

Council of the Reciprocating Surveyors Boards of  
Australia and New Zealand  
(CRSBANZ)

Secretariat:  
PO Box 810, Spring Hill QLD 4004

PH: (07) 38397744  
FAX: (07)3839 8341  
Email: survbrdq@bigpond.net.au

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

### **Review of Mutual Recognition**

The Council is pleased to respond to the call for submissions on Mutual Recognition.

The Council of the Reciprocating Surveyors Boards of Australia and New Zealand (CRSBANZ) is the body representing all the land survey jurisdictions of Australia and New Zealand, with the primary objective of ensuring sufficient and common standards of survey practice and registration/licensing, to enable full reciprocity (mutual recognition) between jurisdictions.

### **History**

Surveyors initially met in 1892, 'To deal with questions of reciprocity in the issue of Certificates to Surveyors – Surveys of Land and the adoption of the Hour Zone system of time'.

The meeting was recorded as the 'Intercolonial Conference of Surveyors', and attendees came to Melbourne from New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

The Conference (1892) unanimously adopted '...reciprocal recognition by each Colony...' and agreed for each Colony to establish '...Board of Examiners...' and that '... regulations for examination of Surveyors ... and the standard of efficiency required throughout the Australian Colonies, should be identical'.

Mutual Recognition was established in that '...the license to practice as a Surveyor in any Colony should include the right to practise both as a Surveyor of Crown Lands, and as a Surveyor under the Real Property and Transfer of Land Acts'.

To-day the Council is comprised of all the 'Surveyors Boards' (jurisdictions) established under Legislation in the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and New Zealand.

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The voluntary reciprocal arrangements between the jurisdictions was acknowledged and enshrined through the Mutual Recognition legislation.

### **Strategic Matters for the Council**

The Council has the following goals, all of which address in some manner, the concept of mutual recognition.

- Maintain a strategic overview of the implications of surveying reforms as they relate to regulations and competencies required of surveyors.
- Maintain a strategic outlook for the occupational regulation of surveyors.
- Develop standards for training and competency assessment.
- Maintain a strategic outlook for the standards of surveying practice and best practice methods.
- Develop generic guidelines for land/boundary surveys.

Where appropriate, stakeholders such as the Australia New Zealand Land Information Council (ANZLIC), Intergovernmental Committee on Survey and Mapping (ICSM), Institution of Surveyors Australia Inc (ISA) and the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors (NZIS) are consulted by Council.

### **Submission Responses**

#### **The Broad Objectives**

All jurisdictions register land (boundary/cadastral) surveyors. Some jurisdictions operate general registers and grant endorsements for specialised surveying functions – hydrographic, engineering, mining and so on.

There are no barriers for surveyors (cadastral) moving between jurisdictions. Reciprocity was introduced in 1892. It has worked effectively and efficiently since it's introduction.

The Council does not have available to it statistics on the number of surveyors whom hold registration in more than one jurisdiction.

It is not possible to quantify the magnitude of costs and benefits of reciprocity. The decision to hold multiple registrations is made by the individual registrant, based on work opportunities and the requirements associated with maintaining competence in those jurisdictions.

The States determine the minimum competence standards which the candidate is required to meet in order to become registered as a surveyor and also to obtain endorsement as a land surveyor. The Mutual Recognition legislation enables the land surveyor to apply for registration and immediately commence 'to undertake surveys in another jurisdiction on production of an agreed to (CRSBANZ)' letter of accreditation.

It is the prerogative of the Surveyors Board in each jurisdiction to ensure that the survey work is undertaken to the required standard. The Registrar of Titles in each jurisdiction determines the content and format of title or subdivision plans depicting the survey work

To this end, there is no impediment and/or unintended effect, the cadastral surveyor must be fully competent and be capable of meeting the legal requirements operating in the jurisdiction.

- Implementation Issues

The Council is not aware of any general or specific circumstances which have had a detrimental effect on reciprocity.

There is no barrier placed on a jurisdiction which prevents it from ensuring that the reciprocal cadastral surveyor meets the local law, standards and rules from day one.

The Council has as one of its aims 'Develop generic guidelines for land/boundary surveys'. The Intergovernmental Committee on Survey and Mapping (ICSM) strategic objectives for 2002-2007 include 'Develop national surveying standards'.

Implementation of these common objectives should further improve confidence individual jurisdictions have in relation to compliance with 'local standards'.

- Exemption/Exclusions

All land surveyors are registered in each of the jurisdictions which underpins the Land Titling systems. The land surveyor has a primary responsibility to the Crown, to interpret survey data in accordance with the State's land laws.

- Scope

For land surveyors, there is no need to broaden or change the scope.

- Policy

This pertains to the operation of policy development within each State. The Council is not in a position to comment.

The Council has been operating since 1892 and the systems between the jurisdictions for reciprocity/mutual recognition have stood the test of time.

Should any matters require clarification or if further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat.

Yours faithfully

**Keith C Bell, RFD**  
**Chair**