctly. The issue is to get that payment right, so it goes into the background and it does not become the focus of the conversation.

**Mr SAWFORD**—There are three elements to this: status, remuneration and time. Dina mentioned the mentoring. It seems to me that if you combine the three elements that teachers tell us—for goodness sake, let us start listening to the teachers. They will mention those three things. For some teachers it is time, not the money, as Michael has; but basically overall it is a combination of all three. If you are going to be involved in supervising teaching, and do it properly, you need time, you need remuneration and you need a recognition of status. There have been times in the past when we have been able to achieve that, but we have lost that in the last 30 years. As we discovered with the devolved diversity that has happened in Victoria, we need to rediscover some of the things that have worked in the past—not to go back to the past and live in a world that no longer exists, but I think that if you do not consider those three things, you miss out.

**Mr Bugden**—I can give an example on the time element, because that is often talked about, and I am speaking here as an employer. In Victoria, the regulated maximum face-to-face for a secondary teacher is 20 hours. We have surveyed, since 2001, the workload of all teachers in Victoria to try to measure how that is travelling. In the 2000 survey, the average face-to-face of a secondary teacher was 18 hours. In 2005, the average was 16.5 hours.

That significant reduction in face-to-face is for a number of reasons not related to practicum. That is, the agenda that Dina has referred to has encouraged principals to make much more time available within the curriculum for teachers to attend to their own professional development, to attend to understanding their profession, and so on. But in terms of providing further release, it is a significant cost for every hour of time release that is provided, because you have got to fund the full replacement of that person. The question is whether 16½ hours is a fair ask on secondary teachers. At the moment, Victoria believes it is, and therefore the funding levels we have got built in are about right. I am not sure where other states are in relation to that, but I would say Victoria is reasonably well placed in that area.

**Mr SAWFORD**—What about the primary teachers? What is the face-to-face ratio there?

**Mr Bugden**—The face-to-face maximum there is 22½ hours. There was a case run in the Industrial Relations Commission in 1996, which ran for six months, where the evidence and the differences between primary and secondary were run. A secondary teacher will typically have between 125 and 150 students that they have responsibility for. A primary teacher will typically have 25 students. So there is a differential in relation to how much face-to-face time is spent. A secondary teacher will have more transitions between year levels, et cetera, and significantly more preparation and correction, because of the number of students that they are managing. In terms of the 22½ hours versus 20 hours, certainly in the commission's judgement at that time, that was a fair differential.

**Mr SAWFORD**—It was 22½ or it was 15?

**Mr Bugden**—No, 22½ is the maximum. We have not been surveying the primary studies over that period. The focus has been on secondary. This is the first year where we are now conducting that same study for primary teachers to start a longitudinal study of that.

**Mr FAWCETT**—A lot of the evidence we have received from student teachers in terms of some of the things they fear and some of the reasons they leave, come down to classroom management-type things—not in terms of structuring lessons, but in terms of crowd control, almost. Some of the terms of reference of the actual inquiry go to issues of bullying, dysfunctional families, et cetera, and how do we prepare teachers for that. In terms of de-crowding curriculum, and looking at your model of essentially workplace training for career change people, what is the attitude of the department towards providing additional resources in the school environment? By that I mean providing people like school chaplains and counsellors to, if you like, shoulder the main load of working with the people who have been identified as having substance abuse issues or dysfunctional family issues, et cetera. They would come alongside the teacher to give them ongoing mentoring and development, in the context, with that more dedicated support, as opposed to trying to make them experts at teachers college and then throwing them to the wolves when they get to the school. Is there a structured approach or thinking along those lines?

**Ms Guest**—There are welfare officers in both primary and secondary schools, but that will not take away the onus of teachers needing to manage the kids in their classroom. They cannot become experts at university in the teacher training side of it. We are advocating that they be exposed to and aware of those sorts of issues. You will never, unless you learn it on the job, really know how to handle difficult kids, difficult parents, difficult colleagues and so on. You develop that through experience, but you need to have some basic knowledge about those issues.

Student teachers should be exposed to things that could be part of a practicum and counted as a practicum. They should experience a whole range of things. They might not actually be teaching—they might be going to parent teacher nights or shadowing a teacher or a counsellor who is dealing with difficult kids or whatever. The idea of the practicum needs to be broadened to give student teachers exposure to and understanding of what real teachers face when they are out there. I do not know if that answers your question. It is not an in-depth thing that we expect universities and teacher training institutions to provide—they can't.

**Mr FAWCETT**—I accept that. In addressing the perceptions of and, perhaps, fears expressed by some of the students, are you looking at the efficacy of teacher training? Has the department looked at outcomes of the welfare officers? A statement might say: 'We have them in primary and secondary schools—tick the box.' On an ongoing basis do you look at the effectiveness of those positions and how they interact with staff in terms of mutual support and training?

**Dr Tangas**—This is an important point. We are trying to depart from the paradigm of the teacher alone in the classroom. That is not what we are on about. The mentoring, induction and mentoring program is a component of that. We are also encouraging a team approach to teaching: 'You are not alone, you are working with a team of co-professionals and colleagues.' In addition, we are looking at new configurations of teaching and learning, not necessarily the teacher versus the class in many cases. This is the way we are going. It takes time. This is a difficult reform. We refer to this in the Blueprint. The Effective Schools Framework and other research we are doing are aimed at introducing that sort of reform across the system. Whether a school has a student welfare coordinator or a guidance officer, a speech therapist or a psychologist, it is bringing to bear on the issue and assisting the student or students concerned in an integrated way.

**Ms Guest**—To pick up on your point, there are primary and secondary welfare officers, guidance counsellors and so on, but responsibility for doing the monitoring is at the regional level because they know the schools—the schools go to their region. If a particular school has constant bullying and needs help, the school is provided with assistance to deal with that. They are not left to deal with it on their own. The region provides all sorts of support.

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—A question on the suggested changes to the selection criteria, particularly in regard to having an aptitude and/or an interview. While it makes perfect sense to do it, you could equally apply it to a lot of other professions. What is the evidence that there is a problem that this would address? Are you trying to get into the mix people with particular attributes, who would have missed out, or are you looking to keep some people out of the mix who, historically, have got in on the basis of their TER?

**Dr Tangas**—I think there are cases where people take up teaching and they are patently not suited to it; really, that serves no-one's interest. I think the investment is worthwhile in that regard.

**CHAIR**—Investment by who?

**Dr Tangas**—I would say that we are advocates of practitioner involvement in selection; however, that is in the domain of universities. It is their business and we do not want to meddle in it. We are happy to assist as far as we can but, from a university point of view, there are big pay-offs in terms of getting the selection process right. Hopefully, your attrition rates will go down. And, hopefully, at the end of a teaching course you will produce someone that is very employable and very able. That has got to be a plus for the university, I would have thought, and something that they would be interested in. I would think that it is worth the extra investment. Having said that there are those who are not suited to teaching—and it is a waste of resources all round if they get to the stage where they try it and leave—we are also on about improving the standard. We want teachers who are suited, who are able and who, at the end of it, lift the standard of teaching in schools.

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—This is not expressing a view, but is it possible that by changing the method you may have a continued issue with people finding during their training years that they are not able to do the work? Is that a possibility? They might be suited in a personality sense to teaching, and they might be really great with young people, but perhaps they are not able to do the work that it takes to be a science teacher or a teacher of mathematics.

**Ms Guest**—It would be interesting to see research showing that because, for instance, when I applied for teaching, we had an interview process as well as our school results, so it would interesting to compare the attrition—

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—Yes it would.

**Ms Guest**—of the group that did go through the interview process as opposed to the attrition rates that we are experiencing now.

**Mr SAWFORD**—There is some research available that would suggest that in terms of a basic teacher, if the teacher is interested and has a love of teaching, they are more likely to survive and be successful than a person who has the skill and the knowledge of teaching but hates it. That research is available internationally.

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—I do not require an answer, but you made a comment, Dr Tangas, about practice being ahead of theory and that there are some innovations going on in Victoria. I do not expect you to be able to do it now, and there will be a time issue, but I would like to know what they are. Perhaps in the future you might be able to provide the committee with information on some of your flagship teachers and the innovations that you are aware of. Mostly out of curiosity, I would like to see that information.

**Dr Tangas**—I will quickly mention one thing—that is, our Leading Schools Fund, which aims to encourage innovative practices in our schools. It is a major program that we are beginning to see the results of. Basically, what we are doing, as I mentioned earlier, is combining in different ways the infrastructure, the human resources and the curriculum, so that it is a relatively new program. That is not, by any means, the only innovative part of what we are doing, but it is a good example.

**Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON**—Perhaps you might be able to later provide documents to the committee; I think they would be appreciated.

**Dr Tangas**—Certainly.

**Mr Bugden**—We would appreciate that opportunity. But one of the benefits of the devolved system we run is that principals make choices around how they develop their teachers. A number of principals choose to spend their money by sending cohorts of their teachers overseas to explore a variety of different ways in a European or American context, and then bring those practices back to their school, so that a lot of variety in different classroom practices develops. Within Victoria, there are frameworks by which they must deliver student outcomes and standards and that sort of stuff; but, in terms of how they are managing their practice, I believe there are a number of schools where they are practising the craft in ways which in other parts they probably are not. I cannot bring to mind examples, but I am sure—

**Ms Guest**—Glen Waverley is one.

**Mr Bugden**—There is Glen Waverley Secondary College and Wooranna Park Primary School in the Dandenong area of Victoria that I have heard of. I have not been to see it myself.

**Ms Guest**—There is a whole range of them

**Mr Bugden**—The team-teaching concept is the idea that one teacher might have responsibility for four classes and that those four classes are supported by a range of different techniques.

**Mr SAWFORD**—We did that 36 years ago, didn't we?

**Mr Bugden**—Yes. So I think they are there.

**CHAIR**—We have heard evidence from a range of universities which have indicated that they believe the resources spent on an interview process do not warrant a sufficient return. They have indicated that their preference is to remain with the TER system. You may care to comment on that when you write to us.

**Mrs MARKUS**—What are the variables, for example, with the schools where there are no male teachers? You may not be able to say it today, but in what percentage of schools would that be the case? What factors would contribute towards that? Has it got to do with location? What information would you have regarding that?

**Mr Bugden**—It is primarily small schools. Victoria has approximately 280 quite small primary schools with only two or three teachers in them. We still have, I think, about 40 schools where there are one or two teachers. So obviously there are probably 30 schools with only a female teacher. It is primarily a size issue. Once the primary schools grow to a larger size it is different; to my knowledge, there are no big primary schools that have an all-female population. So they are primarily small schools.

In Victoria we talk about remoteness, but remoteness in Victoria is quite a different concept from remoteness in Western Australia and New South Wales because we are a relatively compact state. Mildura, for instance, is a seven-hour drive away, whereas in WA it is probably a three-day drive to get from some of their schools back to the capital city. So there are those issues.

The other big issue with those small schools is that it is placing female teaching staff in a small community—primarily, young females—without any social infrastructure around them. They are primarily the issues we deal with in those schools. I am not aware of any educational evidence around differential outcomes for the kids in those schools. Dina might be able to comment on that. Primarily the issues we are facing are more around the person, the environment they are in and whether they have enough support around them. For instance, if they are living in a timber town they might be one of only two or three young women in that town, so it creates a lot of issues for that person and makes those jobs hard to recruit to.

**Ms Guest**—I can probably follow it up and find out if there is any difference in student outcomes. Is that what you are getting at?

**Mrs MARKUS**—Yes, that is sort of what I am looking at, but I am particularly wanting to see what variables contribute towards that.

**Mr Bugden**—I think that mainly geography and size create that phenomena.

**Dr Tangas**—We should say that the proportion of male teachers in primary schools reflects the proportion of males in teaching courses coming through. It is really a national average, so it is reflected across other states.

**Mr SAWFORD**—But there are some differences compared with 30 years ago. We are not getting males and females—not just males—from disadvantaged areas into universities and into teaching. We are not getting them from particular ethnic groups, newly arrived, that are under a bit of siege in this country. They are not there. And they are certainly not from an Indigenous community or from remote, rural and provincial communities. There was a deliberate attempt 30- or 40-odd years ago to accommodate a lot of those people into teaching. It is the same question, basically. Universities in Australia, with only one or two exceptions, are not deliberately targeting those cohorts, and that is part of the problem.

**Mrs MARKUS**—You mentioned the rate of teachers leaving the profession. What was that percentage?

**Mr Bugden**—I think it is 1.6 per cent.

**Mrs MARKUS**—And that mainly tends to be those who are at retirement age?

**Mr Bugden**—Our actual attrition rate is around four to 4½ per cent, but the article in this morning's paper is focused on people resigning from the profession. We were asked to extract resignations away from all the other separations, and it was quite a low number.

**Mrs MARKUS**—That may mean my question is probably invalid. My question is could you identify how come that is lower? That is not the message that we are getting from other states.

**Mr Bugden**—Actually, in responding to that story, we were asked that very question, why is it we are retaining them so well, and I would like to say I knew. It is probably because we are such an outstanding employer of choice, but the truth is I am not sure we actually truly understand why that—

**Mr SAWFORD**—What is your casual rate?

**Mr Bugden**—In Victoria we have casual placement teachers for vacancies of up to six weeks, so they are primarily leave replacement type jobs. The other indicator is the fixed term versus ongoing employment.

**Mrs MARKUS**—I suppose the direction I am heading in is often we ask what is contributing towards a high percentage of people leaving, but do we ever ask what is contributing towards people staying? If there is something happening in your state that is different to others, the question ought to be asked.

**Ms Guest**—I think it is the range of professional learning experiences we are offering them. For instance, our Teacher Professional Leave initiative provides for between four to 10 weeks of leave for teachers. It is a fairly new initiative, it is only in its third year, but it is really having a significant impact on the workforce. They are feeling rejuvenated, they are feeling valued because they are seeing an investment in their learning. The four to 10 weeks is a significant time.

**CHAIR**—It is a big concession.

**Ms Guest**—That is right, it is.

**Mr Bugden**—The other issue about the workforce dynamic from our perspective is that—I have a belief that it is valuable when teachers do teach with us and leave and maybe do other things and come back to us, rather than the traditional model where they start at 18 and finish at 65 and have done nothing other than that. One of the famous comments is how long—

**Mr SAWFORD**—That is right, it is not always a negative, is it? If teachers are going on to better and bigger things, it is actually a plus for teaching.

**Ms Guest**—The new graduating teachers, they go overseas and teach and they come back.

**Ms CORCORAN**—I have three questions. I have to leave in about four minutes because I have to be in the House, so I am going to ask the three right off. I might have to leave while you answer them, which is very rude, but I will read it in *Hansard*. I do not have any other choice. My first question is about numbers. I am intrigued because in the beginning of your submission, you talked about how you employ 37,000-odd teachers—I mean 37,000 teachers, none of them are odd—and you advertise vacancies of something like 12½ thousand. Prima facie, this means 30 per cent of your workforce is turning over, and that is not my observation of schools in Victoria. I guess that is just teachers moving around a bit. Do not answer it yet, because I have to get my other two questions out; I will get into trouble from the Chair.

I am interested in your career change program. You have said before in Victoria, the principals do most of their own hiring and that sort of stuff. I am intrigued about how a career change person gets to be in a school. Do they go to university first and then enrol, and then that enables them to be interviewed? Or does a school say, 'We'd love you to come, but you need to get yourself enrolled down the road,' that sort of stuff. What is that path?

My third question goes back to what Louise was saying. You said earlier, if I have understood you correctly, that you have a retention bonus available after three years, which suggests to me that when you were putting that in place, it must have been there for a very long time, you were actually addressing the problem. I am assuming there was a problem with retention, which you have addressed. Is it working? It would suggest the answer is money too, I do not know. What happens with those? Is there an exit at year four?

**Mr Bugden**—In answer to the first question, a lot of our vacancies are leave replacements—women on family leave, long service leave, that sort of stuff. We have around 6,000 to 8,000 teachers employed fixed term behind our other teachers absent on leave and other things. We have quite a high vacancy rate in terms of filling that sort of a job. An interesting statistic, we

now have recruitment online, and we have been monitoring the number of people applying for our jobs to see whether it makes a difference.

**Ms CORCORAN**—That is a whole other issue, which I will not follow up. There are a few problems in there.

**Mr Bugden**—When we used paper based advertisements, we were getting 73,000 applications for our jobs annually. With e-recruitment, it is now 170,000 applications. So the appetite for people to be applicants for jobs, as long as we can get it out in the right way, has tripled. The number of jobs does not reflect the apparent attrition rate, mainly because a lot of internal shifts go on with leave and other things. In terms of career change—

**Dr Tangas**—The career change relates to that response because we have a devolved education system and we have recruitment online. The way it works is that schools that are interested in taking on a career changer advertise a position. Interestingly, a lot of tech studies teachers are recruited through that means. The school advertises and the professionals apply to the school directly, so they perform the selection process.

**Ms CORCORAN**—Would the advertisement say, 'You do not have to be a qualified teacher'?

**Dr Tangas**—Yes. All of the information is there, so everyone knows what they are doing, but it is a matter for the school as to whom they select. We do the advertising and that sort of thing to promote the program. We do not have an issue in terms of attracting. Does that answer the question?

**Ms CORCORAN**—Yes, that helps. Thank you.

**Mr Bugden**—If you take a statewide view rather than a government or non-government view, the retention bonus is more about them staying in our government system rather than going into the Catholic or the independent system, because they are now a trained teacher and they are mobile. It is more about trying to retain them to teach in the government system because we have invested in it, which is a bit parochial at the end of the day. That is the prime reason it was there and it was also to avoid people saying, 'This not for me. I am moving on.'

**CHAIR**—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. Certainly the Victorian government report, as the deputy chair has mentioned, adds a great deal to the debate and is one that we find of considerable value. We may contact you if we need further information and we look forward to receiving that material as quickly as possible.

**Mr Bugden**—We thank the committee for giving us the time to make this presentation; we appreciate it.

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Sawford**):

That this committee authorises publication, including publication on the parliamentary database, of the proof transcript of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.

**Committee adjourned at 10.57 am**