

Submission  
No 33

## INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation:

Name: Mr Martin Feeg

Telephone:

Date Received: 17/05/2005

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Theme:

Summary

Martin Feeg

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Australia



**The Standing Committee on Social  
Issues**

Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney 2000

20/05/2005

Dear Sirs,

Dental care of Australia is in desperate need for dentists, with pain relief waiting lists varying from a few weeks to several months depending on the area; the media does report about it and the population suffers from the circumstances. I am a dentist and for a long time I have not disclosed my profession while roaming the rural areas of Australia, to avoid precarious situations.

Since 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004 I have been working at the Westmead Centre for Oral Health on a Limited Registration granted under Section 18(1) Dentist Act 1989, initially issued for one year by the NSW Dental Board. This year the Limited Registration was extended only for another 6 months not allowing for any extension until such time as the ADC theory exam has been passed.

I have not been idle since February 2004 when I started retrieving documentation requested by the Australian Dental Council, to be submitted with the "Application for Assessment of Professional Qualifications in Dentistry", including *an official certified transcript of educational courses completed showing subjects, hours and examination results and, where applicable, details of practical and clinical education*. These are documents one wouldn't collect as a student and naturally it took some time to get them. Finally, in January 2005, I was able to apply to the ADC providing all requested documents. Apparently, no assessment was made and none of my previous experiences considered. I was only invited to sit the exams. Querying this unfavourable outcome, I received a return letter saying "*The Australian Dental Council (ADC) has no discretionary power to exempt applicants from the examination process*".

The course of action with the ADC is highly unsatisfactory as I filled in an **Application for Assessment**, yet I have not been assessed in spite of having provided detailed documentation of my educational courses as required, and **additionally** pointed out that I had worked in the UK for over 4 years with 98% of my treatment provided under the NHS, thus proving I am equal to a UK graduate. My professional records are without blemish, as I proved with a certificate of good standing.

Enclosures: Curriculum Vitae

Martin Feeg



Yours faithfully,

I am very happy to discuss matters in more detail or to assist in any possible way. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Why not allow overseas qualified dentists to work in units where reliable assessment dentists observe their work with checks at regular intervals, e.g. after a fortnight, 2 months, 6 months and finally after a year, the latter leading straight into full approval on a pass. At any stage shortcomings could be addressed and if necessary courses or the ADC Exam ordered. As such these overseas colleagues would have the chance of working, earning money and demonstrating their expertise, while providing valuable services to Australia. And as a last advantage they are not turned away by costly exams.

I am certain there are numerous dentists overseas who would love to come for a short period of time, explore Australia, enjoy this lovely land and the friendliness of the people while providing dental services. DIMIA has recognised the desperate situation and put dentists on "The Most on Demand List", however, if the ADC does not follow, and assess dentists from countries with similar dental education to Australia, such as America, Scandinavia, France, Germany, Switzerland etc., I cannot see an end to the suffering of the Australian population, as I expect almost all of the enquiries will stop short when confronted with the high cost involved in sitting ADC exams. By the way, the second part of the examination (practical) can only be done within Australia, requiring travel and accommodation, incurring additional expenses.

The now set Limited Registration by the NSW Dental Board is very disappointing, taking into account how desperate the situation at Westmead Centre for Oral Health (WCOH) is in regard to senior dental personnel, and the length of the waiting list. The situation is even worse at rural dental hospitals that WCOH is sending secondments to. My performance at WCOH is just as good as my record in the UK.