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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

INQUIRY INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS

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At Sydney on Wednesday 16 March 2005

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The Committee met at 10.00 a.m.

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PRESENT

The Hon. J. C. Burnswoods (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans
The Hon. K. F. Griffin
The Hon. C. J. S. Lynn
The Hon. R. M. Parker
The Hon. I. W. West

ANDREW CAPPIE-WOOD, Director General, Department of Education and Training, and Managing Director of TAFE New South Wales, 35 Bridge Street Sydney,

MARTIN GERARD BOWLES, Deputy Director General, Corporate Services, Department of Education and Training, 36 Bridge Street, Sydney,

TRISH KELLY, General Manager, Human Resources, Department of Education and Training, 35 Bridge Street, Sydney, and

PAUL KENNETH BROCK, Director of Learning and Development Research, Department of Education and Training, 35 Bridge Street, Sydney, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: Mr Cappie-Wood, you are appearing before the Committee in your capacity as Director General of the department. Do you wish to make a brief opening statement after the other witnesses have been sworn in?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Yes, I would like to make a brief opening statement, if I may.

CHAIR: Mr Bowles, you are appearing before the Committee in your capacity as Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services of the department, is that so?

Mr BOWLES: Yes, thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Kelly and Dr Brock, each of you appears before the Committee in your official departmental capacity, is that so?

Ms KELLY: Yes.

Dr BROCK: Yes. I am accompanied by my carer.

CHAIR: Mr Cappie-Wood will now make a brief opening statement.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Thank you very much. Clearly, we welcome this inquiry. It raises the profile of teaching and particularly the teaching profession, and recognises that the recruitment and training of teachers is critical, absolutely critical, to ensuring the quality of teachers, which in turn is the major determinant of the quality of student learning outcomes. The issues surrounding recruitment and training of teachers are complex and interwoven, but most can be addressed in a systemic and strategic manner to ensure that our workforce continues to be at the forefront in quality, knowledge and best practice. It is a process that needs to be constantly looked at to make sure we can be better.

The changing nature of the labour market is an issue and the increasing attractiveness of teaching as a career, which we have seen recently, offers a significant opportunity to be able to attract and retain highly qualified and talented people into the workforce. The fact that we have seen an increase in first preference applications for teaching by 9 per cent since 2002 is extremely positive, as is the general increase in UAI scores for students entering these courses. However, we have to be somewhat vigilant in ensuring that we are being strategic in our approaches to our workforce, to be able to ensure that the emerging and future needs of the changing market, and the teaching and learning needs of our students, are being met.

It is not only New South Wales—other Australian States and Territories, international trends and the OECD have also identified this—that has focused on recruitment and retaining quality teachers as such a critical factor to future generations as well as, I would have to say, to the economy and to the nation generally. It is something that we recognise and something that other education systems worldwide are seeing.

Through my involvement on the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee [AESOC] with my counterparts in the other States and Territories, and on the Ministerial Council that covers the education and training area, I am clearly aware of the national focus on teaching quality, and of the efforts of my colleagues across Australia to advance the recognition of the quality of our

workforce, and both maintain and enhance that quality. What we are seeing is something that goes beyond merely New South Wales; it is a national effort. In this context there have been significant advancements by the New South Wales Government in terms of commitments to improve the quality of teaching and we have been pleased to be able to participate in the implementation of those initiatives.

One of the most important of these has been the commissioning of the review of teacher education undertaken by Dr Gregor Ramsey. This review is supported by an analysis of the recommendations for inclusion in up to 21 national and New South Wales reviews and reports from 1982 to 1999 in relationship to teacher education, both at the preservice and the professional development level. The author of that analysis, entitled, "Two decades of sound and fury, but what's changed"—a lovely title, I would have to say—which provided valuable background for the review is with us today. I am very pleased that Dr Paul Brock will be able to contribute his knowledge and experience to the inquiry process.

Whilst we have seen a number of outcomes impacting on teaching quality as a direct result of the Ramsey review, one of the most significant of these has been the establishment of the Institute of Teachers. The establishment of the institute will enhance the status and standing of the teaching profession, and engender public confidence in teacher quality through the accreditation of teachers against the framework of professional teaching standards. This is an advancement which I think we can all look to as a considerable issue in front of us that is going to bring great benefits. These standards have been developed for the professional teaching standards. These particular standards have been validated by the profession itself and have been externally validated by Professor John Pegg from the University of New England.

The standards will provide a framework for the continuing development of teachers and the preservice education of teachers as well. The department has been implementing many other key initiatives designed to support provision and retention of quality teachers, including a strong promotional campaign through Teach NSW—which we are happy to talk about in more depth; through scholarships, a variety of scholarships to attract quality and diversity of skilled people into teaching; a teacher-mentor program to support and retain beginning teachers; and improved incentives, particularly incentives around locating to rural and regional areas. These incentives are covered in detail in our submission. We obviously welcome the opportunity to be able to explore those further with you today. Rather than repeat what is contained in the submission, I will leave it at that and we will be happy to answer questions.

CHAIR: You have received the Committee's questions?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: We have, indeed. Yes.

CHAIR: You have given us a lot of detail in your submission and I refer to you question 1 of the written questions. We have noted the written material and will ask questions arising from it. We have separated them into recruitment, universities, training, support and a series of specific questions about the institute, so perhaps we will stick to that format. First, you have told us about the methods of recruiting graduates. Is there a need to improve graduate recruitment above what you are doing at the moment?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: I think it is fundamental that we keep our eye on the ball. We cannot be complacent that any of our particular programs that are there are, therefore, working perfectly, without looking at them to see how they are impacting, the nature of changes in the labour market, changes in our demand patterns and the variety of strategies we have in place, be they incentives to attract and retain, incentives for rural teachers and incentives for particular types of teachers. We have to keep our eye on the ball with all of these complex ranges of approaches. Are they working, are they responding well, is the graduate recruitment program, which takes in 1,000 a year, working, is it targeting the right ones and is the quality coming through?

This is a constant evolutionary process and we will always be looking to see how we can improve, but it is from feedback of how the working of the complex arrangements that we already have in place in terms of incentives that we can see whether it is working or not. I have to say that from this point of view, between issues such as the graduate recruitment program and scholarships, it

is delivering a significant number of both targeted and general teachers to our system such that there are over 20,000 qualified teachers who have sought permanent employment with the department and are awaiting permanent placement.

This indicates that there is currently a range of provisions that are working well for us. In the primary area there is a very adequate sufficiency—and we will come to some of those numbers—that would indicate to us that in the primary area we are well served. The numbers will speak for themselves, as they are quite considerable. In the secondary area there are other considerable numbers. I will get you the absolute numbers in terms of those areas. As at 1 February 2005 there were 12,760 qualified teachers seeking employment as primary teachers and 8,354 secondary teachers who were seeking New South Wales government employment as permanent secondary teachers. This is a very significant number—21,114 teachers who are on our list seeking employment.

CHAIR: Would some of those people have first applied some time ago and be a little bit lost and not withdrawn? In other words, how up-to-date are those figures?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: The figures themselves are refreshed annually, I understand. I might ask Trish Kelly to go through how the list works and the process of refreshment and placement of that.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Could she also give us some demographics?

CHAIR: I do not know if Andrew is going to get to that. I interrupted because it helps to know the figures. You obviously have the figures for us.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are not these figures in the submission?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Many of the facts are in there and we do not need to go over those. It is more about the workings of the system that I thought was the key to the question.

Ms KELLY: In terms of the list, we have about 9,000 people we give approval to each year and that is through graduate recruits, people returning to teaching, people from interstate and overseas. That is the number that has generally come onto the list each year. From the list itself we probably employ in the vicinity of 1,200 to 1,600, depending upon what our vacancy rate is. Each couple of years we actually resurvey the list in terms of going out to people and asking them to advise us if they are still interested in working with us and asking them to update qualifications, areas where they might be prepared to work, et cetera. One of the things that we will be looking to do as we increase our on-line facilities in a range of recruitment practices is to do that on line, so that we ultimately have people having the capacity to enter on line any changes of detail and we will be able to also go out much more frequently to remind them to tell us of any changes that may occur.

Dr BROCK: I hope to flesh out some of that stuff with some quite interesting research. The two big things that have changed in the last recent years about the nature of people entering preservice teacher education programs is that the academic entrants—whatever you think of UAI scores—have significantly increased in recent years. The other really interesting thing is that a much greater proportion of people going into teaching come from different careers. They are the two significant shifts. For example, at Sydney University, which is top of the range—more than 80 per cent of those who entered into preservice teacher education courses at the University of Sydney in 2002, 2003 and 2004 had UAI scores of 90 or greater and 10 per cent of those had UAI scores of 98. Look at the proportion of young people entering those programs.

I was heavily involved as an academic and Chair of the University of New England's preservice teacher education program. We had numbers nothing like that. Only 64 per cent of them were aged between 19 and 21. In my time in the 1980s and early 1990s, that was way up in the late 1990s, so there is a significant shift in the kinds of people coming into teacher education. Also, 54 per cent of those who entered the University of Sydney's master of teaching program—they have done a degree and then do the master of teaching program—in 2002, 2003 and 2004 came as a second career.

That is a profound shift over the last decade. The teacher figures nationally are a bit lower than that but generally the teacher figures for 2002 put the figure somewhere around 20 per cent of all

people entering teacher education programs are choosing teaching as a second or a third career. They are quite interesting figures. Internationally it is also interesting. They did a major study in the United Kingdom in 2003—now I am uncomfortable about some of the labels they put here, but they came up with a profile of career changes in the United Kingdom. They found six broad categories of people deciding to teach as a second career. The first one is called "the parent', the second one "the successful careerist, the third one "the freelancer, "the latest starter", "the serial careerist" and finally "the young", whatever that means "career changer". It always means 10 years younger than us.

The reason for changing careers are dissatisfaction—a bit like migration—with where you are, with the nature of the previous career, feeling bored, alienated or isolated, and, secondly, need for greater security and stability. Teaching is being seen as a relatively stable career. The third is changing perspectives on life, such as going through mid career life. I found it really quite interesting. Also, research is being done in New South Wales, which shows that having a satisfying career is a really significant reason why people go into teaching. In fact, the salary issue, which is often mooted as being a very big issue—mind you, first year out graduate teachers in New South Wales are paid well—but their salary comes down the scale for significant reasons a bit. I just thought the Committee might be interested in that sort of supplementary information.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I have a question of clarification. Ms Kelly, you mentioned employing between 1,200 and 1,600 graduates. On page 30 of the submission you talk about 1,000 new graduates being appointed each year. Where is the difference?

Ms KELLY: Basically, we employ people through the graduate recruitment program, which is where we talk about targeting the most outstanding graduates. That is the up-to-1,000 figure that we talk about. As well as that, we take people of our employment list each year. There are two separate types of employment processes.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Was there a category called "parking", where people park while they waited for another career path? We heard about the take-up rates but we did not care about the drop-off rates.

Dr BROCK: Trish can address the drop-off. The question about parking is a quite interesting one. Skilbeck and Connell did a national commissioned piece of research for the Commonwealth. They made the point that in the first 10 years there is a bit of parking, overseas travelling, hanging around waiting to see what occurs, but maybe you are thinking about people who go on the list following graduation, waiting for appointment.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Or people who are waiting to get into another career.

CHAIR: Staying in teaching until something else comes up.

Dr BROCK: Skilbeck says that a bit of that goes on, but not just in teaching. In a number of professions there is a little bit of hanging around and waiting to see which way to go. For example, nowadays qualifications in education are often recognised, either explicitly or implicitly, as good qualifications for other areas in the labour market, so a fair bit of that goes on.

The Hon. IAN WEST: That is why I was trying to understand the take-up rate over two or three years as opposed to the fact that the figures appear to be from day one and there seems to be no longitudinal position being put.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: I am still trying to get to the nub of the question. If I am interpreting the question right, you are saying: what are the numbers of people who may be undertaking teaching as a holding career whilst they are waiting to do something else?

The Hon. IAN WEST: Yes.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: As Dr Brock said, clearly teaching is seen as a career capacity that you can do other things from, which I think is good. You want to see it as a valued as opposed to a cul-de-sac qualification. The issue we have is that the evidence today is that most of the teachers are there because they want to be teachers. That is their driving ambition, their driving force.

Subsequently, some of them may decide that they want to do another career for which their teaching qualification may be a suitable prequalification. The relative amount of people who are retiring or moving is below the public service average, and below many other industry changes. So, it goes back to the still relative stability. We have some demographic issues to deal with. Like most government agencies, there are demographic peaks in the workforce which we have to address, but that question about stability, people leaving to go and do other things, is below the public service average, which speaks well for the teaching service.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It has been said that the Diploma of Education is a barrier to entry. How does that relate to the people coming in? They do not have to do a Dip. Ed., do they? There is a Dip. Ed. getting in and there is a thing called the accelerated teachers training program, which is controversial if our submissions are to be believed.

Ms KELLY: Yes, I have noted that on some of your submissions. All teachers on our employment list have a teacher education qualification. Some of them will get it through doing an undergraduate degree and a graduate diploma in education.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is a Dip. Ed.?

Ms KELLY: A Dip. Ed. Some of them will get it through doing a combined degree, where they do their education stream throughout, and some will get it through doing the accelerated teacher training program, where we have recognised their industry experience and qualifications as meeting the discipline requirements for the area of secondary teaching and we provide them with teacher training through that program.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How long does this accelerated teacher training program take?

Ms KELLY: Eighteen months.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have lost me. The Dip. Ed. is 12 months and people are complaining that that is too long. Now you are telling me there is an accelerated program taking 18 months. Are we going backwards?

Ms KELLY: No, they are two different types of people coming into those programs. The accelerated teacher training program people are people from industry. For example, we had some people from BHP some years ago when BHP was downsizing, and they had engineering credentials. We put them through an 18-month program where we picked up where necessary any discipline modules they might require plus all the teacher education, professional experience and qualifications. In the Dip. Ed. it is people who have an undergraduate qualification where we have recognised that the discipline studies would meet our qualification requirements, and they do their program. Some of the programs often, while they say 12 months, are very condensed, intense and rigorous.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you do a BA Dip. Ed. from university and come out as a teacher, there is no discipline in your BA?

CHAIR: By discipline I think we mean English or science or maths.

Ms KELLY: The curriculum area.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Fundamentally you have a degree that is your curriculum area and then a degree how to teach, which is the Dip. Ed.?

Ms KELLY: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Surely, if you have been with BHP with an engineering degree for however long it is, and you have loads of life experience, you would not need more than the Dip. Ed. time? Why would you need 18 months then when you only needed 12 months when you were an undergraduate?

CHAIR: Because our secondary schools do not teach engineering. But it is useful to turn you into a science or a maths teacher.

Ms KELLY: And we need to pick up some of those curriculum modules.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So you say professional discipline in the sense that they might not know the chemistry for them to be a science teacher, or physics?

Ms KELLY: Yes, and its application to schools.

Dr BROCK: Did you mean to say that some had complained that the Dip. Ed. was too long? Did you really mean to say that?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes, certainly. It would seem that is a barrier to some people teaching, which is not a barrier in the private sector, and that is costing you a lot of teachers. That argument would not be new to you.

Dr BROCK: It is not a question of length, it is a question of whether it is necessary. That is the difference. Every report that I received since 1980 has said the Dip. Ed. is too short. People regularly say how on earth can you compress into 12 months the teacher training? The argument that is mounted by other sectors is why do you need a Dip. Ed. at all? The general issue is do they need one and, of course, with the Institute of Teachers it is made quite clear that people will be required to have teaching qualifications. Merely because you have a PhD in physics does not necessarily mean you know how to go about working with children and teaching physics. That is generally the debate. It is not so much whether it is too long. If anything, the debate is it is too short.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you have a PhD in physics you are assumed to be able to walk into a university lecture hall and teach the students at 19. If you want to teach students at 18 you need a Dip. Ed. or longer. Yet presumably people who have their PhD in physics walk into the private sector and the private sector evaluates the people. I am not saying there is no skill in teaching—that would be an absurd proposition.

CHAIR: Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, we need to ask the witnesses some questions.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am trying to do that. The point is, if private schools do not have Dip. Eds and to get some good teachers, which they have to select, why can the Institute of Teachers not do that, rather than be wedded to this Dip. Ed., which must surely exclude them?

Dr BROCK: Because by definition teaching is a profession. It is not sufficient to be able to argue that merely because you happen to know content you can necessarily teach it. That is the basis upon which the Government established the Institute of Teachers.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can it not evaluates them on a case-by-case basis?

CHAIR: I think we should try to get back to recruitment.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am talking about barriers to recruitment. The Dip. Ed. is seen as a barrier to recruitment in most public discourses.

CHAIR: The whole inquiry is into recruitment and training. Yes, what you are saying is about recruitment but the difficulty is we have 19 questions here and we agreed before that we would try to deal with them in segments. Because it is so new we need to deal with the Institute of Teachers as a block. It is literally just getting under way.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Sure, but I am saying can it not do without a Dip. Ed.?

CHAIR: Why do we not leave those issues until we get to the ground rules and standards of the institute? At the moment we are trying to give an indication of the statistical picture, the ways in which the department recruits, and then when we move on to universities and training we are trying to get an overall picture of the training side of it. Of course, everything you are saying is relevant but if we try to stick to one area at a time it might make it a bit easier.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: As long as we get to it eventually.

CHAIR: Dr Brock, can I ask you a question about the statistics you mentioned? You said the University of Sydney is perhaps atypical, but I think I also understood you to say that the MCEETYA figures suggest that a similar pattern has happened over the past decade?

Dr BROCK: The MCEETYA report 2002—and I am not sure whether it was over X-number of years, I think it was speaking contemporaneously, the current situation is such that across the nation 20 per cent of people entering training for teaching are choosing it as a second or third career.

CHAIR: That was as of 2002?

Dr BROCK: Yes, 2002, I think.

CHAIR: Not necessarily saying this has been an increasing trend?

Dr BROCK: My hunch would be that it would be certainly indicative. That is definitely what has been occurring certainly strongly anecdotally, that that change I have spoken about is taking place. We are getting many more people now, considerably older and more experienced from other careers, joining teaching, whereas 10 or 20 years ago it was basically a young person's from graduation.

CHAIR: Has the UAI rise been going on over roughly the same period or does it come and go?

Dr BROCK: No, I would suggest it is probably the past five years. But they are indicators of other things as well. They are indicators of availability. British research indicates that there is a sense that there is something in teaching, the fact that so many went in with a sense of altruism and coming out with a sense of altruism as well. It is a sense that is appealing to people, working with human beings rather than being stuck in front of a computer all day, and the terms of employment and the stability of career, and the pupil-free teaching time. All those things are attracting people, I would have thought.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: A further point to what has been raised: The United Kingdom teacher training authority now employs more people entering teaching from a second career perspective. So, they are over the 50 per cent mark, and this is seen as a continuing trend. There is international evidence of that as well, and they are making sure that they can tailor their employment and training arrangements around that phenomenon.

CHAIR: Is there a view held by the department or the Minister or the world in general that this is a good thing and we should encourage it or are we talking about a market situation where we are observing this is happening?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Generally speaking, it could be seen as a very good thing. People are coming in with a broader frame of reference, that they have undertaken careers outside the teaching environment. They can bring a wealth of experience, personal experience, to the teaching situation. That is quite often very welcome by students instead of a theoretical construct. Teachers can then talk from personal experience and this is something I think we have to value as part of our system.

CHAIR: So if we are recruiting and we have a choice, other things being equal, preference would be given to someone with a wider career experience or someone who is older?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: At the end of the day we have to see how good a teacher are they, and that is taking personal qualifications, their own qualification background, their capacity to be a teacher, and that goes to the issue of how good a teacher are you. You might have subject content but we also have to be able to see you are capable of imparting knowledge in a way that will engage students.

CHAIR: Ms Kelly, I am not sure whether you had finished going through your numbers of applicants. Some of this is leading on to question 2. We feel we need to get straight from you people whether there is a shortage of teachers and, if so, where? Occasionally you get headlines about shortages of teachers. For instance, you say there is not a shortage of primary teachers in particular, so perhaps if you could continue and get on to question 2?

Ms KELLY: In the secondary area, and it is in the report that you can look at, we look at the list in terms of each of the curriculum key learning areas and five broad geographic locations which have similar demographics. The three areas that are of concern to us and are of concern Australia-wide and internationally are maths, science and technology. So, because we know through the supply of graduates coming out of universities and people who are on our list seeking employment in those areas are not going to be sufficient to meet our needs, we have implemented a number of targeted strategies in those areas to supplement the other sources of supply we have. They are things like the scholarships where we target maths, science and technology and we also target English. They are the accelerated teacher training program, where we target maths, science and technology and we have also retraining programs where we take our existing teachers who are looking for a career change in their curriculum area and we put them through a rigorous retraining program that is run by universities.

CHAIR: Will they usually be primary teachers moving to secondary?

Ms KELLY: Some are primary. Some are secondary teachers in non-targeted shortfall areas that want to look at a career change. Certainly, the feedback we have had from these programs where we have retrained primary teachers is that they do make excellent teachers in secondary areas because they have really mastered the art of teaching students and are able to pick up their content in their new curriculum area.

CHAIR: As you say, a lot is in your submission about how the department is addressing these areas of predicted shortage. Do we assume that we think these shortages in maths, science and IT will go on for the foreseeable future? I am not sure whether you have a crystal ball or what you do to work these things out, but they are worldwide shortages?

Ms KELLY: They are, and certainly we have ongoing dialogue with universities about the number and type of pre-service teacher education places that would better suit our needs as a major employer. Again, if you look at our figures in the submission you will see that the number of primary graduates from university programs over the past seven years or so continues to grow. Obviously, we continue to need primary teacher education graduates but the deficits are in those three secondary areas. It is probably not as simple as saying that, however, because universities need to attract people into their places if they offer them and it is probably fair to say that particularly in maths and science areas some universities have found difficulty in attracting people into those programs, not just into education but indeed in the science faculties themselves. I think that is an issue for us as a nation that we need to look at the whole issue of mathematics, science and technology, not just in teaching—teaching is a very important part of it—but more broadly in the whole study of those areas.

The other issue for universities in terms of some of those areas, particularly the technology area, the industrial arts area and the food technology areas, are very expensive programs to support from an infrastructure point of view. Therefore when you look at all of the tensions of students voting with their feet in terms of where they want to study, the infrastructure costs in universities and the whole tension of supply and demand in terms of using their places, it is quite a complex issue to unpack. But we will continue to work very closely with universities and other education stakeholders to promote, in our schools, the learning of mathematics, science and technology and therefore careers in mathematics, science and technology and, obviously from our perspective, careers in the teaching of mathematics, science and technology.

CHAIR: The committee noted that quite a few of the programs you have told us about like Teach NSW are quite recent so it is fairly early to tell us about the results. Given that Teach NSW dated from September 2002, can us give the committee an indication of what it is achieving and what you hope it will achieve over the next few years?

Mr BOWLES: Since opening in September 2002, to give an idea of the number of inquiries we had around that stage was just over 9,000. That increased to 36,900-odd in 2004. What we have seen since 2002 is effectively a four-fold increase in the number of inquiries, and that has come from a range of different groups, both teachers who are out of the work force, teachers from outer State and a whole group of non-teachers who are interested in retraining. In the first year of the program it jumped from 9,000 to a bit over 26,000 and then to the 36,900-odd that I mentioned. What is also interesting is that what we are seeing now is that it is about 1 in every 3.5 inquiries that is actually turning into an application to our system, which is a significant improvement in numbers.

It is Teach NSW coupled with a whole range of other programs that does start to make a difference around sponsorships and scholarships and things like that which Trish can talk a little bit more about. We have heard about site visits and the like. Teach NSW has a site in Elizabeth Street, Sydney, and it would be good for the committee to look at that if it wished. It is a lean operation. It is effectively people ringing in and we are dealing with all of those people as they come through either the door or the telephone system.

CHAIR: Question 4 refers to whether many new teachers are leaving the profession. For instance, the resignation or loss rate was said to be less than in the public sector as a whole. It is often said that young teachers drop out quickly. Do you want to say anything more about that? We have another question about competition with non-government schools and the loss of graduates and departmental teachers to those.

Mr BOWLES: Teacher resignation rates in our schools are quite low in reality. In the past 10 years we have varied between 1.3 per cent and 2.1 per cent resignation rate in the government schools. Last year we ran at 1.4 per cent, which is quite low.

The Hon. IAN WEST: How many is that?

Mr BOWLES: We can get that information. Some of the anecdotal comments that we get around the different systems, outside of education, is that they run at significantly higher rates than those. We could probably provide some further information on that. There is also then the issue raised around the early years of teaching whether they come in and out and I think Paul can talk a little bit more about that. But basically what we have seen is that approximately 5 to 6 per cent of teachers in their first year have resigned. Again, it is higher than what our total resignation is but it is only 5 to 6 per cent. What we have seen over the first five years of service is a resignation rate of around 17 per cent, so it is what you would expect. It actually comes down in the second, third and fourth year and so on. But that in broad terms is what the numbers look like. But I might ask Paul if he wants to add anything.

Dr BROCK: In the English speaking world, amongst the people we normally compare ourselves with, this issue of teachers leaving within the first five years of their appointment is an issue. The research undertaken by a team at the University of Sydney, Ewing Smith Manuel—I have to say Manuel happens to be my wife, Jackie Manual, for vested interest I would have to mention that. They researched the United Kingdom and the United States of America data that showed that somewhere between 25 to 40 per cent of early career teachers leave within five years, and where the schools are in disadvantaged socio-economic areas it was closer to 50 per cent. The figures in the United Kingdom are quite pessimistic. In 2003, a major study was undertaken in the United Kingdom, commissioned by the Department of Education and Life Skills, that made the extraordinary assertion that it guessed around 52 per cent of teachers would leave the profession in the United Kingdom within the first year of graduation and that period on. There were very alarming kinds of prognostications overseas.

The reasons that people left in the international studies in the United Kingdom and the United States of America was about workload, new challenges, school situation, salary and personal circumstances. There was a similar huge study done in the United States of America with similar

kinds of things coming out. In fact, the rather depressing thing about the United States stuff was that, in fact, there was a correlation between the better the results at university the more likely that people were dropping out in their first three to five years. A big study was done in The Netherlands which concluded, as did the United States study, that the biggest thing we need to do as educators is to booster the whole concept of internships and mentoring. New South Wales research has suggested that the biggest thing that seems to effect people leaving the profession in the first five years is lack of support and sometimes, not being particularly welcomed by colleagues, even at time almost covert and overt hostility in those five years of employment. Perhaps Trish might talk about some of the teacher mentoring programs, but I want to make two points.

I was asked to undertake an evaluation of the teacher mentoring program which Trish will talk about and I insisted that we have an external reputable academic on that. There was myself, Dr Geoff Barnes from the department and Christine Deer who was a Professor at the University of Technology, Sydney. We found that that program was magnificent. We did a rigorous study of what the principals thought of it, what the teacher mentors thought about it and what the young teachers thought about it. We talked to kids, talked to students, did surveys, did site visits and it proved to be a fantastic program for mentoring those teachers. At the end of the surveys we asked the extent to which they thought people who may otherwise have given up, stayed as a result, and it was very high.

We are about to start a major research project in which we trace through the experience of newly appointed teachers in the first five years from graduation. We will try to identify the reasons why people stay because often this type of research only looks at why people go and what are the reasons which engage them? I am hoping it will be a little bit like some of the stuff we found out earlier, without prejudging the research, on finding out why people go. We found when we evaluated the teacher mentoring program that some people leave for some of the most legitimate reasons: they have had a crack at it—a bit like your parking concept—seen what it is about, and it is not for them. It is not necessarily that people leave because they have had a bad experience; they have just realised that they might go and try something else.

We are going to start this longitudinal study and it will be a little bit different from the pure kind of research where you step back and make sure you do not interfere with the data or the process. If we find in the process things are happening in the study that we have started that we believe ought to change, we will actually be suggesting that those changes take place rather than some sort or pure disinterested notion of research which is to sit back and watch people fall over cliffs. They are the two points that I would make, from a research point of view, about where we are going. But clearly teachers do not necessarily leave because of the kids, they leave when they are dissatisfied because they just do not feel they have support from their colleagues or, in some instances, they have actually experienced hostility.

My last point is that this is not peculiar to our profession. The Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans would be well aware of the tradition in the medical profession of what you do to first-year out doctors in hospitals. It happens in engineering. It is a phenomenon. It happens in private schools. It happens on university colleges in their first year out so there is a nature in which it is not just peculiar to our profession that first-year outers can get a rough time. It happens in the Navy even sometimes. But having said that, yes, we are trying to do something about the issue. Trish will, I am sure, speak about the teacher mentoring program and other induction programs that the department runs. If somebody said to me "Has anything changed in New South Wales since I wrote that report?" I would say "In New South Wales it is the seriousness with which in the last three or four years this department has taken on the issue of mentoring and inducting new teachers."

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is interesting that you talked about initiation in colleges as a justification—

Dr BROCK: I did not justify it.

[*Interruption*]

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: When it is said that the resignation rates are low with older teachers, are the teachers happy or are they trapped? Some of them who have been teaching for 30 years are not exactly spring chickens and the employment market for those in the

mid-50s is a bit grim if they have been in the one spot for a long time. Are these people happy or do you not know?

Dr BROCK: I will take your look at me as a chance to refute that I did justify a comment. I am not in a position to answer that: it is not my field. I think Trish and Martin might know more about that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Has the department conducted a survey of the happiness of teachers and their job satisfaction if they have been teaching for a fairly long period and are not resigning? Is that because they are happy or are they trapped? If so, on what data do you base your answers?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: We do not hand out happiness pills and we do not assess their quality but what we do is, in terms of professional development—and this is very important because one of the issues about general satisfaction in any job, particularly, I would have to say teaching is important to this—is that the ongoing professional development is one of the key indicators of not only growth in the profession, the standing in the profession but also in the general wellbeing of the individuals working in those environments, and teaching is no exception.

Teaching is no exception. I am very pleased to see the efforts that have been put in by the organisation prior to my arrival into bolstering the whole area of professional development. When you dovetail that in with the development of the Institute of Teachers, where the professional development courses will have to be accredited in their own right so that they match the teaching standards issues and contribute towards those, you are seeing a very solid framework around professional development. It is something we are constantly looking at to see how we can continue to improve professional development. If there is one thing teachers tell me when I am out in the schools it is about the professional development and ongoing investment in them as professionals so that they can grow and not, as you may be implying, stagnate. We are seeing very strong engagement with teachers around that very issue. We see that as one of the particular keys we are looking for in the future.

I think we have made some major steps of late with $144 million going into schools directly so that they can take into account their particular capacities to tailor professional development to the needs of students, the needs of teachers and even the needs of student teachers fresh out of the universities to make sure of their ongoing professional development. We cannot do that from head office. Hence it was about giving the control to the schools to be able to tailor that and work that into professional development plans for each teacher. As I said, having the Institute has a very strong dovetailing effect. We will see the lifting of the professional standing of teachers, which goes to some of the questions, such as feeling valued in the workplace. The standing and profession of teachers is one of the things we are working on with the Institute of Teachers as one of the fundamental issues there as well.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do I take it there has not been a survey of teachers' job satisfaction?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Not in the months I have been with the organisation. I can ask otherwise.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What do you mean by "months"?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Twelve months.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: There has not been a survey undertaken in the last 12 months. Has there been a survey in the last five years?

Ms KELLY: Not in terms of a general survey about teachers' satisfaction. However, there certainly has been both at the previous district level and now at the regional level the capacity for school education directors and principals groups to provide information about the needs of teachers, issues they have and also now, as Andrew said, the capacity for them to look at determining their own professional development priorities and needs.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I take it the answer is "no"?

Ms KELLY: Yes.

CHAIR: Dr Brock, when you referred to the statistics in the United States of America and the United Kingdom about resignations within the first five years—25 per cent to 40 per cent—are those statistics for public school education or for all schools?

Dr BROCK: I do not think they are just for public schools. I think they are for all schools. I will take that on notice and get back to you.

CHAIR: Thank you. Obviously the 17 per cent figure you gave for the first five years here is the department's figure?

Mr BOWLES: That was my figure.

CHAIR: Do you know what the rate is in non-government schools here?

Dr BROCK: Of course, in the United States the proportion of public to private is much, much greater than here. I will try to ascertain it for you.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: The question started out around some of the mentoring programs. If you do not mind, we might come back and mention those because I think that goes to Paul's point about the impact that has made.

Ms KELLY: I will start by saying that we see providing support for all beginning teachers as an absolutely essential issue. As part of our professional learning policy, which dovetailed with the devolution of the $144 million for professional development, there are very clear guidelines about the need for all beginning teachers to be inducted into their schools. Over and above those induction programs we now have the Teacher Mentor program that Paul talked about. That program started two years ago, and we 50 teacher mentors who worked across 51 schools in the first year and 53 schools in the second year. The program was evaluated, as you heard, as a great success.

Some of the things that teacher mentors do is team teach with the beginning teachers, provide them with advice about programming, and provide them with advice about how to manage situations in the classroom. They teach themselves so that they can be role models and the beginning teachers can see very skilled teachers in operation in the classroom. As part of the evaluation, it became clear to us we would like to try some different models to extend the reach of that program to more than the 20 per cent of beginning teachers that we covered in the first two years. As a consequence, and through work, I might say, not only based on the evaluation but in close consultation with our Principals Council, the Teachers Federation and the Teacher Education Council, which comprises representatives of Deans of Education in New South Wales, we developed a new model where we have teacher mentors in schools that have a very large proportion of beginning teachers working solely with that school, teacher mentors working across a group of schools and teacher mentors working, in two cases, with temporary beginning teachers in the Fairfield and Liverpool areas.

So, by doing that, we have been able to have 58 teacher mentors this year covering 60 per cent of our beginning teachers. I might just say that the teacher mentors themselves are incredibly talented teachers. They are chosen through merit and they have a great passion for supporting and nurturing our beginning teachers. We provide professional development to the teacher mentors so that they are up to date and they also have their own network to support teachers. Recently, at the Teacher Mentor Conference some of the comments from the principals who came along for part of that were that they provided a great lift to the entire school, as well as to the beginning teachers. We are very proud of that program and we will continue to evaluate it and look, as Paul indicated, longitudinally at some of the outcomes as our beginning teachers who have been supported move through it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In you submission you talk about the new staffing agreement between the Department of Education and the Teachers Federation. Would you outline how that agreement will give principals autonomy to choose their staff, how will it assist schools and how will the department monitor the employment of staff in schools?

Mr BOWLES: We have done a lot of work over the last number of months in two main areas. One is the staffing agreement, but a precursor to that was also looking at principal accountability. Put the two together we probably come up with answers to those sorts of questions. As to the principal accountability issue first, we were trying to look at ways that we could help the principals in delivering what they need to deliver on every day. We needed to also look at the longer-term issues around principalship and how to make sure we get the best people into those particular jobs.

We looked at, for first time, coming up with what was called a principal assessment and review system. It basically is a yearly process where a school education director sits down with a principal and looks at performance, the school's performance, and starts to pick up a couple of the issues that we have talked about. We have never had a specific program around performance improvement for principals. We have developed one and have introduced it as part of that principal accountability model. We looked at introducing the notion of the appointment of principals to schools for five years. It is not in a contractual sense. They are appointed as principals but what we were looking at is a review of the principal's appointment after five years in a school. That was based on the comments of a range of principals over a period of time.

Another part we looked at, and this goes to some changes we made to the Teaching Services Act, basically opened up promotional positions of principal and executive in the areas to external candidates. That had not happened in the past. We also looked at how we could then split performance and misconduct, because they had always been lumped in together. If someone was having some difficulties with their performance they got lumped into "they must be bad", or involved in some form of misconduct. We tried to split those, and we have done that. That is important as a bit of context to the staffing agreement. We were looking at trying to introduce a degree of flexibility into schools, and that is the feedback from the teachers and principals that we see on a regular basis. That flexibility obviously still has to be balanced across what is a very, very large system—2,238 schools, 750,000 or 760,000 kids in the schools. So it is a very large, very geographically dispersed system. We needed to make sure we could maintain staffing at all schools.

Also, we needed to recognise that we did need to make some changes around how we got some of these teachers in place. We recognised that the transfer system is required if we are to look after those broader schools. But how could we introduce flexibility of appointment of teachers? We wanted to make sure that the graduate recruits, up to 1,000, were part of this process. We wanted to have a look at how they were placed across the system and how principals could use that to their best advantage by introducing new fresh ideas with new fresh people coming out of university in one form or another or through one of our programs. We also wanted to look at some of the casuals who work in our system.

We got a lot of feedback around "We have got very good casuals. We cannot get them in." So we wanted to have a look at that. We have a program called the Permanent Employment Program, which looked at trying to place some of these casuals in our system. Basically, over the last number of years we have placed very, very few. What we have done in the staffing agreement this year is said that we want to place 300 of those. The broader group is to look at the teachers who come into our system every year off our employment list, which I think Trish talked a little bit about before, the 1,200 to 1,600 group. What we have done there is we will still assist schools to do this, again because of the large numbers of people we are talking about. We have a staffing area, which will still assist schools. But they will provide the school with the top five people off that employment list and then they basically go to interview. Some schools, because of their geographic nature, may choose to say "That is not feasible for us in this particular circumstance. Can you assist us with that?" We will also help with that.

Also, we had to consider: How are we going to assist principals in this process? How will we manage this as a broader system? This goes to the last point, monitoring and so on. When we restructured the department a bit over 12 months ago, we looked at a regional structure to try to put a lot of decision making closer to the schools. When we introduced principal accountability as part of a range of issues that we were considering to do with schools, we also looked at our education areas, which before the restructure were called districts. Before the restructure we had 40 districts, and under the regional structure we had 10 regions and 43 school education directors, each looking after a group

of schools. We quickly recognised that that would not be sustainable as a large number of schools would be reporting in to a director, so we worked out a way of increasing that 43 to 78.

We have rejigged our system a little bit to allow us to do that. Now, a school education director is responsible for an average of 28 schools. That is seen by principals groups and everyone as being a manageable process. So, as we go through the levels of assistance, the principal has more ability to select. School education directors have fewer schools to look after, and therefore can get to the many, many issues that are out there. We have regions in place, and we have our school staffing areas that will still assist in this process and maintain the employment list. They will still provide that information to the schools. And, if required, we will assist the schools in doing that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You spoke about teachers in their first year being welcomed to the school, and so on. Are you monitoring that induction process through the principals and the system?

Mr BOWLES: Part of that is the teacher mentor program, which Trish Kelly spoke about. We have been able to expand that from 20 per cent to 60 per cent. We have in place the induction programs. It is all part and parcel of a broader issue. They do not all necessarily relate to a staffing agreement process. The staffing agreement is basically a document of agreement that we have with the Teachers Federation about how we place staff in schools. There are a whole range of other, much, much broader ways of looking at that regional structure and that school education director structure that allow us to keep an eye on those broader issues.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You said that 300 casual teachers were to be made permanent this year. Is that the plan?

Mr BOWLES: It is, yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: This and each year?

Mr BOWLES: This and each year. What we have negotiated within this process is to look at what is the best way of using those 300 casual teachers. Obviously, there will still be a process around how those people are appointed, because obviously we need to do that. But that is part and parcel of our staffing arrangements.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What percentage of teachers is that number of casual teachers? There seem to be a lot of long-term casual teachers out there.

Mr BOWLES: That is correct.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: They are in supply-and-demand land, without secure incomes and unable to get home loans, and whatever other problems that brings.

Mr BOWLES: I suppose that is true. It is a small proportion. But, equally so, we work on the principle that our teaching work force is a permanent work force, and we look at casuals in a notion that they will relieve for sick leave, maternity leave, long service leave and a whole range of other issues as we go through the system. There obviously will be a large demand for casual teachers in a system as large as ours. Last year, for the entire system, we paid group certificates—or whatever that new language for group certificates is—for about 135,000 people. So we are a large organisation.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What percentage of those are casuals? A teacher at my son's school had been a casual music teacher for about a decade. When he finally found permanency elsewhere, he disappeared into the sunset. For years, the school had been crying out for him to be made permanent. He is now lost. This fellow obviously was trying to get a career and was being stopped from doing that. How many like him are there? What percentage of teachers are casual? How many are stuck in this long-term casual arrangement, which could be termed second rate?

Mr BOWLES: I might ask Trish Kelly if she knows any more of the detail. There are around 1,200 to 1,600, depending on the year, people employed off the employment list. A range of those

people are also casuals in our system. Just because they are on our employment list does not mean they sit around waiting for us to employ them. Probably the largest chunk of those people are actually working as casuals in our system right now, so they are actually getting opportunities through that 1,200 to 1,600. In addition to that, we have looked at increasing this number of 300 into the system. In the past, we had done significantly less than that. I would have to get you the numbers on that, but we are talking about well and truly less than 100 in past years.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How many people have you got, and how many of those are casual? How long have they been casual? Why are they casual? We need to talk quantitatively here; there is no point talking in generalities.

Mr BOWLES: We may have to take those questions on notice. I will ask Trish Kelly if she knows any more of the detail.

CHAIR: Might I also say that this is an inquiry into recruitment and training. We could do a whole inquiry about casuals and so on.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I understand. But we are hearing about people going to the private sector because the system is sclerotic and cannot adapt to their needs, and we are hearing that casuals have been banging on the door for a long time and the system is not adapting to their needs. Those are recruitment questions. I mean, if you are going to be mucked around, you do not want to go to that system, do you?

Mr BOWLES: That may be a little bit unfair. We have 21,000 people on our employment list wanting to do that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do what?

Mr BOWLES: Wanting to work with us. We should also bear in mind that in our graduate recruits we get a very good take-up of people wanting to work in our system. So I do not think it is necessarily fair to say that we have people leaving for the sorts of reasons that you have just outlined.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: In that case, they would not be coming into the system. You would say they had not left it.

Ms KELLY: If I could bring a different perspective to it. Some people who work casually actually only want to work casually.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What percentage is that?

Ms KELLY: I do not know the percentage, off the top of my head.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is my point: you do not know. But it is important to know, isn't it?

Ms KELLY: It is an important factor that some only want to do that. Some are working casually and temporarily while they are awaiting permanent employment.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Hoping for permanent employment.

Ms KELLY: Many of our people get permanent employment. The other thing about casual employment is that when they work with us casually and in a temporary capacity we recognise that service and we give them some accelerated progression or priority on the employment list. We recognise the fact that they are working with us whilst awaiting permanent employment.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Will you take those questions on notice and provide us with statistics? There has been criticism, of which you would be aware, of the treatment of overseas trained teachers. Could tell us about the new pre-employment program for overseas trained teachers and answer some of that criticism? How are they treated in New South Wales?

Mr BOWLES: A while ago there was some criticism about overseas trained teachers. We sat down with principals groups and the Teachers Federation and tried to establish a better way forward. That led to the pre-employment program for overseas trained teachers. Basically, that program was implemented in 2004. It is a bit too early to get to the end point but, anecdotally, the feedback from that program has been quite positive. It is a much strengthened orientation program for people who teach in the government system in New South Wales. That includes an in-school experience component and an on-the-job assessment of a teacher's proficiency. Once people go all the way through they are given the approval to teach.

Within that program there is a mechanism to ensure that people still go through the normal processes—assessment of their qualifications, whether they have Australian qualifications or overseas type qualifications; a working with children check; and an English language proficiency assessment, which is an independent test we put people through. Once they get into the program not everyone necessarily will come out at the end having approval to teach. The program is in its infancy but 136 teachers undertook the pre-employment program in 2004 and 124 of them have been successful in gaining approval to teach in 2004. We think we have started to move in the right direction.

That was a collaborative effort with the Teachers Federation, principals groups and the department working through the issue. We will continue to look for additional flexibility in the way in which the program is run so that we can deal with all the issues. We also want to look at the high performers. Sometimes there is a perception that because someone is an overseas trained teacher he or she is not necessarily as good as anybody else. That is not necessarily true. A lot of high-performing teachers also come from overseas. Obviously we need to try to factor that into our thinking. We will continue to do that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You would be well aware of comments that talented graduates are snapped up by non-government schools prior to any offers from the government sector. What are you doing to address that issue?

Mr BOWLES: Over the past few years we have done a fair bit of work trying to address that issue. Sometimes, you are right, the independent sectors jumps a little bit earlier.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Going back to the graduate recruitment program, we see it as a means of being able to target high performing students to ensure that we gain them for our system. We do that early on in the process. Every time we move there are some counter moves. So it is a competitive game. We have to be on the ball and responsive to it. There is no doubt that the graduate recruitment program is producing some significant results. In fact, a high percentage of all potential students apply for the graduate recruitment program. That is an indication that the public education system is seen as a valued end employer.

The graduate recruitment program is just one of a number of programs that provide students with experience and an understanding of how the public education system works. In particular, it affords students in rural areas, et cetera, some experience. The beyond the line program, the beyond the bridge program, the rural professional experience program and the orientation program are all aimed at teacher education students in their final years, or those who are in the process of completing their qualifications. We try to ensure that we get the best of them into the public education system.

We look at it from various perspectives. We try to get the best teachers—teachers who are aware of the teaching conditions and hopefully some of the benefits of teaching in rural or remote areas of the State. We make sure that they see beyond the metropolitan area, which obviously is a source of a lot of the current education pre-service programs. All those programs are designed to ensure that we have the very best. The percentage of teacher education students who are applying for the graduate recruitment program is an indication that we are a preferred employer.

Ms KELLY: We are keen to continually review the graduate recruitment program. This year we brought our promotional campaign forward earlier than last year. We will also do some of our interviews earlier for mid-year exit students so we are able to pick them up. We made another improvement last year. Once graduates in their final year have completed their professional experience—in the majority of cases it coincides with the end of term three in the school year—we

give them conditional casual approval. That gave them a capacity to work in our schools, to develop a bond, to look at working in public education and to be remunerated for it.

During that period last year over 1,700 graduates, for whom we had given conditional casual approval, taught in our schools. That is another way in which we are looking at nurturing final year graduates and having them see and experience working in our public schools. Earlier Andrew referred to the fact that 95 per cent of final year students were interviewed last year under the graduate recruitment program—an increase of about 10.1 per cent on the figure for the previous year. So students in universities seek to participate in that program.

Dr BROCK: It is not a defence but putting it into a broader context I spent some time in an earlier career in Canberra. At that stage I had some oversight of a national authority, in that I was on the Minister's staff. We need to look at what this department has done. It has approached people with overseas qualifications within a broader context. Other professionals perhaps have not been quite as proactive.

The other day three people came to paint my house. The first was a qualified engineer from Afghanistan with post-graduate qualifications in the United States of America. The second was a qualified journalist from a university in Iran and the third was a lawyer who was married to a nursing sister. None of them could get their qualifications recognised anywhere in this country and they were painting houses. I am not defending this issue. I am saying, once again, that what this department is attempting to do for overseas trained people is pretty significant when we look in the broader context at the way in which these things are treated within the profession.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Question No. 8 refers to scholarships, et cetera. Would you take that question on notice?

Mr BOWLES: Yes.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: My question relates to the autonomy of principals. We spoke earlier about what principals are doing. I refer to the recruiting of staff. What if principals are having problems with a member of staff—somebody who has to be got rid of, so to speak? How much support and flexibility do those principals have when there is such a conflict?

Mr BOWLES: I referred earlier to what we have in place for principals. I also referred to the development of a principal assessment review schedule and a performance improvement program. We also have in place a teacher assessment and review schedule, or TARS, and a program for teachers who are having difficulty with their performance. Basically, that process, which has been in place for quite a while, assists principals in dealing with the performance of their teachers. The department also gives them assistance. Our performance review mechanisms assist principals with some of these difficulties.

CHAIR: We will deal now with universities. You said earlier that universities were producing a lot of people who were trained for primary teaching but not so many people for other areas. In your submission there are a number of comments about the relationship and the degree of co-operation between universities, the department and schools. We would like to explore that a little further.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Are university courses appropriately qualifying graduates for employment with the Department of Education and Training? Could they be better prepared through those courses?

Dr BROCK: Generally speaking it is fair to say that they are appropriately prepared in universities. However, there are some issues that warrant being placed before your inquiry. In recent years, as a result of discussions with universities, it has become apparent that they are being required to increase their courses across a wider scope. They are under pressure from governments and from employers and they have fewer resources and staff. I would be surprised if Professor Steve Dinham did not raise that issue this afternoon.

The first thing to recognise is the increasing pressure on universities by way of reduction. If you go back 20 years and look at the number of academics per student and program and at the number of courses that are required to be taught within those programs, you will find that there has been a significant shift in recent times. That is the first point I make in defence of the situation in which universities find themselves. We have a lot of contact with universities. Through our teacher qualifications advisory panel we negotiate constantly with universities to try to ensure that the sorts of things we require to be covered under our curriculum are covered in university programs.

Because of the resourcing and staffing constraints that have been placed on universities it is not always easy for them immediately to add a whole raft of new sorts of things at the drop of a hat, or at the request of governments or employers. In 2003, for example, the Government made it mandatory to ensure that literacy, behaviour management, information and communications technology, Aboriginal education and teaching students from a non-English speaking background were part of our university pre-service teacher education programs. Some of those already were there and had been done for years, for yonks. Special education has been mandatory, I think, since the time of the previous Liberal National Party coalition government. So some of that has already been there for quite some time.

The universities are relatively under-resourced with staffing and fewer permanent tenured people working in teacher education proportionate to what used to be the case. I think they found some of those pressures a little difficult. I think we have reached a kind of agreement that what was required was not the establishment of additional silo-type courses within each of those things. When do they get time to teach people how to teach English, science and maths and those sorts of things? For God's sake, fundamentally teaching is about knowing your stuff, communicating with your kids and being able to engage yourself with teaching.

So the universities have actually incorporated some of those mandatory requirements within pre-existing courses, as well as, in some instances, literacy and special education. So I think universities have accommodated those kinds of requests pretty well. Where the department does not exercise much control is, to pick up Dr Chesterfield-Evans' earlier point, is in the programs where there is an initial degree followed by a teaching degree, either a Dip Ed or a B Ed. Sometimes what students do in an undergraduate degree might not necessarily equip them to teach the particular KLA later on when they go to do a teaching degree. There can often be a problem when they go from one university to another.

A classic case is where they might do a communications course in one university and go to another university to continue with a B Ed or a Masters. We find that what they thought would be sufficient in their undergraduate degree to teach English actually has not been sufficient. I know that Trish Kelly's people constantly are negotiating with universities to keep reminding them that if they want to leave open a pathway into teaching, students must be quite careful about their choice of undergraduate subjects so that they are able later on to have sufficient curriculum knowledge from their first degree. That is an ongoing issue that can only be addressed by constant communication with universities.

We feel that the Institute of Teachers will strengthen the whole issue of satisfaction because it will be quite clear at the graduate teacher stage, which is the first standard, and universities will make sure that their courses cover those aspects. This is what has happened in the United States with the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. But what has happened there is very different in some aspects. I do not want to waste your time talking about that. It was found there that once the standards were set in place, universities actually ran postgraduate programmes focusing precisely on what was required in order to qualify to be an accomplished NBPTS-accredited teacher in the United States. Clearly, the universities will make certain that those things are consistent with the standards.

Picking up question 11, the last point I want to make is that it is essential to recognise that teacher education is a continuum. People in universities do not pretend any more to prepare teachers for a lifelong career. You cannot. The best thing you can do is to make sure the people coming out of your teacher education program are sufficiently knowledgeable and skilled in the appropriate professional values to be able to go into a school, supported by the teacher mentoring program to get them through that stage, in order to be able to teach. If you look at the graduate standards in the Institute, they make it quite clear.

A lot of blame-gaming goes on. You have to recognise what a university teacher education program can and cannot do and what mentoring program can and cannot do, and that they continue across the line. A lot of blame game goes on: "Why didn't they teach that at university? Forget all that stuff you heard about at university." Or the university says, "Schools are a minefield, blah blah." There is not enough recognition of the importance of continuum. So, the answer to question 11 is that the universities and employers need to keep in constant communication about what they can and cannot do, and recognise the stereotypes that often occur across that line from the end of graduation into schools.

We must try to avoid the blame-game. I think we need to expand our notion of mentoring. These people should not be seen as fragile petals that come into the school and have to be carefully looked after before they wither. That is part of the game, but they are wonderfully rich resources. These are people coming out of contemporary, really good, high-quality teacher education programs. We know a hell of a lot about, for example, board of studies learning outcomes. Who know a hell of a lot about the theoretical things underpinning the recent 11-12 English scores. I suspect that perhaps we have not done enough of that. These are people with a hell of a lot to offer the established profession in our schools, by sharing with them across that line. So I think that notion of continuum is important, and we should stop the blame game and recognise what each other can do.

There is a particular ongoing problem about the practicum. This is a really difficult issue and I'm sure Professor Dinham will mention this. The Commonwealth allocation of funds comes to universities through grants and universities make their decisions as to how the funds are allocated to faculties. If you talk to university people about the lack of resources, and all people tend to whinge about lack of resources, they will tell you that they do not get enough money from within the university to properly run their practicum programs. I spoke recently to an academic in a university whose belief is that his university really provides only something like 25 per cent to 50 per cent of the money required. By way of explanation, a practicum is when students doing a degree go into schools for a period of time, supervised by the teacher. A report is written and the university academics come in.

University academics will say that they feel they do not have enough influence in determining where their students are placed in schools, and that they have almost no influence in deciding which particular teacher will supervise their students. It is often a hands-up thing, "Who wants to do it this time?" We are addressing that issue and part of the department for which I used to have responsibility is trying to build regional networks with universities to make that a little better. Some schools have complained that when they have identified serious problems with a student teacher who has gone into the school they never hear back from the university. They say, "We don't know whether the university has addressed those issues, we don't know whether the university has gone on to graduate that student." So communication needs to work both ways.

The last point I want to make is that we have to recognise what I used to call when I was an academic the "zone of benevolent neutrality". What often happens is that a student teacher goes into a school and he or she has a supervisor. The student teacher thinks the supervisor is so busy, flat-out doing everything after school, being involved with the tuckshop, running footy teams or, more importantly, cricket teams, they do not have enough time. So out of a sense of benevolence the student teacher can be reluctant to seek the wisdom, advice and practical assistance of the supervisor. On the other hand, the supervisor remembers what it was like being a prac teacher, having someone looking over his or her shoulder in the old days, thinking, "God, where did I get it wrong? Got to put up these bloody lesson programs and everything else. He or she might fail me. God, I'm terrified." So the supervising teacher has this benevolence and does not really want to come down hard. There builds up what I call the zone of benevolent neutrality where a lot of professional development might take place but sometimes does not.

I remember going once to a school where I supervised one of my students and at the end of my supervision I got a note signed by every kid in the class. It said, "Dear Dr Brock, could you please leave your prac student here teaching us English and would you please take our teacher of English with you back to the university and show them how to teach English." They are some of the practical kinds of issues that come up, but by and large I think universities are doing a good job under

constrained circumstances, tight resources and huge demands from everybody. However, there are certain issues that are ongoing and need to be kept in touch with.

CHAIR: The next question perhaps could be taken on notice.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Yes. I think how the department assesses a graduate's ability is a good one to have on notice. Also, part of what has just been said relates to question 13. Obviously, communication is one of the major issues, particularly two-way communication where universities are concerned, and the impact of funding, whether from the Commonwealth or through the faculty.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Might I just pick up a point on that? I think this whole issue about cooperation between universities, the department and the Commonwealth is going to be influenced by the Commonwealth inquiry into teacher education. Seeing where that goes and some of the agendas around it will set the tone. Clearly, there has been an erosion of the communication links between this organisation and universities over, particularly, the staffing requirements that we see. They are so tied in now with the funding requirements at the Commonwealth level that the real needs of the people who are taking up the supply are secondary. We treat this very seriously, and when we come to that particular inquiry we have to be able to put our case for re-establishing a relationship with those universities about the relative supply issues and the issues from a system consumer, because if the universities are oriented solely towards Canberra and the numbers games that are run there, quite frankly I think we are losing the linkage with the product process and making sure the product coming through these institutions is absolutely fit for the purpose.

As Paul said, there are some extremely qualified teachers coming out, so qualified that they are poached overseas, and the rest of it. Three hundred Australian teachers are working in just one firm in the United States. It says a lot for the quality of teachers being produced in Australia generally. But when it comes to the relationship with, if you like, the home grown consumers of this area, if we do not have a dialogue and a linkage--they have gradually withered with the shift in relationships with the universities--we have serious problems. That is why are going to use that Commonwealth inquiry to try to re-establish what we see as a viable linkage, in detailed discussions around the numbers, types, quantum and relationships we need with those particular institutions.

CHAIR: It would probably be useful if we could get some information on the department's submissions or arguments to that inquiry, which I think has not yet got underway.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: No, it has not. We will look at the timing, but that is a point.

CHAIR: Since Dr Refshauge gave us this inquiry, in addition to the one you're talking about, there has been the federal inquiry about literacy and the teaching of reading, which has some overlap with training of teachers. We thought perhaps there was not a great deal of overlap and we would wait to see the results rather than getting an early look at the submissions.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: The literacy wars continue.

CHAIR: This committee did quite a lot of work on that, as some of you would know, in our inquiry into early intervention for children with learning difficulties. We have already seen some of the wars over phonics and whole word.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Professor David Barr, who is a former vice-chancellor of the University of Western Sydney Macarthur, had a philosophy of offering students experiences that money could not buy, because he knew he could not compete against Sydney and other established universities. As part of the professional development of teachers, is any thought being given to a sort of regional exchange programme, for their own personal development? In the Pacific, for example, where they are crying out for that sort of thing, if somebody went over there as part of the teaching profession, it would widen their life experience, and so forth. It would probably be jointly funded by AusAid. It would make a real contribution over there and also to teacher development back here.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: The issue of teacher exchanges is a very rich field at the moment for the department. In fact, looking at our annual report you would think that there is no-one left in the country there are so many overseas trips. Scholarship growth has been very strong and the Premier has

been very supportive of companies contributing towards scholarship growth. That leads straight back into the professional development of teachers, the continued enrichment of their environment and continued learning. It is fantastic to see that growth. They are building up the whole profession. With regard to exchanges, there is a process for looking at how mutual exchanges operate. They operate largely between English-speaking countries where there is a degree of commonality around teaching practice. That is largely Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and the like, but there are some other exchanges with smaller numbers to a wider number of countries. I do not have the exact numbers. We might get you the details.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I would appreciate that. I was also looking at teaching the teachers up there, more so than teaching the students.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: We can get you some of those details.

Dr BROCK: You mentioned AusAid. Part of the department I had some responsibility for has linked up with TAFE Global, which won a tender put out by AusAid for conducting professional development of senior educational figures in New Guinea. It is more admin than professionalism per se, but that will filter down through the professional.

The Hon. IAN WEST: You may wish to take this question on notice. We suffer from the tyranny of distance in New South Wales. In trying to come to grips with the tools of trade that you use to teach the teacher, mentoring, professional development et cetera, to what extent have you been developing the possible usage of e-learning, videoconferencing and all those tools of trade?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: This is a very rich field, nationally as well as in New South Wales. There is the tyranny of distance issue, but ours is an inclusive system. It covers the entire geography of New South Wales. We are not exclusive or geographically selective; we are inclusive, covering everywhere. Therefore, we must have the capacity to deliver the Board of Studies curriculum to every corner of this State and that presents some unique problems for us. We cannot shrink from that; we have to be able to do so. I will give an outline from the national down to the local. A number of ministerial companies have been set up by the Education Ministers to solely focus on the production of digital online content, learning objects, designed to make sure that e-learning and blended learning environments are supported.

That is also supported by national efforts around making sure that the capacity to communicate across education systems—such as, interoperability standards, metadata tagging, et cetera; all of the, if you like, machinery elements to support the usage and sharing of educational materials—is underpinned. A lot of money from the Commonwealth and State governments goes into producing online materials. For New South Wales that becomes the capacity to be able to say, "How do we take that and use it in such a way that it will be of benefit to schools, be they in the metropolitan area or more generally in the rural and remote areas of the State?"

I will be happy to provide the Committee with details but we have established the teaching and learning exchange, which is a groundbreaking online tool, literally groundbreaking. When we show it to people around Australia and internationally, they say, "This is at the cutting edge" of being able to order and present online teaching materials that make sense for the teachers. There is advice and teaching materials in there and, in fact, online learning communities that can use this particular environment. It is a very rich and rapidly growing particular approach.

We also have to say: how do we assist teachers in the process of being able to use these online materials? It is okay to have them there and to order them in such a way that they are accessible, but how do you actually start to use them? We will be looking at some specific software from Macquarie University, LAMS as it is called. That software has been taken up enthusiastically by the United Kingdom, New Zealand and other teaching systems. We will be trialling that in a range of schools to see how it assists teachers to be able to blend online content into the development of their particular lesson plans; to be able to have that aid in that process and, hopefully, reduce the time take and demystify it for them.

We see considerable opportunities in this regard in relation to distance education issues. For New South Wales that is a fundamental focus. Here we have the potential to be able to make sure that

we can cover some of the areas where we are having some staff issues. For instance, I am very well aware of a number of regional schools linked together by videoconferencing to, say, deliver physics classes. A particular high school might have a physics teacher but only a small physics class and by videoconferencing be able to undertake that course. There is a range of many other forms of distance education which we deliver but, with the rollout of the broad band together with the rich environment that the distance education people have been undertaking, I think there is considerable opportunity to be able to take this further.

Dr BROCK: Just to complement that, we have a very large Australian Research Council project nearing completion at the University of Technology Sydney, examining e-learning in the primary sphere K-6 Technology and Science. That is a very big research project, which is almost finished. Once again, it is no good simply doing research; it is the outcomes from that research which we can extend through the department.

CHAIR: I think proposes to ask some questions but we are obviously out of time. We might need to go on for a few minutes longer, if that is a convenient. You have prepared answers, I assume, to the questions we have not asked. In that sense you could probably take them on notice. Of course, we often find that by asking questions new issues arise as a result of your answers. The Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans certainly has an interest in the issue of accelerated teacher training. The factual matters can be taken on notice but there might be some questions we have not thought of in advance. Similarly, evidence from the Institute of Teachers has been delayed and the Committee will hear from them in April. The Committee wanted to ask you about the departmental side of that. Arthur, do you want to take up the accelerated teacher training aspect? We will take the factual material on notice.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes. There are couple of matters arising out of that. One relates to TAFE. Is TAFE the same? We have not heard of TAFE this morning. Is TAFE, to a large extent, taking on people who generally have a profession and then have to teach? Do they go into the same accelerated learning course to become accredited in order to teach TAFE?

Ms KELLY: No, this is a program for school teachers.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So, this inquiry does not relate to TAFE, is that right?

CHAIR: It should. In fact, I have a piece of paper with the word "TAFE" written on it. I did not realise we had overlooked possible shortages or recruitment or training difficulties in relation to TAFE. It is a very important area, so ask your question, Arthur.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I have a lot of questions on TAFE, but I will not going to them all at this time.

CHAIR: They can be taken on notice.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: I will be happy to take them on notice.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am saying in essence that TAFE has been criticised for not offering certain courses, not being able to offer them, not being flexible in who it employs and not being able to deliver some of the courses it ought to deliver.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: I think them may well be some myths in that, which I am happy to debunk if you want to give me those questions.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I will dig those out for you.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: That is fine. I will be happy to do so. In fact, TAFE is a remarkably flexible system. With regard to the shortage of places around, say, kids who want to do apprenticeships in air-conditioning refrigeration, for instance, that is more about the shortage of teachers than it is about the capacity of the system to deliver. We are particularly targeting to make

sure we have the teachers to meet the demand. In these instances the teachers are specifically targeted to the requirements of the course and so industry experience is fundamental here. Obviously, they also have to have a capacity to teach as well. But having that content understanding and industry background is one of the issues.

I would also say that the spread of course offerings in TAFE is phenomenal and just the breadth is awe-inspiring. I will give you details of the course offerings and you will understand the complexity of the teacher requirements. Many of them are part-time teachers or casuals, given the nature of the teaching load, the location or the requirements. Many of these people have come straight out of industry or still have jobs in industry and are teaching at TAFE in the evening. It becomes quite complex issue, making sure we can respond to the market demand, because it does involve market demand.

We are actually having trouble identifying industry requirements in many instances, for example, things such as refrigeration. Because of the rapid growth in that particular sector we are having difficulty getting experienced people from industry to come and assist in the teaching process. That becomes a factor. The individual sectors are growing so fast that there is not necessarily a pool of people with sufficient experience to try to attract into a teaching environment. It is something I am happy to address. Given the complexity of the environment under which it operates, TAFE is remarkably skilled and adept at matching the demand for specific places—which can vary. The school system is so much more ordered in that sense, whereas there can be very rapid changes in particular demands at TAFE.

The IT area is one such example, where there is a huge growth followed by a huge contraction by market demand for places in particular courses. You have to have a teaching force which is remarkably flexible to meet market demand, as opposed to, say, school where we know how many kids we have within a very fine margin of difference. That can be fundamentally different with TAFE, both geographically and by industry sectors. To have a teaching system that supports that is a feat beyond belief. I was talking to the Malaysian Minister for Higher Education just two days ago and he was absolutely impressed by the breadth and capacity of our system that is so industry focused to be able to meet those particular needs. He proposes to send out more people to see how we do it.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How do you get those people? You say it takes 18 months for a clever person from industry with a string of degrees to get to teach in schools. How do they get to teach in a TAFE when, presumably it is not their full-time job? They are not going to stop doing a job for 18 months while they brush up to teach welding for two hours a week. How do they get across and what is your recruitment?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: We can provide you with details on that but the shorthand version is they have to take a certificate 3 course, which gives them the capacity to be able to teach. They are assessed on that before they are allowed to undertake that process.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does this mean that TAFE students are qualitatively so different that the certificate 3 is okay for TAFE but 18 months accelerated teaching is necessary for schools? Is that a factor of necessity rather than desirability? Is it overkill on one side or underkill on the other?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: We are also talking about completely different learning systems. The effect of having mandatory outcomes in the Board of Studies curriculum structure as opposed to what we are looking at, competency based learning, which quite often is much more narrow in focus. That is the nature of the modules that are undertaken, that you have that capacity to be able to say certificate IV has the means of answering those questions. I am very happy to take you through that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Could I ask one last question on gender balance in primary schools—

CHAIR: Basically, the terms of reference relate to schools. The heading and the first sentence are about recruitment and training of teachers, but then refers to attracting teachers to New South Wales public schools. I understand why your submission does not mention TAFE, but perhaps you could take on notice the extent to which some of the TAFE issues are relevant. Many people who

teach in TAFE also teach in schools and there is a movement from one to the other. Although the terms of reference are about teachers in public schools, we would be foolish to avoid looking at TAFE areas that could be useful.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I notice that the gender balance in your schools is pretty heavily weighted towards women and presumably has primary and secondary schools in together. If you could split the graph on page 10 into primary and secondary, my experience would suggest that the gender balance is much worse in primary schools. What is being done to fix the real shortage of male role models in primary schools?

CHAIR: The bottom table on page 11 shows the split.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is 78.1 per cent in primary.

CHAIR: And 52 per cent in secondary.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: And rising?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Yes, not as much as other States and Territories, but marginally; the trend is there. All the parents that I have spoken to have said, "I want a good teacher." They have not said to me that they want a good teacher who is either male or female. We might explore that issue.

Ms KELLY: If I could talk about some of the work we are doing in Teach NSW. While we are promoting teaching to boys and girls, men and women, we also in our schools have a program now where we are promoting teaching using male role models that they might relate to, such as sporting identities who have come up through public education, as well as some of our own male teachers. So we are looking at how we can provide for people to consider teaching as a career—young male teachers, who are working very successfully in our schools and also people who have been through our school system, talking about the relationship that they have had with their teachers, males and females. Picking up on what Andrew has said, some of the research is quite interesting in terms of the gender issue and the quality debate. Paul probably has some comments that he would like to make in relation to that.

Dr BROCK: You probably heard on *AM* the other day Professor Terry Lovatt, a professor at the University of Newcastle and now President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education, addressing this issue. I spent 15 years as a Marist brother in Catholic schools. One of my confreres and friends was Brother Kelvin Canavan. You may be aware that the Catholic Education Office advertised 12 scholarships to encourage males to go into preservice teacher education programs. They have only been able to fill six; they have not been able to fill the full 12. Terry's response to that is, "I think it is a cultural issue." You can do everything in your power to increase the male-female ratio but you are dealing with cultural issues, the way in which the profession has been perceived, particularly as a primary school teacher.

There is the way in which it has been gendered, if you like, in a sense by history, if you look at the data, for example, after the establishment of the University of Western Sydney and well before this the freeing up, after Gough Whitlam's time in government, of university positions. The great aim and the great role was to significantly increase the proportion of people coming out of south-western Sydney—underprivileged areas—to enrol in university. The data on that—and you may be able to correct me on this, Charlie—well before this there was not a profound shift in people going in because it was a cultural issue. All the money and all the policies in the world did not transform that cultural sense of: we're westies and westies, by and large, do not go to university.

I think there is a cultural thing here and it is very hard. Unless you have cultural police you cannot go around bashing people on the head. The ultimate thing is that parents—and I am a parent with kids at public schools—we want our kids to be taught by really qualified, terrific teachers. If they wear a skirt or they wear a shirt, at the end of the day if they are damn good teachers, that counts. If they are lousy teachers, that counts. But having said all that, yes, I would like there to be to a greater exposure—delete that—

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: But that goes to the issue though, does it not?

Dr BROCK: We do have to address the issue. I take your point, Madam. It is a very salient point you mentioned there; the issue of the impact of child protection and some of the particularly highly media demonstrations. I was involved in the Ramsey review and one of my staff took a phone call from a man in tears. He said, "I have got one thing to say to the Ramsey review, that is, don't let males go into primary school teaching. Ban them." His story was he was taking a sixth class and kids were going over a vaulting horse. A young girl going over the vaulting horse lost her balance. He instinctively reached out, caught her and put her down again, and his hand touched her bottom. Nothing was said; no smirks, no nothing.

One of the kids mentioned it to a parent that night and the parent mentioned it to the boss. Under the rules and regulations the boss had to institute an inquiry. The guy went through the department's procedures on accusations of malfeasance. He went through the courts. He spent two years defending himself and was found completely innocent on both counts but never will teach again. He cannot go back to teaching. Sometimes commonsense gets in the way (sic).

When I was in England there was a brilliant young kindergarten teacher. A kid came to school the first three days, balled his eyes out and mummy stayed with him. The fourth day they agreed that the mummy would go home. Kid bawled his eyes out and the young teacher did what any parent would hope, if they trusted the teacher, and gave the kid a bit of a cuddle and the kid settled down. That went into the national media and that young woman was sacked for inappropriate touching. I know your point was made as an aside but the whole issue of the ways in which the profession may be perceived by males in the light of highly publicised issues like that is the hope that commonsense might sometimes override as long as the spirit is there. I think it is a very important issue.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I think we would like to know what the department is doing about it actually.

CHAIR: Do you want to take that on notice?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: It is a very large area for which there has been a lot of case history and a lot of thought has been put into this. We would like a chance to be able to put that in writing because it is one that, unless the right tone and balance is sought, is seen as a positive disincentive, so we would have to take that seriously.

CHAIR: It probably should be put in the context of the kind of cultural attitudes that you started talking off about, Dr Brock, where, for a whole variety of reasons, primary schools have been seen more as a place for women, although I should also add my own. They have always been seen as a place for men as long as they are in a sufficiently suitable promotions position, but the classroom has always been seen as a place for women, and that is another cultural issue.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: That is rapidly changing.

CHAIR: It has changed but a lot of people still see primary schools like that. Is there anything we should get on the record about the Institute of Teachers in terms of the department's interface with them? You obviously can give us the answers to these questions on notice because you have prepared them and we are conscious that the institute is new, but we are not clear—and perhaps no-one is—about the extent to which the department will be involved in the application of the standards or in monitoring how things go over time. These may be questions to be resolved later because the institute is only just starting off.

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: Yes, the institute, as a separate statutory authority, is remarkably new. The first process of accreditation of teachers coming out of universities and other areas and going into teaching is only just commencing. The main area of intersection with the department is that, in fact, all school systems—be they independent, Catholic systemic or ourselves—are now looking at how we take those particular standards to see how they apply to what we do and how we support that. For instance, our framework for quality teaching is to ensure that we are simpatico with those standards that are there with the institute.

Also, we have clearly established an internal process to make sure that the procedures for managing probationary teachers link in with what the institute is coming up with as well, so there are a range of procedural issues and process issues to make sure that that takes place. Just making sure they are in place in term two of 2005 is effectively when they become mandatory, so a lot of work is being undertaken by Trish and her people to ensure that that is in place.

The new teachers have to undertake accreditation at local or professional competence, which is the entry, effectively, into the level competence range. We have to look at the changes in policies and procedures that are going to be able to support that—everything from our employment forms, how we appoint, how we communicate and that we make sure that the communications from the institute are also getting through to our teachers, be they through the graduate recruitment program, and that we are assisting in the communication process about what is happening with the Institute of Teachers.

We are also making sure that our internal procedures match the outcomes required by the institute and all school systems are undertaking that. At the same time, we are looking very closely to see where the Federal Government's own national institute for quality teaching and school leadership is heading, to make sure that we can input to minimise any overlap or confusion between any national movements in this regard and how they relate to State level accreditation. At the end of the day State level accreditation is fundamental because there is such a linkage through to the ongoing professional development of recruitment and retention of teachers. That is why it can never be really a national process. It is a very close relationship obviously with the employers and the other areas where we want to make sure that we can support that in the way we shape and manage our business.

CHAIR: We will put in writing our questions on notice. Was there anything further you wished to say?

Mr CAPPIE-WOOD: I wonder whether it would be of any benefit to the Committee for me to provide a copy of the material relating to the graduate recruitment program and other target programs and if members have any further questions, we are more than happy to take them. I will also hand up a copy of Paul Brock's important research and analysis.

CHAIR: Given that the department is at the heart of the inquiry, I am sure that members will have further questions following evidence from other witnesses, so you and departmental representatives may be required at a later date.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Luncheon adjournment)

JENNIFER GAYE LEETE, Deputy President, New South Wales Teachers Federation, 23-33 Mary Street Surrey Hills, and

WENDY CURRIE, Research Officer, New South Wales Teachers Federation, 23-33 Mary Street Surrey Hills, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: You have not yet made a submission, but that is coming. Do you want to make an opening statement before we go into questions?

Ms LEETE: I would like to make a very brief opening statement. On behalf of the Teachers Federation we very much welcome this inquiry. In particular, we welcome the opportunity to raise issues and concerns that our union has and we have been attempting to address for sometime in relation to recruitment of teachers into our public schools in New South Wales—in relation to the fact that it is a public education system and we are speaking about the needs of students in all parts of the State, including some quite isolated parts of the State. We think that the importance of the public education system to this State warrants a very significant monitoring and policy response where there are circumstances in which questions of the supply of teachers in particular could potentially be problematic.

CHAIR: You have the questions that we sent you? As I said before to the departmental people, these are a guide arising out of yours or other people's submission that we feel the Committee needs to get answers to, and Committee members invariably have all sorts of other things they want to ask as well. In some cases you may want to say you will be covering that in your submission, and there is no reason to talk to something if you feel it will be better dealt with in your written submission. We have recruitment first, and 10 questions under that heading. Do you think the department's current means of recruiting graduates is effective?

Ms LEETE: I think our short answer to that is that we do not think it is as effective as it could be. We recognise and acknowledge that the department has had a particular focus and a particular understanding of the need to have some new strategies about recruiting young people—people who are currently doing their teacher education training at universities—into the New South Wales public education system. It is probably not surprising when you are speaking about the major union that is involved in a key area of the public sector that we take the view that the department and the Government are not doing as much as they could be doing.

Again, you will not be surprised to hear this coming from a union, we would put that down to the amount of resourcing that is available to support the department in that work. We will talk later, and we will address in our written submissions, questions around, for example, teacher scholarships and the potential extension of teacher scholarships as a strategy for recruiting people from the universities into our New South Wales public schools.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In that, will you be addressing strategies generally—just picking up from the last discussion with the department about gender—to encourage gender diversity in teaching as well?

Ms LEETE: In our examination of the terms of reference we had not particularly focused our minds on the issue of gender. On the other hand, of course, the federation some years ago made quite a significant submission to a national inquiry that was occurring in relation to the number of men in teaching. We would generally take the view, since the world is made up of both men and women, it would be a jolly good thing for children to be taught by both men and women, but we would have to say our clear priority is to ensure, first, that all of our public schools are staffed and, secondly, that all of our public schools are staffed with the best quality teachers that we can have.

So, gender in that sense is probably not going to be a particular focus of our submission but, as I said, on the other hand we have always maintained the view that we want to encourage both men and women to come into teaching. To be fair to the department, in the publicity and materials it has created around Teach New South Wales it has consciously ensured that both young men and young women—and, I have to say, young men and women not necessarily from your white Anglo-Saxon

background but a diversity of young men and women—are promoted into the sorts of role models that young teachers are portrayed.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What can be done to improve recruitment? You talked about scholarships but are there other initiatives that could be explored?

Ms LEETE: We certainly do think there are other initiatives. I suppose this picks up some of the matters that were raised this morning as well. In terms of what we would see as a need for a far better and closer relationship between the Department of Education and Training as the major employer of teachers in this State and the universities and student teachers whilst they work their way through university in what is usually four years of a teacher education program. It still remains the case that, even though we have had a very concerted attempt by the department to focus on this area, the focussing on the area still seems to be happening basically in the final year of the teacher education qualification, sometimes in the final months of the teacher education qualifications.

We have got some real concerns about both the quality and consistency of the delivery of information to student teachers by the department. We do not just hold the department responsible for that, I think that there is a real problem in relation to the communication between the department and the universities. Just to give you an extreme example, questions about a study program that a student teacher is going to undertake as they are in the university. We have had instances where a student has got to the fourth year of a four-year qualification without being made aware that the particular combination of subjects that they have chosen to study as part of their qualification is actually not going to equip them with the accreditation that the department requires to teach in particular subject areas.

Students, for example, who, whilst they might be doing accredited courses, might be doing a combination of subjects which in terms of the normal and regular pattern of employment of the department would be seen to be completely extreme and, frankly, the person's employment prospects would be pretty slim. But the university student may not necessarily even get that information until the last couple of months of a four-year teaching qualification.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you mean if a student studies English and geography they could not be employed because geography went with history and English went with it?

Ms LEETE: That was the second example I have alluded to, yes. In addition, we have had some extreme cases where there is a particular course that the university is offering to prepare—I must say the particular examples in my mind are in relation to the preparation of PD-Health and PE teachers—a KLA. PD is personal development, health and physical education. We have had instances where a group of students have gone through a particular institution and that institution's course has not been accredited by the department's body, which does that kind of thing, which is called the Teacher Qualifications and Advisory Panel [TQAP]. Yes, your example about the student who does that particular unusual combination of subjects, that is an issue, but again, as I said, in relation to particular courses.

Part of it is to do with the fact that there is not a mechanism for the department to be represented in any way—to have some kind of a voice—to play an advisory role in some way, shape or form to teacher education students in universities. We can all talk about the old days and I certainly do not want to take us back to the past, but there certainly were occasions in the past when teacher education scholarships were fully funded for the preparation of teachers all the way through a four-year university qualification. The Department of Education and Training specifically had personnel on site at each of the New South Wales universities in which the students who had received those scholarships had to submit their course of study and ensure that it fitted, if you like, with the department's requirements.

Whilst I am certainly not proposing that that would necessarily be the best way for the department to spend its resources, I think what has happened as a result of the changes that have occurred over the past, say, 10 years is that there is now such a gap between what is going on at the universities and the department, that it is a real issue. I know the department is very much aware of it and I know that the pressures that are placed on universities, particularly the schools of teacher

education, around funding and their own access to resources and personnel, makes all of those things very difficult. But there is a crying need for it, and in the review into teacher education conducted by Gregor Ramsay a couple of years ago, he spent a considerable amount of time describing the problem and proposing strategies to address it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you foresee there will be shortages of teachers in the future?

Ms LEETE: We certainly do. Wendy is in a better position than I am to say something about the figures. Our written submission will go into the absolute specifics. There have been a number of reports, including national reports—the Kwong Lee Dow report—into teacher education that looked at the issue. The TQAP and various other groups have worked on it. I think our answer to the question about whether there will be a shortage is that whilst we are not expecting there to be a generalised shortage—meaning across the entire teaching service—we would argue that there is already a shortage in particular subject areas and in particular parts of the State. I think that is a real issue, given our union's commitment to the public education system and given that the department's responsibility is to administer a public education system across New South Wales.

We are very much aware of the difficulties that exist in encouraging teachers, probably mainly in mathematics, science and information technology but also in some of the more traditional areas such as English, even languages and dance which is a growing subject at the higher school certificate level and in particular parts of the State where there already exists some very serious problems in relation to teacher supply. They may be being manifested, not necessarily in that you can identify this particular class that does not have a teacher, but in a sense it is camouflaged a little because they may have a teacher, but if you then dig a little deeper and you check out whether the teacher's qualification and training is actually consistent with the subject area that is being taught, or you might find that, yes, that particular science class at Walgett High School, for example, has had a teacher all year but, in fact, it has had 14 different teachers. Then you count how many of those 14 actually have the qualifications.

There might be quite a number of positions occupied by casual teachers or by someone that is, in a sense, filling in—meeting a very important need—but their qualifications do not necessarily match. So that then brings in issues about turnover of positions in country schools and all of those questions about the need for educational stability in terms of the provisions of them. Yes, we would say there is already a shortage in some parts of the State. We believe that it is going to get worse over the next 5 to 10 years. We would agree that there is not a shortage in relation to primary teachers but even the demographics of primary, the primary teaching service at the moment means that there is going to be a very significant retirement of primary teachers in the same way that will happen for secondary teachers, and lots and lots of employment. One of the real issues, in our mind, is those who are currently waiting, even in the primary area, to be offered full-time employment. How many of those people, as the demand grows and the employment picks up, will be prepared to go to some of the more isolated parts of the States?

CHAIR: As to shortages, school counsellors are usually not new teachers, but they have to have teacher qualifications. I am told there is a huge shortage of school counsellors. Is that true? Are there other groups such as counsellors where the system is in need?

Ms LEETE: I think it would be fair to say that already, yes, there are shortages of school counsellors. Again, that may not be necessarily manifested in terms of "these particular students in these particular schools" cannot get a councillor. It might be manifested in different sorts of ways. The average age of school counsellors is older or higher than the average age of the teaching service generally. That is not surprising given that, in addition to having teacher qualifications, to be a school counsellor you have to have a certain number of years of experience as a teacher and you need additional qualifications in the psychology area.

The Teachers Federation and a number of the principals groups have been having discussions with the department about the need for a range of strategies to recruit people into school counselling. Before I leave school counselling, I would want to put one thing on the record. One of the huge assets that New South Wales has, in our view, is a school counselling service that involves people who are teachers initially. The quality of the work that our school counsellors do and the credibility that those

school counsellors have as professionals in our schools is very, very much associated with the fact that they originally were teachers.

CHAIR: Someone told me that careers advisors are often in short supply. That may not be true. Are there other groups of people who need teacher qualifications but then play a special role in schools where there are shortages?

Ms CURRIE: I was going to say that there does not seem to be any shortage of careers advisors, in particular. Certainly there are some issues around English as a Second Language [ESL] teachers and teacher librarians. But I do not think there is any problem with recruitment in those areas that I know of.

CHAIR: Therefore, counsellors would be a special case?

Ms CURRIE: I would say so, yes, particularly because they need specific qualifications. Careers advisers or teacher librarians do not need anything other than their teacher training. They may have some librarian qualifications or careers education qualifications as well, but they can gain those qualifications while they are doing the job. With school counsellors, it is a highly specific area where there is a necessity of some psychology in their degree. That puts them in a special category, which I do not think the others fall into in the same way.

Ms LEETE: If I may add, even in relation to an area like careers advisors, I think that the potential for a shortage has got to be considered in terms of the current demographics of the teaching service in our schools, in particular, the demographics of each of these professional groups. Again, I suspect, from my experience anyway—I do not know this for sure—that if you looked at the average age of careers advisers you would find that they were older than most teachers. We could easily be facing a period when a whole lot of careers advisers over a very short period of time are going to retire from the teaching service.

Ms CURRIE: I would like to say something about the average age of teachers. I am not sure if some groups of teachers are older than other groups of teachers. The average age of teachers is at such a point that the Federal Government inquiry into teacher training, which was particularly looking at science and technology training, was specifically concerned about that and came to a conclusion that there would be an enormous percentage—I am trying to find it in here but I cannot—something like 20 per cent of all teachers are going to retire in the next five or so years.

CHAIR: The department's submission has given us the figures but not the percentages.

Ms CURRIE: I can give you the percentages from that, but not right now. I can provide that for you. The issue, of course, is what is going to happen in the next eight years or so. The figures already show that the retirement rate for teachers in New South Wales is hotting up. In other words, the number of teachers who are retiring each year is increasing as we go on. There is an expectation that will continue.

CHAIR: The department says at the moment 8.9 per cent of teachers are over the defined benefit of superannuation scheme retirement age and a further 18.6 per cent will reach retirement age by 2009. That would certainly fit in with or even be greater than the Federal inquiry percentages.

Ms CURRIE: Yes, it would fit in with that, most definitely. I would also like to talk about something I think the department talked about this morning, that is, in relation to the resignation rate among teachers in, say, the first couple of years. What we need to look at is not just the first year or first three years. There are some very interesting statistics from the department's own figures in relation to the number of teachers resigning from teaching in the first nine years. That is interesting because it falls within what we call the common incremental scale, in other words, the period of time it takes to get from the first year out teacher rate to the top of the classroom teacher scale rate, which you cannot go any further beyond unless you are in a promotions position. We can give you those figures. I do not know if the department provided those to you, but they are quite telling.

CHAIR: The department said 17 per cent resigned within the first five years.

Ms CURRIE: Yes.

CHAIR: The department did not go anywhere beyond that. It would be interesting to get that next band.

Ms CURRIE: I can tell you now from the department's figures that between the first and ninth years of service there were 672 resignations, including early voluntary retirements. This was 60.4 per cent of all resignations. In other words, if you took the resignations across the whole of the government teaching service in New South Wales, 60 per cent of those happened in the first nine years of teaching. In the first 14 years of service 832 teachers resigned or took early voluntary retirement. That is 74.8 per cent of all resignations. Basically we are looking at the resignation rate of teachers. Forget the notion that everybody is going to retire soon. That is one issue. This is a separate one. The resignation rate among teachers in the first few years, I would say the first 10 years, adds up to 74.8 per cent of all resignations from the department. That is when they are occurring.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does that mean once you get over the fact you are in the right or wrong profession you do not resign? In other words, when you consider the very low resignation rate after the first 10 or 14 years, are the teachers staying because they are happy or because they are trapped?

Ms CURRIE: Are you suggesting that it takes 14 years to realise you are in the wrong profession?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It would seem to be a long time. I gather that most resignations happen relatively early because they decide they are in the wrong profession. The kids scream and they say they have had enough. They decide they are in the wrong profession and they get out. If the resignation rate is high in the first few years and then remains constant, would you say the teachers who remain are content within the system?

Ms CURRIE: I am not sure what you mean by trapped. I always think if teachers are trapped, they are usually trapped by needing to keep up their superannuation in order to be able to retire. Apart from that, I am not sure what you mean by trapped.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you are 55 and you have been teaching since you were 25, presumably you would be reluctant to leave and go out on the job market.

Ms CURRIE: I do not think I would be able to comment on that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I asked the department if it had any figures as to the degree of job satisfaction of teachers. It answered me in terms of ongoing professional development. That is not the same thing.

Ms CURRIE: No. I do not think I can answer your question.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does the union have a comment about people not resigning because they are content or because they feel once they have been in the teaching profession for a long time they cannot get out?

Ms CURRIE: We have not done any specific research on that to be able to answer your question definitively. We could give anecdotal evidence that some people are fed up and still doing it, some people are dreadfully happy and love the job. I do not know.

CHAIR: We have to bear in mind that when we are talking about recruitment and training we are looking at teachers who are within the first few years of their career.

Ms CURRIE: That is right.

CHAIR: As the department said, with an increasing percentage of career-change teachers, a person might be 40 years of age but has been teaching for only one year.

Ms CURRIE: That is quite right.

CHAIR: So we need to be careful as to whether we are talking about the age group or the number of years in the teaching service.

Ms CURRIE: That is right.

CHAIR: Fundamentally our interest is in whether recruitment or training programs have flaws or issues that need addressing so that we do not spend a great deal of money on recruiting and training teachers only to soon lose them—which results in a waste of money and heartbreak and impacts on the system. That is more our focus than senior teachers.

Ms CURRIE: Yes.

Ms LEETE: In that context, one of the things we would like to say is that a very significant factor in terms of the benefits of the public education system relates to the stability of the teaching service. We have schools, and the department will refer to schools that are considered to be difficult to staff. Often that is a geographic thing. It means they are in more isolated and remote parts of the State. But also there are schools, and probably an increasing number of schools, that are considered to be difficult to staff in the Sydney metropolitan area. They are all too often schools that serve our socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. It is frequently in those schools where you have a very high turnover of staff, including at the classroom teacher level, people who are entering the profession for the first time and in leadership positions.

Where you have a very high turnover of staff, it tends to create real difficulties within the school. Whilst we are certainly not advocating a view that teachers should be appointed to a school and stay there forever, a very high turnover of school staff is a problem, not just for students but for the creation of an ongoing relationship and sense of purpose in consultation with the school community. From our perspective, issues about training and recruitment of teachers are very much connected with the extent to which we are going to be able to retain people in our schools. Obviously we have a transfer system. The transfer system is one of the most positive ways in which we are able to extend the skills from one school through into other schools. Where you end up with a system that has a significant number of schools with a very high turnover of staff, then that is going to raise, and possibly in some parts of the State already does, fundamental questions about the equity of the provision of education and whether on behalf of the public of New South Wales we are able to provide a high quality education to all our students, no matter where they are in the State.

CHAIR: Over the page in our training and support questions we ask about the induction and mentoring programs. Obviously, those programs are important in schools that are more difficult to staff where teachers may have more problems. Other than the transfer system, are there other initiatives that encourage teachers to go to and then stay in the more difficult to staff schools?

Ms LEETE: The area on which we would want to focus most significantly is the whole matter of induction of and support for beginning teachers. A related area, but perhaps somewhat removed from the terms of reference of this Committee, is development and support for people in school leadership positions. The federation's position on induction of new teachers is one that I think would be quite highly critical of the department and of the Government, certainly of previous governments in this State, and the inadequate extent to which they have supported and resourced induction. Until the creation of the teacher mentor program in 2003, the fundamental commitment to and resourcing of teacher induction was to the extent that a school west of the line, in the western part of the State, or in western or south-western Sydney was given the equivalent of one school day for each beginning teacher.

CHAIR: One school day a year, or a term?

Ms LEETE: One school day in a year, and just in the first year. It was assumed that that one school day for that first year somehow would be adequate to induct teachers into the profession. It did not go any further than that. And, for a school in the Sydney metropolitan area, not in the west, the resourcing was to the extent of half a school day for one year.

CHAIR: When you say "resourcing", do you mean that the mentors were relieved of their other duties for one school day, or what exactly does the one school day add up to?

Ms LEETE: The first thing I would want to say is that the term "mentor" was not really used until 2003. Mostly—and this is pretty much consistent across the State—the full day for teachers in the western region and in western Sydney was used to take them out of their schools so that they could go to a location like the district office, for example, where district office staff were able to spend the day with them. It was sort of like a course, with the beginning teachers sitting with presenters who would spend the day briefing the new teachers on a whole lot of things, including leave conditions and things like that.

CHAIR: That is the induction program, not the mentoring program.

Ms LEETE: Yes. Essentially, that was the extent of resourcing of the induction program. It was often said that schools themselves—meaning the principal and personnel in each school—had an obligation to provide induction for new teachers. But, in terms of providing a mechanism by which that could happen—so that the head teacher, for example, could be relieved from class to go into the classroom of a new teacher and work with that teacher in a very practical way to deal with what was going on in the classroom—those sorts of resources were not provided at all. It was a body called MACQT, the Ministerial Advisory Council on the Quality of Teacher, a committee that existed until John Aquilina became Minister for Education and Training, that did some research on the question of teacher induction. The committee discovered, when it went out and asked a group of new teachers in New South Wales, that most of them said they had not had an induction program in any way, shape or form.

In 2003 the head of the Teachers Federation lobbied very hard for the creation of some specific positions, to be appointed to schools that had a significant number of beginning teachers. That is what led to the creation of the teacher mentor program. It was funded by the Government for 2003 and 2004 to the extent of what is referred to as 50 full-time equivalent teachers. So it represented 50 teachers. We very much supported, and were involved in, the implementation of that program and we are aware that evaluations of it have taken place. In each of the State budget submissions that the Teachers Federation has prepared since that time it has asked the Government to expand the program to the extent that it has 300 positions, as opposed to the 50 positions.

In the context of the evidence that the department presented of 1,000 targeted graduates each year, in addition to the employment of between 1,200 and 1,600 teachers, we think the appointment of 300 teacher mentors would be a highly effective and appropriate strategy to address the needs of beginning teachers. It is very interesting to look at the way in which those teacher mentors are used. They are used in very flexible ways, largely dependent upon decisions made at the school level. Sometimes, for example, they may take the class of say the science head teacher so that the science head teacher can then do the work that might be necessary with two or three beginning teachers who might be there on the science faculty.

The final thing I would like to say about it—and I think it is very important to understand—is that in its evidence the department said that, in 2003 and 2004, 20 per cent of beginning teachers received support from a teacher mentor. That is true. But the department went on to say that this year 60 per cent of beginning teachers received support from a teacher mentor. I think the Committee needs to understand that the program has not been expanded at all. It continues to be to the extent of 50 full-time equivalent teaching positions. Essentially, in the implementation of the program, resources are now spread more thinly. In 2003 and 2004 the very great majority of teacher mentors worked in one school, where they supported beginning teachers. For example, a number of schools might have 13 first-year-out teachers arriving on day one and needing support. Based on the number of beginning teachers in a school, the department appointed those 50 people. This year, a number of those teacher mentors are working across three different schools, attempting to support beginning teachers. Some of those teacher mentors now have a 50 per cent teaching load of their own, so that only 50 per cent of their time is available for teacher mentoring.

CHAIR: The sentence they were referring to—at page 34 of the submission—is that the 2005-06 program featured 58 teacher mentors working with new teachers in more than 80 schools

with significant patterns of new teacher appointments. You might like to comment on that. So it was at 50 schools, whereas it is now more than 80.

Ms LEETE: That is right. What needs to be understood is that the 58 teacher mentors can represent 58 different people but, depending on the extent of the size of the teaching load that those people have, it would add up to 50 in terms of full-time equivalent. We would take this opportunity to say that we believe absolutely that the teacher mentor program is the way to go. They do not work with just beginning teachers. They work with people in leadership positions in schools who work with beginning teachers. So that, if you go to some of our difficult to staff areas, for example where there are a lot of new teachers, there are usually also a lot of people who are very, very new to the leadership positions. In the high schools, the head teachers might have been head teacher for only one or two or three years; the assistant principals in primary schools might have only just moved into that leadership position; and even the principal is, most probably, likely to have been a principal for only a very short period of time. The teacher mentors can play a very significant role.

The other issue—and I will stop here—is that we have asked the Government to make an ongoing commitment to that program, so that we, the Secondary Principals Council in particular and the primary principals, who have played a big role in this, will not have to keep arguing at the beginning of each budget cycle for these positions to be retained. We want them to be ongoing positions. The teacher mentors might be moved from school to school, depending upon where the beginning teachers are, but we want teacher mentors to be an ongoing part of the staffing of the public education system.

CHAIR: I think you have made it very clear—as we asked you to—what improvements or whatever you want in the mentoring program. You were a bit critical of the induction program, but you have not told us whether you have any specific ideas on the way in which induction programs can be improved. You may want to take that question on notice and deal with it in your submission.

Ms LEETE: I will take the opportunity to respond now. I think the big problem with teacher induction, as I have indicated, is the failure to resource it. It is in those schools that have teacher mentors where, guess what, we now have real induction programs for teachers. The director-general referred to a document that was produced by the department when additional funding was provided for professional development. At the same time, a document was prepared about the need for teacher induction. That is because the Teachers Federation, in negotiations with the department, asked the department to do that. It was not part of the department's original plan.

It should be the case, with the addition funding for professional learning that is now available in schools, that the schools themselves have greater capacity to implement and put in place some real teacher induction programs. But it is very early days. This year is only the beginning of the second year in which those professional learning funds have been available. Prior to that, going right back to 1996, we all heard the media talk about $25 a year per teacher being available to schools for professional development. That additional money for professional learning should assist and support teacher induction. We think the material available under the policy that the department has distributed, and also in another kit it produced some years ago around teacher induction, is all good material. The crying need has been for time for teachers in schools and those in leadership positions to actually do something useful with that material and put the policy into practice in schools.

CHAIR: In its submission the department goes into a bit of detail about the documents you talk about. It finishes by saying that the web site also links to the Institute of Teachers web site. If that is the case, obviously the department has been doing recent work on that.

Ms LEETE: Again, as to how useful that will be, it is very, very early days.

CHAIR: We sort of hopped over the next question, because you were talking about ways of encouraging teachers to stay at schools, and I pointed out that we had questions about induction and mentoring over the page. Are there other things you would like to talk about in relation to shortages, or encouraging new teachers to stay? Or shall we move on to the later questions? The next one we would like your opinion on is whether you think university courses are appropriately qualifying graduates for employment with the Department of Education and Training.

Ms LEETE: I might move on to that area.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The Hon. Charlie Lynn has one final question before we move on to that area.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: My question relates to the recruitment of teachers. I refer to the impact of the mandatory application of what is euphemistically called inappropriate behaviour where a spontaneous act of compassion towards an injured or distressed student can lead, and has led, to the destruction of a male teacher's career. What is the view of the foundation on this issue? Do you think that would have a negative impact on the recruitment of male teachers in primary school education?

Ms LEETE: In my capacity as Deputy President of the Teachers Federation the matter of child protection is strangely referred to as the campaign issue for which I am responsible. A couple of years ago the Teachers Federation, the Independent Education Union and the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations quite actively lobbied to have changes made to the child protection legislation in this State, in particular, amendments to the Ombudsman Act and the Act that covers the Commission for Children and Young People. The sort of example that you referred to in your question is precisely the example that drove us to do that. Unfortunately, there are all too many examples.

At that time we were able to achieve some amendments to the legislation but, as often happens with all these things, when you are pursuing betterments you might get some betterments but they never go quite as far as you wanted. Certainly that is the case for us. There is no doubt in the federation's mind, collectively, about what is seen to be vulnerability—the likelihood that their behaviour might be misinterpreted. That is real issue and real disincentive for young men and older men to move into teaching, particularly in the context of dealing with very young people.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Has the federation done any research in relation to that issue—its ability to recruit and maintain male teachers as a result of our current child protection laws?

Ms LEETE: No, we have not done that. The federation's research capacity is limited to the extent that it has two full-time research officers to cover the entire area of its campaigning. So we do not tend to have the resources to do that kind of thing. On the other hand we also have 20 field officers. We pay them a lot of money to go into schools every day and to talk to teachers. All the presidential officers and other officers of the union go into schools a lot. It would be fair to say—I do not want to be hysterical about it because we did achieve some betterments in the legislation—that this matter is raised in every school that we go to.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Would you address that issue in your submission together with recommendations about how to improve the system?

Ms LEETE: We will attempt to do so. When it comes to improvements in the system I suspect we will probably argue for further changes to the legislation.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I think that would be a good point. At least it gives us some guidance as to what are your views. My basic understanding of the issue is that this is a major disincentive. We could walk around this issue or we could try to address it and do something about it. I would appreciate any information or research that you have.

Ms LEETE: We will attempt to do that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We will deal now with university courses. We need to ask you a number of questions. However, after we receive your submission we might need you to come back so that we can explore other issues. We heard about the need for graduates in particular curriculum areas. Are we getting enough qualifying graduates with Department of Education and Training qualifications to work in our schools?

Ms LEETE: There are two ways in which you could look at this. On the one hand there is the reasonably superficial level about whether the courses that the graduating teachers have completed are consistent with the department's requirements for accreditation. Of course, the majority of them

are. On the other hand you could look at it a little more specifically in relation to the content of the teacher education qualification and the course of study that the new teacher has had the benefit of across the four years of study. It is difficult for us to speak in a way that is underpinned by the specific research we have done because we do not have the research capacity to do that sort of thing.

Because our people are always in schools we get massive feedback from teachers about it. Essentially, that varies quite dramatically. Sometimes the reports are about brilliant and capable young people arriving from the university, or almost directly from the university, and about the extent to which their training has clearly equipped them for the new environment in which they find themselves. I think it would be fair to say that the majority of our feedback on this issue is that there is criticism of the extent to which university courses might have adequately prepared new teachers for the work that they now need to do.

We are cautious about this because we also have a great deal of respect for the role that our colleagues play in teacher education. We would connect this issue about the way in which university courses are preparing new teachers to the Institute of Teachers, granted that it is in its early days. I know the Committee has prepared questions relating to how the institute could play a significant role. When we talk to teachers they say, "If the Institute of Teachers does nothing else we want it to look closely at teacher education courses and to genuinely ensure that teacher education courses are the best possible courses for preparing new teachers for the role that they will play."

When you hear that argument you sometimes have to remind those teachers that they will be getting teachers as well. The best university in the universe would not necessarily be capable of producing somebody who walks into a classroom and who is a brilliant teacher. So much of our teaching is a process of skill development—as you do it, working with your colleagues, working as part of a school. The interim committee of the Institute of Teachers has prepared two things that we think will provide a real way forward—not necessarily based on the assumption that what is going on in teacher education now is not good enough, but based on the assumption that we have an obligation to assure ourselves of the quality of the provision.

The interim committee produced a document entitled, "Guidelines for the Endorsement of Initial Teacher Education Programs." That document took almost a year to produce in consultation with various stakeholders, including practising teachers, but also including teacher educators. Just producing a document is not necessarily great, but if that document is put in place and it is implemented in a way that provides the quality assurance mechanism we are looking for, it would be a significant achievement. In addition, the interim committee of the Institute of Teachers produced a set of graduate teacher standards.

The expectation is that a student completing the four years of teacher education would, at the end of that process, be able to meet the standards, which are essentially descriptors about the behaviour, knowledge and skills that that teacher would be expected to have, for example, knowledge of curriculum, child development, pedagogy and the methodology of teaching that kind of thing. There might be issues about what universities are currently producing, but I think there is a real issue about consistency from one university to the other. That is an area in which the Institute of Teachers has a real capacity to do some important work on behalf of the community to ensure that the quality is there.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You referred earlier to consistency. You also mentioned there are some areas that are not being covered. What are you talking about specifically?

Ms LEETE: Not being covered in teacher education?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Yes.

Ms LEETE: It would be hard for me specifically to state what is not being covered. Some years ago the group that was referred to as MACQT, the Ministerial Advisory Council on the Quality of Teaching, did some research on new teachers, the extent to which they were familiar with the syllabus requirements of the Board of Studies—the daily bread, if you like, of a teacher—and the extent to which they were incorporated into and dealt with in teacher education programs. There was very mixed feedback about the extent to which they were or were not addressed. I do not want to sit

here and criticise particular teacher education courses but we need to be assured that a whole range of things are included. For example, the department, the Teachers Federation, principals and various other groups have done quite a bit of work involving issues that we would expect to be incorporated into teacher training courses—the teaching of literacy, behaviour management skills, indigenous students, students with disabilities, and those sorts of things. Given the pressures that teacher education faculties and universities have been under, we need to be assured that these things really are happening.

Another issue that I refer to is the whole area of practicum and professional experience. We know that universities are really stretched in terms of their capacity to fund significant professional experience opportunities for their students. So much of the work and development of teaching skills can happen when you are in a school dealing with a particular class for, say, four weeks at a time. You can develop skills and learn things that you cannot learn in a lecture at university. I know that that has been under a great deal of pressure.

Ms CURRIE: I do not know whether the department's submission referred to the mandatory requirements they have on universities in specific areas such as special education, literacy and so on. A document was prepared quite recently that went to those areas, and it was going to be distributed to the universities. It covered such things as NESB, literacy, aboriginal education, and a whole range of things. That has not been finalised, partly because, I believe, that function is going to be taken over by the Institute. So it seemed a really silly thing for the department's teacher qualifications advisory panel to move on that, although there was consultation with the universities on that particular document.

That is all well and good. We have heard today about the lack of resources at the universities but I would also like to stress, as has been said, there is a limit to what you can expect a university to train people to do in a given time. There are two ways you can go about this. The universities could get more resources for their teacher training programs or you could say that student teachers need to be at university longer. How can you cram all that into a three or four-year programme? There is a problem with that because these people have to pay HECS. They are going to come out as teachers, not as brain surgeons, so you have to take into account their pay when they finish training if you say you are going to pack so much into a university course for their training that they will need to do five or six years' training before they can start. We have to look at that.

Then there is the notion that the department as an employer must take some responsibility for continuing the training that may well have begun in a university. If you look at all the areas that the department is now saying are mandatory for pre-service training, and you say university resources and the length of time for training mean they can only be covered in a very scant way, the department itself has an obligation to take that up once it has employed people, in either a casual or temporary way. That is an aspect that not too many people are looking at when we talk about what it is that we want beginning teachers to come out with. They cannot come out with everything. They start on a lower salary rate because they do not have everything. That is why they are there and are paid that rate. Their employer has a responsibility to train them further in the areas they think are important. That is where I think the department is falling down, rather than it being the universities that are falling down.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: My question is a general one with regard to recruitment, pride in profession and esprit de corps within the profession. I left school when I was 15, so I do not have practical experience in this area, but there used to be teaching colleges. In those colleges there was a big emphasis on not only academic development, but also sporting development. They had football teams that competed against each other, cricket teams, tennis teams, hockey teams, the whole gamut, which I believe developed a great pride of profession and esprit de corps. Is this part of the development of teachers strong in university courses and, if it is not, do you have any views on how that aspect could be built? I appreciate it is not academic, but it is part of personal development.

Ms LEETE: Our teacher education students are prepared at universities now and my observation of universities, and indeed the whole area of what I might describe as student life or the culture of universities, is that they have changed dramatically from the nature of university when I did my teacher training in the 1970s. I trained at university and some of my colleagues trained at colleges at exactly the same time. I think that has to do with the fact that for the great majority of our people at university, whether they are training to be an electrical engineer, a schoolteacher or doctor, the culture

has changed. Most of them are flat out trying to keep themselves alive, trying to support themselves. Most of them have part-time jobs and most of them leave university with a very significant HECS debt. That is the reason those sorts of things, be they sporting teams or other cultural activities, have almost disappeared from universities.

I do not think that necessarily means that a person will lack anything as a teacher. Some comments were made this morning about the increasing number of people coming to teaching as a second career, who are moving from another part of the workforce. That has the capacity to bring a broad range of social, cultural and work experiences into schools. The culture that exists in a highly effective and well-functioning school is one of a genuine school community, where students, teachers and parents do a lot of things together. Obviously it will be specifically focused on teaching and learning, but creating and building the community often involves teachers participating in community activities. If you go to most country towns, for example, and talk with teachers in a school, you will find they will be involved in local sporting groups, or Rotary, or other community groups. A significant number of our teacher members are involved in various volunteer services, such as the Rural Bushfire Service and others. When you have a climate of collaboration in a school, those sorts of things are developed.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I regard it as the most important profession because of the impact it has, so I am very interested in the views you have expressed.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I was interested in the accelerated teacher training program. I assume you have read some of the submissions we have received. Their response to the teacher training program is quite variable. You said that some of the new teachers had good and bad comments to make about teacher training in universities. Do you think the accelerated teacher training courses are good or bad, and what should be done?

Ms LEETE: The Teachers Federation, along with some other stakeholders, was consulted about the accelerated teacher training program. We get feedback from our people in schools. Perhaps I should give you a little preamble about this. When the union comes into a school or teachers phone the union, they tend to focus on what they think is wrong. I often say to people that no-one rings us up and says, "Here I am at Woop Woop high school where everything is going great, we are a well-resourced school, the staff are happy and we work collaboratively together." So I want to put my response in that context because I do not want to be overly critical. I do have to say, and unfortunately I have not had the benefit of looking at the submissions but I will do so, that most of the feedback we get is negative. It would also be fair to say, again to put it in context, that the majority of feedback we get is from principals and from people at the head teacher level in secondary schools. That is not surprising because all of the accelerated teacher training programs relate to secondary schools.

It is an area about which we have great concerns because of the sort of feedback we are getting. Again, it raises real issues about the quality of the training. By that I do not mean the training should have done it all, but perhaps we need to look again at what happens following the period of time in which those training courses occur, which is about 18 months. To pick up the point that Wendy raised, which is a really important one, those people will continue to need support and development as they move into schools.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you had a program that was new in industry, or some sort of scientific experiment or whatever, you would have an evaluation as part of that program. At the end of the day you could say you had trained X number of people and that 10 per cent had no trouble, 80 per cent had a bit of trouble, and 10 per cent were terrible. You would then look in more detail at the reasons for failure and feed it back. It seems when I ask these questions that no-one even considers that process. Does the union demand some sort of rigour when a change like this is made?

Ms CURRIE: We make a lot of demands that are not met. It would be a most sensible thing that there be a proper evaluation of any training program. I do not know whether Jennifer knows whether a proper evaluation has been done.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am flabbergasted that a statewide program putting teachers in every school can go ahead without such an evaluation. It makes the mind boggle in terms of proper scientific methodology. You are saying there has been no evaluation.

Ms CURRIE: I am saying that to my knowledge there has been none. That does not mean there has not been an evaluation.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It might be worth my while asking the department again. I had a session with the department this morning and that was going to be discussed on notice, so hopefully we will get an answer to that question.

Ms LEETE: I must say I would absolutely agree with you. The Federation put forward a policy position to the Department of Education and Training about 18 months ago for the use of, and advent of, a concept we referred to as educational impact statements. We were concerned not just in relation to the accelerated teacher training program, although that is a good example, but about a whole lot of so-called initiatives being put in place across the DET. Many of these are not referred to as trials. We would generally support the concept of a trial, where something is tried and then an evaluation is done and judgements are made. They all seem to be happening as pilots, meaning the initiative is first done and then expanded further.

We wanted to have in place a process whereby following a trial there would be an assessment of the educational impact of a particular initiative. In a sense it is another way of saying an evaluation of an initiative to determine whether it is doing what you thought it would do, and whether it is worthwhile continuing. Those discussions have stopped and when the new Director General moved into his position we raised the matter again. The department has indicated it is not terribly interested in discussing that concept with us. The implication was that it would limit the department's capacity to implement further initiatives—I think because there seems to be an assumption that somehow the union would want to stop everything.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I can only say that in medicine it went on for years and years. Finally, a fellow called Cochrane said, "Look, I want evidence-based medicine. I want statistics to prove that what we do works." He encountered a surprising amount of resistance but it is now generally accepted that if the Cochrane quality is not applied the results may be suspect. Surely education should be the model profession for this to happen?

Ms CURRIE: I think everything you are saying is right. It is clear there should be an evaluation and that is basically what Jennifer was saying. We agree entirely with your position that there should be an evaluation of the programs. But I would point out one other aspect of the accelerated teacher-training program and retraining programs for people is the area of technical and applied sciences [TAS]. It includes areas of industrial arts and the old home economics, food technology and things like that. They now come together into what would be a faculty in a school called "Technology and Applied Sciences". The range of subjects that come under that faculty is absolutely enormous. It covers areas such as wood technology, metals, tech drawing, food technology, design and technology, and a whole range of things, some of which require the use of machinery and tools, some of which require the use of information technology equipment, and a high standard of that use.

Currently, as people are appointed by the department to the area of TAS, as a TAS teacher in a particular school, they are approved to teach only two of those areas probably—design and technology should be one of them. We have situations where teachers are being asked to teach outside of their training, and that happens with teachers all time, but when it means that you are going to be using a circular saw I think it is a different matter altogether. The issues of training within the TAS faculty and how the appointments are then made, and whether the department is making full, proper and the best use of the specific training that these teachers have received is another matter altogether. I think that is an area that needs serious examination.

We have attempted to have discussions with the department about just this issue. It is about linking the appointments, and what is expected when teachers get there, with the sort of training they have received. You cannot expect a teacher to graduate with training in design and technology, and wood or food technology necessarily. There are some very big issues there. Often a lot of the

accelerated teacher-training people and a lot of the retraining people are in that faculty area. That is when you will find them is that is where there is a shortage.

CHAIR: The Committee has received a long submission from the Industrial Arts Teachers Association that raised a number of those issues about the way the teacher training and on-site teaching do not really match.

Ms CURRIE: Is an area that needs to be looked at.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Does the federation feel that the pre-employment program for overseas trained teachers is effective?

Ms LEETE: Again I would say that it is too early to know, but we have our doubts. As the department indicated, the federation and the Secondary Principals Council were involved in the discussions. The discussions were slow to get moving, because they began with the department essentially indicating to us that any initiatives in this area needed to be cost neutral—meaning we could do anything we liked as long as it did not cost any money. That was very difficult for us. A little further into the discussions the department indicated that it might find, from the corporate services budget, some money that they could put towards it.

This is constantly the position that we as a union are placed in. Of course we go into negotiations to try to achieve the best possible outcome, but in that process we never get everything we want. We think that the new program will be better than previously existed, because previously the only thing that existed was a possible 11-day program, which was not mandatory; it was entirely up to the individual overseas trained teacher whether they took part. We very much hope that it will be better than it was. We are very concerned about the equity provisions, because if it is identified that an overseas-trained requires further support—what is referred to loosely as a bridging course or further development in terms of working with a teacher onsite in an induction and support situation—then the overseas-trained teacher has to pay a fee. That fee is roughly equivalent to what is required to be paid to the supervising teacher. It is like the practicum money; it has to be paid to the supervising teacher.

When you are dealing with people who are new to this country, many of whom have come here in very difficult circumstances and are at the same time trying to set up new homes and establish their families and all of that kind of thing, the payment of fees associated with that kind of professional development is, we think, are real concern. When it was all worked out our executive looked at it and said, "Yes, it is better than previously existed," but raised serious concerns about those equity issues.

There is another ongoing problem. A disproportionate number of teachers with an overseas-trained background in a language other than English find themselves the subject of the efficiency procedures. We suspected that, because the Teachers Federation provides welfare support to our financial members and we have our own records and our own database about this type of information. But during the discussions we asked the department to give us some figures. I cannot remember any of the figures now because it was a couple of years ago, but the figures did show that a disproportionate number of teachers from overseas-trained backgrounds in languages other than English were taking up appointments in schools, many of them, not surprisingly, in the area of maths and science. Obviously that is where most of the employment is occurring. Further down the track there efficiency levels were found to be unsatisfactory.

Very difficult and complex issues are involved here, a combination of some language difficulties but also a real issue about cultural differences, which led to circumstances where the interaction with students in a secondary setting became so problematic that the teacher was experiencing real difficulties related to behaviour management. I have certainly not speaking generally. I'm not saying that this is what happens with all overseas-trained teachers with languages other than English. There are some absolute success stories and we have some schools doing some really positive work in supporting those teachers. They are not just making the transition to a different education system; in many cases they are making the transition to a completely new culture.

Australian teenagers can be quite different to teenagers in India, Pakistan, Fiji or wherever the person may happen to come from. A disproportionate number found themselves to be the subject

of procedures and that was one of the things that was driving the federation and the Secondary Principals Council to try to get some additional support for these teachers so that they were better placed to take up positions in our schools.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: You are saying about the pre-employment program that it is public too early to make comment on it. But a couple of the things that you would look at to ensure that overseas-trained teachers are better prepared to teach in New South Wales schools would be overcoming or trying to resolve those issues you spoke about, and the financial aspects attached to pre-employment program. There any other issues you would mention?

Ms LEETE: That is correct. One of the things that the federation wanted the department to do was to fund a longer period of time in which an overseas-trained teacher with a language background other than English was supported to work in one of our schools. For example, a program that allowed such a teacher to take up an appointment and to have a reduced teaching load—not to have the same face-to-face teaching load as other people, but a reduced teaching load—that allowed that teacher to also move in and out of the classrooms of other teachers, and to see the sorts of classroom practices being used in other classrooms.

That was the type of thing we wanted by way of support for those teachers. Our schools desperately need these teachers in the maths, science and information technology areas. Teachers from different cultures and with different language backgrounds have wonderful skills and knowledge to impart. In the same way that we say that the world is made up of men and women so let us have men and women as teachers, the world is also made up of people from all sorts of different ethnic and racial and national backgrounds and we need to have people from all different backgrounds teaching our young. Our focus was on attempting to ensure that there was greater support and acknowledgement that we are not just talking about someone making the transition to a different education system, for example having to pick up a different maths syllabus from that which they taught in their country of origin, but really about a huge cultural transition that the teacher is involved in.

CHAIR: Apart from teaching in the maths and science areas, would be overseas teachers also be disproportionately located in difficult-to-staff schools?

Ms LEETE: Because in fact that the great majority of positions that are filled on employment, as opposed to transfer of existing teachers, are mostly in the areas that are difficult to staff. In schools in south-western Sydney, for example, it will not be uncommon to find that a significant number of vacancies in the Science Department are filled with new teachers, and those new teachers could very easily have overseas-trained backgrounds in languages other than English.

CHAIR: So that as well as being in schools where some of the cultural adjustments may be more difficult, there is also likely to be a concentration of new teachers and overseas-trained teachers, and that makes the problems of induction and mentoring and all rest of it that much more difficult.

Ms LEETE: That is correct, countered by the fact that in those schools you have new people in leadership positions as well.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Early in your evidence you spoke about scholarships. I assume that your answer to question 10—whether departmental scholarships are providing sufficient incentive to prospective students—would perhaps be that there should be more scholarships and obviously more incentive. Would you place on record the opinion of the federation?

Ms LEETE: Certainly, one of the positions that we have taken for a long time is that the scholarships that the department is currently offering are not sufficient to really address the issues. For example, the great majority of scholarships are only provided to people in their final year of a teaching qualification. We do not see that as being adequate at all. We would like the department to be providing scholarships to people from the beginning of a teaching qualification. Clearly, in terms of a scholarship, the department has a legal and contractual arrangement with that teacher and there are protections for both parties that are built into it. You do not want someone getting money from a teacher's scholarship and then wandering off and teaching in another system. You would have to put all of those protections in place, but we would very much support an expansion of the teacher

scholarship scheme, particularly focusing obviously on those areas of need in terms of the curriculum but also supporting those teachers throughout what is usually, of course, the four years of the teacher qualification, rather than just the last year.

CHAIR: We have covered most of the areas but I am not sure whether we have covered your view of universities and whether they do enough preparation. Perhaps you could address that in your submission or take the matter on notice.

Ms LEETE: I feel we have said as much as we want to say in relation to the question about universities preparing students.

Ms CURRIE: If our TAFE colleagues read this transcript and see the reference to TAFE teacher qualifications—and I understand that inquiry is not going to necessarily look at it—but in 30 seconds I could correct what might be a misapprehension from anyone reading the transcript from earlier in the day.

CHAIR: Yes, please do.

Ms CURRIE: TAFE teachers actually do require teacher training. It was said earlier today that they require a certificate III. What they require to begin with is that every person who is delivering a national training package requires a certificate IV in workplace learning and assessment, which is about competency-based training. In addition, every person who teaches full time or more than eight hours a week in a TAFE college needs a degree in adult education. They can be appointed and teach while gaining that training, unlike schoolteachers in public schools, but they do need to have that and it is a university qualification in adult education. If they are part time and work under seven hours a week, the certificate IV is basically all that is required of them. I know we will not cover it in this inquiry, but it needs to be said that TAFE teachers do require proper training in teacher education.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It did seem inconsistent to what was said this morning.

Ms CURRIE: Yes.

CHAIR: It is pretty clear from our terms of reference that this is an inquiry into public schools but there may be areas of increasing overlap between secondary schools and TAFE. We are just seeking views on whether there are matters relevant to TAFE teachers and training, co-operation and so on, but I should say formally that this is not an inquiry into TAFE but into public schools. We often bring back major players in an inquiry as a right of reply and to round things off because it is a learning experience for the Committee.

Ms LEETE: We would welcome the opportunity to return.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

STEPHEN DINHAM, Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: You have not provided a written statement but I understand that you are happy to receive questions from us?

Professor DINHAM: Yes.

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement or go straight into questions?

Professor DINHAM: Straight into questions.

CHAIR: As you know, we have put the questions under the headings of recruitment, training, Institute of Teachers and so on. We will try to stick roughly to those headings. The first one is: what could be done to improve graduate recruitment and we have follow-up questions, which you may like to address together, about the need to increase the number of graduates generally or are we looking at a problem in particular areas such as science, maths and technology?

Professor DINHAM: I think that if we go back to first principles, if you are going to attract quality people into teaching they have to have the experience of happy committed teachers themselves in their own education. This is the role model type thing. That is the first point. Unfortunately, there is a lot of evidence that prospective teachers are being discouraged from going into teaching by their teachers and implicitly and explicitly by their parents and by the community. We have a situation where people are pressured to spend all their HSC marks, so that if they get 99 or 98 there is pressure to go into something else. One of the first things, as a first principle if you like, is that the profession needs to promote itself and I see that not happening to the degree to which it was. Getting down to the specifics of what you can do, money is always important in these sorts of things and certainly scholarships are one way to do that.

I suggest a more innovative approach to this to meet a number of aims. For example, if people got some sort of scholarship to attract them to teacher education, that is fine, but if they also had a situation where their Higher Education Contribution Scheme [HECS] debt could be paid for them every year they teach, so that by the time they had exhausted their HECS debt they had not actually paid anything, it would be an incentive to stay in the system and also I think another incentive, because it is a fact that people are put off by the debt that they will face when they start. A number of other things can be done. I think systems need to target students pretty early on in universities, so that people who get onto deans' merit lists, for example, people who show up as being high academic achievers should be encouraged because, in many cases, they need to be tapped on the shoulder and told, "Have you thought about being a teacher? This is what it is like. We can give you some experience. Here are the conditions."

I have already mentioned teachers promoting teaching in schools to their best students, which I think does not happen to the degree to which it should. Another possibility is to enable people in their undergraduate degrees to pick up education subjects as part of their electives to build credit on the way through and also get interested in education to see if they like it. Double degrees are extremely popular, where people do things like teaching science and teaching arts. In fact, the demand tends to exceed supply. The advantage of those is that people come out with two qualifications and you can get those two qualifications in a shorter period of time because of cross-credit arrangements. They are extremely popular and, I think, need to be promoted because people, through those double degrees, will bring a whole new range of qualifications to teaching. They are more expensive because they are longer and, again, money comes into all these things.

The issue of teacher salaries is always there, and we cannot get away from the fact that salaries have declined 20 per cent-plus in real terms since the 1970s. We will probably never get that back but it is a factor in certain areas where people can see they can earn far more money doing something else. That one is not going to go away. Some of these things that would assist beginning teachers would also help to attract graduates. One of the major things—and every inquiry into teacher induction, and every inquiry into teacher education has said this—is reduced teaching time for beginning teachers. That would be of major assistance to ease people into that and to give them the

time out from the day-to-day classroom cyclone basically—to be in contact with mentors, possibly still to be in contact with some university people or to get some in-servicing. You cannot fill them up, in their teacher pre-service training, with everything they need to know, because we do not know where they are going to go. They go to Queensland, they go overseas, they go to Catholic schools, they go to government schools, and the really fine detailed stuff you cannot give them in their pre-service training.

So reducing teaching time for beginning teachers, something in the range of one day a week or half a day a week would be wonderful. Time is more important than money in some respects, when people are so flat out just getting on top of it. In the first couple of years of teaching you are doing everything for the first time. Further down the track you get a few runs on the board and you have units of work and so on that you have prepared and it is not quite as daunting. Something else that would assist graduate recruitment is if people knew they would pick up an appointment pretty quickly rather than being on a waiting list. So, if they could be fast tracked, even if they were fast tracked into positions that were not full-time tenure positions, at least in schools they could gain some experience and do some teaching. I think that would attract some people. At the moment you are looking at four to five years with no guarantee of a job, and that is a big thing to some people. Can I move onto the second question?

CHAIR: Yes.

Professor DINHAM: That is the issue of numbers (of teachers). Broadly speaking, the numbers are probably sufficient but it is geographically very different. If you go outside the major city areas you find it is difficult to fill positions. Certainly, maths, science and technology have been mentioned. I was on Brendan Nelson's inquiry that finished in 2003, the one before last, and we looked specifically at maths, science and technology. There is no doubt there are problems there. The problem with that group of subjects starts in primary school. In many cases primary school teachers do not have the confidence to teach those subjects because they have to teach across the board. When students get into high school, again in many cases, they are not getting challenged and interested by science. By the time you get to university, the universities are finding it very difficult to fill first-year science courses, to the extent that some universities have done away with specialist first-year science and gone to more generic or generalised science courses.

So, if you are looking at shortages in maths, science and technology, partly it is the teaching early on and partly it is the attractiveness of those subjects, those disciplines, and also the salaries people can get in other areas, especially technology areas. People who have the sorts of science and maths capabilities are not applying those in mathematics per se, but applying those in things like finance or business. Those same sorts of attributes are obviously fairly transferable to those areas and there has been a great boom in those areas, business degrees and so on, going back to the 1980s. So I think one of the keys is turning people on to those areas in the primary schools.

One of the things I recommended in the Nelson review, and I still believe it—although not everybody shares this view—is that we have reached the stage with primary education that we need primary specialist teachers. The minute you say that, people start thinking we are talking high schools, bells and 40-minute periods and the worst aspects of high school. But what we are asking primary school teachers to do is over the top. If you think about all those areas that you need to be an expert in—the maths, the science, the drama, the visual arts, physical education—I would advocate that we look at the issue of having maths, science and technology specialists in primary schools. We already have release from face to face, so it is not that new a concept to have a specialist teacher there. You could still have your generalist, which you would probably need in country areas.

Allowing some specialisation will do a couple of things. It will attract people who maybe do not want to teach the full range of primary school subjects but are turned on by maths and science, for example, and it will enable a greater depth of study in the primary school in those areas and which, hopefully, will turn kids on to those subjects so that when they get into high school they will want to pursue those subjects, and when they think about university they will pursue them and think about being a teacher.

CHAIR: Why do a lot of people not agree with you? Is it that they are wedded to the traditional notion of the generalist primary teacher or is it because they think it would not work for other reasons?

Professor DINHAM: An observation I have made in doing a lot of research projects with teachers, particularly primary school teachers, is that when you offer them a chance to give something up they will not. They will complain that there is too much to do but when you say you will take this off them they say no, they want to keep control of it. It is partly that, and it is partly the idea that it is the worst aspects of high school. If you look at primary education now, it is not the oasis that maybe it was in the dim dark past—the teacher with the peaceful class all day. There are disruptions. There is specialist teaching now—release from face to face and so forth. There is an overcrowded curriculum. It is not what it was. I have seen in primary school kids react very positively to having a range of teachers—not six or eight that you see in high school.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are only talking about two—physical education and computers—are you not?

Professor DINHAM: That is right, they would only have two or three, and I think the exposure to different teachers can be a positive thing rather than having the one teacher all the time. I think the notion of specialisation in primary education would meet a number of ends.

CHAIR: How would you get it started, given that there is already a shortage of teachers in those areas or do you think people might be more willing to specialise in primary and that would increase the pool because some of the primary teachers available would be happy to specialise?

Professor DINHAM: I think that is right. I think some people might balk at primary teaching because of the full range of things they have to do—the literacy, the PE, the drama, the music or the art or whatever. But people of a certain bent, that is towards maths, science or technology, may well be attracted who would not be attracted otherwise. I am not saying get rid of the generalist altogether, we will need them for a long time, but I think it would be one way to address a couple of concerns. The broad demand on primary school teachers is one of those, and improving the quality of teaching in those subjects in primary school is another. I have not been a primary school teacher, I was a high school teacher, but it daunts me to think about what they have to do, the areas they have to be experts across. So, while there is a bit of opposition, I would like to see us experiment with that a bit.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: There will always be opposition to a new idea like that, but that should not prevent you from pursuing it.

Professor DINHAM: No. I think two broad specialisations would be less threatening than going down the high school path. The other thing we need to be wary of is that there is an enormous pool of teachers out there who are not teaching. When we talk about the shortage of teachers, we should be thinking about up-skilling those people and getting them back into teaching.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You mean like a nursery recruitment program?

Professor DINHAM: Well, many people for whatever reason are out of the system and, I suspect, are hesitant about coming back because the syllabuses have changed and all the rest of it, and maybe they do not feel equipped to take it on. But there is an enormous pool out there that we should not neglect in this whole business of demand and supply. There is no doubt as the retirement bulge goes through the shortages will become acute. They are becoming acute in England, the United States of America and Australia. If you pick up the *Sydney Morning Herald* of a Saturday you will see advertisements for teaching in New Zealand, in England, in Queensland and so forth. That is a global situation.

CHAIR: Is that in the areas of maths, science and technology?

Professor DINHAM: It is across the board, but those areas tend to be most acute because of the special reasons I was talking about before. In the past when we have been short of teachers we have done the advertising thing. We have flown them out from England and America and so on. That

is not going to happen this time, for a number of reasons. They have shortages themselves and the exchange rate tends to work against us and the salaries that people can earn in England and so forth are higher than they can get here. The English in particular are aggressive about recruiting Australian graduates. They come to the universities regularly and it is quite attractive for people to go over there and do their three or four years. They like Australian teachers. This rubbish you might hear about them being not bombproof and ready for the classroom—they go into difficult areas in schools in London and so forth and are very well regarded. One of our problems is getting them back here, because the seniority system seems to work against that. Their overseas service is not recognised always, which is something else we need to get to and which I will talk about later.

The third question is how can teacher transfers benefit? Let me talk briefly about some research I have been involved with. Dr Catherine Scott and I began a research project at the University of Western Sydney and it continued while we were at the University of New England. We have surveyed teachers in England, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Malta and Cyprus. We found an interesting phenomenon, particularly in our samples in England, New Zealand and Australia, and specifically New South Wales, in that the longer people have been in their current school the lower their satisfaction and the higher their mental stress, the lower their commitment to professional development and so forth.

That goes against the general findings of occupational satisfaction. The usual thing you find with occupational satisfaction is that it rises over time. People who do not like the job get out and people who stay there get better at the job, they get more confident, they get promoted and they get more money. Efficacy is really important—how well you feel you can do the job. What we found did not support that. So it raises the issue—this is a general principle and some people get upset about this—it seems that too long in the one school can be detrimental as a general principle. But we can point to many teachers who have been in schools for a long time who are absolute rocks of that school; they are beacons; they are fantastic people. But overall there is a pressing need, I think, for the rejuvenation that can come from moving around.

What we have seen following resignation rates during the 1990s and the ageing population generally is that mobility is much less than what it was. In the 1970s when I became involved with teaching, resignation rates were 10, 11, 12 per cent per annum—lots of growth in schools and the system because we had a baby boomers and then the shadow baby boomers, with the children of the baby boomers going through. People were in and out and they were moving and they could go to the country and they could complete their couple of years there and be promoted back to the city. Because we have an ageing population and the school-aged population has contracted, and people have been locked in during the 1990s because basically the economic conditions were not favourable to leaving, and once you get over 45 years old you are not very attractive in the marketplace, and people get locked in by superannuation and those sorts of things, what we found was that the mobility in the system just ground to a halt. So people are spending long, long times in the one school.

CHAIR: The Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans asked questions earlier today to the department that touched on this subject.

Professor DINHAM: My view on this one is that there are ways around that without forcing people to move in a military sort of model where they have to up stakes and go somewhere else. But one of the key things is getting people out of their comfort zone, out of their current school, into another situation. One of my big criticisms of education is that there is far too much reinventing the wheel that goes on. People are beavering away in their own school working on things when somebody across the road is also working on them independently. I chair the Minister's Quality Teaching awards in New South Wales and as part of that, when we assess people for winning those awards, we take a team of two people into the school to actually watch them teach, as well as the earlier stages. That makes it a bit distinctive because many teaching awards do not actually involve you watching people teach, which might seem strange.

So when we take these people into the schools to watch people teach, and this includes primary schools, early childhood, high school, TAFE and university, they say "Wow! Great professional development, inspiring" but they do not have to be great teachers to do that. I have been part of another project during the past four years which is an Australian Research Council project with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training and a couple of universities. We have

been going into high schools that have been getting outstanding outcomes in years 7 to 10. As part of our team we take in a faculty head teacher from the local district. Universally those people have said to us "Best professional development I have ever had" because they have left their school, they have stepped back, they have reflected, they have watched somebody else operate, they have talked to other teachers outside their own school, students, parents and so forth. So I think one of the really important rejuvenation tactics, if you like, is to get people out of their schools into other schools.

CHAIR: How would you increase the percentage of transfers without the military kind of compulsion?

Professor DINHAM: That is going to happen anyway to some degree because when the retirement bulge goes—I mean there is already great shortages now of people going to leadership positions—the whole thing will free up very quickly. But what I would do is I would use it both as recognition and rejuvenation. I would be saying to people "You have got some skills to offer here. You are very experienced in this particular area. There are schools that could benefit from your experience. We would like you to share that experience."

CHAIR: Are you talking, in a sense, about an extension of the transfer points system where you go to certain areas in the west of the State and you get extra points?

Professor DINHAM: The trouble with the transfer points system is that it is designed to do one thing and tends to do another to some degree. It freezes to some degree the fluidity of appointments so that your lateral transfers get the positions first and then other people who are trying to get in on the bandwagon find it difficult because they are behind in the queue. I know why we have the whole points system. I would favour other incentives rather than that. I would like to see a system where every position is open to anybody. I think the days are gone, or they are fast going anyway, where, for example, in the government system only government teachers can apply for positions. If it was open to everybody I think it would free up the whole thing considerably. Now we are starting to see that at the higher levels with principals and so on, but I think we have come to the point now where we have just got to advertise positions, with a range of incentives quite possibly, to anybody.

If they happen to be on a transfer from somewhere else, okay. If they happen to be a new teacher, okay. What we have at the moment in government education is a one-way street. If you leave government schools to go to work in a non-government school you cannot come back very easily: you lose seniority, you go back to the restart basically and you may have to wait. We are starting to see this now but I have become a bit of a free marketeer here, which surprises me in my old age, but I really think if it were open to all the systems, the schools would be forced to compete for a scarce resource. I think that would be good overall.

CHAIR: You would keep incentives or whatever was necessary for the areas where it is hard to get people?

Professor DINHAM: I have a very New South Wales-centric view of this. When I was on the national committee the people from South Australia and Victoria were challenging my thinking a lot because they were saying "No, we do not do that. We offer the incentives and people come. We do not have a centralised staffing operation. We can staff these sorts of schools." When you look at the incentives, sometimes it is money but often it is time that is as important as money. So you are giving people release time for professional development, to go back to be with their families or to do university courses, or whatever. There is a range of things. But the thing is that if the incentives are sufficient you will attract people.

CHAIR: Do you think it is more difficult in New South Wales than in South Australia and Victoria?

Professor DINHAM: It is because there is an entrenched bureaucratic approach to staffing that has been there for a long time, and the other States have dispensed with this largely.

CHAIR: New South Wales also has a higher percentage of difficult-to-staff areas and schools?

Professor DINHAM: But if you look at the other States too they have a lot of isolated schools as well. It has got to be thought about as a range of options, I think. I think you can get people to go to those areas with the right incentives.

CHAIR: Some of what you have said hints, at least, why new teachers might be leaving the profession. Statistics on resignation rates in the first five years of teaching were provided by the department this morning. What are your views?

Professor DINHAM: My experience both with the national review and in this State is that there are two peaks where resignation occurs and the first is in the first 1, 2 or 3 years where you can lose 20 per cent or more. The second peak that most people do not know about is about 8 to 10 years out. The reason for that I believe is that teachers get to the top of the salary scale.

CHAIR: The federation people mentioned that earlier.

Professor DINHAM: Then they look around and say "What happens now? I will get the same salary as the person sitting next to me and I am, maybe, heavily involved in professional development doing higher study and so on. I get no recognition for that. I get no money for that. In fact, I end up with a debt. If I want more money or whatever I have got to leave the classroom progressively." I think it raises the question there of incentives for people to stay in the classroom who want to stay in the classroom beyond that initial 8 to 10 steps on the salary scale. Certainly in other parts of the world they have done this and it is quite possible for classroom teachers to earn, say, deputy principal's money. It is not an automatic locked step progression they have got to demonstrate. The new standards for the institute might be one way to do that. But I think keeping our best teachers in the classroom has a lot of spin-offs.

CHAIR: The department's figures suggested that the percentage in New South Wales that leave in the first five years is actually way below—Dr Brock was taking us through these—the figures in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Their figure was 17 per cent in the first five years but compared with other countries and also to some extent with other professions, they were tending to say that it is not as high as people fear.

Professor DINHAM: It is a tremendous loss whichever way you look at it in terms of people who have been trained to do a particular career and now they are walking out the door. If it is 17 per cent—I suspect the national figures are higher so maybe New South Wales is slightly better—

CHAIR: Yes, I think the national figure might be 20 per cent.

Professor DINHAM: It was around 20 or 22 per cent the last I heard. Again, that is not even because in certain geographic areas, I suspect, it would be considerably higher in more difficult areas. We still have this very strange idea in teaching: we send our raw recruits to the most difficult schools and if they survive that sort of baptism of fire or sinking or swimming or whatever then they get moved to somewhere nicer. I could use a colloquial expression but I will not: it is a silly idea. We have tried to do various things, such as targeted graduate schemes and so on where we try to put people into some of these more favourable areas, and it has worked to some degree, but it is not free enough, I do not think. I think we have got to do better at that. It is a nonsense, when you think about it, to send people to the most difficult schools first up.

CHAIR: Do not all professions work that way? We have read today that we cannot get rural doctors. In a former inquiry into early intervention we heard again and again, even from relatively favoured areas like Orange and Dubbo, that they cannot get occupational therapists or speech therapists. Any health professionals who go go almost as conscripts and they stay one year and then they are attracted either financially or by some other means. In what sense is teaching, in effect, different from most professions?

Professor DINHAM: It has always been a case that that has happened, and it happened to me. One of the difficulties is that when you go to those situations there is not a great deal of experience, corporate knowledge. There is a continual churn through and it happens with teachers and people like school counsellors where they go and do their two years or whatever in a western school, leave and somebody else comes in and starts again from scratch. That frustrates people like principals

and more senior people because they are continually investing a lot of time and effort to up skill people and then out they go again.

CHAIR: If it happens in any other profession we can name, what is it that we can do to change it in teaching?

Professor DINHAM: I think what we can do is more sensitively place people in schools where they are needed rather than rely on the bureaucratic way of transfer points and so forth where people go out there, do their time and come back in. But even within Sydney itself if we are not talking about travelling and leaving this area we know that the challenging areas to teach in basically that is where people tend to go. If they work their way through that and survive then they will gradually work their way back to somewhere else. Yes, it happens in other professions too but I do not think it makes it right or sensible.

CHAIR: I was not suggesting that. This committee in different inquiries over the years has heard about it in a number of different professions. The issue is some of them hope to solve it by market driven things, others, the more centralised staffing systems try to do a bit of a carrot and stick. I cannot think of a profession that has solved the problem.

Professor DINHAM: Even if you are talking about banking, if you were an inexperienced bank clerk or whatever, you would have experienced people around you. But in many cases these people are really on their own. I have done work with Catholic Education and the department out west and it is not unusual to see virtually all the promotion positions being held by people in acting positions. I am seeing now people who are second- and third-year-out being put into executive positions in an acting capacity: there is nobody else to do the job. So that you have got very inexperienced people, not just looking after their own teaching in the first few years which is vital but looking after other people as well. I think we really have to grasp that one.

For me there are real equity issues here if we are talking about offering people in the country a "decent" education. There are a whole lot of things that mitigate against that. I will give you one example, when you look at the results of the higher school certificate [HSC] across the State people outside the metropolitan areas do worse and you expect a 5, 10, 15 points lower university admission index. One of the major factors is the fact that their teachers do not have HSC marking experience and that is a major influence on the results the kids get in the HSC because if you have had that experience you know what the standards are, you know what the markers are looking for, you can direct your students so you understand the relative importance of areas of the curriculum. So you have got these inexperienced people, all these experienced people lacking that experience, out in the bush and their students are being disadvantaged, along with other disadvantages to do with isolation, smaller classes, lack of resources, lack of access to things we take for granted in the city. So the whole issue of rural-regional isolation of teachers is a big one.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The department is very proud of the fact that senior teachers do not resign. Looking at the age profile, many of them are older.

Professor DINHAM: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The ones who do not resign after being in the profession a long time, are they happy in their job, as the department suggests, or are they locked in because of their superannuation or the knowledge that, presumably, if they are 45 years old and put themselves on the job market after 20 years of teaching they would be wearing their shoe leather? Do you think the reason the resignation rate is low is because they are happy or because they are locked in? Is there are any data on this issue?

Professor DINHAM: I can give you some data, some of our data actually.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That would be good, because the department and the union did not have any data.

Professor DINHAM: We have surveyed, as I have said, teachers in this State and other countries. The surveys we did in this State were in the late 1990s. Some people would question

whether it is relevant or not. We found when looking at teachers' satisfaction—we got them to rate their satisfaction on a whole range of areas—there was basically a bimodal distribution in schools. In other words, we had a group of people who were very happy and a group of people who were very unhappy. The average is in the middle, but that is misleading. So you really have got two groups of people. You have got the happy committed people who are making a career and will stay with that career. You also have those who basically have got in there—and our data shows that for many people it is their third or fourth career choice—and they are locked in. There is nothing else they can do.

We have had people in their mid-thirties saying to us, "I am here. I am not going to go. I am not going to transfer. A transfer would be good for me but I do not want that. I am retreating to my classroom. I am giving up the extracurricular stuff I used to do." We actually call it the retreating phenomenon in the work we have done. Those people—it is only a small is percentage—are saying to us basically, "I am not interested in professional development. I am pulling back to my classroom." These are people 35 or 40 years of age who still have a long time to go. I think we are dealing with two groups of people.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is that data published?

Professor DINHAM: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Did you write those papers?

Professor DINHAM: Yes, we have written those papers. They have been published nationally and internationally.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I asked the department whether the accelerated teacher training was successful. It appears there has been no quantitative evaluation of the program. Is it common for new initiatives of major import to be brought in without any quantitative evaluation?

Professor DINHAM: There are evaluations which the Department of Education and Training [DET] commissions, because I have done one of them. They are not published.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Why?

Professor DINHAM: You will have to ask them. They own the data.

CHAIR: Do you mean evaluation of the accelerated teacher training program?

Professor DINHAM: Yes. A slightly different one, we did an evaluation last year—I cannot reveal any of the data upon this—of the internship program to retrain people as school counsellors very quickly. We did an evaluation for the department, which they have but it has not been released.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Why do you think the department refuses to release the data? Surely openness would be the beginning of progress.

Professor DINHAM: I cannot answer that question. That is part of their own internal quality assurance or evaluation procedures for modification of courses or whatever. I cannot answer that question. In terms of the short-course training programmes, I have some strong views on those. There is an interesting paradox here. We are hearing that teaching has never been more difficult, more challenging, all that sort of stuff, and that teachers need to come into schools bombproof and ready to roll. It is what we call the Christmas miracle: between December and February they become the autonomous professional. On the other hand, people are saying, "We can do it in five weeks." Are you aware of the Teach for America program? It is five weeks of training in America where graduates who are not trained in teaching can in five weeks receive training and be put into schools.

CHAIR: This seems to be one of the matters you can give answer on notice. I am conscious that you told us you need to catch a train at 4:06 p.m. from Central. We will have to ask you to take a number of questions on notice. It is good to throw in extra questions so that we can work out whether

you can answer them now or you should take them on notice. If you are going to catch your train you will need to leave in about 10 minutes.

Professor DINHAM: I will get a roll-on.

CHAIR: It might be a matter of saying that you can get back to us on question 5, 6 or 10. I am conscious of the fact that we have little time.

Professor DINHAM: Let me have a go.

CHAIR: We would like to ask you about the Institute of Teachers. Perhaps you have prepared material that you can send us on that issue. Which questions should we talk about today?

Professor DINHAM: On the training one I have mentioned some of the things I feel about that. Reduced workload and time out are very important there. I have also mentioned mentoring, support for beginning teachers, more sensitive placements and salary increases to keep the best people in the classroom.

CHAIR: Do you think the universities are preparing people adequately?

Professor DINHAM: As well as can be expected, given the diverse range of places they are going to go to and the diverse range of expectations on them when they go out. I think some people take a very narrow view of knowledge. For example, we have people criticise us for not teaching how to mark the roll. The main thing, from my view, is that we teach them the importance of the roll as a legal document. If they go to a Catholic school, government school, Queensland school or whatever you can show them how to mark the roll technically in five minutes. There is a lot of that sort of stuff.

CHAIR: Coming back to some of the points you made earlier, there seems to be criticism—not necessarily of any one player—that the practical teaching during a degree is not working as well is it should or perhaps not as well as it used to.

Professor DINHAM: We would love to offer more time in schools. I think it is essential.

CHAIR: Why can they not be done?

Professor DINHAM: Money.

CHAIR: Money to the university?

Professor DINHAM: It goes two ways. We have to pay teachers to supervise practicum. It is about $21 a day in New South Wales. It does not sound like much money. You send out 1,000 teachers for four weeks, with all the on costs it is over half a million dollars. We would love to send them out for more days but paying for that is problematic.

CHAIR: Is it a matter of Federal funding to universities or fees?

Professor DINHAM: Brendan Nelson would say that the money has come through to the universities but they are siphoning it off or not letting it all go through. There is a bit of truth in that. But it does need to be funded.

CHAIR: Is it a separate identifiable basket of money?

Professor DINHAM: To some degree it is. It comes through practicum being a subject in the program, which is different to what it used to be. So there is some funding that comes there because students pay their fees and everything else. But there is also some Federal money for professional experience. That is the one thing I would do. I would not hand it over to schools. I would give people a much wider range of experience in different settings. In fact, I would put them into social welfare-type settings as well to give them a good thorough grounding. I would get them to go to different parts of the State. The thing with this is time and money. Yes, I think we are all operating pretty much on

the minimum number of days the employers will accept. That would be the number one thing that I would be advocating: more time for professional experience.

CHAIR: That could be done, in your view, without affecting the amount of time they spend on the rest of their degree?

Professor DINHAM: It would compromise it to some degree.

CHAIR: What sort of increase are you talking about? How many weeks?

Professor DINHAM: It depends on which program you are talking about. If you are talking about a four-year program, I think something like six weeks a year—which is more than most get at the moment—would be reasonable. In the case of a secondary program something like maybe 10 weeks, 10 to 15 weeks a year.

CHAIR: What do they have at the moment?

Professor DINHAM: Most universities have ways of getting around it. They have things like lead-up visits and visits to schools for observations, which are not seen as practice teaching. That is a way of getting around it. You would be lucky to get 60 days in most high school programs across the country.

CHAIR: In a whole program?

Professor DINHAM: In a one-year program.

CHAIR: Sixty days is 12 weeks.

Professor DINHAM: Sorry, six weeks—two three-week blocks would be typical. My mental mathematics is not so good.

CHAIR: We need more maths teachers.

Professor DINHAM: We do. We should increase it to 8, 10, 12 weeks. The trouble with the Diploma of Education is that it is so action-packed. There is so much in them in one year that we get to the point that you cannot train a teacher in one year. Something else most of us are moving towards is a two-year program. A two-year program obviously gives you a bit more space to have more time in schools. In the four-year programs you would like to think the student teachers were in schools for 10 weeks a year.

CHAIR: Did you say this is one of the initiatives you believe would be most important?

Professor DINHAM: Absolutely, because you want to give people the widest range of experience: different schools and different settings so that they have got a better chance of understanding the context they get sent to. It is very difficult for us to train someone to go into any school in this State, this country or overseas, all those different contexts. But the wider experience they get, the better. The thing about teaching, and many other occupations, is there is so much you can teach but people beyond that need to learn. There are things you have to learn that you cannot be taught. Experience is an important teacher there.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I would like clarification. You said "most of us are going to two years". What do you mean by "most of us"?

Professor DINHAM: Most of the universities are staring down, looking at a two-year Diploma of Education, whether it is called a Master of Teaching or whatever. Queensland actually mandated this a couple of years ago and had to back off because of shortages. They were not getting enough teachers through. For example, people from other States could not go and work in Queensland because it had this two-year requirement. The way around it is the double degree I mentioned earlier. That can give you greater time and to do more education subjects. When you look at the range of things that we are expecting people to do in a 12-month period—content, curriculum, behaviour

management, special education, literacy, numeracy, Aboriginal education, information communication technology [ICT]—all the things that have been mandated, the Diploma of Education is pretty anachronistic.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: There would be a domino effect in terms of the number of teachers coming out, with the increased Higher Education Contribution Scheme [HECS] and whether they were remunerated appropriately at the end of the day.

Professor DINHAM: Yes. There is a problem with the Federal Government because the Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST] does not recognise two-year qualifications. They, if you like, recognise the first year but they will not recognise the second year. Part of the reason for that, I have been told, is that they have been called masters degrees. If they were called a Bachelor of Education or a Bachelor of Teaching, my understanding is DEST would be happier with that. At the present time the extra year is a disincentive for people and also the issue of costs associated at university. I think, realistically speaking, you cannot do it in 12 months with the current models.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Would it not be better to teach students to go to some schools and not others rather than have two years? People are already going into the private sector because they do not want to do the Diploma of Education.

Professor DINHAM: They will not be able to teach in the private sector without teaching qualifications with the Institute of Teachers.

CHAIR: That has happened, but they will not be able to in the future.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The Institute of Teachers will insist on a Diploma of Education or equivalent?

Professor DINHAM: It will insist upon teaching qualifications.

CHAIR: You will have to go if you are catching a training to Nowra at 4.06 p.m.

Professor DINHAM: I am almost resigned to getting the other one. It is all right, I will keep on going.

CHAIR: You need to tell us when you have to go. We can hurry through the questions or select the ones you want to talk to or you can tell us which ones you will get back to us.

Professor DINHAM: I am happy to take a few more questions on what you see as the burning issues. Maybe I can get back to you on the other ones.

CHAIR: What do you think about the Institute of Teachers? We have a whole series on the institute. It is just starting and we will be talking to representatives of the institute.

Professor DINHAM: First thing, I am on the interim committee of the institute. I am the only teacher educator on it. So I have a vested interest in it, to some degree. I do think potentially it is the greatest step forward for education in this State since we moved indoors. In terms of having agreed standards that are owned by the profession, a system of accreditation which I think has credibility—it is rigorous, it is not a rubberstamp; it gives people something to aspire to their profession and to measure themselves against—teacher status and so on in the long-term, I think it will make a positive contribution. In terms of unqualified teaching occurring in various parts of the State, it will make a positive contribution. I think it is great that the government and non-government sectors have got on board with it to date. It has tremendous potential, particularly given we have gone the hard way in New South Wales.

We have four levels of accreditation, not just the one level as some States have. We have the graduate level initially, then the competent level, the professional accomplishment level and the professional leadership level. It is a very ambitious program, but that reflects teachers' professional growth and development over time. Ultimately, if those upper levels are required of people for things

like promotion and appointment, and people get recognition and reward for doing that, that has tremendous potential to drive the professional learning of teachers in this State. The thing is whether the program delivers or not, and whether the accreditation process falls back and becomes a rubber stamp. I do not think it will.

CHAIR: What would drive that if it were to fall back? Would it be costs?

Professor DINHAM: It could be cost. We in this State have been very sensible. We have not attempted to accredit everybody, which other systems have done—simply rubber-stamping everybody as being competent, or whatever. I think that is an insult to people who have been in the game for a long time. On the other hand, it is an enormously administrative burden to try to process all that. Basically, what they have said is that the program applies to new teachers from this year, and then later those higher levels will be optional for people who want to put themselves up for promotion and so on down the track. Basically, we are the last to get on the bandwagon, but at least we have had the benefit of looking at what other people have done and where they have had problems. So, on paper, in theory, it is the best system in Australia at the moment.

CHAIR: Does it involve any difficult issues of relationships between the major players, the universities, the department, the schools and the institute? Are there likely to be problems there?

Professor DINHAM: No. Potentially, there could be some. For instance, in terms of the institute accrediting teacher education courses, in the past there have been other ways of accrediting those. Providing it is not too intrusive, too inflexible and too bureaucratic, there are not likely to be problems. But there is danger in all those things. That, in itself, is not a problem. I think you can over-centralise and over-standardise. And you can discourage innovation. We do not want that. We want universities to have innovative approaches to putting teachers into schools and all the rest of it.

CHAIR: If you are to catch your train, you will have to leave very soon.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: You mentioned earlier some research that you had regarding teacher satisfaction.

CHAIR: I suggest Professor Dinham take any further questions on notice and send his responses to the Committee.

Professor DINHAM: We have had material published over the past ten years.

CHAIR: Committee members can let the secretariat know what questions they would like Professor Dinham to answer.

Professor DINHAM: I am sorry I have to rush.

CHAIR: It has been a very valuable contribution.

(The witness withdrew.)

KERRYANNE KNOX, Vice-President, New South Wales Primary Principals Association, of Nuwarra Public School, McKay Avenue, Moorebank, New South Wales, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: In what capacity are you appearing before the Committee?

Ms KNOX: As Vice-President of the New South Wales Primary Principals Association.

CHAIR: Do you have a written submission?

Ms KNOX: Yes. I have four copies that I will hand up.

CHAIR: Did you want to make an opening statement?

Ms KNOX: Yes. I will refer to my submission in making that statement. The New South Wales Primary Principals Association strongly believes that teaching is an honourable and important profession that has a major impact on Australia's future. The status of teachers in the community is crucial if we are to attract people to our profession. This status is affected by the image presented from the government of the day, the media and individual politicians. Clear messages about the value of teachers, support for their role and consequently unconditional support of public education are required.

CHAIR: We will try to speed-read and look at some points you make in your submission, but you may draw out attention to them anyway. Did you receive the questions from the Committee?

Ms KNOX: Yes.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: At page 1 you say, "The responsibilities facing teachers and workload issues need to be addressed if we are going to attract people to the profession." You then mention that teachers have to be "politically correct" at all times, adding that, for example, rules and regulations for occupational health and safety and child protection have had an enormous impact on schools. Would you like to elaborate on that?

Ms KNOX: The rules and regulations that are made certainly affect every facet of day-to-day teaching. For example, although the occupational health and safety regulations are important and necessary for the safety of the workplace, no additional time or funding is made available to schools to implement those regulations. For instance, teachers are not allowed to attend occupational health and safety committee meetings in their own time, so those meetings have to be held within school times, meaning that teachers have to be released from classes and classrooms.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Why are they not allowed to attend in their own time?

Ms KNOX: That is a regulation from the New South Wales Teachers Federation. Therefore, teachers have to attend a meeting during school time, which means we have to release them from classes and classrooms. That is the way it is. Child protection is vital, and I think every teacher and principal in New South Wales would applaud the child protection regulations that have been implemented over the past five to ten years. However, there is a very fine line between comments being regarded as vexatious and teachers being affected by a one-off comment from a child or parent that can lead to months of investigation. Basically, it is the investigation procedures that can cause a lot of angst. Personally, I believe hugging a child or making sure you put your arm or hand on a child who is upset or in need of your comfort is part of our role. It is a nurturing role. Some people shy away from that because of the possibility of litigation, or being singled out as a paedophile or someone who has wrong intentions. That has made our role extremely difficult.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Do you see this as having a negative impact on the recruitment of male teachers in primary schools?

Ms KNOX: Absolutely. They are concerned all the time about the way they have to behave, the way they have to act—which is all well and good, but it is probably more so for male teachers. A hand on a child or a comforting pat can be misconstrued.

CHAIR: How do we know that this has an impact on recruitment?

Ms KNOX: Because I have spoken to quite a few young, male teachers. Actually, in the past few days I have spoken to a couple of male teachers in rural areas who tell me that it is constantly on their minds; the fear of litigation, the fear of being singled out, the fear of prosecution is always there. They are very careful about what they do and the way they act, and they have to think about everything they do before they actually do it.

CHAIR: Are teachers aware of the changes to legislation made last year?

Ms KNOX: Yes, they are. But I still think—

CHAIR: To a large extent, those changes were along the lines that teachers and others were asking for. A number of workers in a number of areas were asking for a different sort of balance. Has the word got out about those changes?

Ms KNOX: The word is out there, because we were all trained. It is not out, I do not think, in the community. I think that makes it difficult, because the eyes of the community are on us daily. We are constantly in the face of parents and the community, and I do not think the message has got out to them.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Could you expand on the term "politically correct"?

CHAIR: We should remember our questions about recruitment and training.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I am sure this is impacting on recruitment and training.

CHAIR: But sometimes a bit of order might help everyone get through the terms of reference.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: My only question is on the term "politically correct".

Ms KNOX: We live in a politically correct world. I think it is different in different areas. For example, the school I am in has a very high proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds. To be politically correct, you could stop Christmas carols, you could not have the Australian flag.

CHAIR: Why would you do that?

Ms KNOX: I am not saying I would do that. I certainly do not. I am saying that could happen because of the mix of the community. You have to be very strong and say, "I am sorry, we are going to have Christmas carols. That is our culture." We have to have the Australian flag now. That is just part of protocol. I am talking about communities that will put pressure on principals and schools to be politically correct and not have Christmas carols.

CHAIR: The department has made statements or has rules and so on that cover this.

Ms KNOX: The community do not take much notice of that, though.

CHAIR: But, as a principal, you are protected by the rules and regulations.

Ms KNOX: Yes. But you have to live in the community, and if the community is pressuring you not to have Christmas carols and not to observe certain religious days, then I would think some principals would be quite concerned about that.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: What needs to be done to overcome that perception in the community?

Ms KNOX: Strong support from the Department of Education and Training to say that you can do that—just a straight-out statement that schools, principals and staff will be supported if they choose to have a Christmas carol night.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Do you feel that support is not there at the moment?

Ms KNOX: I think the media has helped not to have that support weakened, or to have that support watered down a little.

CHAIR: But ever time this issue has come up the department and the Government have made very clear statements that all of those things that you have mentioned are part of the ordinary school—

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: With all due respect, we are asking questions of our guest, rather than adding our own commentary in defence of government.

CHAIR: What I am trying to find out, though, is whether there is some regulation or some statement that we are not aware of. I am just puzzled by what you are saying, given the evidence that we have.

Ms KNOX: I can only say that when it hits Allan Jones, often the support is not as strong as we would like it to be.

CHAIR: The support from the department?

Ms KNOX: The Government, yes.

CHAIR: Well, from the department or the Government?

Ms KNOX: Both.

CHAIR: So, in terms of telling Allan Jones he is wrong, basically?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The answer was definite.

Ms KNOX: I think it was a definite answer.

CHAIR: Well, no. I am sorry, but given we have to follow up statements that are made—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: We ought first confine ourselves to the questions that have been provided to witnesses, should we not?

CHAIR: We should. When you speak about not being given support, or not correcting, do you mean sending something to schools, or do you mean going on a radio station?

Ms KNOX: What I am trying to say is that the media often has a negative impact on some of the decisions and the support that is able to be given.

CHAIR: We have been told by a number of people and we have read in several submissions that there is no shortage of primary school teachers but that there are considerable shortages in the secondary school area. Obviously that will make a difference to the sorts of comments that people from primary and secondary schools might make. Given that fact, what comments do you have about the ability of the department to recruit graduates and improve the problem? Are we talking numbers or are we talking about the kinds of teachers?

Ms KNOX: There will be a critical shortage of primary school teachers—and I am talking about the primary side of education—in the next few years. We can see it in a lot areas across New South Wales. In rural areas where there are small one and two teacher schools we have first year graduates teachers who are in a principal's position. That is very poor support for those teachers who have to go out to those areas and take up the role of a principal in those small schools. In the area I

come from, in south-western Sydney, we find it very difficult to get casuals to take the place of teachers. So many teachers are due for their long service leave and they are now taking that long service leave. Some teachers are retiring and we are finding it quite difficult to find casuals. In some country towns you will find that there are 15 people who are available for casual teaching. In the south-west Sydney region they just get scarcer and scarcer and it is more difficult.

CHAIR: There are enough primary teachers in the State but in certain geographical areas it is almost impossible to get hold of them?

Ms KNOX: Yes, there are some hard-to-staff schools.

CHAIR: It is not really an issue of recruitment; it is an issue of incentives to get people to go.

Ms KNOX: It would be interesting to see the number of teachers who leave teaching because of some of the issues that occur in their first year. I will talk about that issue later. Definitely, we need to have more teachers trained. One of the proposals that I addressed in the submission is that there must be either an apprenticeship or mentoring system so that these teachers are learning on-the-job training. The more you can recruit and the more on-the-job training you have happening, the better quality teachers you have. Teachers will be able to step in to fill those critical shortages that will occur in the next five to 10 years.

CHAIR: Why are new teachers leaving? Why is it hard to get teachers to go to the schools that you are talking about?

Ms KNOX: There are a lot of reasons why teachers leave in their first year. One of them relates to the lack of connection that occurs in some universities between theory and practice. They can handle the theory and complete their assignments but when they go out into the classrooms and into the schools they find it difficult to transfer that theory in to practice. I think that comes down to ensuring that we have links between schools and teacher training institutions so that they can constantly see those connections happening. They could even bring back demonstration lessons. That is what used to occur many years ago. I know that teacher training institutions will say, "We show them videos", but I am afraid that that is not good enough. They need to see real classes; they need to see interaction; they need to see how kids learn; and they need to see how teachers cope with classroom management issues. They need to have all those things happening if they are to be able to get a real understanding of what they are going to face in the classroom.

Young teachers are leaving because of the lack of support that is available for them when they are facing things like classroom management issues, violent children and emotionally disturbed children. A number of special education kids are in our schools now without enough funding to be able to maintain their learning style. I refer also to the number of children in classes. The kindergarten initiative has been fantastic but, unfortunately, it is only for kindergarten. So, therefore, other classes still have 30 students. With a lot of the violent and emotionally disturbed students and kids with special needs it is turning young teachers or early career teachers away from schools. Another issue is the lack of time in primary schools for executive and other teachers to be able to mentor our early career teachers. Executive teachers in primary schools only receive two hours release each week from face-to-face teaching. The comparison of that with our secondary school colleagues is an issue in itself.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What is their release time?

Ms KNOX: Their release time is different. They often get more periods a week away from face-to-face. I think it is six to eight periods a week away from their classes. The deputies of course get a lot more than that. That does not occur in primary schools. There are only very few primary schools where there are non-teaching executive staff. So it is left to the principal to do a lot of the support, or it is left to the school to provide some extra time for the executive to have away from their class to be able to support these early career teachers. The best initiative that has occurred in the past five to 10 years is the mentoring initiative in primary schools. A mentor has been placed in a school where there is a high number of beginning or early career teachers. That mentor has been able to work with them and support them. That has been an absolutely fantastic initiative.

CHAIR: Does Nuwarra Public School have one?

Ms KNOX: No, it does not. Local schools near me have had them. This year that initiative has changed so that the mentor is working between a couple of schools and supporting teachers.

CHAIR: We heard a number of different comments today from the department and the Teachers Federation.

Ms KNOX: That has been an excellent initiative. I think it has saved numbers from dropping off over the past 12 months to two years.

CHAIR: Does Nuwarra not have access because you do not have a high number of new teachers?

Ms KNOX: No, we do not have a high number of new teachers. I am on the other end of the scale. I have teachers who have been in the profession for 30 or more years and they do not ever want to leave Nuwarra Public School. That in itself can be an issue in a school. That can be as hard for an early career teacher coming into a school where there are teachers who have been at that school for a long period, as opposed to coming into a school where there are 15 beginning teachers. Often the more experienced teachers do not value the knowledge of some the newer teachers. So there are double issues there. That mentoring initiative should not just be for schools that have high numbers of beginning teachers; it should be broader and capture some of those early career teachers who are in schools that have had people there for a long period.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you see any value in extending that mentoring program to executive teachers, or at least senior teachers?

Ms KNOX: Absolutely, yes. Last year I was a principal support officer in the Sydney region. I supported quite a few principals and mentored the executive. Members of the executive came to me and said, "It has just been fabulous to have someone to show us some development and to support us. It has just been terrific." I think that is needed across the whole of New South Wales, mentoring executive teachers in particular, because quite a lot of young teachers are now gaining executive positions and they certainly need the support.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You said in your response to the recruitment of graduates and teacher training that there was a need to address the status of teaching. Today we discussed the need to attract a good gender balance and, in particular, to attract and retain male teachers in primary schools. How do you think we can address that issue?

Ms KNOX: There are two schools of thought on that issue. Some of my colleagues would state emphatically, "We want good teachers, not just male teachers." I think that is a fair enough comment. However, when we look broadly at today's society, we see that there are a lot of single parents, particularly mothers, and there are a lot of children who need a role model. They need role models in our schools. That is the place where they will be able to get that experience and support. I have to be honest: I believe that males do not come into our profession because of the pay. The pay scales do not attract male teachers. They can get a lot more money doing something quite different in the broader world. So the first issue is the pay scales.

I think the passion for teaching has to come from within. A number of males who have done a lot of community work, who have worked in the area of sport and who have worked with kids are attracted to our profession. If we had more of a specialisation in primary schools in the areas of physical education, music, technology and science that would be an incentive for more male teachers to come into the profession. I believe we need to have a look at specialisation in the future because teachers in our system who are general primary are not as enthusiastic. It is a generalisation but they are not as enthusiastic in teaching in some or all of those specialised areas.

Children in our primary schools are just as entitled to have a love of music, technology, science and physical education as are our secondary colleagues where there are specialised teachers. I think we need to have a look at specialisation. That would certainly attract more male teachers. I think

we need to have some incentives for male teachers. Perhaps we need to give them the ability to choose the schools in which they would like to be. We also need to make sure that schools support male teachers by not giving them hard classes when they come into the schools, which is what sometimes happens.

If there is a male teacher and there is a bit of a tough class the school thinks that he will be able to handle it. We have to be a lot more supportive of our male teachers if we are to retain them. We should investigate why males go into secondary schools rather than into primary schools. A fairly good number of males are still going into the secondary arena rather than into the primary arena. I think we need to investigate that issue. One of the issues is certainly the child protection issue.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You said earlier that teachers have to be "good, not male". I am alone in finding that to be an extraordinarily sexist comment? In no other profession does anyone say, "They have to be good, not male", or, "They have to be good, not female." All that is saying is that, as a result of the affirmative action program, we should not employ incompetent people. If so few males are going for the job that only incompetents would apply and thus you have the choice of good rather than male surely that shows a huge systemic problem?

Ms KNOX: Is it not sexist to state that we need more males in our profession?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No, I think the gender balance is a simple fact of child development. There is nothing sexist about that.

Ms KNOX: Do we ever say that we need more females in the medical profession?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: They did 20 years ago and they now have them. They do not have them for things like gynaecology, but everyone knows that footballers go into that profession.

Ms KNOX: I did not think it was a sexist comment to say that we need good teachers because I think we need quality teachers in our system.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: There is nothing wrong with saying that we need good teachers, but you said—the department certainly said this morning—that we need good teachers not male teachers. The clear implication is that as a result of the affirmative action program we want to employ poor males.

CHAIR: Not all that long ago there were programs in New South Wales where males needed much lower university admission indexes to go into teaching than did females. The Federal inquiry that reported about three years ago made a number of suggestions along those lines. So if you are talking about the way in which academic ability, et cetera, is measured traditionally, that comment is quite apt. People who want to increase the number of males have quite specifically said, "We will take people with less ability and less good results to give us more males."

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am not advocating that.

CHAIR: No, but it certainly has been advocated.

Ms KNOX: I think that is why that comment was made. We would be extremely critical if one of the incentives to attract more males into our profession was to lower standards.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I agree with that. Before you reach that conclusion and discard it on the assumption that I knew that was the solution that had been proposed or that had been implemented, the problem seems to be more systemic.

Ms KNOX: I hope we have cleared up your understanding.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I would still like you to answer the question. What do we do to get more males without getting incompetent ones?

Ms KNOX: As I just said, one of the main things is to ensure that teaching is a profession people would like to choose and therefore the status of the teaching profession in our community is certainly important. As I said in my opening statement, the media, the government of the day and everyone has to be talking about what a fine profession teaching is and how important it is for our students and in its impact on the future of Australia. We have to get away from this teacher bagging and bashing that happens in media and make sure that people understand it is a good profession. We need males and females, quality educators, in our schools. The pay and workload of teachers must be looked at, and the fact that there is the view in the community that teachers hold the solutions to all of society's problems. You have only to list all the things we do in a school for someone to feel tired and overloaded.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I want to explore the pressures on teachers. You have talked about community attitudes and the attitude of teachers towards new graduates. You mentioned briefly the pressures of the kindergarten reduction program. Is that impacting on your teachers because the government is pushing those numbers onto other classes?

Ms KNOX: In some schools it has. There has certainly been an impact, particularly in the earlier years, because kindergarten classes are 20 or less, or at the most 22. Some of our year 1 or year 2 classes have risen to 28 or 29, where as in many schools across New South Wales we are able to play with those numbers are little more if we can put 24 or 25 children in kindergarten. We are very happy to have the kindergarten initiative and we have certainly managed it in our schools in the knowledge that next year it will assist year 1. The government initiative and commitment has been to focus on early childhood development. As educators we believe early childhood development has to be a priority because it will help us in the long run in dealing with some issues as children go through the primary years.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What about the physical environment that teachers are currently working in, with substandard maintenance programs, poor ventilation and non-existent air-conditioning in classes? When they come from university straight into a school that must be a shock to the system.

Ms KNOX: I think it is a shock because some of them forget they were in primary school. To over-generalise, I think secondary schools have better conditions than a lot of primary schools. I have been in schools that are very old. The last school was built in 1920 and still consists of portable wooden buildings. My new school has brick buildings and wet areas and is probably a little bit of paradise for me. But teachers still have to suffer very old brick buildings that have no air-conditioning. The children are hot and the teachers believe they are disengaged in the latter part of the day. You do all the things you would normally do to make the kids' lives easier in a hot climate. You make the breaks smaller, you change the times when they are outside in the playground, but still they come into very hot classrooms. That most certainly has an effect on teachers. Not having technology at their fingertips, or having technology that does not work every time, is frustrating. Early career teachers have all these wonderful ideas that they learned about in theory about integrating technology into their classroom and learning, and are disappointed and let down by some technology. That has certainly improved over the past two years, but there is still evidence that technology is not wonderful in schools.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you think school maintenance has improved?

Ms KNOX: No, I do not. We are in the middle of some horrific problems. We are waiting for the maintenance contract to be decided and we are in limbo. Maintenance is just not happening in schools.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It is shocking. Do you see a shortage of teachers in future?

Ms KNOX: Absolutely. A shortage of teachers will occur. A huge number of teachers will be retiring—our baby boomers, so to speak—and we need a large number of teachers to be trained to take their places. I am talking about young people, not career change people. Young people are not going to stay with their jobs as we did and stick out 25 or 30 years of teaching. They will want to do five years in schools and then have a couple of years overseas, come back and do three years somewhere else. This is what is happening. We are going to have that constant in and out. Although

we might say we have enough teachers trained, we are not taking into account the fact that we need to be more flexible with these young people.

CHAIR: I refer to some figures that the department gave us because we asked statistical questions in some detail this morning. In relation to primary, the department strongly argues there is not a shortage and the number coming out of universities is increasing each year. They said there are 12,760-odd primary and 8,000 secondary on the list, and about 9,000 people are coming on each year. At the moment they are employing about 1,000 new graduates each year and about 1,200 to 1,600 others. In other words, very roughly speaking, by our employing one third to one quarter of the number of people applying. They went on to talk about the demographic make-up of the teaching profession. They were stressing that the problems in secondary exist, but also that they do not exist in primary.

Ms KNOX: I would beg to differ when I have colleagues in my local schools who lose six young teachers in one day. They are appointed to a school permanently and my colleagues cannot get people to take their place.

CHAIR: As I said before, we need to differentiate between recruitment to the New South Wales Teaching Service and the difficulty that the department certainly admits of recruiting to individual schools. I suppose what the department is saying is there is an oversupply of primary teachers not in certain areas you cannot get one. The recruitment overall is okay.

Ms KNOX: I would like to know where they go. I think they wait so long to get a job they choose another profession and they remain in that profession. They may not come back to teaching until their children have started school.

CHAIR: The department is saying it is recruiting enough every year and there are thousands who want to be recruited, but the difficulty is getting people to go to certain areas. So the issue is about incentives, or whatever it may be, to get some equity into the system.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: That is what the department said this morning. Can we not ask the witness for her views?

CHAIR: I want to ask exactly that question.

Ms KNOX: I understand what you are saying and that the department has all figures. I am saying I wish you could talk to more colleagues of mine who cannot get teachers to take the place of another teacher who is on long service leave, a teacher who is leaving a class, or one who is sick. It is difficult to get teachers in a lot of areas. If you look at the North Shore, you might have 10 people waiting there and you have a list of casual teachers.

CHAIR: That is what I am getting at. That is why I wanted you from your perspective to address that issue.

Ms KNOX: I think a lot of people think it is the rural areas that are hard to staff. We are talking about metropolitan schools as well. There are a lot of metropolitan schools that cannot find a teacher to take the place of some of the teachers they are losing. It is still a difficulty.

CHAIR: It is obviously a matter of definition, and I apologise for that. It is only matter of trying to ask similar questions to all our witnesses.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Only if they agree.

CHAIR: I am sorry, Ms Parker, I take objection to that. It is not a matter of agreeing; it is a matter of us being sure we are all talking about the same thing. We have a transcript that goes on the web site. We ask witnesses the same set of questions, worded the same way. Just as with Professor Dinham there was one area where we were trying to get our terms straight. It is important.

Ms KNOX: It concerns me, and I do not think it has been discussed a lot of, that we have a society now where people go in and out of jobs. We have to be flexible enough to know that is going

to happen and that young people will want to try teaching, come in, do a little bit, go overseas, or whatever. We are talking about a critical shortage of teachers. I think that was still happen in the next five years as people wander in and out of the profession, and retire. The more we can do to get young teachers in schools as part of a mentoring system, or coming in on an apprenticeship or an internship, or something like that, will be beneficial.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I think it was Professor Dinham who floated the idea to us of a sort of free market in terms of employment so that teachers could apply from wherever for a position, whether in the private sector or the public education system. Do you think that idea will attract more teachers into public schools or draw them back after they have left?

Ms KNOX: It is a really hard question to answer when you think about the facilities that are available in some private schools compared with public schools and the amount of headhunting that goes on with private schools finding excellent teachers in the public schools and offering them the world. They are taking some of our excellent teachers into the private system. I do not think that is going to solve the problem for public schools.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: I raised my three daughters in the Catholic school system because the discipline in the system was perceived to be far better than that in the public school system. Would you like to comment on the issue of discipline in schools?

Ms KNOX: I am glad you said "perceived to be", because I do not think public schools have a great problem with disciplining students. The problems come when you have students with learning needs that come out in the emotional disorder, or violent students. That is when our problems occur, when you have a child in your class who is causing huge issues and there is nothing you can do with that child because you have tried every avenue. You cannot just send a child out. There is only one teacher in the classroom at a time. I am talking about a school like the one I have. I am a non-teaching principal, and I have an all-teacher executive. If a child is disruptive in class, I have to be sent for straight away. If a child is being violent, the rest of the class must be taken out of the classroom. You cannot touch the child unless they are trying to injure themselves or injure other children. Parents see this occurring on a regular basis if you have a child who has an emotional disorder or is violent. The perception then is that the discipline at the school is terrible. Why can they not discipline that child? It is not about discipline; it is about catering for that child's needs. That is a bit of difference.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: The next part of the question relates to students with behavioural difficulties, if you like. Is that on the increase?

CHAIR: I am sorry to interrupt, but we are rapidly running out of time. You are getting a long way away from training and recruitment. I know some of these issues affect perceptions, but we have a whole a lot of areas about training and recruitment and that is what our inquiry is about. Our terms of reference are very specific.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: With due respect I believe this would impact on the willingness of people to join a profession.

CHAIR: In the sense that anything does, yes, but the Committee's terms of reference are very specific and I really think we should get back to the questions about recruitment and training. Still in that first little group, Nos 5 and 6, have you had much experience or does the association have a view about the recruitment of overseas teachers, particularly where it seems to have been done to fill gaps in areas that are struggling to recruit teachers?

Ms KNOX: I do not think the answer is in recruiting overseas teachers.

CHAIR: I meant migrants, basically. I do not mean recruiting from overseas but recruiting people who have moved to Australia but whose training was in another country.

Ms KNOX: There are some success stories, but probably the general view of the Primary Principals association is that they have to be more stringent measures in ensuring that these people have high-order oral and written communication skills, and have an understanding of our education system, our values and our culture.

CHAIR: Did you say that because you think that is a problem at the moment?

Ms KNOX: Yes, absolutely. A lot of these teachers have been very successful in their countries of origin with their own education systems. However, attempting to employ some of those strategies and measures in our system can cause quite a few problems.

CHAIR: The department has what is called I think a pre-employment program for overseas teachers. Is that the kind of thing you are talking about that they need to be recruited, trained, checked and so on.

Ms KNOX: Yes, more stringent checking.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: When you refer to more stringent checking what you mean?

Ms KNOX: For example, even in the grammatical context—some kind of language test or writing things down so that grammar and language structure are correct. They are marking students' work. They have to comment on the way a piece of work is structured or the way a student has answered that question. They have to have that knowledge in order to be able to assess students. Some of those teachers are being placed in secondary schools where they are assessing students at stages 4, 5 and 6, Higher School Certificate level. They have to know what they are doing. That is what I mean about more stringent measures.

CHAIR: It was suggested to the Committee that a lot of the overseas-trained teachers are being recruited in those disciplines where there are secondary shortages, such as maths, science and technology; that there are some problems with language ability but also with differences related to cultural backgrounds, which may make issues such as discipline more difficult.

Ms KNOX: Yes, exactly right. As I said, they have their own strategies that worked well in their countries of origin that may not work as well in our education system. Understanding the Australian education system is certainly a priority.

CHAIR: If the initial screening assessment and the pre-employment programs are to work it has to be done more stringently.

Ms KNOX: More stringently, yes.

CHAIR: Do you have any comments on the way universities might better ensure that they are catering to the employment requirements of the department? You spoke a little before about this.

Ms KNOX: I think I have mentioned before the Committee about university elitism and about the inconsistencies across universities.

CHAIR: You mentioned theory and practice.

Ms KNOX: Yes. The Department Education and Training has put a lot of work into a quality teaching project which is excellent. In most schools across New South Wales teachers are working in that area. However, some of the universities have not even picked up on that and have no knowledge of that program. In some ways we believe it is because the University of Newcastle had a hand in developing it. It becomes like one university has developed its and therefore we are not going to be able to do that in other universities. It is university elitism. If teachers are going to teaching in the New South Wales Department Education and Training schools they need to know what we're doing, and they need that training.

So that is an important area. The lack of curriculum knowledge probably refers to the young students who obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree and then do one year Bachelor of Education degree. They come out with not as much curriculum knowledge as teachers who have been trained for the full four years of the course. As a result they are ill-prepared and many give up teaching. They leave the profession.

CHAIR: Were you present when Professor Dinham said that the Diploma of Education needs to be two years.

Ms KNOX: No, I was not. I would agree with that absolutely.

CHAIR: He suggested there are Federal funding and university funding problems with that, that he was certainly saying that the Bachelor of Teaching Degree was too short.

Ms KNOX: I would certainly agree with him on that.

CHAIR: They know their subject field, but they do not know enough about how to teach, is that it?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: He did not say there were Federal funding problems, actually. I think you might have verballed him there.

CHAIR: He said that the Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST] will not count the second year. The University introduced the second year because DEST will not count it and it is not funded.

Ms KNOX: We need good practitioners. We want good practitioners with curriculum knowledge basically, but the practitioner side is extremely important in that is why universities or teacher training institutions have to look at having some compulsory subjects—as in Aboriginal education, English second language, and reading recovery and classroom management. And they cannot be electives; they have to be compulsory. We are looking at a more rigorous curriculum for our trainee teachers, making sure that those areas are covered as well as training them for what is ahead. You know, just classroom management style, organisation, how a school operates, and how the Department of Education and Training works. All of those things.

I can speak from experience. It happened when I was a trainee teacher. They seem to miss out and there are huge gaps in their knowledge that need to be addressed. Their practicums are extremely important. A lot more time needs to be spent in schools and working with teachers in schools, giving some credence to a practicum where a trainee teacher goes in and has to commit to the class, organising and preparing work for the class, rather than being loaded with university assignments at the same time. That is certainly an issue that universities have to have a look at. Another issue is the lack of knowledge of some of the staff in teacher-training institutions who have been there for 20 or 25 years.

There is a wonderful source out there and more teachers will become available, retired teachers and principals. Grab them for the first two years. They have just come out of schools and they know what's happening. Get them into those teacher-training courses and recycle every two years. I do not suggest we should put a retired principal therefore the next 10 years, but for two years. They have just come out of schools and know what's happening. Link them to the teacher-training institutions to impart their practical knowledge and just keep on recycling them.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Could I pursue that question relating to the behavioural issue. I spend a lot of time out in south-western Sydney and the most common feedback I get is that this problem appears to be on the rise—Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and kids on medication, disruptive behaviour in classrooms and so forth. Do you believe these behavioural problems are on the increase?

Ms KNOX: Unfortunately, yes. The behaviour problems are certainly on the increase.

The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN: Do you believe that has a negative impact on people wanting to come into the profession, having to go to schools that have such problems?

Ms KNOX: There are certain areas across the Stage with a high incidence of those kinds of children in the schools. Yes, I think it does have a negative impact on people wanting to join the profession, most definitely.

CHAIR: You have my comments on a lot of our questions. There seems to be an increasing interest, partly because there is an increasing change in the makeup of the profession, about career change teachers. We have heard statistics that average age of people undertaking university courses is increasing with a number of older people coming in who have had other careers. Do you think there are differences in the kind of preparation they have? Does being older or being career-change teachers prepare them better for the classroom? Or does it basically come back to comment you have already made about what universities are doing?

Ms KNOX: I still think they need to be adequately prepared, no matter how old they are. I think that the mature age teachers, as we call them, certainly have a richer knowledge of the world and a calmer approach in some ways to some of the issues we have been talking about. On the other side, though, younger teachers can be a little bit more flexible in their approach. So there are advantages with both age groups. A younger teacher can be more flexible and enthusiastic and want to get out and kick a ball with kids and be a different kind of role model, a different kind of teacher. A mature age teacher may be calm and fabulous in the classroom teaching kids, but does not want to get out in the playground, mix with the children, kick the balls and do all the higher-order physical things that teachers have to do—that I am still doing.

CHAIR: We also asked about your comments relating to accelerated teacher training courses and their effectiveness. That may be more an issue for secondary schools, I am not sure.

Ms KNOX: That concerns me. I know that we have some excellent young people who have gone through the accelerated teaching courses. It is a wonderful opportunity for them. It means they get over things faster. Sometimes they do it faster in order to get through it and get overseas. They are basic facts. The accelerated courses also have a focus on being able to do assignments but there is not a practicum approach to it. Once again we are not looking at the practical side; we are looking at those young people who are good at doing assignments and have been task-oriented; good at handing in assignments and getting high scores. We need to have a look at the practice side of teaching.

CHAIR: Do they have a practicum component?

Ms KNOX: Often the accelerated courses are held during holidays. They speed it up.

CHAIR: So they cannot go into schools. It is probably more of a problem for those courses that it is for the university courses.

Ms KNOX: I think so, yes.

CHAIR: We have not asked you about the Institute of Teachers. Do you have a view? Is it too early to say?

Ms KNOX: It is a little bit early to say. I am hoping that the Institute of Teachers is going to be a positive step. I think it is going to be a lot easier for teachers to map a career path. I think it is a good idea that there are other different competencies in the New South Wales Institute of Teachers so that people can plan and set goals in their professional learning. We can have a common language throughout the whole system about what level teaches are at, where they need to be and what they need to develop. It is a very early comment, but I think it looks good. It is just starting and is very early days so I would not want to commit myself.

CHAIR: What would you like to see come out of this inquiry? You have given the Committee a two-page list of recommendations, which might be the answer to the question.

Ms KNOX: I hope so. I hope there are some clues in that. I would like to see an acknowledgement of the importance of the status of the teaching profession, first and foremost. I think unless we get that clear message sent to the community it is going to continue to be difficult to attract people into our profession. I would hope to see that universities reviewed teacher training and I hope to see the Department of Education and Training able to have some input into teacher- training institutions. I think that will be extremely important. The department needs to develop strong links with schools. We need to have a look at how we get more young trainee teachers into schools. We need to make sure that this inquiry will recommend that we look at real-life learning for these

teachers—demonstration lessons. Getting them into schools and onto the practitioner side of teaching. I would also hope that we could look at really flexible approaches to recruiting teachers and placing graduates in schools. I hope that is what comes from this inquiry.

(**The witness withdrew**)

(**The Committee concluded at 4.45 p.m.**)