

an accessible public register for approvals issued under the proposed act.

- Protocol 2 lists the processes and criteria for the operation in Australia of overseas higher education institutions, including confirmation of those institutions' credentials in their home jurisdictions, as well as the vetting of any local agents who foreign institutions may wish to engage in Australia.
- Protocol 3 lists the criteria and processes for the accreditation of higher education courses of instruction leading to academic awards, degrees, diplomas and other awards offered by non-self-accrediting foreign and local institutions, and approval for those institutions to offer nominated courses. The criteria and processes include the evaluation of proposed courses of instruction against comparable existing Australian courses provided in accredited Australian higher education.
- Protocol 4 provides for delivery arrangements for higher education institutions involving other organisations, and covering universities operating in their own name and through related organisations;
- Protocol 5 provides for the endorsement of courses of instruction for overseas students.

These protocols will be enacted in the proposed legislation.

Part 2 of the proposed act provides that a higher education institution may apply for ministerial approval confirming that institution as suitable for recognition or establishment as a Territory university. The matters the minister must address as part of this process include referring to the national protocols and other related matters.

Part 3 allows overseas higher education institutions to apply for ministerial approval to operate in the Territory. The issues the minister must address when considering an application from an overseas institution also include a reference to the 2000 national protocols.

Part 4 provides for the ministerial approval to be granted allowing interstate universities to operate in the Territory under an agency agreement. The minister must ensure that the protocols are adhered to and other relevant issues are addressed in granting

approval to an interstate university wishing to operate in the Northern Territory.

Part 5 provides for non-university providers, such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, to seek accreditation of courses of instruction offered by those providers.

Part 6 requires higher education institutions to provide courses of instruction to overseas students to have ministerial approval for those courses of instruction. Approval may be granted by the minister only if the institution complies with the requirements of the Commonwealth's national code made for this purpose.

Part 7 allows a person authorised by the minister to observe an institution's operations, to collect information and require a person to provide him or her with information about the institution to ensure compliance with the national protocols or national code.

Part 8 allows for the cancellation of any approvals or accreditation under Parts 2 to 6. Appeals against a decision under Part 8 may be made in accordance with the provisions of Part 9.

Part 10 creates offences relating generally to the contravention of the requirements of the early parts of the act.

Part 11 deals with miscellaneous provisions ranging from ministerial power to delegate, ministerial power to issue guidelines for the administration of the act, and the making of regulations including regulations for the exemption of institutions from operations of the act in certain circumstances. This part also repeals the *Education Act* section 73A.

Madam Speaker, the bill provides consistent standards for higher education in the Territory and across Australia, and I commend it to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS **Take Two Bills Together**

Dr TOYNE (Justice and Attorney-General): Madam Speaker, I move that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent bills entitled *Uncollected Goods Bill 2004* (Serial 217) and *Uncollected Goods (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2004* (Serial 218):

- (a) being presented and read a first time together and one motion being put in