



Australian Government

**Department of Education,
Science and Training**

***2006 Australian
Government National
Awards for Quality
Schooling***

Evaluation Report

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I & J Management Services

Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling Evaluation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 27 February 2006 in a ceremony at the Great Hall of Parliament House in Canberra, the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Julie Bishop, presented the 2006 National Awards for Quality Schooling to 88 individual and school improvement Award winners. The Awards ranged in value from \$30,000 for the Best National Achievement for a teacher, principal and school support staff member (with an additional \$15,000 going to the individual's school) and \$65,000 for the Best National Achievement in School Improvement to \$5,000 for Highly Commended individual Award winners (with an additional \$2,500 to the school).

Since then, the lives of some of Australia's leading educators have changed, and the professional standing of teachers in the community, in schools and within the profession has improved.

*"We used the 'winnings' to purchase electronic whiteboards and to finance teacher professional development. We celebrated the Award with the school community, and used the Award for positive press in the wider community. The students were very excited."
(Head Teacher, School Improvement Award winner)*

This evaluation found that the 2006 Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling (AGNAQS) have had a significant personal and professional impact on the Award winners and contributed to the wider awareness and exchange of quality teaching practices across schools.

The impact of the Awards on individual winners has been tangible, and for some 'profound'. Direct outcomes of having been recognised through the Awards include further professional learning and scholarship, skills development, increased confidence and motivation, increased job responsibility, recognition through other Awards, and career advancement. This is in addition to any personal reward individual Award winners have had through the use of their prize money.

The effects on Award winning schools have been widespread. These have included extension of Award winning programs, development of new programs, investment in professional learning for staff across the school, and investment in learning resources, materials, and technology. Schools have also reported changes in school culture as students, staff and the community come together to recognise the quality that exists within their school.

There is also evidence of professional networks forming as Award winners collaborate more widely with their peers. For many, being nationally recognised as an educational leader has brought with it responsibility for sharing their expertise with other teaching professionals. For some, the introductions made through the Awards, and especially the professional exchange day held the day after the Awards ceremony, have fostered ongoing dialogue, reinforced through collaborative professional sharing.

However, beyond encouraging and rewarding excellence in schools, the main objective of the Awards is to improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders, one of the three objectives of the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme.

The evaluation has found that the Awards are having a significant impact on the teaching profession and their standing in the community. Having an individual or team Award winner within a school has been, in most cases, a cause for celebration among the staff of that school, and in many cases neighbouring schools associated with the winner. It has been a means of boosting morale, building pride in the school and the profession, and a motivating force for teachers to continue to strive for excellence. There are also numerous examples of the school community and sometimes the wider community being involved in the celebrations, and personal feedback to the Award winners from people in the community acknowledging and congratulating them on their achievements.

Since first being awarded in early 2004, awareness of the Awards has grown within the education sector and the community. Word of mouth, professional networking, the professional activities of past Award winners, and promotional activities by Teaching Australia and ACE are contributing to this growth in awareness.

From a professional perspective, the Awards are growing in status and credibility. Critical to this outcome have been the transparent rigour and fairness of the selection process, the substantial prize money awarded, and the prestigious nature of the Awards ceremony – with Awards presented by the Federal Minister in a ceremony in the Great Hall of Parliament House in the nation’s capital. Furthermore, the quality of the Award winners is seen as an important factor in establishing their status. Among the 2006 Award winners there was certainly a feeling that the standard of the company in which they found themselves was very high.

The AGNAQS are also considered an appropriate way of recognising and rewarding excellence. For the OECD has found that the quality of school teachers is the single most important school variable influencing student achievement, and that teachers need to have their work recognised and rewarded.¹

The outcomes described by Award winners reinforce this finding. The recognition and affirmation that the Awards provide generates increased confidence among teachers and schools associated with the Awards. They also increase the credibility teachers have in the community, in the teaching profession and in the wider education sector. Confidence and credibility have been catalysts for action, with Award winners indicating increased motivation to continue to improve the quality of their school. From these actions come increased teaching capability and improved professional standing. These should ultimately support improved learning outcomes for students.

Every award that recognises and promotes the quality of teachers reinforces for teachers and the community the value of the profession, and encourages the best people to stay in the profession and attracts the best people to the profession. The fact that the AGNAQS are held in high regard is indicative of their value to the profession.

“I have previously won state education awards, national ICT awards and state community awards, and hold this as the highest achievement of all awards I have received.” (Teacher Award winner)

The structure, design and delivery of the Awards has evolved over the last three years as DEST, ACE and now Teaching Australia become more experienced and knowledgeable in managing their respective aspects of the Awards process. In 2006 a new Award category was introduced, there was greater promotion of the Awards and a trebling of the number of nominations, there were minor refinements to the selection process, the status of the Awards ceremony was increased, and the professional exchange day following the ceremony was enhanced to foster professional networking. The 2007 Awards process has evolved even further. This process of continual improvement will continue. At the same time stability in the Awards categories and some clarification of governance and timelines would enhance the operations of the Awards.

The aim now should be to grow awareness of the AGNAQS. By 2006, only the third year of the Awards, one in every fourteen Australian schools had nominated for an Award. Growing awareness will attract the ‘best of the best’ and underpin the Awards’ status and credibility, and their capacity to improve the standing of the teaching profession. With around \$2 million expended on the Awards in 2006, this is seen as a prudent and effective investment in the future of the profession and the quality of schooling in Australia.

¹ *The Quality of the Teaching Workforce*, OECD, February 2004.

1. EVALUATION OF THE AWARDS

Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling

The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) manages the Australian Government's National Awards for Quality Schooling (AGNAQS), a program funded through the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP).

The Awards were introduced in 2003 to support, encourage and reward excellence in schools and improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders, one of the three AGQTP objectives. The awards recognise and reward teachers, principals and school support staff who make an exceptional contribution to their school community and outcomes for students. The Awards aim to help build a better understanding and greater appreciation in the wider community of the work done in Australian schools, and are a way of sharing good ideas and practice among school communities across the country.

The Awards also relate more broadly to other Australian Government priorities for the teaching profession and schools, including strengthening learning outcomes and strengthening school communities.

The 2006 Awards

The Australian Government provided \$1.09 million in prizes to celebrate the 2006 AGNAQS², with awards presented by the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Julie Bishop, at a ceremony in the Great Hall of Parliament House in February 2006. Eighty-eight awards (for Best National Achievement, Outstanding National Achievement and High Commendation) were made in four categories:

- Individual
 - Excellence by a Teacher (21 awards)
 - Excellence by a Principal (6 awards)
 - Excellence by a School Support Staff Member (10 awards)
- School
 - Excellence in School Improvement (51 awards).

The Awards for Best National Achievement by an individual Teacher, Principal or Support Staff Member attracted a prize of \$30,000, with a \$10,000 prize for the winners of the Outstanding National Achievement Awards and \$5,000 for the Highly Commended Award winners. The individual Award winners' schools also received prize money. The winner of the Best National Achievement for School Improvement won \$65,000, with \$20,000 awarded for Outstanding National Achievement and \$10,000 for schools that were Highly Commended.

A full list of 2006 Award winners and the prizes awarded is included in Appendix 1.

Teaching Australia – Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (formerly the National Institute for Quality Schooling), was contracted by DEST to manage the 2006 Awards with funding of \$350,000 (GST inclusive) from the AGQTP. Teaching Australia subcontracted the Australian College of Educators (ACE) to manage the selection process for the Awards. This included promotion and receipt of nominations, assessment of nominations, and recommending Award winners to the Minister. ACE was assisted in the assessment of School Improvement nominations by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

² The change in name to the Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling (from the National Awards for Quality Schooling) actually occurred after the Awards were presented in 2006. For consistency, this report will use the current name to refer to the Awards since their establishment in 2003.

The Evaluation

I & J Management Services was engaged by DEST in December 2006 to undertake an independent evaluation of the AGNAQS. The purpose of the evaluation was:

- to determine what impact winning an Award has had on the Award winners and student learning
- to establish whether the AGNAQS aligns with the AGQTP objective to improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders.

The evaluation was to examine the effectiveness of the Awards in improving the professional standing of school teachers and leaders in both Government and non-Government schools, and assess the impact on individual winners, their schools and school communities, and the profession. The evaluation was also to examine whether the Awards are an appropriate means of supporting achievement of the Australian Government's priorities for improving quality schooling and the professional standing of teachers and school leaders. The effectiveness and efficiency of the Awards processes and management in 2006 was also within the scope of the evaluation.

In particular, the evaluation was to address the extent to which the 2006 Awards have contributed to the following two outcomes from the AGQTP Performance Reporting Framework:

Outcome 4: Through participation in the 2006 AGNAQS, teachers will have engaged productively in collegial networks that extend and support knowledge and skills.

Outcome 17: Through participation in the 2006 AGNAQS teachers will, in their work with colleagues, have an increased capacity to lead and influence initiatives in the school community that promote broader connectedness of all students, staff and parents.

The evaluation will also provide input into the review of the AGQTP in 2007.

The evaluation commenced in late December 2006 and was concluded in March 2007. It involved a desktop review of Award documentation, guidelines and 2006 Award nominations, interviews with key stakeholders (e.g. DEST, Teaching Australia, ACE, ACER, Award winners) and a survey of 2006 Award winners. Details of the evaluation methodology are included in Appendix 2.

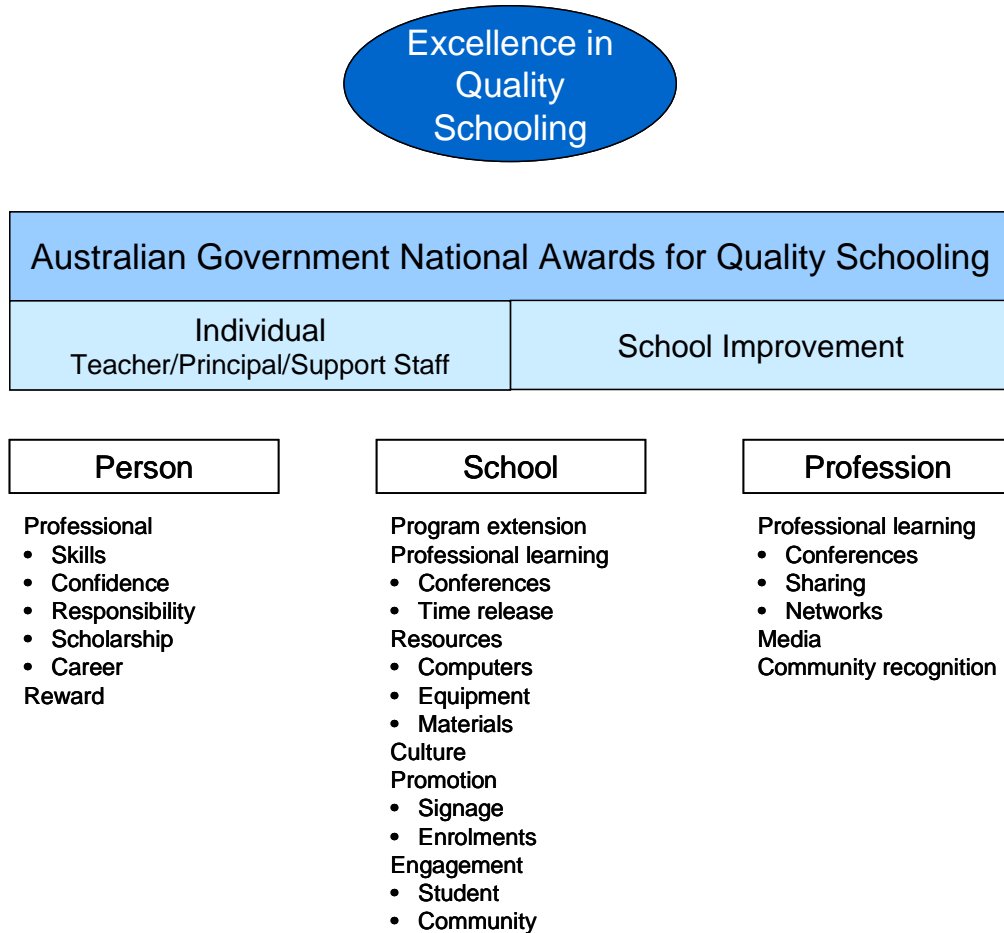
Evaluation Report

This evaluation report presents the findings of the evaluation in two separate but related components.

The first component, in Sections 2 to 6 of the report, looks at the impact of the Awards on individual Award winners, schools (including school communities and teaching and learning practices) and the teaching profession. The second component, in Sections 7 and 8 of the report, examines the design and delivery of the 2006 AGNAQS, as well as the management and administration of the Awards. The conclusions and evaluation recommendations are presented in Section 9.

2. THE IMPACT OF THE AWARDS

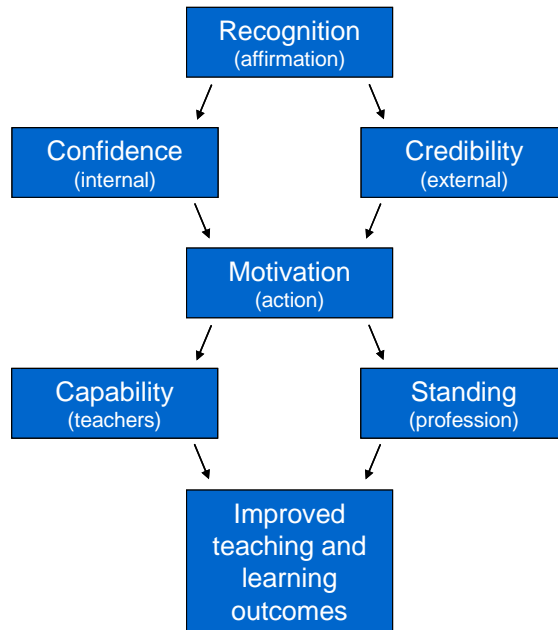
Extensive feedback from 2006 Award winners indicates that the AGNAQS have had a significant impact on individual Award winners, schools and the standing of the teaching profession. While there is no single universal response to the question of impact, with what has happened for Award winners as varied as the initiatives or qualities which won them the Award, there are some common themes. That is, the range of impacts related to any single Award to an individual or school in any school sector in any State or Territory could be found in the diagram below, which presents in summary the type of impact that has been experienced. The actual impacts of the Awards are described more fully in Sections 3 to 5 of the report.



Another way of describing the impact of the AGNAQS, based on the information provided by 2006 Award winners about their experiences, is to link the recognition of quality schooling to improved teaching and learning outcomes for students.

The diagram on the following page simply traces the relationship between the recognition and affirmation that the Awards provide with the increased confidence of teachers and schools associated with the Awards, and the increased credibility they have in the community, in the teaching profession and in the wider education sector. These two factors appear to have been catalysts for action, with Award winners talking about their increased motivation to continue to improve the quality of their school. The results of these actions include increased capability of teachers and schools (e.g. through professional learning, program development, resource acquisition) and improved professional standing of teachers that should ultimately support improved schooling outcomes.

While many Award winners are able to clearly point to some of the following impacts having already occurred, only some would say that they are seeing evidence at this stage of having progressed through this sequence of outcomes.



However, the evaluation has observed that the Awards are making a significant contribution to improving the professional standing of teachers.

3. THE PERSONAL IMPACT OF THE AWARDS

Winning a National Award for Quality Schooling has a direct and often profound personal impact on individual Award winners and staff members of Award winning School Improvement teams.

“I have been invited to speak on numerous occasions and contribute to journal articles on my work and the teaching profession as a whole. Other teachers now look to me for leadership, support and resources. I feel an added responsibility to further my own professional learning, and have dramatically increased the amount of professional reading I do.” (Teacher Award winner)

The main professional impacts of the Awards’ recognition of teaching excellence include:

- increased confidence in Award winning recipients’ teaching, leadership and support capacities
- increased motivation to improve their own knowledge, skills and practice
- increased opportunities for professional development and professional networking
- increased commitment to promotion and support of the teaching profession through participation in conferences, workshops, cross-school visits and mentoring
- career advancement.

As the prize money is not tied to any particular use for professional purposes, individual award winners have also been able to use the Awards for personal relaxation and rewards, outcomes that support their well-being, ‘recharge the batteries’ and enhance their ability to continue to perform at the high professional standard they set for themselves.

3.1. Confidence, motivation and commitment

Increased confidence

The most common response from 2006 Award winners to the question about the greatest impact of the award on them personally was that winning the Award had given them greater confidence in their role and their own capabilities. This is not to say that they were not already confident teaching professionals, but that the recognition of a national Award reinforced what they personally believed, but were seldom told.

“After 19 years as a principal the Award gave me (still does) a nice warm inner glow. It was a good feeling to know that my efforts over the long term have not gone unnoticed.” (Principal Award winner)

“The other Award winners were very impressive. I couldn’t believe that I had been placed in that company and was/am very proud of that.” (Principal Award winner)

Award winners’ confidence was further strengthened by the very satisfying response of many students, peers, colleagues and community members to the Awards, with many letters, phone calls and emails of congratulations received. Feedback such as “enhanced personal confidence” ... “pride and growth in self esteem” ... “people take me seriously” were often mentioned. It was also suggested in some cases that this confidence and morale boost had extended to Award winners’ peers, schools and parent communities.

The most significant consequence has been Award winners’ increased motivation to translate this self confidence into action that furthers their own knowledge and skills, and that of their fellow teaching professionals.

Improved knowledge and skills

Many Award winners now have increased motivation and capacity to improve their own knowledge and skills. For some, this was possible through the financial benefits of the prize, which has been used to fund their participation in professional development, attend relevant in-services, further local and international study, support reflection and stimulate exploration and trialing of new ideas and teaching, leadership and support practices. For some, the confidence gained from winning the Award inspired them to apply for other scholarships and awards which they have won (e.g. Margaret Meijers – Hardie Fellowship, Robin McKean – Westfield Premier’s Research Scholarship). There is also an apparent increased expectation on Award winners from their colleagues to show leadership in quality schooling which enhances to motivation to seek out and take advantage of available professional development opportunities. The benefits come in the form of increased skills for the individual, mentoring and support for peers, and better outcomes for schools and students.

The issue of personal reflection and the value in improving teaching practices and program delivery was also noted in the context of the nomination process, which is in itself seen as a means of improving individual knowledge and skills.

Professional networking

The professional exchange day for 2006 award winners the day after the Awards ceremony was a valuable opportunity for professional networking, and one that was highly regarded by participants. Some of the relationships fostered through that day have extended to networks that are used by Award winners for exchange of ideas and mutual support.

Winning the Award has also opened up opportunities for broader professional networking as Award winners have been invited to participate in forums, teacher associations, policy development and other groups. Wider access to a range of ideas and perspectives, increased knowledge of effective teaching and learning programs, and the capacity to have one’s voice heard in significant forums are all viewed as positive outcomes of winning an Award.

“I linked an Award winner in another state with a national education conference, as I believed that the winner would be a suitable applicant.” (Teacher Award winner)

Promotion of the profession

It is a clear objective of the AGNAQS and the AGQTP to promote the standing of the teaching profession. The Awards create many ambassadors to support achievement of this goal. Again, this is not to say that the winners were not already promoting their profession to the best of their ability, but Award winners themselves report an increased commitment and sense of obligation to encourage their peers to continue to strive ‘to be the best they can be.’

To this end, 2006 Award winners have made and responded to opportunities to formally and informally promote the role of teachers, school leaders and all school staff to their colleagues and the wider community. For example, Michael Goodwin has addressed teacher meetings and conferences in the Mackay District; Avalon Public School has encouraged its early childhood teachers to share with other schools their sound practices in relation to transition programs; and Brendan Magee was asked to present at a seminar for new teachers in the ACT on issues surrounding Boys Education and at a forum on Literacy in Schools.

Career advancement

Award winners did not seek an AGNAQS nomination to further their careers (in fact some did not actively seek nomination at all), although it is understood that winning such an Award is a valuable contribution to a professional resume. However in practice, the Awards have strategically and in some cases unexpectedly influenced the careers of a number of Award winners and significantly broadened their capacity and opportunities for promotion and greater leadership in teaching and educational policy making.

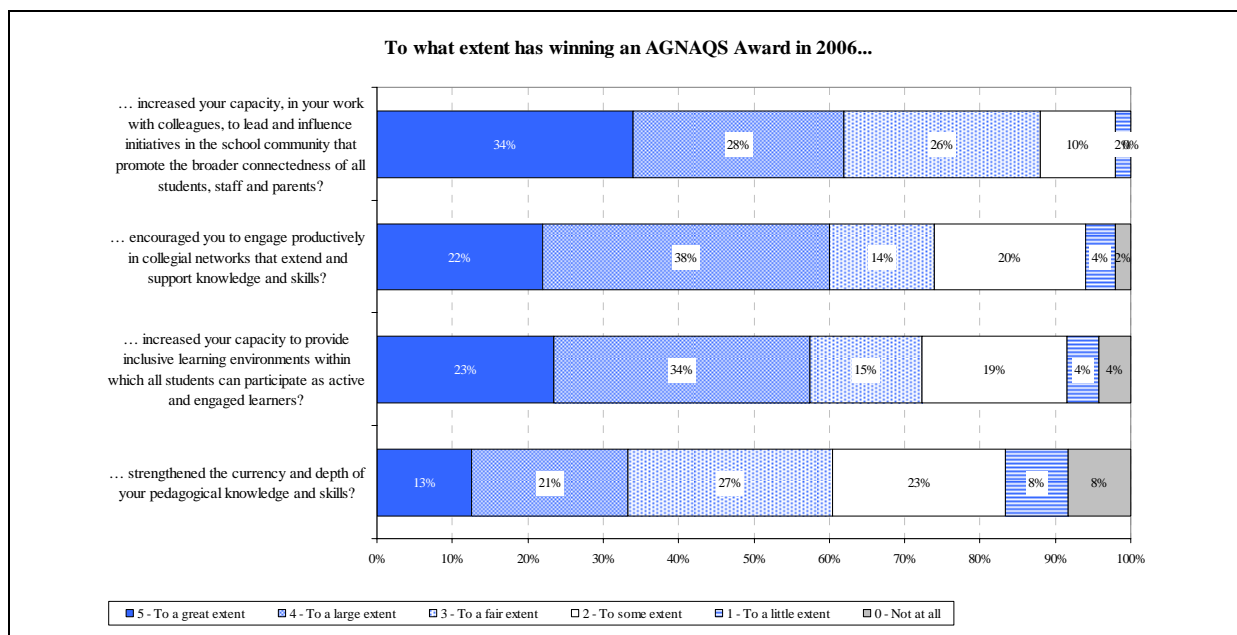
Examples of the career-related impact of winning a national Award include Greg Gebhart (who gained a part time position with a Federal Government initiative to provide education support and information to schools throughout Australia) and Anne-Marie Reeks (who was seconded by Technology School of the Future to report on 'Professional Learning in ICT - the Preschool Strategy' and has become an eTeacher for 1 day per week).

This is not to say that these outcomes are solely the result of the individual's involved being AGNAQS winners. They are not. The Award winners are outstanding teaching professionals with much to offer, as are many thousands of their peers who have not won Awards. The difference is that winning a national teaching Award provides recognition and profile for these qualities that might not otherwise occur. The external affirmation given by the Awards adds credibility that is vital to personal career development and the interest of the organisations and schools offering these advancement opportunities.

3.2. Achieving targeted AGQTP outcomes

The AGQTP Performance Reporting Framework contains a series of outcomes that might be achieved through professional learning, each of which contributes in some way to the AGQTP's objective of equipping teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in the 21st century. The evaluation of the 2006 AGNAQS was asked to capture information from Award winners on their assessment of the impact of the Awards on two particular AGQTP outcomes which relate to the development of professional networks (Outcome 4) and increased leadership capacity (Outcome 17). The evaluation included two additional outcomes in its survey of Award winners. One was related to the impact on pedagogical knowledge and skills (Outcome 1) while the other asked about the impact on the provision of inclusive learning environments that actively engage students in learning (Outcome 7).

The responses from the 55 Award winners that participated in the evaluation survey indicate that the Awards have had a positive impact in all of these areas.



Thirty-four percent of Award winners (or one in three) indicated that winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006 had to a great extent increased their capacity, in their work with colleagues, to lead and influence initiatives in the school community that promote broader connectedness of all students, staff and parents. Another 54% reported that the Awards had influenced their leadership capacity in this area to

a large (28%) or fair extent (26%). Only 12% (or six respondents) indicated that there had only been some or little impact in school leadership.

The extent to which Award winners have been encouraged to engage productively in collegial networks that extend and support knowledge and skills was also positive, with 22% saying this had occurred to a great extent, and a further 52% saying there had been a large or fair change in their engagement in professional networks. This was clearly reflected in the number of Award winners that have contributed to wider professional learning activities (e.g. conferences, presentations) at national, state and local level, and have extended their networks through the recognition associated with the Awards, and also with other Award winners.

The impact on teaching practices that provide inclusive learning environments within which all students can participate as active and engaged learners was similar, and in particular reflects the path many School Improvement Award winners have taken in expanding the scope and reach of the initiatives and programs that won the Award.

While the impact of winning an Award on strengthening the currency and depth of pedagogical knowledge and skills might be expected to be lower, given the high level of professional skills already displayed by the Award winners, the fact that more than 60% still saw the Award as having a great, large or fair impact demonstrates these leading practitioners' commitment to continuing development of their knowledge and skill base.

Overall, the impact of the Awards on individual knowledge, skills and capability cannot be questioned. Most Award winners can clearly point to practical examples where winning an Award and use of the recognition, credibility and prize money it brings have contributed to enhancing their skills, confidence, leadership capacity and career outcomes, as well as their personal motivation and well-being.

4. THE IMPACT OF THE AWARDS ON SCHOOLS

The evaluation has found that the AGNAQS have in most cases had a significant impact on Award winning schools (in terms of changes in school capability, school culture, and teaching and learning outcomes), as well as on other schools and other teachers.

4.1. Building school capability

The most significant and tangible effect of the AGNAQS has been the way in which it has directly and indirectly facilitated building of school capability in many different ways.

Program extension

In many cases the School Improvement programs or individual schooling activities that were recognised by the 2006 Awards have been extended since the Awards. This may have occurred without the Awards, but there is no question that the validation of these programs as outstanding achievements in schooling and the funding boost from Award prize money have been pivotal in maintaining the momentum of these programs. For example:

- Berne Education Centre reviewed its programs and appointed a special need teacher to carry out individual assessments and specialist literacy programs
- Kangaroo Island Community Education has expanded its Marine and Environmental Education program
- Lake Gininderra College has been able to engage external agencies to support special programs.

In promoting these innovative and effective programs the Awards have also encouraged other schools to explore ways in which they might introduce similar initiatives. Many Award winners have fielded inquires from schools and teachers wanting to hear more about their program experiences. Many have hosted local, interstate and in some cases international visits to their school. Both Mt Gambier High School and Princes Hill Primary School (where Best National Achievement Awards were won in 2006) have had to try to manage the demand for school visits by holding a small number of school-based expos over the year, at which fellow professionals can come and see the programs at work without causing ongoing disruption to school activities.

In this way the Awards are stimulating continued innovation and sharing of ideas across schools.

Professional learning

There is not a 2006 AGNAQS winner that has not in some way contributed to or benefited from professional learning activities for the teaching profession as a result of their having won an Award.

Many Award winners have been invited to present to conferences, workshops, seminars and meetings to share their experiences, which provides benefits to those involved in these activities and the teaching profession generally. At the same time, many Award winners have used the funding they have received to support individual professional development and scholarship.

In between these two clear examples of contributing to and receiving professional learning, are the many examples of schools having used the financial benefit of the Awards to support targeted professional development. This has included use of funds to employ relief teachers while teams expand programs or develop new ones. It has included involving more staff in conference presentations and the like than would otherwise be the case (e.g. sending four staff to present at and attend a conference rather than the two which might normally be covered by available resources). It has included time release for providing mentoring support for staff within a school or in other schools, thereby building the underlying level of knowledge and skills across the profession but also

strengthening relationships between schools. It has included funding visits to other Award winning schools, or other educational organisations which have learnings to share. For example:

- Maitland Area School provided release time for teachers to engage in training to improve outcomes and develop individual learning plans for indigenous students.
- Eight teachers from Northern Beaches State High School received training in Certificate IV Workplace Training and Assessment.

Would professional learning and exchange have occurred in these schools without the AGNAQS? Yes. Would it have occurred to the same degree? No. Importantly, the way in which Award winners have taken on responsibility to support professional learning outside their school has been of credit to them.

Resources

School allocated prize money from the Awards has been used to purchase equipment and materials to support teaching and learning outcomes. This has ranged from purchase of computers to electronic and interactive whiteboards, which have reportedly been very well received and used by teachers.

*“After much discussion and teacher reflection, we bought considerable resources with the Award money which will greatly enhance the delivery of the program in the school.”
(Teacher, School Improvement Award winner)*

“Students and staff were involved in a collaborative process that has resulted in a decision to build two shaded outdoor shelter areas.” (Principal, School Improvement Award winner)

“We purchased and installed three interactive whiteboards. This has provided deep engagement of the children, excited teachers and the community, and been an amazing source of professional learning.” (Head Teacher, School Improvement Award winner)

Prize money has also been used to fund the development and production of program and learning resources to enable the sustainable implementation of programs within Award winning schools.

There is also evidence of some schools putting some of their prize winnings to the greater good of schooling through development of resources for other schools. For example, twenty schools have contacted the team from Wycliffe Christian School to ask about the Cultural and Faith Exchange (CAFÉ) program that it runs with its Tongan sister school. In response to this demand the school developed a resource describing the administrative processes required to support such a program, which has been distributed free of charge to interested schools.

4.2. Transforming school culture

If Garry Costello were asked his advice on transforming a school culture he might talk about setting and achieving goals, of working together and trusting one another, of engaging students in learning, and involving the whole school community in the life of the school. These things are challenges, they require hard work, even for high performing school that is looking to further improve its school culture.

The AGNAQS have been found by several schools to be a valuable aid in supporting school transformation. This is less about prize money and what can be done to build school capability, and more about the signals in being recognised for national achievement in quality schooling.

“The recognition heightened awareness of the school’s focus to ‘raise the bar’. It is a powerful motivator to the current staff and students.” (Deputy Principal, School Improvement Award winner)

Staff engagement

The evaluation has found that winning an individual or, more significantly, a School Improvement AGNAQS Award can contribute to improved staff morale and motivation. Particularly for those staff involved in winning an Award, but often (though not always) for other staff in the school, the boost in self confidence and the value of external credibility for the work of teachers has an impact in day-to-day interactions between staff and between staff and other members of the school community.

“The Award gave staff a growing sense of professionalism, in that a program that was ‘born’ within a small school community was seen as a valuable professional experience within the wider Australian context.” (Deputy Principal, School Improvement Award winner)

Student engagement

One of the most rewarding aspects of winning an Award for many teachers and schools has been the response of their students. Whether that be recognition of a ‘famous teacher’, light-hearted ribbing of a ‘star’, and/or genuine pride in knowing that the teacher, principal, support staff member or team that a student comes into regular contact with is one of ‘the best’, the bottom line is increased engagement with school and with learning.

The snapshots of Award winners in Section 6 note some of the responses of students to the Awards, both in terms of attitudes to teachers involved and changing regard for learning and support programs that operate within a school (e.g. the special needs students in St Stephen’s School’s INSPIRE program being seen as ‘heroes’ for their part in its success).

There are different ways to increase student engagement with learning. What the Awards are able to do is to position that in a context of excellence, nationally recognised excellence that reflects brightly on all associated with it.

Community engagement

Just as staff and students have been seen to be more engaged as a result of a school winning an Award, there has been a flow through to community engagement that supports improved school culture.

In the first place, many of the programs and individuals that were recognised by the Awards were embedded in the school and local community to begin with (e.g. Don Hones as Community Liaison Officer for the Pacific Islander Community in Granville, Geoff De Manser in supporting Maori cultural programs in Mortlake). Winning an Award is then seen as recognition of the entire school or community, which is affirming any time, but particularly so for those small, regional and remote schools and communities whose excellence in quality schooling might otherwise be overlooked. As noted previously, the reflected glory of an Award can shine on many.

Then there has been the celebration of the Awards within school communities that has served as a reason for bringing people together, building connections and encouraging ownership of the school by the community. For whatever reasons, teachers and schools do not have a strong history of celebrating their excellence. The Awards do that, and in doing so encourage teachers, principals, school support staff and all people within a school community to reflect on their achievements and take pride in what they do.

“Winning this Award has contributed to the process of moving the school from a culture focused on purely academic pathways, to being more inclusive of the needs of the

changing clientele within our school community.” (Learning Support Coordinator, School Improvement Award winner)

“I have started a cluster parent group, supporting parents and arming them with support services and information to help with educating their students.” (School Support Staff Award winner)

4.3. Promoting quality schooling

Schools noted two significant and related consequences of having won an individual or School Improvement Award in 2006.

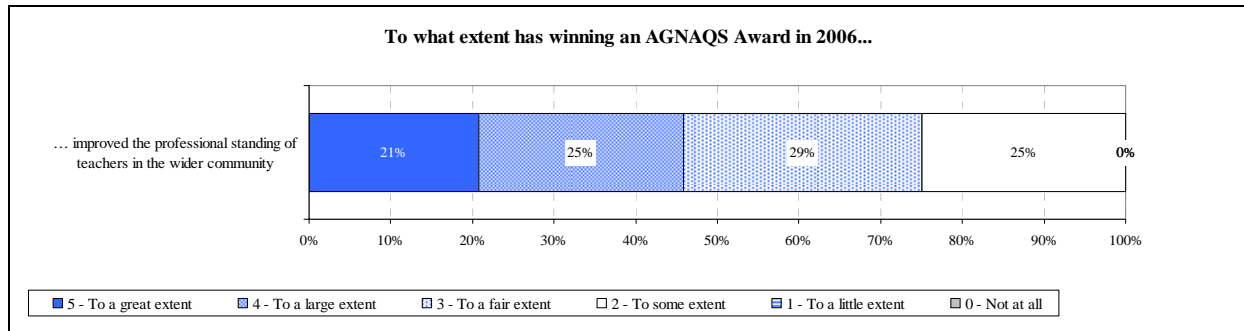
The first was the way in which they were able to use the kudos associated with winning an AGNAQS Award in their promotion of the school to the community and prospective parents, students and sponsors. Beyond the promotion associated with celebrating their success, and hanging their Award certificate in the school reception, some schools took a strategic decision to incorporate the winning of a national Award into the way they presented their school. Signage in the school grounds and references in handbooks and advertising material were all intended to position the school as a ‘centre of excellence’ and its staff as quality educators.

The second notable point is the response to this approach, and increased general community awareness of a school having won a national Award. At least five of the schools where Awards were won in 2006 reported an increase in student enrolments or applications to enrol that was attributed in part to having won an Award. This suggests that where discretionary capacity to select a school exists, consideration of options will be influenced by evidence of excellence, such as that which comes with external recognition.

A number of schools also noted that engagement of local businesses and sponsors to support school activities had been made easier as a result of the publicity surrounding their Award win.

5. IMPACT ON THE PROFESSIONAL STANDING OF TEACHERS

The previous sections of this report acknowledge the impact of the AGNAQS on individuals associated with Award winning schools, and the impact on schools in many different ways. However, a key focus of this evaluation was to assess the impact of the AGNAQS on the standing of the teaching profession. The evaluation survey explicitly asked 2006 Award winners to rate the extent to which winning an Award had improved the standing of teachers in the wider community, and the result are shown below.



The most significant finding here is not that 21% of respondents thought the standing of the teaching profession had been greatly improved, although this is a positive response with a further 54% saying that the Awards had had a large or fair impact, but that none of the 55 Award winners who participated thought that there had been no or only a little impact. Every one believed that the AGNAQS had improved the professional standing of teachers to at least some extent, with most rating the impact more highly.

In practice, the way in which the Awards have impacted the profession has been through:

- support for and Award winners participation in a wide range of professional development opportunities that promote the profession to the profession
- community celebration and recognition of excellence in quality schooling
- media coverage of Award winners
- increased awareness and acceptance of the Awards among the profession.

Of particular note is St Stephen's school which organised and hosted an Expo to showcase the Western Australian winners of 2006 AGNAQS Awards. The Expo was open to the staff and local communities of each school, and advertised to the wider community. It allowed all schools to show their successes, not only of the Award winning programs, but also the wider school achievements and programs. It was seen as a successful and effective way to show the general public that many schools and teachers in WA are doing excellent things and winning awards.

5.1. Taking the profession to the profession

Over the past 12 months 2006 AGNAQS winners have been active in their support of professional development opportunities for fellow teachers and school staff. From formal participation in programs such as Teaching Australia's Master Class series (featuring Garry Costello, Margaret Meijers, Jason Zagami and Steve Pickering³) to many other informal presentations, workshops and school visits, the Award winners have made a significant contribution to promoting the standing of the profession to the profession itself. It is an important part of a mature profession that leaders within that profession take

³ Steve is Principal of Northern Beaches Secondary College in NSW, which won a 2004 National Award for Quality Schooling for Outstanding National Achievement in School Improvement.

ownership of its direction, and the way in which Award winners have responded to this challenge has been encouraging.

It should also be noted that in 2006 three AGNAQS Award winners (Garry Costello, Gillian Collins, Mary Dorrian) were invited to attend an 'invitation only' International Principal's Conference in Beijing, and Greg Gebhart attended and presented at the largest computer education conference in the world in Atlanta. International exposure for Australian educators is enhanced where they are able to be identified and recognised as leading national educators.

There is probably further scope for extension of this activity in formal ways, as well as providing networking support for Award winners in their local promotion of the role of teachers to fellow schools and local teaching associations.

5.2. Community awareness of the Awards

Many schools took the opportunity offered by winning an AGNAQS Award to celebrate 'big time' with their local community. This took many forms, for example:

- many schools promoted their Award winner and/or program in newsletters and on websites
- some schools organized local celebrations
- Melrose Primary School installed signage in the front of the school promoting their Award.

Whatever approach was used, and in several schools the celebration took in all aspects of the school's activities and not just the Award winner, the response was generally very encouraging. Letters and words of commendation from parents, past students, school Boards, local businesses, education departments and more indicated acknowledgement of the great work in 'their school'. The impact on staff morale of this positive community engagement was real, reinforcing for many teachers the worth of their role.

"I have received many cards, faxes and personal congratulations from many local people and staff since winning this Award." (School Support Staff Member Award winner)

"The award was well received in our school community – teachers and parents seeing it as a reflection of the quality of the SCHOOL rather than the individual." (Teacher Award winner)

There are known to be some schools where individual Award winners were not celebrated, or formally or widely recognised, which is disappointing for the individuals concerned and a lost opportunity for the profession. However, in most cases the Award was seen as very much a means of showcasing the quality of schooling occurring.

5.3. Media coverage

Media coverage of the Awards is important in that it provides an effective mechanism for widespread communication of the role of teachers and promotion of excellence in the teaching profession to the wider community. Media uptake of the 2006 Awards (see also Appendix 4) occurred in two distinct phases.

The first, immediately prior to and following the Awards ceremony in February, saw some major electronic media coverage of the Best National Achievement Award winners. There was some television uptake through Channel 7's *Sunrise* program on the day of the Award, and both Garry Costello and Margaret Meijers featured in a small number of national and local radio interviews in the following days. Major daily newspapers in Victoria, Queensland, SA, Tasmania, NT and ACT also ran articles on the Awards in the week following their announcement.

Whilst the reach of the major media is large, it may well have been the second phase of media coverage that had the most impact on raising the profile of the teaching profession. For a period of up to about eight weeks after the Award ceremony local and regional newspapers ran articles (often with photos) of their local Award winners. The common theme in this local press coverage was celebration of a local teacher or school for their achievements being nationally recognised by winning a prestigious national award.

- “Top of the Class” – Parramatta Advertiser
- “Excellent report for preschool” – Central Western Daily
- “Honour for groundsman” – The Flinders News
- “Recognition for an A+ effort” – Wentworth Courier
- “Principal a hero” – The Advertiser.

The ‘feel good’ nature of these articles that portray ‘excellence in teaching’ in ‘our local community’ is very positive press for the teaching profession, even as the profession has to take, by extension, the success of one teacher or school as reflective of quality schooling across all schools.

The exact level of media uptake in this second phase is unknown. Teaching Australia’s media monitoring service identified 40 to 50 such media references, although Award winners were able to cite many more local newspaper articles than were identified through this formal process. Add to this the coverage of the Awards in education journals and newsletters, and on national, state and territory education authorities’ and agencies’ websites⁴ and there was a fair degree of coverage of the Awards.

Clearly there could be greater media coverage of the Awards, in both the mainstream media and in local TV, radio and press, although this may be influenced to some degree by sectional interests (e.g. the Herald Sun daily newspaper in Victoria sponsors its own ‘Teacher of the Year’ awards). Award winners noted that greater coordination of and support for media activities could have facilitated greater uptake of the Awards.

5.4. Participation in the Awards

Appendix 3 contains an analysis of AGNAQS nomination trends over the past three years, showing a significant increase in the number of nominations received in 2006, associated with a heightened promotional and awareness program run through Teaching Australia and ACE. Where 230 nominations were received in 2003, and 180 in 2004, there were 526 nominations for the 2006 AGNAQS.

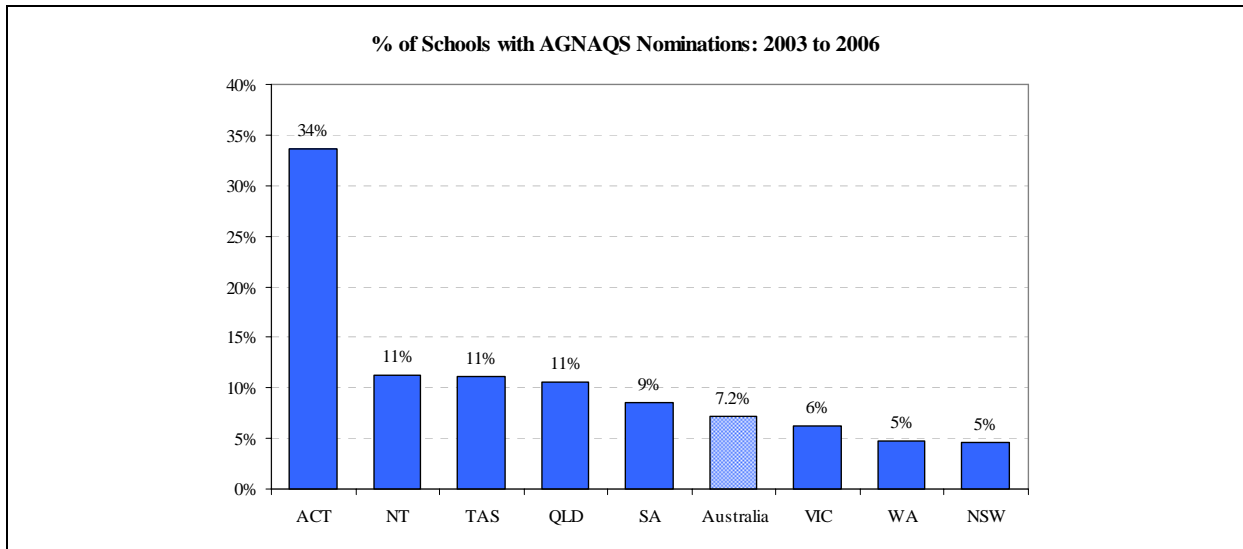
Notwithstanding that there are some schools that nominate multiple times in one year, or have been nominated for awards in more than one year, the number of nominations received does give an indication of the extent to which the Awards are recognised across the national school system. The combination of widespread awareness of the Awards and a rigorous assessment process ensure that the Awards establish and maintain their credibility as leading Awards for quality schooling.

It is therefore interesting to note that in the three years from 2003 to 2006, 690 different schools across Australia had had individual or school improvement AGNAQS nominations. As every AGNAQS nomination is required to be signed off by the school principal, this means that at least one person in a senior position of leadership in the school was aware of the Awards, their aims and objectives, and the basic Award processes. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics⁵ shows that in 2006 there were 9,612 different schools in Australia. This means that over the period from 2003 to 2006, 7.2% (or one in 14) school principals signed off on an AGNAS nomination from their school.

⁴ An Internet search of the exact term “National Awards for Quality Schooling” in Australia found over 500 references.

⁵ Schools, 2006. Table 1, Cat.No. 4221.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The figure below shows that by 2006 around 5% of schools in NSW, WA and Victoria have been nominated for Awards, around 10% of schools in SA, Queensland, Tasmania and NT have been nominated, and 34% (or one in three) schools in the ACT have had AGNAQS nominations.



Therefore, as at the time when nominations for the 2006 Awards closed in late 2005 operational awareness of the Awards existed across at least 7% of Australian schools, and more likely much more than this given that many schools will have known of the Awards but not have nominated for a variety of reasons. The continued promotion of the Awards in 2006 and 2007 by the key delivery agencies, and the work of the Award winners described previously as ambassadors for the Awards and quality schooling would suggest that awareness would have grown even further from this benchmark.

6. PROFILING THE IMPACT ON 2006 AWARD WINNERS

All of the 2006 AGNAQS winners have stories to tell about the impact of the Award on them, their school, their students, their community and the teaching profession. All are worth telling, as they highlight the value of national recognition of teaching excellence and the widespread impact it can have across the school system.

To illustrate this point, nine of the 2006 Award winners are showcased in the following series of snapshots – short summaries of the achievements that led to the Award with an update on what has happened to the Award winners in the 12 months since the Award ceremony. The nine winners featured are:

- Margaret Meijers – Best National Achievement, Teacher
- Garry Costello – Best National Achievement, Principal
- Don Hones – Best National Achievement, School Support Staff Member
- Princes Hill Primary School – Best National Achievement, School Improvement
- Wycliffe Christian School – Outstanding National Achievement, School Improvement.
- St Stephens School – Outstanding National Achievement, School Improvement.
- St Monica's Primary School – Highly Commended National Achievement, School Improvement
- Anne-Marie Reeks – Highly Commended National Achievement, Teacher
- Geoff De Manser – Highly Commended National Achievement, Teacher.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

Margaret Meijers
New Town High School, Tasmania
Best National Achievement, Teacher

Margaret Meijers is an ICT teacher at New Town High School in Tasmania, where her innovative use of technology has engaged and extended boys of diverse ethnic backgrounds and academic abilities, including students with physical and intellectual disabilities. Margaret's use of game development and other real-world applications in her classroom practice, her professional support for fellow teachers, and her self-directed professional development make her an exceptional teacher and educational leader.



“Winning the Award gave me, a classroom teacher, the rare opportunity to have my voice heard at the highest levels of education policy making.”

As a major AGNAQS Award winner Margaret has been invited to speak on television, radio and at so many professional development workshops that she jokes that her school should have set aside some of their prize money for casual relief teaching. Instead, the school allocated its part of the Award to ICT, allowing Margaret to decide how best to spend it.

Since winning the Award Margaret has presented at a range of teacher professional development forums, including Teaching Australia's 2006 Master Class series, to explain her work and her vision to other teachers. Many teachers have contacted her informally for advice and ideas.

With so many teachers now drawing on her expertise, Margaret has felt a new responsibility to stay abreast of innovations in ICT and ICT teaching, and has begun to read and research more widely.

She has also become something of a de facto ambassador for public education, with the Tasmanian Department of Education showcasing her excellence, and radio and television interviewers around Australia seeking her thoughts about Tasmania's public schools.

Having a 'famous teacher', and particularly one who has just won \$30,000, has been exciting for Margaret's students, who have reconsidered the value that is placed on excellent teaching practice. The school community and the wider community have also responded very positively, writing that they were 'pleased to hear about good things happening in public schools'.

The Award has also provided an opportunity for Margaret's ideas to be heard at the highest level. Following the Award ceremony Margaret spoke with the Minister for Education in Tasmania and had lunch with the state Director of Education. She was also invited to be part of the Ministerial task force charged with improving school reports to parents.

Winning the Award gave Margaret the confidence to apply for and win a 2007 Hardie Fellowship, which now gives her the opportunity to further her learning through a nine week study trip in the USA.

While the rest of the teaching profession is clearly benefiting from Margaret's expertise and profile, and Margaret is benefiting from the tangible recognition of her years of hard work, she is looking forward to a quieter year in 2007 so that her school and her students can start to benefit from what she has learned ... and so that she can try out some of her *new* ideas.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

Garry Costello
Mt Gambier High School, South Australia
Best National Achievement, Principal

Over a period of seven years Garry Costello transformed an under-performing school to one recognised for its innovation and all round excellence. The evidence is there for all to see in dramatically increased student retention rates, enrolments, pass rates and academic results at all levels.

Garry has modelled and promoted a collaborative, informed, risk-taking approach to education. He has engaged staff, students, parents and local businesses in the endeavour. He has taken a firm line on unethical or unprofessional behaviour from staff, and has overseen a new curriculum and student behaviour management strategy that aims to build on what students can do and want to do.



“In the educational community you must be willing to inconvenience yourself for the greater good.”

The dramatic turn-around at Mt Gambier High School had already been noticed in education circles, and described in the media, before Garry won the AGNAQS Award. The staff and students could see that the school had been transformed in its cohesive staff room, respectful relationships between students and between students and staff, innovative education practice, cleaned and refurbished buildings and grounds, community engagement, local business sponsorship, and vastly improved academic achievements. Garry had already initiated two large-scale reviews of his own performance, so he knew the views of his school community.

So how does an outstanding and dynamic principal who has supported team-building, distributed leadership, collaboration and community celebrate receiving a national Award that is just for him? Rather quietly.

Ask Garry what has changed since he received the Award and you elicit phrases like, “I’m not an extraordinary person, I just want to do the best I can,” “You can’t take yourself too seriously, you have to recognise that your achievement is not remote from the school,” “You wouldn’t want to grandstand – the kids have great ‘crap-detectors’”, “Too much publicity would be counter-productive, you have to keep the focus on the school”, and so on.

However, Garry believes the Award is recognition of fine contributions by many staff & community members, which has affirmed the work of everyone involved and further increased the community’s pride in its school. It also represents a rare public accolade for excellence in education.

Since winning the Award Garry has presented at many conferences and other forums, including Teaching Australia’s 2006 Master Class series. He has received more requests from educators wanting to visit the school, which now holds a two to three day expo every year to manage and accommodate the demand from teaching professionals who want to learn about the methods used in school transformation. The positive feedback from these activities has a flow-on effect to staff. Garry has also been approached by publishers to write books about his successful strategies. The school is attracting young graduates, and success is building on success as more people want to get involved in improving the school.

As an Award recipient, Garry feels an obligation to give more to the profession, and is negotiating a balance between continuing to drive change in his own school and talking to others about what they could achieve in theirs.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

Don Hones

**Granville Boys High School, New South Wales
Best National Achievement, School Support Staff Member**

Don Hones was a retired teacher when the Principal of Granville Boys High School asked him to take on the role of Community Liaison Officer. The original brief was to support Pacific Islander students and their families, a position for which Don was well qualified with his teaching background, and his family connection in the Pacific Island and Maori community. Don became the advocate who helped the school and the Pacific Islander understand each other. His priority was always the welfare of the boys. This commitment sometimes meant taking them to the doctor or dentist, or to court. His daughters and former students helped him establish a performance group which promoted Pacific Islander culture to the community, raised money for school programs and subsidised some boys' participation in school activities.

It's said that Don changed the staff and community perception of the Pacific Islander students. In 2004 the



"I've been asked to speak to lots of teacher groups. I find this a bit difficult, but I do it because it is important for them and their students."

Board of Studies approved the new *Pacific Island and Maori Studies* course developed by Don. It was introduced to students in 2005, and extended to other schools with large Pacific Islander populations in 2006. Though officially working four days a week, Don says it is more like five. The local School Education Director says it is often seven. Don is now Community Liaison Officer for all students at the school, other than those with an Arabic- or Turkish-speaking background who have Community Liaison Officers of their own.

Since winning the Award, Don has addressed the staff at the school to explain what the AGNAQS Awards are about. He found few had heard of them before, but one of the real changes he has noticed since is the increased willingness of staff to ask him for help. He has been asked to demonstrate class management techniques, and spends more time team-teaching with other teachers. Don sees this as a significant benefit for his students as more and more staff understand how to deliver learning to which students will respond positively.

The Award received recognition with articles in the local newspaper and the New South Wales' Department of Education newsletter. Don was congratulated by the Director General of Education, the Regional Director and his Federal Member of Parliament. Professionals in the Juvenile Justice system have invited Don to work with them to rehabilitate some of his boys. Throughout 2006 he was invited to speak at other schools and church groups, and to mentor boys from other schools. More parents are getting involved in his programs and more students are seeking to enrol at the school.

Don has been invited by the Director of the Region to act on panels selecting school principals and staff for communities with a high Pacific Islander population.

Receiving the Award in Canberra was 'the most memorable experience' of Don's life. Meeting colleagues from all over the country led to a fantastic exchange of ideas which has encouraged Don to share his own ideas and achievements more widely. Though he finds it difficult and his cultural background inhibits 'blowing your own trumpet', Don now believes it is important that he explain his approach to others for the benefit of students.

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL
AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING**
Princes Hill Primary School
Victoria
**Best National Achievement, School
Improvement**

Princes Hill Primary School is an inner city Melbourne school serving a wide range of students, including some from very low income and refugee backgrounds. The school was concerned that the early school starting age in Victoria and the disjunction between preschool and primary school teaching philosophies were leading to a large cohort of boys who did not engage with learning and who fell behind with literacy in their first year of schooling. This was leading to literacy and behavioural issues that persisted throughout their schooling. The Principal and the early years team researched the issue and decided that a developmental play/project based approach in the Prep year would lead to smoother kindergarten-to-Prep transitions and would increase the engagement of all children, and boys in particular.



“It is lovely for us to be able to share with others.”

Though the project was only initiated in 2004, by 2005 the improved literacy skills in boys were significant, pro-social behaviours had increased, students were more engaged and motivated, there were no school refusers, staff satisfaction had increased and parents were more positive about the Prep year experience. Other schools began to visit Princes Hill Primary School seeking advice and mentoring as they introduced similar approaches. The school was also invited to present a paper at the IEA National Early Childhood Education conference in 2006.

Since winning the AGNAQS Award, the staff involved in the project feel that their work has been more widely acknowledged and appreciated, and 2006 was ‘a very busy year’.

On the strength of the Award the Principal was one of nine Australian principals invited to attend the iNet international workshop for school principals in Beijing, exploring “Transformation and Innovation”. The Principal received a Fellowship Award from the Australian Council for Educational Leaders – Victorian Affiliate. The teaching team were keynote speakers at the Early Childhood Education Conference in Sydney, and presented to early years educators in Canberra. The school has also been accredited as a Performance and Development Culture school by the Victorian Department of Education.

The school receives many requests for visits and information from other educators across Victoria, and has developed a program of two formal presentations per term to cope with demand. A DVD outlining the school’s approach has also been developed for distribution to support other teaching professionals.

The Award raised public, parent and referral agencies’ awareness and recognition of Princes Hill Primary School’s excellent programs, and the school is no longer able to meet demand for Prep enrolments. The Award also validated the school’s commitment to professional learning and has encouraged the sustainable integration of the model into Years 1 and 2, facilitated by the use of the prize money.

Having their work valued by an external, national body was the key benefit for staff. “It’s exciting for us. We’re proud.” This was a new program which had begun to show results, and the Award has given it a huge boost in terms of public recognition and staff motivation.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

Wycliffe Christian School
New South Wales
Outstanding National Achievement,
School Improvement

Wycliffe Christian School is located in the middle class suburbs west of Sydney, and most of its students are of anglo-Australian heritage. Wycliffe won its Award for the Cultural and Faith Exchange (CAFÉ) program that it runs with its Tongan sister school, a program designed to expose students to another culture with different mores, values and experiences. The program takes Year 10 students to Tonga, with an intensive preparation beforehand and reflective opportunities afterwards.



The teachers at Wycliffe Christian School believed they were running an important and sometimes life-changing program for the students, but valued external affirmation. “If we had NOT won an AGNAQS Award we would be continuing to wonder if what we thought was a great program was really nothing special.”

“The award gave teachers involved in the program recognition that what they are doing is valued, not just within our own school community, but at a wider educational level.”

The recognition that has come with the Award has encouraged the school’s leadership to commit to extending and expanding the program, and demand from students wanting to participate has increased. The publicity surrounding the Award has also enabled students, parents and the local community to see that the teaching team responsible for the Tonga CAFÉ program are going ‘above and beyond’ the requirements of their job description and providing experiential learning that the students would not obtain in any other way.

Enquiries from other schools (20 schools have now contacted the team from Wycliffe Christian School) led the team to develop a resource describing the administrative processes required to support such a program, and these have been given freely to interested schools. Team members have also presented at conferences and workshops.

The school shared the AGNAQS award with its Tongan sister school in the form of a donation to the equivalent of half of the award prizemoney. The sister school reports that it has also gained a higher profile and received enquiries about the program. Staff from both schools feel the value of the program, and the hard work that went into its development and implementation, have been validated by the receipt of such a prestigious award.

The teacher who was primarily responsible for developing the program has now been asked to join the Board of an organisation with a focus on international development, although this organisation had no previous connection to the school community. The team views this as affirmation of the quality of a program developed from scratch by a small independent school.

The Award has given the team confidence in the quality of their program, and in their capacities as teachers and program developers. Building on this and their increased credibility with students and their community, the team are looking forward to expanding and enhancing the program in future.

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL
AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING**
St Stephen's School
Western Australia
Outstanding National Achievement,
School Improvement

When the leadership of St Stephen's School in Western Australia noticed increasing numbers of students with special needs in their classrooms, they saw an urgent need to provide better support to both the students and staff. A team from across the two P-12 campuses started out with research into best practice, their student achievement data, and their teachers' understanding of and attitude to special needs and gifted students. From this base grew INSPIRE – an holistic approach which emphasised recruitment of specialist expertise, upskilling and supporting teachers, early identification and intervention strategies, and case-management support for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties, and under-achieving and gifted students.



“We hosted an expo to show the public that many schools and teachers in WA are doing excellent things and winning awards.”

The INSPIRE Learning Support program has meant that students of all abilities are experiencing success, and are included in classrooms with their peers to achieve their learning potential.

The INSPIRE program, like any significant change, met with both support and resistance. Some students were not willing to identify themselves with the program and thereby ‘advertise’ their special needs to their peers. Parents of children without special needs were concerned at the inclusion of special needs students in ‘mainstream’ classrooms. Some staff saw the education of the few special needs or gifted students as peripheral to their main priorities. The nine full-time and part-time members of the INSPIRE team were gradually overcoming this resistance with their demonstrated successes and supportive approach, but winning the AGNAQS Award has made a real difference.

The students in the program became ‘heroes’ for their part in its success. Some students who had previously been unwilling now asked to join the program, and other students became interested in issues of disability, learning difficulties and special needs. Phone calls from parents complaining about the inclusive education approach, where special needs students were not separated from their peers, stopped altogether. Other staff became proud of their improved skills and the part they played in the program, and teachers and teaching assistants with expertise in special needs education were given increased status by their colleagues. The Award has led to a more cohesive and proud school community. The prize money has been allocated to further development of the program.

For the INSPIRE team, the Award represented recognition for the work involved in establishing the program. “Just to have some small recognition that their hard work is appreciated and acknowledged was a boost that was very timely and increased momentum to continue.” (Kylie Bice, INSPIRE Coordinator). After the Award, four of the INSPIRE coordinators were either asked to join research teams at local universities, to join curriculum development and/or special focus cross-sectoral committees, or were head-hunted by other schools or organisations.

While the INSPIRE team were already sharing their program with other schools and networks, the Award gave them an opportunity to promote their approach more widely. As a result, in 2006 St Stephen's School organised an expo to showcase the Western Australian winners of AGNAQS at which schools promoted not only their award-winning programs but also wider school achievements and programs. This proactive promotion, underpinned by the national status of the AGNAQS, was an effective way of raising the status of education and the teaching profession in the eyes of the broader community. The potential for ongoing links with these schools is being explored.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

St Monica's Primary School
Australian Capital Territory
Highly Commended National
Achievement, School Improvement

After having undertaken a whole school self-review, St Monica's Primary School in the ACT embarked on a school-improvement framework based on the Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievements in Schools (IDEAS) model developed by Professor Frank Crowther of the University of Southern Queensland. The framework incorporates four key aspects – Strategic Foundations, Cohesive Community, Infrastructure and Pedagogy.

After three years the school has undergone a whole-school transformation process which is drawing on the strengths of all staff. Curriculum has been reviewed and integrated with the inclusion of Information Technology and Library Information Process Skills across all KLAs.

A new literacy assessment and monitoring program was introduced from Kindergarten to Year 2 which monitors student progress and is used as a comparison to teacher assessment. This has led to improved achievements in literacy overall and a new extension program to cater for advanced students. Staff professional development has been aligned to the schools' goals. New computers were purchased and a building master plan was developed and building/refurbishment commenced.

The AGNAQS Awards were not well known in the local community prior to St Monica's winning the Award, and the school did not gain a great deal of attention from the local media, but Principal Mary Dorrian believes The Award has made a big difference to the school. Most importantly, it gave recognition to the hard work of the staff who now realise that their achievements are worthy of praise. Publication of the Award in The Catholic Voice, the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocesan newspaper, added to this. The Award has spurred the staff on to set higher targets and to recognise each other's talents.

The parent community has responded more positively to the new programs being introduced.

Since St Monica's won the Award, the Principal was invited to attend the International Principals' Conference in Beijing, which provided a wonderful opportunity to learn about approaches to school improvement that have proved successful around the world. The lessons from the conference were shared within and outside the school, including a presentation to the Archdiocesan Association, writing an article and presentations to Principals' groups.

St Monica's has also been selected as a case study for inclusion in a book being written by Professor Brian Calwell about alignment in school management. A number of schools from the non-government sector have visited St Monica's since it won the Award. The Principal was also elected President of the Archdiocesan Association.

The school has strongly promoted the Awards to others, encouraging them to nominate, and provided assistance with ideas about application content and presentation.



“It is important to recognise the great work that teachers do. This builds collegiality and confidence within systems.”

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL
AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING**

Anne-Marie Reeks
Monash Kindergarten, South Australia
Highly Commended National
Achievement, Teacher

Monash Kindergarten is a preschool co-located with a primary school. In 2006 there were three staff, all working 0.5, to provide preschool education to approximately 30 children. The kindergarten supports and welcomes families from a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds, and encourages them to participate in the preschool programs.

Anne-Marie Reeks applied successfully for a research project with Technology School of the Future, and was a driving force in using interactive technologies in new and exciting ways in a kindergarten setting. Anne-Marie introduced children to the *KidiPads* Interactive Performance System.



“This Award has been life changing.”

Through the *KidiPads* system eight different coloured touch pads can produce a variety of pre-programmed or recorded sounds. The children, for example, asked that the sounds of native animals be recorded to support their play with native animal puppets, and a photo of each puppet was velcroed onto the touch pads. A parent photographed and recorded the various tools he used in the course of his work, and these were explored by the children through the use of the *KidiPads* system. PowerPoint was also used to capture children’s stories and artwork for them to share with others.

The technology facilitated engagement with the wider community. Year 7s visited the kindergarten to play songs and explore rhythm, the kindergarten children began to use the school’s computer room at lunchtimes, parent information nights for the kindergarten were supported by PowerPoint presentation, and workshops were held to explain the program to the adult community, including parents and other early childhood educators.

Anne-Marie was already promoting the successful use of ICT in early learning to her peers and her community before she won the AGNAQS Award, and her research report to Technology School of the Future (now Learning Technologies) had been published. However, since winning the Award Anne-Marie’s life and career has taken some interesting turns.

Anne-Marie has become a preschool Director, was invited to speak at a conference of the South Australian ‘Computers in Education Group’, works one day per week as an eTeacher developing online learning activities for preschool teachers and children, showcased the *KidiPads* program at an ‘Exciting Learning Expo’, contributed to the development of a KidSmart training course for preschool educators, and has been seconded by Technology Schools of the Future for a term to report on ‘Professional Learning in ICT – the Preschool Strategy’.

Her own community has been proud of the Award and the recognition of their ‘kindy’. Her colleagues have begun to explore their own ICT initiatives, and the South Australian Department of Education donated a new computer to the kindergarten.

The Award has given others, particularly those outside preschool education, trust and confidence in Anne-Marie’s expertise and knowledge. Anne-Marie has joined several new professional associations, has been invited to be a guest teacher at other kindergartens, and has also presented at several forums for early years educators. Monash Kindergarten has hosted teacher visits with a bus load of early years educators from the Riverland region attending for a professional learning session with *KidiPads*.

“The community is proud of this Award. It has had a real impact on the status and credibility of teachers and preschools within the schooling sector.”

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL AWARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOLING

Geoff De Manser
Mortlake College P-12, Victoria
Highly Commended National Achievement, Teacher

Geoff De Manser was recently arrived from New Zealand and had only been teaching for a few years when he first worked as a relief teacher at Mortlake College. In the small P-12 school of around 300 (overwhelmingly anglo-Australian) students, he found a cohort of students with a New Zealand Maori background, most of whom did not know how to correctly pronounce their own names. Geoff recognised the difficult position of these students, coming from families who were proud of their cultural heritage but wanting to fit in with peers who had little exposure to other cultures.



“At worst you put in writing what you have achieved or tried to accomplish – a valuable reflection tool for teachers. At best you get to share your ideas with others from around Australia.”

Geoff and his wife, Anne set out to give these students ‘Mana’ (pride), knowing that to do this they would have to bring an appreciation of Maori culture to these students and to the other students in the school.

The Principal was skeptical but supportive when Geoff asked to introduce Maori as the LOTE option for the junior school but was soon won over by a program which became “so much more than the teaching of a language”. The program was built around mutual respect and responsibility. A performance group started with only a few students from Years 5 and 6 – Maori students and their circle of friends. Students were introduced to Maori culture through songs and dance, and public performances increased their self-esteem and standing within the school and the wider community.

On a trip to New Zealand in 2005, the students performed at Hells Gate in Rotorua and immersed themselves in Maori culture and language. A documentary filmed by ABC and NZTV, showcasing the program and the town, is a source of local pride. A Maori elder has recently begun to work with students at the school, and aspects of Maori culture have been introduced into art, English and cooking classes.

Winning the AGNAQS Award has been personally rewarding for Geoff, a young teacher and recent immigrant who just wanted to change the way his Maori students carried themselves and interacted with the world. Simply being nominated by his colleagues was a boost to his confidence. Winning the Award has further enhanced Geoff’s confidence in his role as a mentor to the group, and has strengthened his relationships with students and their families.

Following the Award the Kapa Haka group has toured schools in Melbourne, Geelong and Warrnambool, with the prospect of a similar program being established in Warrnambool as part of an ongoing exchange. The group now has 50 students of both Maori and Australian background from Years 3 to 11. Older students are acting as mentors to younger students.

Winning the Award has brought greater recognition and understanding from Geoff’s peers and his community, and has added to the value that the Mortlake and district community places on Maori culture and identity. The wider community has a greater understanding and appreciation of their Maori minority, and the Kapa Haka group plays an integral part in town celebrations and festivals.

When he returned with his Award from the presentation ceremony in Canberra Geoff presented it to the community, as “national recognition for a little program in a little town”. The Awards process provided a teacher from a small, rural school with an opportunity to exchange ideas and philosophies with excellent practitioners from all over Australia.

7. THE AWARDS: DESIGN AND DELIVERY

2006 Award winners suggest that the AGNAQS are ‘quickly gaining currency within the teaching profession’ as Awards of great honour and prestige. The profile of the Awards and their standing against other teaching awards is thought to be growing as time passes and the Awards become more widely known, and as the profession and the community become aware of particular aspects of the design and delivery of the Awards.

“The school has been able to promote the program as an acknowledged national Award winning program. We had already been recognised on a state basis but this was along with other schools. The national Award meant that the program was held up as an example of National Quality Schooling, which was fundamentally different.” (Program Coordinator, School Improvement Award winner)

Factors which appear to be instrumental in establishing the recognition, credibility and status of the Awards, include:

- the national status of the Awards
- the Awards’ recognition of different aspects of and contributions to quality schooling
- the prize money associated with the Awards
- the Minister’s role in the Awards and their presentation in Parliament House in Canberra.

7.1. Form and structure

The universal nature of the AGNAQS is a distinctive and defining feature of the Awards. Since 2003 the Awards have evolved to a state where the only pre-condition is excellence in quality schooling.

The AGNAQS are national Awards. Every school in every state and territory in every school sector from pre-school to senior school is eligible to be nominated. The Awards recognise individual excellence among classroom teachers, among school principals and school leaders, and by school support staff from community liaison officers to administrative staff, ICT support and groundsman. The School Improvement category has the potential to cover any program that contributes to improved teaching and learning outcomes, student wellbeing, a stronger school culture and any other aspect of quality schooling.

To read the achievements of all of the 2006 Award winners is to read inspirational stories of quality schooling that span the school system across the country. It has taken the AGNAQS three years to reach this degree of universality, but the absence of quotas on the total number of Awards by state and territory or by Award category, and the inclusion of the School Support Staff Member category in 2006 are clear signals of the unrestricted focus on excellence.

“The unique feature of these Awards is that they recognise exceptional achievements in a variety of work situations.” (Teacher Award winner)

“Other awards like ... are significant but are about state awareness, rather than a national celebration of excellent practice.” (Department Head, School Improvement Award winner)

The importance of the School Support Staff Member and the School Improvement categories should not be underestimated. The first, because it provides the capacity to acknowledge the many individual contributions in a school beyond the role of the classroom teacher and the principal that go to make up quality schooling and creation of an engaging, effective and supportive learning environment.

The School Improvement category is important for a number of reasons, the most obvious of which is that there are many programmatic initiatives in schools that deserve recognition. However, it is also true that the teaching profession is one in which there is a reluctance to single out individual excellence, with the role of the team seen by many teachers and principals as more important than any one member. In evaluation discussions some 2006 individual Award winners sought to deflect the kudos of their achievement to others in their team and the whole school staff and community, even when it was quite apparent that their personal contribution was unquestionably the difference between a good and a great outcome for the school and its students. Unfortunately, there also exists in some teachers a propensity for professional jealousy, with some individual Award winners sadly noting the discomfort they had experienced with negative responses from some of their peers. The School Improvement category provides scope for this wider recognition of a school team.

It is noted that in 2007 three new Award categories have been included:

- Excellence in Family-School Partnerships
- Excellence in Teacher Leadership
- Excellence by a Beginning Teacher.

Having reached this point, there do not appear to be pressing reasons to make further adjustments to the form and structure of the Awards. In fact, to prevent dilution of the 'brand' the Awards could benefit from a period of stability to enable the teaching profession and school communities to consolidate their awareness and acceptance of the Awards.

Naming the Awards

Since the presentation of the National Awards for Quality Schooling in 2006 the Awards have been officially renamed to explicitly include the reference to the Australian Government in the Awards' title.

This change occurred to ensure that Awards were clearly understood as being funded by the Australian Government and the Awards of the Minister (similar to the NSW Premier's Scholarships for Teaching, Queensland Westfield Premier's Educational Scholarships, WA Premier's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching). This is reasonable and appropriate from the perspective of accountability, and also reinforces the national status of the Awards which, as discussed above, underpins their credibility.

However, whether the name change will be universally adopted in everyday terms is questionable, as even the naming and ownership of the 2006 Awards was not consistently understood or reported.

For example, although the Award winners clearly knew that the Awards were from the Australian Government and made by the Minister (given that they received their Award from the Minister), in referring to the Awards during the evaluation there were numerous mentions of the 'NQS Awards' and in some cases the 'Teaching Australia' awards. While media reports on 2006 Award winners most commonly and correctly referred to the National Awards for Quality Schooling, there were again also references to the 'National Quality Schooling Awards' and the 'Teaching Australia Awards'.

As with changes to the Award categories, stability and continuity is important in establishing the credibility of the Awards. DEST having selected a name, the key now is for all stakeholders to use this name (and any agreed acronyms or common name) consistently in all communication associated with the Awards.

7.2. Selection processes

The credibility of the Awards is dependent to a significant degree on the extent to which the teaching profession views Award winners as worthy recipients of recognition. If this were not true, the currency of the Awards would be devalued.

Feedback from 2006 Award winners indicates that current processes for nomination and selection of Award winners are rigorous and fair. Having been through the process (in some cases several times), and with some now being part of the 2007 Awards selection process, many Award winners felt that they had been professionally tested and assessed. It is a credit to ACE and ACER (as the primary assessing bodies) that when presented with the 2006 Award winners' achievements other recipients 'generally felt that each school was a worthy recipient of whatever level of prize it had received.'

There is, however, a concern that while the nomination and selection process is effective in distinguishing the 'best of the best' from those nominations it receives, the process may not be being exposed to the full range of excellence in quality schooling that occurs. That is, outstanding schools and individuals may be reluctant to nominate as they consider that what they do is just the 'getting on with business' that is expected of them, or wish to avoid being chopped down by the 'tall poppy' syndrome. Alternatively, some schools have had multiple nominations in a single year (one school had nine nominations in 2006), which suggests either an exceptional degree of excellence or gaming of the Awards process.

At the same time, the engagement of professional writers by a small number of schools in the preparation of their nominations can easily be seen as undermining the integrity of the process, and putting more store in the quality of the submission than the quality of the schooling. The response to this legitimate concern, and the equally legitimate approach to preparing the most persuasive submission, is that the selection processes that have been established for the Awards are on current evidence sufficiently rigorous and challenging to identify the relative worthiness of a nomination.

The evaluation sees no reason to alter the current Awards' nomination and selection processes. The incremental refinements that have occurred over the past three years, the use of past winners in assessing nominations, the professional approach of the assessing bodies, and the care given to fully assess nominations at all threshold levels is generally producing recommendations on Award winners that are the best of those submitted

The real challenge for the AGNAQS is to attract the best schools and the best educators to be nominated.

7.3. Prizes

The level of prize money associated with the AGNAQS gives substantial weight to the Awards. Winners and nominators report that a 'first' prize of \$30,000 for an individual teacher, principal or school support staff member, \$65,000 for the top school, and substantial amounts at other prize levels makes winning an Award an attractive proposition.

*"The cash component is significant enough to give it a status beyond that of being a 'feel good' award. Other awards come with a ceremony and certificate, but rarely cash."
(Teacher Award winner)*

More than there being more than \$1 million in total prize money, although this presents a valuable promotional message, it is the fact that the money per prize is high, rather than being spread thinly across hundreds of schools and individuals, that is the key sales proposition.

Not only is the prize money high, there are no catches. The money is the winner's to do with as they choose. For schools this often meant reinvestment in programs, resources and professional development. For individuals this meant investment in professional development, career enhancement, or in many cases a little well-deserved self-indulgence.

The introduction in 2006, at Teaching Australia's suggestion, of the complementary school prize for schools that had an individual Award winner was a valuable addition to the Award structure. It constrained the tendency for school's to expect an Award winning individual to contribute their prize winnings to the school's direct benefit.

The capacity to offer substantial cash prizes to all Award winners is one factor that will continue to support the credibility of the Awards, maintain their relative standing against other teaching awards, and attract quality nominations.

7.4. The Awards Ceremony

Many 2006 Award winners report that the 2006 Awards ceremony was a significant milestone in their professional career, heightened by the format and location of the ceremony. Three factors were particularly important:

- the Minister's role in hosting and presenting the Awards
- the prestigious nature of the presentation in the Great Hall of Parliament House
- the opportunities for professional networking and sharing.

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Julie Bishop, was relatively new to the portfolio when the Awards ceremony was held in February 2006. During the evaluation Award winners made special note of the fact that the Minister's presence and her willingness to make time to celebrate fully in the Awards ceremony and share Award winners' 'moment in the sun' demonstrated her commitment to recognising their contribution to quality schooling. Added to the impressive setting for the Awards, in the Great Hall of Parliament House in the nation's capital in the presence of other Award winners and sitting Members of Parliament, a real sense of occasion was created.

"The Minister played a much larger role than we had been led to believe." (Principal Award winner)

"Because receipt of the Awards involves travelling to Canberra, and because they are presented at Parliament House by the Federal Minister, this is an enormous part of the status of the Awards for recipients and the wider community. The staff who attended the ceremony from our school were the most excited teachers we have ever seen." (Program Coordinator, School Improvement Award winner)

"The importance of the Great Hall at Parliament House should not be underestimated. It was a career and personal highlight." (Principal, School Improvement Award winner)

Some Award winners noted that they would have like to have heard more about the Best National Achievement winners as part of the ceremony, although this would have been logistically challenging given the time constraints in presenting Awards to 88 winners in the space of 60 minutes, including all of the associated speeches and performances.

Consequently, the professional exchange day on the day after the Awards ceremony was seen as a great opportunity for Award winners to get a better sense of the company they were in, and that the standard set for the Awards was appropriately high.

"This was the most interesting and beneficial aspect of going to Canberra as I got to see how teachers and schools from interstate function. Passing on ideas to my colleagues has been very beneficial." (Teacher Award winner)

There was some concern from Award winners about the structure of the day, in that it did not provide sufficient opportunity for both effective formal and informal networking. It is understood that this

feedback has already been noted by Teaching Australia and acted on in planning for the 2007 Awards. This initiative should be continued to enable Award winners to maximise the time available for sharing of ideas between Australia's leading educators. Further support for professional networking among past Award winners might also be facilitated.

7.5. Relationship to other teaching awards

Taking all of this into account, it is interesting to consider the standing of the AGNAQS against other national, state and professional awards for teaching. For there are many other awards that recognise teaching excellence sponsored by government agencies, professional associations and corporate bodies (see Appendix 5). For example (but only a small sample of the awards available):

- National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEITA)
- National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2007 Minister's Awards
- National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education
- NSW Quality Teaching Awards
- Victorian Education Excellence Awards
- Herald Sun Teacher of the Year Awards (Victoria)
- Queensland Westfield Premier's Educational Scholarships
- Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards (Northern Territory).

These and other teaching excellence awards variously address many aspects of teaching. Most are state and territory specific. Some are only relevant to teachers in targeted curriculum areas. Some are only open to (mainly classroom-based) teachers, while others have a broader coverage. Some recognise only individual teachers, while others have the capacity to recognise school-based teams. All offer combinations of financial reward, certificates and medallions, media recognition and promotional opportunities, although the mix varies. Some provide funding for further study and scholarship, others have no restrictions.

So how can the AGNAQS be compared with other awards across the different dimensions that exist? All of the aspects of the AGNAQS discussed earlier in this section of the report are relevant. Firstly, all teaching awards are based on solid assessments of the merits of applicants, and as 2006 Award winners noted need to continue to co-exist and complement one another (in particular the NEITA awards which are regarded highly).

Secondly, the AGNAQS need to be understood for what they are. Put simply, the Awards are national, they recognise and reward excellence in schooling in all its aspects, they are presented by the Federal Minister at a ceremony in one of the nation's most prestigious locations, and they offer substantial prize money to Award winners. On any objective basis they have a credibility and status at least equal to and in many ways ahead of these other awards.

But what of the views of Award winners?

"I have previously won state education awards, national ICT awards and state community awards, and hold this as the highest achievement of all awards I have received." (Teacher Award winner)

"We had won the state's highest education award, and been recognised as community of the year. We felt pretty good winning a national Award." (Deputy Principal, School Improvement Award winner)

"I think for those in the know the status and credibility are certainly there." (Teacher, School Improvement Award winner)

Ultimately however, the AGNAQS will be benchmarked against other teaching excellence awards on the extent to which they consistently recognise and reward the ‘best of the best’, and are seen by the teaching profession, and to a lesser extent the wider community, as a fair representation of excellence in quality schooling in Australia.

7.6. Raising the profile

It can be expected that awareness and the profile of the Awards will increase over time. The experience to date suggests that as more schools become aware of the Awards, identify their own areas of excellence, are nominated for Awards, and if successful have the opportunity to travel to Canberra to accept their Award from the Minister, that the Awards will become an everyday part of the schooling landscape. Furthermore, as Award winning schools celebrate and promote their collective and individual achievements to their local school communities, neighbouring schools and the wider community the Awards will become more well-known. Finally, as the teaching profession is able to tap deeper into the network of Award winners as a means of showcasing and promoting excellence in quality schooling and encouraging the sharing of ideas, practices and resources between professionals the Awards will have greater standing within the profession.

This will take time, but it could be supported by more strategic and coordinated promotion of the Awards and Award winners by Teaching Australia, other professional bodies and DEST, a view strongly supported by 2006 Award winners.

The Master Class Pilot Program conducted by Teaching Australia in 2006 is a fine example of using the knowledge and experience of AGNAQS winners to:

- increase the knowledge and sphere of influence of the good practice recognised by the Awards among a broader community of teachers
- provide inspiration and encourage effective leadership at all levels within schools and educational communities
- celebrate and recognise the achievements of schools and individual educators.

Many Award winning schools and individuals have, since winning their Award, taken on the responsibility for sharing their experience with others, presenting at conferences and seminars, hosting school visits, and mentoring other schools and staff. Some expressed an interest and a willingness to extend this activity, and were disappointed that these opportunities were not provided to them.

“I would have been very happy to drive 200 km and do a 40 minute talk for just the costs of petrol.” (School Support Staff Member Award winner)

Bearing in mind the need to not overburden any Award winner with professional engagements that too often take them away from the excellence that they obviously bring to their own school-based role, there would seem to be scope for increased use of a pool of Award winners by Teaching Australia and other professional bodies at national, state and territory level for promotional and professional development activities.

“We need to change the culture in schools to celebrate success. This may be through using winners in each state as ambassadors.” (Teacher Award winner)

The absence of a coordinated media strategy to promote the Awards and Award winners in the weeks immediately after the Award ceremony was raised during the evaluation. A more proactive approach to media engagement at national, state and local level would certainly have helped those Award winners (especially some small schools) that did not have the knowledge or skills to give best promotional effect to their Award.

Finally, while there has clearly been informal networking between some 2006 Award winners since the ceremony, support for an alumni of Award winners might be explored as a means of enhancing the professional sharing that occurs and increasing the status of the Awards within the teaching profession.

8. THE AWARDS: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

In assessing the management and administration of the Awards, it should be noted up front that from the viewpoint of the Award winners the process runs very smoothly. From nominations, through selection and notification, the lead up to the Awards ceremony, the ceremony itself and the follow up activities, the behind the scenes operations are not evident to the Award winners. From their perspective the process is, as it should be, all about them – giving them the best chance to put their case for an Award, being judged rigorously and fairly, and being made to feel very special if they are indeed worthy of receiving an Award.

“ ‘Very impressed’ ... ‘very well managed’ ... ‘very sound and professional’ ... ‘organisation was first class’ ... ‘superbly organised and delivered’ ... ‘I cannot speak highly enough of the whole experience!’ ” (various Award winners)

8.1. Governance

The roles and responsibilities for management and administration of the Awards have changed over time, with the lead agency shown in the following table.

Function	2003/2004	2006	2007
▪ Ownership (funding, policy development)	▪ DEST	▪ DEST	▪ DEST
▪ Ministerial liaison	▪ DEST	▪ DEST	▪ DEST
▪ Promotion of Awards - Communication - Publicity	▪ ACE	▪ Teaching Australia/ ACE	▪ Teaching Australia/ ACE
▪ Management of Awards - Oversight of nominations - Coordination - Reporting	▪ ACE	▪ Teaching Australia	▪ Teaching Australia
▪ Management of nominations - Advice - Receipt, follow up - Assessment ⁶ - Notification of outcome	▪ ACE	▪ ACE	▪ ACE
▪ Awards ceremony - Event management - Travel coordination - Ceremony presentation - Media	▪ DEST ▪ DEST ▪ ACE ▪ DEST ▪ DEST	▪ Teaching Australia ▪ Teaching Australia ▪ ACE ▪ DEST DEST/Teaching Australia	▪ DEST ▪ DEST ▪ ACE ▪ DEST ▪ DEST/Teaching Australia
▪ Follow up activities - Professional development - Professional networking - Media monitoring	▪ ACE	▪ Teaching Australia	▪ Teaching Australia

In 2003 and 2004 DEST engaged ACE to deliver most aspects of the Awards. Teaching Australia has been established as an independent entity with the principal objective of raising the status, quality and professionalism of teachers and school leaders throughout Australia. In early 2005 the Departmental Secretary invited Teaching Australia to take on an active role in carriage of the 2006 Awards to support it in fulfilling this objective. Teaching Australia was responsible for management of the 2006

⁶ ACE are responsible for all aspects of the management of nominations except for the assessment of School Improvement nominations, which is undertaken for ACE by ACER.

Awards and sub-contracted the management of the nominations process to ACE. The same arrangements apply to the 2007 Awards.

Therefore, just as the form and structure of the Awards have evolved as the Awards find and make their place in the education sector, the governance structures have also shifted as part of the evolution of the Awards. This has caused some tension between the organisations responsible as there has been a little confusion about roles and an incomplete appreciation of the conditions under which the other organisations undertake some of their functions.

It should also be noted that a new Minister was appointed to the portfolio a month prior to the 2006 Awards ceremony, meaning that DEST had to insert a briefing and induction process into the planned timeline, compressing time for fulfillment of some other functions.

While this situation was challenging for DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE in the final run up to the 2006 Awards ceremony, this was not apparent to the Award winners, who from their perspective saw the process as operating very smoothly and efficiently. In fact, many Award winners commented on how well executed the ceremony was from an organisational or logistical standpoint, stating that they were well informed on what they should expect of the ceremony, how it would run, and their role.

There have in 2007 been some further changes to roles and responsibilities, with DEST taking a greater role in managing the Award ceremony and appointing an event coordinator to further enhance the streamlined delivery of the ceremony. There has also been more structured, earlier and improved cooperation between the partners in 2007 with establishment of a working group to support the planning for and implementation of the 2007 ceremony.

During the evaluation it was also noted that Teaching Australia retained some concerns about the timing of decisions on roles and responsibilities. In 2006 the formal notification of their role in the Awards for 2007 occurred after the previous year's Awards ceremony and six to eight months before the close of nominations, narrowing the timeframe for a comprehensive and integrated promotional strategy. Teaching Australia see an early and/or long-term commitment to their role in managing the Awards as delivering certainty and allowing them to better incorporate the Awards into their overall planning and promotional schedule for ongoing communication and engagement of the profession.

To the extent that clarity, stability and certainty can be features of the Awards' governance model, in an environment where change is inevitable, this will support the future efficient delivery of the Awards from both an internal and external perspective.

8.2. Operations and resourcing

Overall, the operation of the Awards in 2006 was efficient and effective. Certainly from the Award winners' perspective the whole process was very well run. The role of ACE in very professionally managing the nomination and assessment process, and the contribution of Peter Weddell in particular, was singled out for comment by several Award winners. This degree of professionalism reflects positively on the Awards and enhances their credibility.

It is also thought that, relative to previous years, the increased promotion of the Awards by Teaching Australia and engagement of Award winners in follow up activities related to professional development and networking have been a positive change. As noted in Section 7 of this report, there is still scope for increased promotion of the Awards, especially down to teacher level within schools, and greater use of willing Award winners as ambassadors for the teaching profession and the Awards themselves. Stability in the structure of the Awards (e.g. categories, Awards process) and a longer-term planning timeframe would further enhance the position of the Awards.

Again, as discussed earlier, the Awards ceremony is now a distinctive and distinguishing feature of the Award. The timing in the calendar is right, the location is prestigious, the Minister's role adds stature, and the professional exchange day provides practical networking benefits. In DEST adding a more professional event management capability to the 2007 Awards it should now be considered that the overall Awards program has a very solid platform across all aspects of its operation.

Budget

The overall expenditure on the 2006 Awards is estimated to have been around \$2 million, as shown below based on high level information provided by DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE.

Expenditure Item	2006 Expenditure* (excl. GST)	Note
Prize Money		
- Award winners	\$1,090,000	Paid to Award winners by DEST.
- School co-payments	\$162,500	Additional payment recommended by and paid by Teaching Australia. DEST will pay this in 2007.
- Sub total	\$1,252,500	
Nominations process		
- Management	\$100,000	The original budget negotiated with Teaching Australia provided for 300 nominations and management of 37 Award winners to the ceremony and professional exchange day. Additional resourcing was necessary to assess 526 nominations, and include all 51 Highly Commended Award winners in the ceremony and professional exchange.
- ACE	\$185,000	
- ACER	\$60,000	
- Travel, accommodation and professional exchange	\$65,000	
- Sub total	\$410,000	
Management of Awards		
- Promotion	\$200,000	Estimated Teaching Australia costs for overall management and promotion of the Awards.
- Sub total	\$60,000	Direct costs incurred by Teaching Australia for brochures, pamphlets, communication, etc.
Ownership of Awards	\$60,000	Estimated DEST costs for staff contribution to overall conduct of the Awards, including Ministerial liaison, the Award ceremony and media.
Total*	\$1,982,500	

* These figures include both actual direct expenditure and estimates of staff time in management and delivery of the 2006 Awards. They do NOT include some 'in-kind' contributions by DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE.

Given the almost threefold increase in nominations from 2004 to 2006, the enhancement of the professional exchange day, and other factors, comparison with previous years is not directly relevant. At the same time, many of the administrative functions associated with the Award (e.g. overall coordination, preparation of the Awards ceremony) are essentially 'fixed' and not scalable in terms of the number of nominations or Award winners.

This total level of expenditure can be broken down into three broad categories of activity.

Expenditure Category	Estimated Expenditure	%
Prize Money	\$1,252,500	63%
Assessment of Nominations	\$315,000	16%
Awards Management (incl. ceremony)	\$415,000	21%
Total	\$1,982,500	

This shows that around 63% (or just under two-thirds) of the total expenditure on the 2006 Awards went to prize money, both to Award winners and to schools as co-payments where they had an individual Award winner. Of the remaining third, 16% was incurred by ACE and ACER in managing and assessing Award nominations. On average, across the 526 nominations received in 2006 this equates to around \$600 per nomination, which includes reviews and ratings by two independent assessors, and in some cases a third independent assessment, with a final overall moderation and recommendation process. This process also includes the support for potential nominees and the nominations and assessment process by ACE.

The final 21% or \$415,000 of expenditure covers overall management and ownership of the Awards by DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE. It includes the full delivery of the Awards ceremony and professional exchange day, estimated to be at least one third of this total, with the average cost of bringing each winner to the ceremony around \$750. It also includes Teaching Australia's promotion of the Awards and follow up activity with Award winners.

Across all components of the Awards, the evaluation considers the Awards to have been delivered cost efficiently by all parties and does not consider the total amount expended or that for various components to be unreasonable given the nature of the activity undertaken.

It should also be noted that of the total \$2 million expended, DEST funded around \$1.5 million or 75% of this. This included direct prize payments, funding of \$300,000 (ex. GST) for Teaching Australia, additional funding to enable the 51 Highly Commended Award winners to attend the ceremony and its own internal ownership costs.

The remaining \$500,000 (25% of total) was contributed by Teaching Australia, as part of its commitment to raising the status, quality and professionalism of teachers and school leaders throughout Australia. One-third of this in 2006 was the school co-payments, recommended by and paid for from within its own resources by Teaching Australia. In 2007 DEST is covering this co-payment within its total prize budget.

8.3. Value for money

The evaluation was required to address the extent to which the 2006 AGNAQS provided 'value for money', considering 'such matters as the level of participation and the ratio of administration to programme expenditure'. The expenditure side of the equation is discussed in the previous Section. The question of 'value for money' is a broader one, which takes into account both the costs and benefits of the Awards.

The benefits appear to be substantial, if the feedback from 2006 Award winners is any indication. Not only have they obtained personal recognition and reward for their outstanding achievements as education professionals and school leaders, their schools and school communities have benefited from the recognition and boosted their resources, professional capabilities, motivation and levels of community engagement and participation. Without doubt, the professional standing of teachers has been enhanced within Award winning school communities, and through networking with peers and media coverage the impact has been felt more widely.

So what does it cost to recognise the 'best of the best', and deliver a national Awards program that in the eyes of Award winners sits atop the scale of similar programs to recognise quality schooling at a state or territory or school sector level?

One answer is that \$2 million was expended in 2006 to recognise 88 Award winners, roughly \$23,000 per school with an individual or School Improvement Award. This is a significant amount in terms of many school budgets, and many Award winners would argue that their school has received at least this much value from the Award. However, the prize money for winners in the three individual Awards

categories (excluding school co-payments) was deliberately awarded as a personal financial reward for high achieving individuals. This \$325,000 could be excluded from these calculations leaving around \$1.7 million going to schools. On this basis the average 'contribution' to the 88 Award winning schools goes from \$23,000 down to \$19,000, while the benefits and value to these schools remain the same.

This argument misses an important point, however, in that having a program that recognises outstanding and quality schooling is intended to and does enhance the standing of the entire teaching profession. So the benefit of the Awards is in some way transferable to all teachers. The ABS reports⁷ that in 2006 there were 240,000 teaching staff and 81,000 specialist, administrative and other staff in all Australian schools. That is, the \$2 million expended on the 2006 AGNAQS was an investment of \$6.20 for every person working in a school. If that \$6.20, presumably spent every year over several years can deliver the reported increase in the professional standing of teachers, it would seem to be a very good investment. Not forgetting of course, that the \$6.20 per staff member in Award winning schools is also providing resources, professional development and program improvements that are already contributing to increased engagement of students in learning, that should according to research flow through to improved learning outcomes.

The question of value for money could be further explored by looking at the \$2 million expenditure as a percentage of the tens of billions of dollars spent by the Australian and State and Territory Governments on school education, but as the result is likely to be around one hundredth of one per cent the analysis would itself be of little value.

The evaluation's conclusion is that the AGNAQS deliver significant value for money at a personal, a school, a professional and a community level.

⁷ *Schools, 2006*, Table 17, Cat.No. 4221.0, and *Schools Australia, 2005*, Table 63, Cat.No. 4221.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Conclusions

The Australian Government's 2006 National Awards for Quality Schooling (AGNAQS) have been evaluated to:

- determine what impact winning an Award has had on the Award winners and student learning
- establish whether the AGNAQS aligns with the AGQTP objective to improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders.

Through discussions with DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE and surveys and interviews with more than 60% of 2006 Award winners and a sample of nominators, the evaluation has found that the Awards have been successful in achieving their objective to improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders.

Are the Awards effective?

The Awards are seen to have a significant impact on the teaching profession and its standing in the community. Having an individual or team Award winner within a school has been, in most cases, a cause for celebration among the staff of that school, and in many cases neighbouring schools associated with the winner. It has been a means of boosting morale, building pride in the school and the profession and a motivating force for teachers to continue to strive for excellence. There are also numerous examples of community-based celebrations of the Awards, as schools have involved the school community and sometimes the wider community in their celebrations, and personal feedback from people in the local community to the Award winners acknowledging and congratulating them on their achievements.

Having first been awarded in early 2004, awareness of the Awards is growing within the education sector and the community. Word of mouth, professional networking, the professional activities of past Award winners, and promotional activities by Teaching Australia and ACE are contributing to this awareness, with many Award winners commenting on how much more is known about the Awards now than was the case when they first heard about them or were nominated.

While mainstream media uptake has not been high to date, there was some coverage of the 2006 Awards on national and regional television and radio, and in major daily newspapers. However, most of the media uptake has been in regional and local press with articles celebrating and taking great pride in the achievements of local schools, teachers, principals and school support staff, all of which serves to support the professional standing of teachers and promote the Awards.

From a professional perspective, the Awards are growing in status and credibility. Critical to this outcome have been the transparent rigour associated with the selection process (which ensures that only the very best nominees are recognised), the substantial prize money awarded and the prestigious nature of the Awards ceremony – with Awards presented by the Minister in a ceremony in the Great Hall of Parliament House in the nation's capital.

The impact of the Awards on individual winners has also been significant, and for some 'life-changing' and 'profound'. Skills development, further professional learning and scholarship, increased confidence and motivation, increased job responsibility, recognition through other Awards, and career advancement have all been noted as direct outcomes of having been recognised through the Awards. Not to mention the personal reward that some individual Award winners have had through the use of their prize money.

The effects on Award winning schools have been widespread. These have included extension of Award winning programs, development of new programs, investment in professional learning for staff across the school, and investment in learning resources, materials, and technology. Schools have also reported changes in school culture as students, staff and the community come together to recognise the quality that exists within their school.

There is also evidence of professional networks forming as Award winners collaborate more widely with their peers. For many, being nationally recognised as an educational leader has brought with it responsibility for sharing their expertise with other teaching professionals. For some, the introductions made through the Awards, and especially the professional exchange day held the day after the Awards ceremony, have fostered ongoing dialogue, reinforced through collaborative professional sharing (e.g. Teaching Australia's 2006 Master Class, the WA Award winners Expo).

All of the Award winners are inspirational. It is their outstanding qualities that make them exceptional teachers and leaders. Among other things, the Awards have boosted their inner confidence, given them external credibility, motivated them to act, and provided them with opportunities to inspire other professionals and not just their students and staff. There is, however, scope for further use of the Award winners as ambassadors for the profession, to the profession and to the community.

Finally, the effectiveness of the Awards is undoubtedly influenced by their being national Awards presented by the Federal Minister. Award winners appreciate the value of this national recognition, and how this distinguishes the Awards from other state and territory teaching Awards. This wide acknowledgement of the value of a 'national' brand, does not however translate to widespread recognition of 'the brand', that is the Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling. Media reporting, conversations with winners and even promotional material associated with the Awards indicate that more work is needed if the name is to stick.

Are the Awards an appropriate way to promote the teaching profession?

The AGNAQS are seen as an appropriate means of improving the standing of the teaching profession and meeting the Australian Government's priorities for professional learning and the profession.

Thirty four percent of Award winners indicated that winning an Award in 2006 had to a great extent increased their capacity, in their work with colleagues, to lead and influence initiatives in the school community that promote broader connectedness of all students, staff and parents. Another 54% reported that the Awards had influenced their leadership capacity in this area to a large (28%) or fair extent (26%).

The extent to which Award winners have been encouraged to engage productively in collegial networks that extend and support knowledge and skills was also positive, with 22% saying this had occurred to a great extent, and a further 52% saying there had been a large or fair change in their engagement in professional networks. This was clearly reflected in the number of Award winners that have contributed to wider professional learning activities (e.g. conferences, presentations) at national, state and local level, and have extended their networks through the recognition associated with the Awards, and also with other Award winners.

The structure of the Awards also reflects on the appropriateness of the Awards. Intended as a means of nationally recognising the 'best of the best' the Awards need to be seen and taken as 'serious' Awards. They are. As indicated previously, the quality of the Award winners, maximum prizes of \$30,000 for an individual and \$65,000 for school improvement, and a prestigious Awards ceremony all give weight to the Awards. In particular, these attributes signal to the profession and the community that being an outstanding teacher is something that deserves and gets recognition at the highest level.

There are alternative ways to recognise quality schooling, but none give the multiple benefits of individual and school recognition, opportunities for widespread media coverage and community

engagement, significant contributions to school programs, personal reward, and a growing pool and network of outstanding educational leaders.

The Australian Government could also not hold the Awards. It did not do so up until 2003. Without the Awards schools carried on ... quality schooling occurred ... teachers took pride in their work ... but there was not the impetus or stimulant for celebration of excellence that comes with external recognition, validation and affirmation. And all of these things are seen to flow through to improved teaching and learning outcomes.

The OECD has found that the quality of school teachers is the single most important school variable influencing student achievement. Teachers need to have their work recognised and rewarded.⁸ Every award that recognises and promotes the quality of teachers reinforces for teachers and the community the value of the profession, and encourages the best people to stay in the profession and attracts the best people to the profession. It is appropriate in the national interest that the Australian Government have a direct role in enhancing the quality of school teachers.

Are the Awards efficiently managed and delivered?

From the Award winners' perspective the AGNAQS are very efficiently managed and delivered. From thinking about nomination through, for those who win Awards, to the Awards ceremony and follow up activities, their experience is reportedly an affirming one, a rewarding one and an enjoyable one.

If this is the 'external face' of the Awards, all that remains is for DEST, Teaching Australia and ACE to work collaboratively to make sure that everything behind the scenes works smoothly and maintains the quality experience of teachers, schools, the Minister and other stakeholders.

There have been some changes to the Awards' governance structure over time, with continued refinement in 2007 building on the experience of 2006. This process of continual improvement is encouraged as it will lessen some of the tensions that have existed as the agencies come to understand their respective responsibilities and the factors which influence their capacity to act and act quickly in any way.

It is estimated that \$2 million was expended on the 2006 Awards. Sixty three percent of this went to prize money, which is at a level that makes it very attractive to win an Award, but at the same time sends a signal that Award winners must be of exceptional quality. Seventeen percent of expenditure went into the nomination and assessment process, which as a process of internal reflection and external evaluation the OECD also sees as critical to teacher effectiveness. More than 500 nominations were received and assessed in 2006. The remaining 20% or \$400,000 went to ownership, management, administration and promotion of the Awards, including the Awards ceremony.

Taking into account that in 2006 there were 88 Awards in 88 different schools, from more than 500 nominations, from nearly 10,000 schools and more than 300,000 school staff, the total investment in the Awards represents value for money. As demonstrated in this report, over the past three years 7.2% (or one in fourteen) of all Australian schools have nominated for the Awards. This is around 10% in Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory and 34% in the Australian Capital Territory. On average, the Awards represent an investment of around \$6.30 for every school staff member, which as an investment in improving the professional standing of teachers is being well repaid.

⁸ *The Quality of the Teaching Workforce*, OECD, February 2004.

9.2. Recommendations

Overall, the evaluation finds that the Awards are effective in meeting their stated objectives and supporting the improved standing of the teaching profession. The evaluation has also noted a process of continual improvement in the design, delivery, management and administration that has over the past few years introduced improvements into the Awards structure that improve their effectiveness and efficiency.

The following recommendations are therefore made as an aid to this improvement process, with the intent that they might contribute to the implementation of an even more effective program for recognising and rewarding quality schooling.

1. That DEST retain the current governance arrangements in which Teaching Australia is responsible for management and promotion of the Awards and that ACE has a role in managing the nomination and assessment process.
 - a) That all agencies work to clarify roles and responsibilities and establish planning timeframes that optimize the opportunities for promotion of the Awards and attraction of the best nominations.
2. That Teaching Australia and ACE continue to promote the Awards to all schools throughout Australia.
 - a) That Teaching Australia and ACE design and implement promotional strategies that reach all professionals.
 - b) That Teaching Australia and ACE place particular emphasis on promotion of the Awards in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.
3. That there be no changes to the Award categories for a period of at least two years.
4. That Teaching Australia examine ways in which all past Award winners can have opportunities to take an active role in supporting and promoting the profession.
5. That Teaching Australia examine options to support networking among past Award winners.
6. That Teaching Australia examine ways in which Award winning schools can be supported in their engagement of media to promote their Award and promote the teaching profession.

APPENDIX 1 – 2006 AWARD WINNERS

The 88 winners of the 2006 Awards are listed in the following tables.

Teachers (21 Award winners)

Name	School	State	Sector	Award
Margaret Meijers	New Town High School	TAS	Government	Best National Achievement
Deborah Arthurs	Cardiff South Pacific School	NSW	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Greg Gebhart	Lowanna College	VIC	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Michael Goodwin	Mackay North State High School	QLD	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Paul Hedgcock	Proserpine State High School	QLD	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Robin McKean	St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls	WA	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
Brendan Magee	Lyneham High School	ACT	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Morris Needleman	Kincoppal-Rose Bay School	NSW	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
Jason Zagami	St Aidan's Anglican Girl's School	QLD	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
Rose Callaghan	Cairns West State School	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Leigh Charlesworth	Aberfoyle Park High School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Geoff de Manser	Mortlake P-12	VIC	Government	Highly Commended
Trevor Howitt	Cocos Island District High School	WA	Government	Highly Commended
Stacey Hunter	Cavendish Road State High School	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Malcolm McInerney	Findon High School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Norena Mendiola	St Margaret Mary's College	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Donna Mincham	Ludmilla Alternative Pathway Programme	NT	Government	Highly Commended
Laurel Nowacki	Wodonga Primary School	VIC	Government	Highly Commended
Anne-Marie Reeks	Monash Kindergarten	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Hao Anh Ngo Ta	Willetton Senior High School	WA	Government	Highly Commended
Donna Wright	Wodonga High School	VIC	Government	Highly Commended

School Principals (6 Award winners)

Name	School	State	Sector	Award
Garry Costello	Mount Gambier High School	SA	Government	Best National Achievement
Bella Irlight	Port Phillip Specialist School	VIC	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Chris Presland	Airds High School	NSW	Government	Outstanding National Achievement

Name	School	State	Sector	Award
Joy Bedford	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College	SA	Catholic	Highly Commended
Clayton Jones	Girton Grammar School	VIC	Independent	Highly Commended
Richard Lornie	Central Coast Grammar School	NSW	Independent	Highly Commended

Support Staff Member (10 Award winners)

Name	School	State	Sector	Award
Don Hones	Granville Boys High School	NSW	Government	Best National Achievement
Lynette Eggins	Clarence Valley Anglican School	NSW	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
David Neilson	Barwon South Network	VIC	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Jill Walters	Para Hills West Primary School	SA	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Jan Cooper	Engadine High School	NSW	Government	Highly Commended
Lyn Mernagh	The Canberra College	ACT	Government	Highly Commended
Donald Mudge	Jamestown Community School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Heather Niss	Carmel School	WA	Independent	Highly Commended
Colin Russell	Cardijn College	SA	Catholic	Highly Commended
Jeanette Skenner	Loganlea State High School	QLD	Government	Highly Commended

School Improvement (51 Award winners)

School	State	Sector	Award
Princes Hill Primary School	VIC	Government	Best National Achievement
Bowraville Central School	NSW	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Brookvale Public School	NSW	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Collingwood/Fitzroy Catholic Primary School Cluster (Lead School – St Joseph’s Primary School)	VIC	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
Geographe Primary School	WA	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Loreto Normanhurst	NSW	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
Melrose Primary School	VIC	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Mirani Cluster (Lead School – Mirani State High School)	QLD	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Northern Beaches State High School	QLD	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Northern Territory Music School	NT	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Orange Preschool Kindergarten	NSW	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
Portland Central School	NSW	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Sherwood State School	QLD	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Spensley Street Primary School	VIC	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
St Hilda’s Anglican School for Girls	WA	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
St John Vianney’s Doonside	NSW	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
St Patrick’s Catholic Primary	NSW	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
St Peter’s Primary School	VIC	Catholic	Outstanding National Achievement
St Stephen’s School	WA	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
Waverley Primary School	TAS	Government	Outstanding National Achievement
Wycliffe Christian School	NSW	Independent	Outstanding National Achievement
Aberfoyle Park High School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Airds High School	NSW	Government	Highly Commended

School	State	Sector	Award
Airds High School	NSW	Government	Highly Commended
Avalon Public School	NSW	Government	Highly Commended
Barmera Primary School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Berne Education Centre	NSW	Catholic	Highly Commended
Caloundra State High School	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta	NSW	Catholic	Highly Commended
Claremont College	TAS	Government	Highly Commended
Delaney College	NSW	Catholic	Highly Commended
Great Lakes College	NSW	Government	Highly Commended
Jabiru Area School	NT	Government	Highly Commended
Kangaroo Island Community Education Centre	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Lake Ginnindeera College	ACT	Government	Highly Commended
Maitland Area School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Miles Franklin Primary School	ACT	Government	Highly Commended
Ocean Grove Primary School	VIC	Government	Highly Commended
Red Earth Cluster (Lead School – Mooroolbark College)	VIC	Government	Highly Commended
Rutherglen Primary School	VIC	Government	Highly Commended
Snowtown Area School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
Springfield Primary School	SA	Government	Highly Commended
St Jerome's Primary School	WA	Catholic	Highly Commended
St Joseph's School	NSW	Catholic	Highly Commended
St Mary's Hampton	VIC	Catholic	Highly Commended
St Michael's Grammar School	VIC	Independent	Highly Commended
St Monica's Primary School	ACT	Catholic	Highly Commended
St Paul's Primary School	NT	Catholic	Highly Commended
Tambo State High School	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Upper Coomera State College	QLD	Government	Highly Commended
Wodonga High School Cluster (Lead School – Wodonga High School)	VIC	Government	Highly Commended

Summary of prizes

Award Category	No. of Prizes Awarded	Individual Prize	School Prize Amount	Total Prize Money
<i>Excellence by a Teacher</i>				
Best National Achievement	1	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$45,000
Outstanding National Achievement	8	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$120,000
Highly Commended	12	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$90,000
Total	21			\$255,000

<i>Excellence by a Principal</i>				
Best National Achievement	1	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$45,000
Outstanding National Achievement	2	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$30,000
Highly Commended	3	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$22,500
Total	6			\$97,500

<i>Excellence by a Support Staff Member</i>				
Best National Achievement	1	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$45,000
Outstanding National Achievement	3	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$45,000
Highly Commended	6	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$45,000
Total	10			\$135,000

<i>Excellence in School Improvement</i>				
Best National Achievement	1		\$65,000	\$65,000
Outstanding National Achievement	20		\$20,000	\$400,000
Highly Commended	30		\$10,000	\$300,000
Total	51			\$765,000

APPENDIX 2 – EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation of the 2006 Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling was undertaken by I & J Management Services for DEST from December 2006 to March 2007. The evaluation was completed in four broad project stages.

- 1. Project Planning* The short stage at the beginning of the evaluation produced an agreed workplan, enabled the collection of a range of documentary information necessary for the evaluation, and ensured that Award winners and other stakeholders were informed of the evaluation's objectives and timelines, and encouraged to participate in relevant evaluation processes.
- 2. Desktop Review* Over several weeks in early to mid January a thorough review of AGNAQS guidelines and material was undertaken to enable the evaluators to develop a solid understanding of the 2006 AGNAQS and the evaluation issues to be examined. The output from this process was an evaluation framework that clearly defined the questions to be asked in the evaluation and who was best placed to answer them (e.g. DEST, Teaching Australia, Award winners, nominators). Surveys of Award winners and nominators were developed.
- 3. Data Collection* In this stage of the project from late January to mid February, information about the 2006 AGNAQS was collected from a range of different stakeholders. Invitations to complete the evaluation surveys were distributed, followed up and the responses from Award winners and nominators collated. Telephone interviews were held with selected Award winners in order to gather more detailed information about their experiences since winning the Award. These Award winners are featured in the snapshots included in the evaluation report. Interviews were also held with representatives of DEST, Teaching Australia, ACE and ACER.
- 4. Evaluation Report* The evaluation report was written in late February 2007, and finalised with DEST in early March.

Survey Forms

All 2006 Award winners were invited to participate in a short survey to assist in the evaluation of the 2006 AGNAQS. The survey captured information about their experience of the Awards and the Award ceremony, as well as information about the impact of the Award on them, their school and the teaching profession.

Award winners received an electronic copy of the survey via email and were able to return the survey via email, fax or post. They also received a supplementary survey that they were asked to forward to the person who had nominated them for the Award. Overall 55 surveys were received from Award winners and ten surveys were received from nominators.

The questions asked in the survey sent to individual Award winners are included on the following pages. They include the specific questions drawn from the AGQTP Performance Reporting Framework. The survey for School Improvement Award winners was similar to this one, with necessary adjustments to the wording of some questions. The nominator survey also asked similar questions, relevant to the perspective of the nominator and their reasons for nominating the award winner and their observations of the Award's impact on the Award winner and the school.

Evaluation Form for Individual Award-winners

Congratulations on winning one of the 2006 Australian Government National Awards for Quality Schooling (AGNAQS). It will help us to understand the impact and value of these Awards if you could please complete this evaluation form and return it to I & J Management Services.

A little about you ...

Name: _____
 School: _____
 2006 Award Category: _____

The impact of the AGNAQS Awards

1. Briefly describe anything you have done as a result of winning the AGNAQS Award in 2006 that has enhanced your teaching/leadership/support skills and practices and/or enhanced the professional standing of the teaching profession.

2. What has been the impact, if any, on you as a teacher/principal/support staff member of winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006? Consider the impact on your:

- professional skills, knowledge and practice
- professional development activities
- confidence and capability in your role
- development of professional networks
- colleagues'/peers' observation and assessment of you as a teaching professional.

3. What has been the impact, if any, on your school or other schools of you winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006? Consider the impact of:

- your collaboration with others and support for improvements to their teaching/leadership/support practices
- formal or informal presentations, networking and mentoring you may have undertaken.

4. What do you believe has been the impact, if any, on the teaching profession of you winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006? Consider:

- community perceptions of the standing of teachers/principals/support staff
- teachers' own perceptions of their professional standing
- community awareness of teachers as professionals
- any media coverage you may have received (please list)
- community presentations you may have undertaken.

5. Please mark your response to the following questions on a scale of 0 to 5.

<i>Please click on one response for each question</i>	Not at all 0	To a little extent 1	To some extent 2	To a fair extent 3	To a large extent 4	To a great extent 5
To what extent has winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006 ...						
... strengthened the currency and depth of your pedagogical knowledge and skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... increased your capacity to provide inclusive learning environments within which all students can participate as active and engaged learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please click on one response for each question

	Not at all 0	To a little extent 1	To some extent 2	To a fair extent 3	To a large extent 4	To a great extent 5
To what extent has winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006 ...						
... encouraged you to engage productively in collegial networks that extend and support knowledge and skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... increased your capacity, in your work with colleagues, to lead and influence initiatives in the school community that promote the broader connectedness of all students, staff and parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To what extent has winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006 improved your standing as a teaching professional ...						
... among your colleagues/peers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... within your school community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... within the wider community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To what extent has your winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006 ...						
... improved the professional standing of teachers in the wider community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Awards

6. Do you think the Awards are an appropriate and efficient means of improving the standing of the teaching profession? Consider:

- whether the Awards are well-recognised and well-regarded in the teaching profession and the wider community
- whether the status of the Awards as an Australian Government initiative and the Minister's Awards provides status and credibility
- the standing and value of the Awards against other awards for teaching professionals (please mention others you are aware of)
- community awareness of the Awards prior to you winning an Award
- whether the Award ceremony was an appropriate way of acknowledging the achievement of Award-winners and quality schooling.

7. Are the Awards well-managed and well-delivered? Consider:

- the promotion of the Awards
- the nomination and selection process
- the Awards ceremony
- any follow-up activity.

And finally ...

8. Have there been any unexpected outcomes from your winning an AGNAQS Award in 2006?

9. How would you, and your school, be different if you had NOT won an AGNAQS Award in 2006?

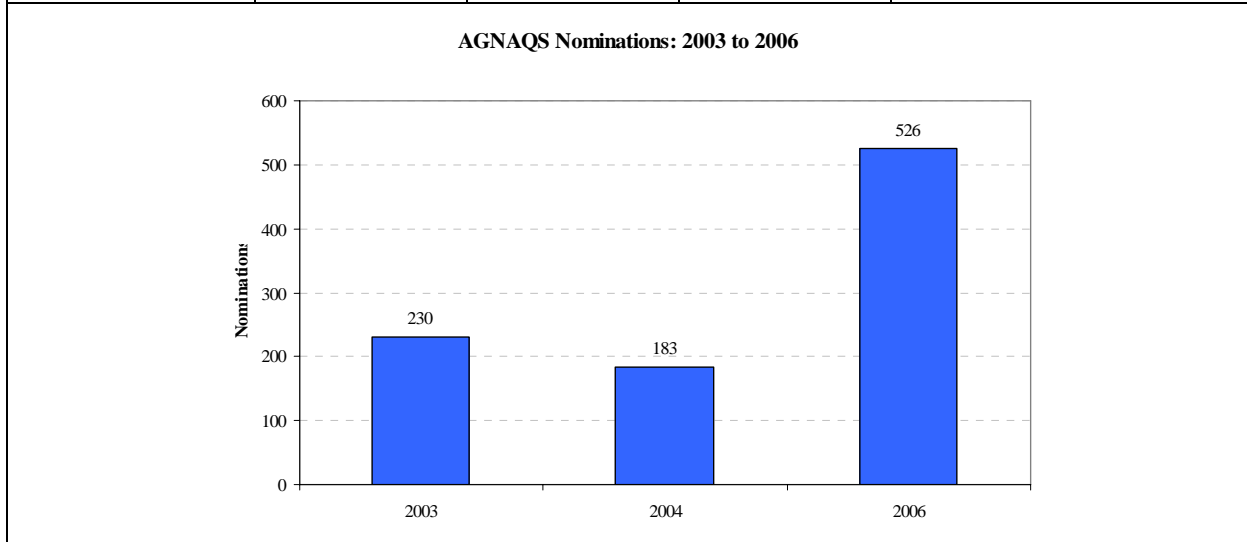
10. Would you encourage other teachers/principals/support staff to be nominated for the Awards? And why?

APPENDIX 3 – ANALYSIS OF AGNAQS NOMINATIONS

The number of AGNAQS nominations increased significantly in 2006, with 526 nominations received, up around 150% on the average numbers in 2003 and 2004. The growth in nomination numbers occurred across nearly all States and Territories and across all school sectors and school levels, although there has been a decline in nominations from Victoria after a high response in the first year of the Awards.

AGNAQS Nominations by State/Territory

State/Territory	2003	2004	2006	% increase from 2003
Queensland	56	48	158	+ 182%
NSW	45	33	117	+ 160%
Victoria	75	46	63	- 16%
SA	15	22	52	+ 247%
WA	17	9	50	+ 194%
ACT	7	5	48	+ 586%
Tasmania	11	12	21	+ 91%
NT	4	8	17	+ 325%
Australia	230	183	526	+ 129%

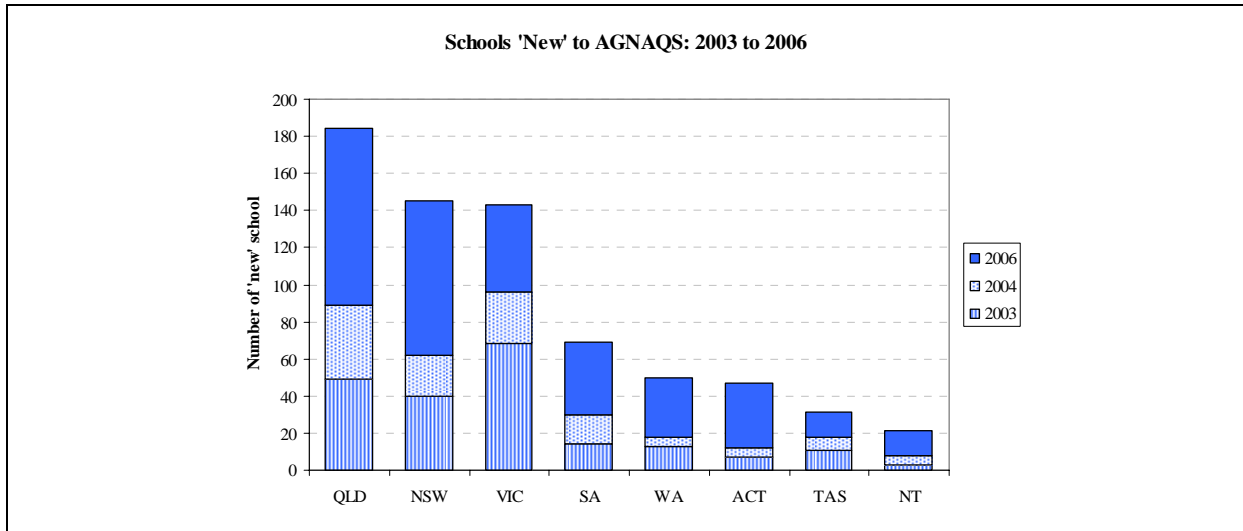


The increase in nominations has been driven by a number of factors, as outlined below, the most significant of which is the promotion of the Awards.

- Widespread promotion of the Awards by stakeholders (e.g. Teaching Australia, ACE, DEST)
- Increased awareness through local networks (e.g. there are numerous examples where a teacher or school has been nominated in one year – and may have one an Award – and neighbouring schools have been nominated in subsequent years, possibly encouraged and inspired by their peers)
- Repeat nominations (e.g. a school that has a nomination in one year may also be nominated again for the same – if an Award was not won the first time – or alternative teacher or school improvement initiatives in following years)
- Multiple nominations (e.g. there were some schools who had multiple nominations – up to nine – in 2006 for one or more of the school principal, different teachers and/or support staff, and school improvement initiatives)
- The passage of time (which enables the Awards to build and establish their credibility and take a position in the mindset of the teaching profession and the educational community).

While the AGNAQS nomination data highlights features of the Awards processes, the use of this data to examine the reach and awareness of the Awards is most important. Consider the following.

Every AGNAQS nomination is required to be signed off by the school principal, meaning that at least one person in a senior position of leadership in the school is aware of the Awards, their aims and objectives, and the basic Award processes. In 2003, the 230 nominations for teachers, principals and school improvement initiatives were received from 205 different schools across Australia. In 2004, another 180 nominations were received, some from schools that were represented in 2003 but many from schools that were ‘new’ to the Awards, with 128 ‘new’ schools nominated in 2004. By 2006, 690 different schools had had individual or school improvement AGNAQS nominations, the greatest number of these (184) coming from Queensland (see figure and table below).



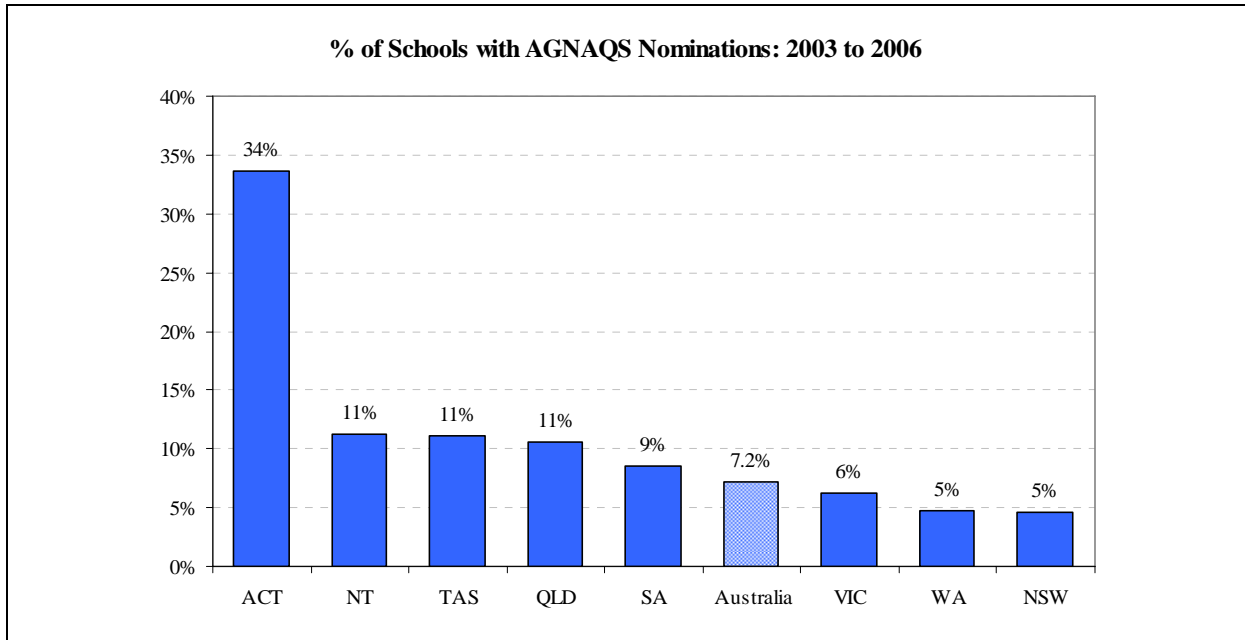
Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics⁹ shows that in 2006 there were 9,612 different schools in Australia. This means that over the period from 2003 to 2006, 7% (or one in 14) school principals signed off on an AGNAS nomination from their school. Operational awareness of the Awards therefore exists across at least 7% of Australian schools, and more likely much more than this given that many schools will know of the Awards but have not nominated to date for a variety of reasons.

The table below shows that by 2006 around 5% of schools in NSW, WA and Victoria have nominated for Awards, around 10% of schools in SA, Queensland, Tasmania and NT have been nominated, and 34% (or one in three) schools in the ACT have had AGNAQS nominations.

Schools ‘new’ to AGNAQS nominations by State/Territory

State/Territory	2003	2004	2006	Total	Schools (2006)	% nominated
Queensland	49	40	95	184	1,739	11%
NSW	40	22	83	145	3,099	5%
Victoria	68	28	47	143	2,299	6%
SA	14	16	39	69	805	9%
WA	13	5	32	50	1,067	5%
ACT	7	5	35	47	139	34%
Tasmania	11	7	13	31	278	11%
NT	3	5	13	21	186	11%
Australia	205	128	357	690	9,612	7.2%

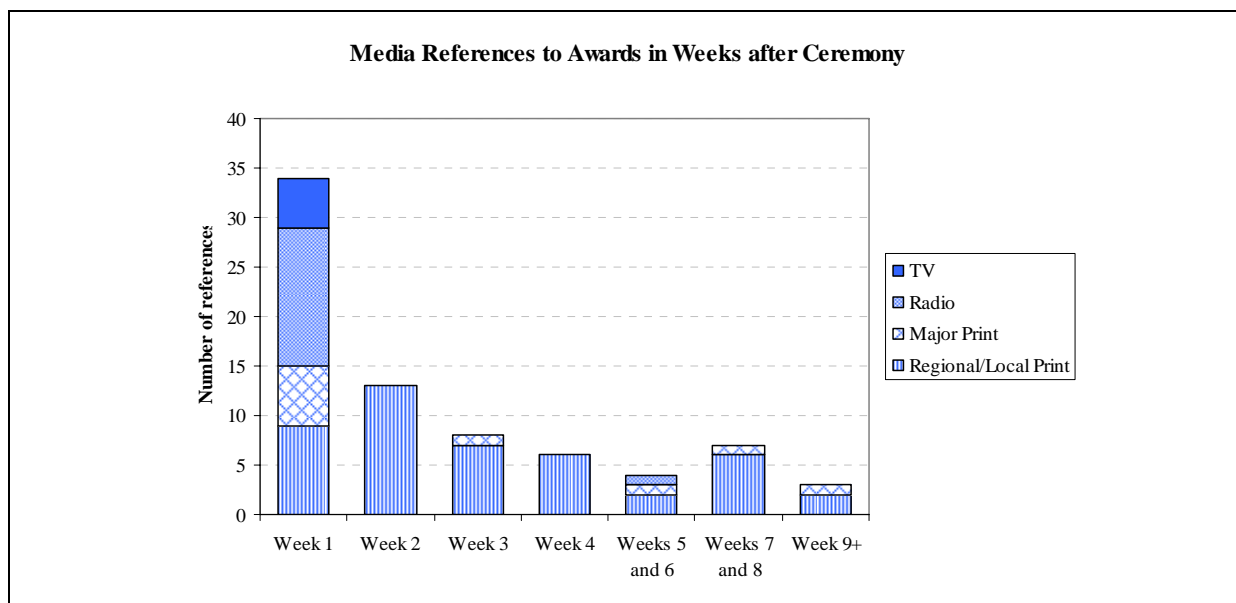
⁹ Schools, 2006. Table 1, Cat.No. 4221.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics.



More detailed analysis of AGNAQS nominations data could be undertaken to identify areas where awareness penetration of the Awards is relatively high or low (e.g. by Primary/Secondary/both Primary and Secondary/Special school, by Government/Catholic/Independent school, by metropolitan/regional location).

APPENDIX 4 – MEDIA TAKE UP

In the months following the announcement of the 2006 Awards Teaching Australia's media monitoring service identified 75 media references to the AGNAQS and Award winners on television and radio and in major, regional and local print media. Whilst the feedback from Award winners indicates that there was in fact much greater media uptake of the Awards, these references give a fair indication of the way in which the Awards were covered by the traditional media in 2006. Internet searches also identify some coverage of the Awards on school and educational websites and the websites of Members of Parliament. The following figure and tables summarise and profile this 'known' media take up.



The media uptake of the Awards in 2006 can be described as occurring in two distinct phases. The first phase relates to the week following the announcement of the Awards and the ceremony on Monday 27 February 2006. Forty-five percent, or nearly half of the 75 media references occurred in this first week, and much of this within the three days after the Awards ceremony. Furthermore, all of the television coverage and nearly all of the radio coverage also occurred in this first week. Most of the references to the Awards in major metropolitan daily/Sunday newspapers were in this first week. There was some coverage of Award winners in regional and local newspapers in Week 1.

The focus of the media uptake in this first phase was primarily on the Best National Achievement Award winners, in particular Garry Costello (Principal) and Margaret Meijers (Teacher). Not surprisingly, reporting of the Awards during this phase was strongest in South Australia and Tasmania.

Media coverage of the Awards shifted in Week 2 to regional and local newspapers who ran stories about their local Award winning teacher or school (e.g. "Top of the Class", "Excellent report for preschool", "Honour for groundsman"). These articles and photos tended to focus on the specifics of their local 'star', outlining the winner's 'national recognition' in winning 'a prestigious national teaching Award' and the enthusiastic and proud response from students, parents and fellow teachers.

Thereafter, the nature of the reporting tended to be concentrated in regional and local newspapers, with numbers gradually tailing off over a period of six to eight weeks. Whilst there was some doubling up of reporting, with the same or similar articles being run in local papers in neighbouring areas, for the most part these articles were one-off reports about individual Award winners.

Summary of media uptake (total 75 references)

By State/Territory	
▪ South Australia	21 (28%)
▪ NSW	19 (25%)
▪ Tasmania	14 (19%)
▪ Victoria	7 (9%)
▪ WA	4
▪ Queensland	3
▪ NT	3
▪ ACT	2
▪ National	2

By Media Type	
▪ Television	5 (7%)
▪ Radio	15 (20%)
▪ Major print	10 (13%)
▪ Regional/local print	45 (60%)

By Award Category and Level	
▪ Best National Achievement	12 (16%)
– Principal	
▪ Best National Achievement	8 (11%)
– Teacher	
▪ Best National Achievement	4
– School Support Staff	
▪ School Improvement	23 (31%)
▪ Multiple Award winners	12 (16%)
▪ Teacher	11 (15%)
▪ Principal	3
▪ School Support Staff	2

Examples of media outlets covering 2006 Awards

Television
▪ Sunrise (Channel 7)
▪ Mount Gambier WIN TV
▪ Tasmanian Southern Cross
▪ Townsville WIN TV

Radio
▪ ABC Local Radio (Adelaide, Hobart, South East SA, Northern Tasmania, Ballarat)
▪ ABC Radio National
▪ Hobart Magic
▪ Hobart Sea
▪ Ultra106five (Tasmania)

Regional/Local Print (NSW)
▪ Advocate
▪ Auburn Review
▪ Blacktown City Sun
▪ Blue Mountains Gazette
▪ Central Western Star
▪ Guardian News
▪ Lake Macquarie News
▪ Lithgow Mercury
▪ North Shore Times
▪ Parramatta Advertiser
▪ Parramatta Sun
▪ St Marys Star
▪ Sydney Central Courier
▪ The Border-Mail
▪ The Manly Daily
▪ The Northern Daily Leader
▪ Wentworth Courier
▪ Western Advocate

Major Print
▪ The Advertiser (SA)
▪ The Mercury (Tasmania)
▪ The Age (Victoria)
▪ The Canberra Times (ACT)
▪ Sunday Mail (SA)
▪ Northern Territory News (NT)

Regional/Local Print (Victoria)
▪ Education Times
▪ Maroondah Journal
▪ Melbourne's Child
▪ The Ovens and Murray Advertiser
▪ Yarra Ranges Journal

Regional/Local Print (Queensland)
▪ Whitsunday Times
▪ The Sun

Regional/Local Print (SA)
▪ Adelaide Child
▪ Roxby Downs Sun
▪ Standard Messenger
▪ The Border Watch
▪ The Flinders News
▪ The Islander
▪ The Murray Pioneer
▪ The Murray Pioneer
▪ The Southern Argus
▪ The Southern Cross

Regional/Local Print (WA)

- Canning Examiner
- Cockburn Gazette
- Fremantle Gazette
- Wanneroo Times

Regional/Local Print (Tasmania/NT/ACT)

- The Glenorchy Gazette (Tasmania)
- Territory Times (NT)
- The Queanbeyan Chronicle (ACT)

APPENDIX 5 – AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

There are different awards for teaching excellence that can be won by teachers and other school staff across the Australian school system. Some are awarded at State or Territory level, some are awarded within school sectors, some are curriculum or role based. The AGNAQS cover all of these dimensions. Some awards are sponsored by teacher professional associations, some are sponsored by government and some are corporately funded. Some award offer prize money to award winners, others offer money to schools, or for further general or specific professional development. A brief outline of some of these awards is presented here to indicate the nature and scope of the different teaching awards in Australia.

Name:	National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEITA)
Sponsor:	Australian Scholarship Group (ASG)
Scope:	Awards nominated by school councils, parent committees, parents and students are open to all practicing teachers in early childhood education centres, primary, secondary schools throughout Australia and New Zealand
Award Categories:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NEiTA State and Territory Awards (50) ▪ ASG Community Merit Awards (up to 80) ▪ National Awards and ASG Grants (15 selected from the above award winners).
Awards:	<p>Of the 50 NEiTA State and Territory Award winners, twelve teachers are presented with a NEiTA National Teaching Excellence Award. Each recipient receives a crystal apple and an ASG grant of \$5,000 to be used for their professional development or a chosen project. In addition, three teachers selected from the ASG Community Merit Award recipients receive National ASG Community Merit Awards. Each receives a crystal apple and an ASG grant of \$5,000 to be used for the benefit of their school and wider community.</p> <p>International Space Camp Prize: An additional teacher is selected to represent Australia and join international ‘Teachers of the Year’ from around the world, at the International Space Camp at the US Space & Rocket Center in the USA.</p>
Name:	National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2007 Minister’s Awards
Sponsor:	Department of Education, Science and Training
Scope:	All Australian teachers in the primary and secondary sectors
Award Categories:	Excellence Awards (12); Highly Commended (45)
Awards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eight Excellence Awards of \$10,000 each for one government school per State/Territory and 4 Excellence Awards of \$10,000 each for non-government schools Australia-wide ▪ Forty-five Highly Commended Awards of \$5,000 each for government and non-government schools.
Name:	National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education
Sponsor:	Department of Education, Science and Training
Scope:	Music teachers
Award Categories:	Teacher Award (10); School Leader Award (3)
Awards:	Up to thirteen awards for excellence and leadership in school music education will be awarded to teachers and school leaders in 2007. The awards will recognise the recipients’ exceptional contribution to enhancing the status and quality of music education in their schools. Each recipient will receive a grant to the value of \$5,000 to further their professional learning related to music education.

Name:	NSW Quality Teaching Awards
Sponsor:	NSW Department of Education and Training; The Daily Telegraph
Scope:	The Awards are open to permanent, part-time and casual government and non-government pre-school, early childhood, primary, secondary, university, TAFE and community education teachers in NSW
Award Categories:	Quality Teaching Award (up to 60)
Awards:	Awards will be made to teachers from educational institutions across NSW in 2007. Awards will be in the form of a testamur from the Australian College of Educators, presented by the NSW Minister for Education and Training, and an award of \$500 provided by The Daily Telegraph. Awardees will receive one year's free membership of the College.
Name:	Victorian Education Excellence Awards
Sponsor:	Victoria Teachers Credit Union; mecu
Scope:	All Victorian school teachers
Award Categories:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Lindsay Thompson Fellowship Award ▪ The Outstanding School Leadership Award ▪ The Outstanding School Leadership Team Award ▪ The Curriculum Innovation Award ▪ The Victoria Teachers Credit Union Outstanding Primary Teacher Award ▪ The mecu Outstanding Secondary Teacher Award ▪ The mecu Outstanding Business Manager Award ▪ The Outstanding School Services/Support Team Award
Awards:	The Lindsay Thompson Fellowship Award offers \$50,000 for an annual travel and research fellowship. The Outstanding School Leadership Award is also valued at \$50,000. The Outstanding School Leadership Team Award and The Curriculum Innovation Award receive a prize of \$20,000 each. Winners of each of the remaining four awards receive \$10,000 each.
Name:	2007 Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools
Sponsor:	Channel 10; Commonwealth Bank; RACQ; Media Monitors; QUT; The Courier Mail; RemServ
Scope:	Queensland government schools
Award Categories:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in the Middle Phase of Learning ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in the Senior Phase of Learning ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in Inclusive Education ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in Leadership ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in Innovation ▪ Showcase Award for Academic Excellence ▪ Showcase Award for Excellence in Community or Industry Partnerships
Awards:	In 2007, up to 97 regional awards will be announced during State Education Week – 28 May to 1 June 2007. Each will receive \$1,000 in development grants funds. Twenty four State Finalists (three from each category) will receive an additional \$5,000 grant, and have the chance to win one of eight State Awards of \$20,000.
Name:	Queensland Westfield Premier's Educational Scholarships
Sponsor:	Westfield Holdings Limited; Ginger Max Pty Ltd
Scope:	State and non-state secondary classroom teachers of science in Queensland
Award Categories:	Scholarships
Awards:	Up to five teachers will receive scholarships to the value of \$24,000 to undertake an overseas study tour in his/her chosen field related to science.

Name:	Tasmania Westfield Premier's Educational Scholarships
Sponsor:	Westfield Holdings Limited; Ginger Max Pty Ltd
Scope:	Tasmanian teachers
Award Categories:	Scholarships
Awards:	Four scholarships valued at \$12,000 each are available each year to Tasmanian teachers.
Name:	Premier's Teacher of the Year Award 2006
Sponsor:	ExxonMobil
Scope:	Western Australian teachers
Awards:	Nominees who are successful in either of the program's two rounds each receive \$1,000. At the end of the program in December, one teacher or lecturer receives the overall prize of \$25,000. There are also two highly commended awards of \$5,000 each. The schools of the overall prize winners also receive \$5,000 to be spent on teaching/training resources.
Name:	Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards (Northern Territory)
Sponsor:	Department of Employment, Education and Training
Scope:	Northern Territory teachers
Awards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher of the Year Award – \$1,000 prize and a certificate of recognition for the teacher and the school. ▪ Early Career Teacher of the Year Award – \$1,000 prize and a certificate of recognition for the teacher and the school. ▪ Teaching Excellence Awards (4 awards) – Certificate to successful teachers from urban, remote, primary and secondary sectors. ▪ School of the Year Award - \$2,500 for professional learning or resources and a certificate for the school.
Name:	The Bob Squire Annual Award for Excellence in Science Teaching
Sponsor:	Australian College of Educators (bequest); Australian Science Teachers Association; Australian Academy of Science
Scope:	Open to permanent, part-time and casual teachers of science in government and non-government primary and secondary schools in Australia
Awards:	\$1,000 to support the continuous professional learning of the award recipient.
Name:	Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education
Sponsor:	QSITE
Scope:	Queensland teachers and educational leaders who have made a significant contribution to the use and promotion of ICT in any curriculum area.
Award Categories:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educator of the Year ▪ Emerging Leader of the Year ▪ Outstanding Leader of the Year
Awards:	Title and prize of registration, accommodation and travel up to the value of \$1,000 to the annual QSITE conference.