



Friday, 9 October 2009

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretary

Re: Inquiry into Social Security and Other Legislation Amendment (Income Support for Students) Bill 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this Inquiry. I am pleased that Southern Cross University's submissions and evidence to the Inquiry into Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities will be also considered by this current Inquiry in so far as it is relevant.

One additional item I would like to highlight relates to the timing of the payment of the two scholarships (start-up and relocation) to students.

Southern Cross University, like a number of universities throughout Australia, has moved from a biannual semester teaching calendar to a trimester calendar. I note that while the Bill provides for payments on a standard two semester basis, it does allow for flexibility as to when these scholarships are to be paid. (The Explanatory Memorandum specifically refers to attendance at institutions that do not have biannual semesters as one example). Retaining the provision for flexibility is important. Further, I would also seek to ensure that the implementation of these exceptions remains sufficiently flexible (with clear guidelines for decision-makers) to ensure that otherwise eligible students are not disadvantaged by a trimester calendar.

Yours sincerely



Peter Lee