

Mutual Recognition Schemes  
Productivity Commission  
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Dear Sir

**Productivity Commission's draft report on Mutual Recognition Schemes**

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information (BOSSI) of NSW welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Productivity Commission's draft report on Mutual Recognition Schemes.

BOSSI is a statutory body constituted under the NSW Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002. BOSSI is responsible for:

- providing registration of land and mining Surveyors in NSW,
- developing standards in surveying and spatial information in NSW,
- providing advice to the NSW Government on spatial information, and,
- protection of the general public and the integrity of the cadastre.

BOSSI is also a member of the Council of Reciprocating Surveyors Boards of Australia and New Zealand (CRSBANZ). This body has been coordinating the recognition of registration requirements as a land and mining surveyor across the Australian States and New Zealand since the first initial meeting between surveyors in 1892.

Mutual recognition is seen as an important part of the surveying profession in NSW and in particular ensuring that the supply of registered surveyors is maintained to keep up with demand from infrastructure, land development and mining projects in NSW.

Currently surveyors seeking registration via mutual recognition need to make an application to BOSSI and include a letter of accreditation from the Surveyor Board which they are registered with. Once this application is assessed and verified, the surveyor is granted registration in NSW depended upon any qualifications which have been placed on their registration in their other jurisdiction. BOSSI also places a condition that the applicant needs to attend an interview with the Board within 6 months of registration being granted. This interview is more of an information session to inform the applicant of particular requirements for surveying in NSW.

To subsequently maintain registration in NSW, a registered surveyor must meet BOSSI's requirements for annual registration which includes payment of annual fee and undertaking continuing professional development. These requirements are legislated in the NSW Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002.

The majority of our mutual recognition applications are from the ACT and as such a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed between BOSSI and the ACT Surveyor-General to make this process more streamlined. Other popular areas that applications are received from are the border regions with Victoria and Queensland but we continue to receive applications from all other Australian States and

Territories and New Zealand depending upon the supply and demand of surveyors in NSW and elsewhere.

As detailed in the draft report, BOSSI has similar concerns with surveyors 'shopping and hopping' between jurisdictions to find the easiest path to gain registration in NSW which may have substantial consequences in ensuring safety to the public and the integrity of the cadastre. BOSSI has had at least one occurrence of this happening with a mining surveyor in the past due to different educational and assessment standards in each jurisdiction. It should be noted that Western Australia is the only state in the country which allows a surveyor to progress to registration or authorization with a TAFE qualification. All other States and Territories require a Bachelor Degree equivalent as a minimum requirement. Since this particular instance, BOSSI and the jurisdiction in question have held discussions and have come to an agreed MOU for dealing with similar future applications from that jurisdiction.

BOSSI also has concerns regarding the introduction of Automatic Recognition as this may affect the undertaking of its functions such as providing information to the public about registered surveyors, investigating complaints against registered surveyors, and ensuring standards are maintained in NSW. Automatic Recognition may also have an effect on other organisations within NSW which depend on BOSSI's registration as a requirement for submissions to their organisations, e.g. the registration of survey plans by NSW Land and Property information. It is felt that before Automatic Recognition could be implemented in the surveying profession, further work needs to be undertaken to harmonise surveying, land titling and mine legislation and standards across Australia and New Zealand.

Yours sincerely

Des Mooney  
President  
23 July 2015