

J.H. BRYANT
CHARTERED ARCHITECT

7th July 1997

Ms A. Meldrum
Policy Division
Department of Public Works and Services
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Facsimile: 9372 8851

Dear Ms Meldrum

REVIEW OF THE ARCHITECTS ACT 1921

- 1 I attended the public meeting held at the McKell Building Conference Room on 18th June 1997 and I have read the Issues Paper dated June 1997.
2. Both the meeting and the Issues Paper provided excellent analyses of the shortcomings of the current Act, and of the Government's position in reviewing the purpose of the Act.
3. I bring the following background and experience to my submissions.
 - 3.1 I have been in private practice in NSW for 38 years, at one stage employing over 60 staff.
 - 3.2 My practice carried out work not only throughout Australia, but also in Arabia, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. (I am therefore aware of the respect with which overseas governments regard our qualifications).
 - 3.3 I was elected to the Board of Architects for the years 1984 to 1988.
 - 3.4 I was President of the Association of Consulting Architects 1982-1986.
 - 3.5 I have been a Senior Counsellor of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects since 1994.
 - 3.6 I was a Minister's appointee to the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority 1977-1985 and through their commissioning of Architects, I am aware of the need for recognised qualifications.

4. Whilst there are 28 discussion points raised in the Issues Paper all of which warrant thoughtful debate in the interests of the public of NSW, reinforcement of any particular alternative will depend to a significant degree on the core issue of whether there is to be an Act at all. I recognise that the review includes proposals to change some of the provisions of the Act and to add new provisions, but to my knowledge the necessary alterations to the Act have been researched and already placed before the Minister or his predecessor. Society is always changing and growing, and to my mind, the submission for changing the Act already made represent the view of the times in which we live.
5. The environment in which we live, work and play is clothed in our surrounding buildings. It is the heritage we have been left, and which our society leaves in due course. It is a measure of ourselves that the buildings we create reflect our achievements and skills. To my mind this is optimally achieved by educating and registering those people who are to design and administer our built environment. Difficult as it is, laden with errors as it is, it is a far better option than if our society were not protected against those unable to be registered.
6. Sydney is a magnificent city, and its fabric is most envied by foreigners. Our architects are sought out despite the disadvantage of distance. It is my belief that recognition of architects by the Government through enactment is a reasonable and necessary safeguard of our reputation as professionals of merit in the world scene; and is of material benefit to Australia.
7. The Royal Australian Institute of Architects, NSW Chapter receives in the order of 700 telephone calls per year which are referred to by Senior Counsellors for answering. There are 10 such Counsellors in Sydney all of whom are private practitioners. In my experience this service to the public underlines the need for the Architects Act, and it is my belief that this service should be provided by the Board of Architects as a proper protection for the public.
8. My opinion therefore is that the public needs an Architects' Act, and that the submissions already delivered to the Minister or his predecessor warrant implementation.

Yours faithfully,

(signature)

J. H. BRYANT