

MUTUAL RECOGNITION (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) BILL 2020

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Premier)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Premier.

Second Reading

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [12.16 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to continue Western Australia's participation in the national mutual recognition scheme by adopting the commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act 1992 under section 51(xxxvii) of the Australian Constitution for another 10 years. In 1992, Western Australia signed an intergovernmental agreement with the commonwealth, other states and the territories, which established the framework for the national mutual recognition scheme. Western Australia has participated in the scheme since 1995 and does this by adopting the commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act 1992 for specific periods of time. The current act, the Mutual Recognition (Western Australia) Act 2010, will expire on 28 February 2021, and this bill will continue Western Australia's adoption of the commonwealth act until 28 February 2031.

The national mutual recognition scheme reduces regulatory barriers to the interstate flow of goods and labour between Australian jurisdictions. The scheme is based on two principles, which are subject to exceptions. Firstly, for goods, the general principle is that goods produced in one jurisdiction may be sold lawfully into a second jurisdiction without meeting further regulatory requirements. Secondly, for occupations, the general principle is that a person registered to practise an occupation in one state or territory can practise an equivalent occupation in any other state or territory.

Western Australia also participates in the trans-Tasman mutual recognition scheme and adopted the commonwealth Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 in 2007. In January 2015, the Productivity Commission conducted a review of the national and trans-Tasman mutual recognition schemes and released its final report in September 2015. The Productivity Commission found that the national and trans-Tasman mutual recognition schemes are generally working well. The schemes make it easier to do business across borders and give consumers a wider and more competitive range of goods and services.

Mutual recognition schemes provide many benefits for states and territories. They provide benefits to workers by allowing them to work in other jurisdictions; they provide benefits to businesses by improving access to skilled labour and reducing compliance costs; and they provide benefits to consumers by increasing competition in markets.

The bill will adopt the commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act 1992 as originally enacted and any amendments made to it before it receives royal assent.

In keeping with past practice, this bill includes a termination date of 28 February 2031, unless the Governor determines an earlier date. Changes to the schedules to the commonwealth act can be made by regulation, and this bill includes a provision that requires the tabling of those commonwealth regulations in this Parliament. The commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act 1992 is not attached as a note to the bill, which is consistent with the approach recommended by the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review for the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Western Australia) Act 2007. Western Australia derives many benefits from being part of the national mutual recognition scheme, and therefore it is the government's view that it should continue participating for another 10 years. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr A. Krsticevic**.