



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 132

## WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations, Hon Robyn Cahill OAM MLA:

### Registered Surveyors

1. How many new surveyors have been registered in the Northern Territory in the following financial years or reporting periods or by calendar years:

Year	New Registrations	Mutual Recognition
2020	0	2
2021	0	1
2022	0	2
2023	1	3
2024	1	0

2. What are the problems or blocks faced by graduate surveyors getting their NT surveyor registration?

#### Background Information

- The Surveyors Board of the NT (the Board) is responsible for the licensing / registration and practice of surveyors to perform land boundary surveys.
- Present day statistics suggest that on average it takes 4-5 years for a Graduate Surveyor to become a registered Licensed Surveyor. To be eligible for registration as a Licensed Surveyor you must have:
  - a 4-year degree qualification in Surveying from a recognised University
  - completed a Professional Training Agreement (PTA) which comprises:
    - a minimum of 2 years (480 days) practical experience, of which 12 months (240 days) must include land boundary (cadastral) surveys
    - achieving competency in specified skills and capabilities
    - undertaking 5 suitable practical projects
  - attained a Certificate of Professional Training from the Supervising Surveyor, who certifies that the Graduate Surveyor is fully competent to take responsibility for cadastral surveys
  - passed the Professional Assessment.

These requirements are prescribed in alignment with National requirements as agreed to by the Council of Reciprocal Surveyors Board of Australia and NZ (CRSBANZ)

Below are challenges rather than blockages:

- Most Graduate Surveyors who are on a PTA to become a Licensed Surveyor are also employed fulltime, consequently finding dedicated time to complete the 5 projects can be challenging.
- Most Supervising Surveyors of Graduate Surveyors on a PTA are also working Licensed Surveyors and are employed with the same survey firm / business as the Graduate Surveyor, therefore available time is also a challenge for Supervising Surveyors.
- Undertaking a PTA requires ongoing commitment and motivation to maintain a consistent level of intensity and be resolute, so this can be challenge for both Graduate Surveyor and Supervising Surveyor.
- In some circumstances, it is challenging for Graduate Surveyors to gain suitable land boundary practical training from within their place of employment or survey firm / business because the place of employment or firm / business may not undertake all types of relevant surveys.
- On occasion, Graduate Surveyors misinterpret the requirements to become a registered Licensed Surveyor, and this may delay commencement of their training or projects. Note, to alleviate this the Board reviews and modifies the training requirement guidelines on a regular basis; consideration of changes is based on feedback from Graduate Surveyors and Supervising Surveyors.
- The Board comprises industry Licensed Surveyors who are full time employees or work in their own business. As such, response times to Graduate Surveyors' requests / queries who are on a PTA can occasionally be extended or delayed. This time issue also applies to examination of projects as all project examinations are performed by peers who are industry working Licensed Surveyors.

**3. What more can be done to help graduate surveyors get NT registration?**

- The Board could have more frequent industry information seminars / workshops about PTAs, supervision, and the various role of the Board and stakeholders involved.
- In conjunction with an initiative currently being developed by CRSBANZ, the Board could develop a framework and relevant policies, to facilitate a national approach or program or pathways for Graduate Surveyors to be registered / licensed.

- The Board could evaluate the current PTA process and requirements for Graduate Surveyors to become registered Licensed Surveyors.
- The Board could explore programs whereby Graduate Surveyors can meet most of the requirements for registration as Licensed Surveyors through ‘competency-based assessments’ facilitated by an accredited University or another Board from CRSBANZ.
- Note, the above would require legislative changes to the *Licensed Surveyors Act 1983* and subsequent Board policies.

**4. What is the NT Government doing to assist graduate surveyors to gain their NT Surveyor Registration?**

- We are not aware of any specific programs for a Graduate Surveyor who chooses to become a registered Licensed Surveyor.
- However, the NT Government could commence a sponsorship or grant program to entice Graduate Surveyors to work and obtain their registration / licence in the NT. Note, the sponsorship / grant should be to the Graduate Surveyor not the survey firm / employer.

**5. Is there a shortage of registered surveyors in the Northern Territory?**

- Not currently; however, statistics indicate there has been a decline in the number of registered Licensed Surveyors in the NT. The other concern is the age demographic as many of the registered Licensed Surveyors are over 55 years of age. Please note, other Boards are experiencing this situation as well. Both circumstances could lead to a shortage of Licensed Surveyors in the future.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Licensed Surveyors Registered</b>
2016	92
2017	96
2018	89
2019	82
2020	77
2021	67
2022	55
2023	57
2024	51
2025	40

- The current National skills shortage in the land survey and geospatial information profession may also accelerate and /or lead to a shortage of Licensed Surveyors in the future.