Date introduced: 11 September 1985
House: Senate
Presented by: Senator the Hon. Susan Ryan, Minister for Education

DIGEST OF BILL

Purpose

To restructure the tribunals responsible for the review of decisions under the Tertiary Education Assistance (TEAS) and Post-Graduate Awards (PGA) schemes, and to make other administrative changes to the schemes.

Background

The TEAS and PGA schemes were established by the Student Assistance Act 1973 (the Principal Act). The TEAS scheme provides assistance to undergraduate students at universities and colleges of advanced education while the PGA scheme provides assistance to postgraduate students at those institutions. At present, administrative decisions in the schemes, such as decisions to refuse or vary assistance, are initially reviewed by the Department of Education. Persons dissatisfied with a decision may seek a review with the Student Assistance Review Tribunals (SARTs). These tribunals are constituted under the Principal Act and each consists of a chairperson and two other members. The main purpose of this Bill is to restructure the SARTs.

Main Provisions

Clause 4 substitutes a new section 18 in the Principal Act to restructure the SARTs. There will be a single review body composed of a Convenor or Convenors and other members. The Minister may determine the number of Convenors and other members, and is responsible for their appointment.
The constitution of SART is dealt with in clause 8 which substitutes a new section 25A in the Principal Act. The SART is to be normally comprised of a Convenor and two other members, although in certain circumstances it may be comprised of a Convenor and one other member.

The Minister will be empowered to appoint Acting Convenors (clause 5 which inserts a new section 21A in the Principal Act).

Clause 12 will insert a new section 34A in the Principal Act to allow the Minister to delegate certain powers to the Department.

A time limit for prosecutions under the Principal Act is to be inserted by clause 13 which inserts a new section 35A in the Principal Act. Offences committed after this clause comes into force may only be prosecuted within 2 years of the commission of the offence.

For further information, if required, contact the Education and Welfare Group.

1 October 1985

Bills Digest Service
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE

© Commonwealth of Australia 1985

Except to the extent of the uses permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written consent of the Department of the Parliamentary Library. Reproduction is permitted by Members of the Parliament of the Commonwealth in the course of their official duties.