



Submission from

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to

Committee Secretary

**Senate Education Employment and Workplace Relations Committee**

PO Box 6100 Parliament House

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holding

**Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students**

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## 1. Introduction

The Australian international education industry needs to improve scrutiny, quality control and marketing of study in Australia to enhance and improve the Australian study experience for all overseas students and stakeholders.

Good news is that there is no need to “throw the baby out with the bath water” as resources and tools required already exist onshore in Australia, i.e. international students and virtual multimedia to communicate internationally, in addition to international administrative officers and management (if onshore).

Student welfare and related issues are not new, the writer of this submission researched Master of Education thesis (Victoria University) “International Education: Experience of Students & Stakeholders” in late 90's due to lack of discussion, data or systems related to the international student experience in Australia and to this time appears not much has changed.

Recent media investigations have focussed entirely upon Indian students, welfare and perceived migration rorts, however, these are symptoms of an underlying lack of management, marketing and oversight of the system by responsible Australian agencies and institutions.

**Central theme of this submission is based upon good management and marketing, i.e. need for systematic and regular feedback from students and stakeholders concerning study satisfaction, welfare and all related issues to ensure timely remedial actions and adjustment of system.**

The alternative is for students and stakeholders to continue relying upon the media and informal channels to expose concerns and demand immediate solutions?

### Who are we?

AIEC the Australian International Education Centre based in Budapest, Hungary was founded with limited backing of the University of Melbourne in 2000 (withdrew 2003), and has been operated independently since by the writer of this submission. AIEC markets and counsels a wide range of candidates virtually through internet and deals with candidates from Ireland and UK through Central Eastern Europe to Turkey, and Iranians (studying in Hungary).

My background includes Department of Veterans' Affairs Victorian Branch working various positions in Management Review, IT & Services, followed by past 20 years in international education teaching and management in U.K., Turkey, Taiwan, Australia and Central Europe. International education background includes teaching English, business & work skills, corporate training, market research, marketing, promotion, counselling and recruitment, in addition to establishing and managing a successful International House language school franchise in Istanbul late 90's.

We see most current issues as related to lack of marketing (includes onshore welfare and implicit quality control) that has been found across the Australian education sector (both state and private) since the 80's, i.e. focus upon short term promotion and selling of education as an export commodity while ignoring the qualitative or student experience.

*“Given the policy developments...and the increasingly important role played by overseas students in the university system, there is a surprising dearth of recent research or writing in relation to either their experiences and attitudes or to their learning needs and how these may be best be met” (Harris R, 1997)*

*“At the dawn of the new millennium a plethora of quantitative data has been published, exemplified by Australian newspaper headlines, trumpeting the increasing numbers of international students enrolling at Australian institutions and boosting the industry as a key export earner (Maslen 199a, Maslen 1999b, Thorp 1999 & Tysome 1999)*

One hopes that this Senate Inquiry can set the example of how to ensure a quality education system and product through actively seeking out informed feedback for improvements.

## **2. Literature Review - International Education Marketing - Student Welfare, Quality & Best Practice**

***The U.K.'s initial international fee paying marketing experience from state institution perspective was characterised as “limited by 'sketchy' market research, amateur recruitment techniques and the activities of some universities were compared to 'used car salesmen'. ...ultimately needed to not just sell but do real marketing, that is finding out what clients wanted” (Belcher 1987)***

***“Who are the new students and less direct clients, like employers? What do they want? How can it be best provided?” (Jones & Pritchard 2000)***

***“....warning of dangers when students pay fees, they have raised expectations and therefore expect a return on their investment. If an institution does not pay attention to quality, and students do not get value for money, then some may start resorting to litigation” (Illing 1999)***

***“If they don't like our courses they wouldn't come would they? 'I haven't heard anyone complaining, have you?' Attitudes such as these, though seldom voiced loudly or publicly, may be covertly present in many higher education institutions. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that all **too many institutions see overseas students solely or mainly in financial terms, they are also an important educational resource, bringing fresh perspectives to our culture and are by no means simply a lucrative nuisance to be tolerated” (Ackers 1997)*****

***“To achieve consistent quality of value creation and delivery to the customer, sustained research and feedback from intermediate and final customers is required” (Ackers 1997, Chisnall 1988, O'Brien***

1987, Wilkinson & Cheng 1993)

*“Management of students should be part of a whole quality assurance system ..... **the challenge appears to be .... the systemisation of an integrated marketing and quality life cycle in education institutions’ management processes.**” (Piper 1993)*

**“Such an approach could systemise surveying for example, as a cyclical part of an institutions’ marketing and quality assurance strategy”** (Freestone 1994, Hill 1994 & Illing 1999)

*“It would be in the interests of the education industry to have in place systems or agencies, like the mooted **Australian Federal Quality Agency, to monitor the experience of both international and domestic stakeholders**” (Maslen 2000 & Kemp 1999).*

### 3. Problems & Issues

Student welfare issues and public protests are valid, many of these issues have always existed, but while institutions feign ignorance through not asking, Indian students in particular have taken on some Australian traits of demanding “a fair go”. This makes their experience in Australia, though negative in some respects, a great success of the hidden curriculum raising confidence and independence of international students from developing countries where independence is not tolerated.

*“Australian universities, TAFEs and Colleges have all these thousands of international students but they do not know how they got here because they have no marketing strategy nor do they speak with them (onshore). Further, Australia has developed an excellent system of legislation and regulations (ESOS and National Code) to assure quality, but only on paper.....in practice not enforced pro actively” (University International Marketing Officer, 2007)*

**Standard or accepted definition of marketing includes client satisfaction ensuring the product meets their needs through ongoing feedback and evaluation.** However, and contrarily, the **ESOS Education Services for Overseas Students Act. definition of marketing focuses solely upon promotions requiring (encouraging?) offshore travel by relevant international administrative personnel?**

The previous comments suggest that many problems are symptoms which could be indirectly caused by those personnel who are responsible for oversight and improvement of the system. Many senior and other administrators in sector clearly do not have the required management and marketing skills, or are under no duty to carry out their roles to a high professional standard (especially with ever increasing numbers and travel opportunities for all)?

Good management should be obvious to all but marketing, the widely accepted definition includes client or student satisfaction through regular feedback and analysis (where welfare issues would be at the forefront?), followed by visible concrete action. Such marketing then leads to satisfied students who inform and refer their friends (could be up to 90% of all students) and therefore institutions need not focus upon direct short term and aggressive selling offshore via one off fairs and seminars.



#### **4. Student safety**

Advice can be assessed as adequate through feedback from student surveys, welfare officers, teachers and learn what safety and welfare concerns students have for inclusion and other actions. Advice can then be formulated for specific locations in cooperation with local communities and how to communicate effectively to prospective international candidates and stakeholders?

Respective state bodies and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) via Education Services for Overseas Students Act. (ESOS) are supposed to ensure providers have active student welfare management systems? ESOS via DEEWR needs to include a checklist of specific student safety topics and advice that must be communicated. Further issue, what student support is available after hours?

Most effective means of communicating pre departure study and related information or advice is internet based video highlighted through institutional, agent, state education "marketing" bodies and DEEWR Study in Australia websites.

Further, in addition to advice given in compulsory orientation sessions before classes commence, these institution sessions should include welfare, safety advice, in addition to migration, employment, accommodation, and videotaped for much wider international distribution to prospective candidates and families via institutional websites (good home grown authentic promotional materials). Agents can be directed to give candidates access to such advice and confirm on student application agreement statement (most institutions demand with acceptance of letter of offer).

#### **Follow up:**

If quality assurance system in place e.g. regular student surveying, issues should emerge and advice formulated accordingly within an institutional policy and system that can be verified for compliance.

#### **Benefits:**

-Industry and government proactive in managing student welfare, and involves local or regional communities with international students.

-When welfare or safety issues emerge they can be acted upon immediately, and advice communicated via internet and other media.

-Education industry personnel do not need to travel offshore to advise on student safety and welfare face to face, internet has far greater reach all year round, more economic and measurable.

## 5. Accommodation

Adequate and affordable accommodation has also been an issue for Australian students, and specific issues and concerns of international candidates could be elicited via survey giving feedback and offering advice.

Could be tied in with state governments and councils to encourage increased higher density urban planning and construction including student apartments both dedicated and with existing residential dwellings (with tax/financial incentives).

Institutions must be able to guarantee housing to prospective candidates directly? Many, if not most, outsource accommodation to subcontractors e.g. home stay providers and apartment complexes and do not assist directly (therefore not aware of problems or issues?)

Pressure on capital cities from international candidates is partly due to not knowing regional alternatives and in most cases they cannot study regionally as restricted to Commonwealth Register of Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). Encourage availability of more CRICOS courses in regional towns and cities, many more (especially mature with family units) candidates could or would go regional but lack awareness and knowledge of Australian regions.

Any accommodation should include Australian students and general community where possible. Encourage more in general Australian community to offer home stay to international students through promotion and financial incentives. Many institutions have long standing relationships with commercial providers, in addition to their own personnel to whom they can refer accommodation requests (public servants working in universities and TAFEs allowed to run related part time businesses and consultancies?).

### **Follow up:**

Monitor property market issues and student concerns via regular survey to inform accommodation strategies.

### **Benefits:**

- Institutions liaising more closely with students and accommodation providers on accommodation will help improve the study experience.
- Closer links through local communities, and potential for broader Australian society to interact with international students locally.
- Impetus to encourage higher density mixed living, or regional living, versus increasing outer urban sprawl, stretched services and less security.

## **6. Social inclusion:**

Social inclusion is an integral part of the international student experience but unfortunately there has been some isolation of international candidates in Australia through restrictive government regulations, negative community attitudes toward foreigners (of non Caucasian background), viewed by sector solely as cash cows and negative (misinformed) media reporting.

Need for regular informed feedback from international students as informal feedback from many international students complain that the only Australian they have had any true social experience with is their own teacher(s), welfare/recreational officer(s) and home stay family after hours.

What events and activities does the provider conduct to ensure not just social activities with other students but cross cultural interaction with Australians? Is enough being done to provide opportunities outside school hours with Australian communities?

Not encouraged by CRICOS with some institutions, due to compliance requirements, keeping international students separate from domestic. This is exacerbated further when some private colleges and state institutions have a dominant international student group, which is often a negative for their compatriots and other international candidates who want an "Australian" study experience.

Another issue here where Australian institutions need to diversify their international student population further, the experience is lessened if classes are dominated by one or two main student nationalities. International students should expect to be studying beside Australian students, conversely, international student only colleges must be encouraged to take in Australian students to be registered as an RTO, and on CRICOS?

### **Follow up:**

Survey feedback and cap nationality numbers (some private colleges already do this to ensure diversity) or require enrollment of Australian students?

More after hours social activities involving local communities, many private English colleges do, but in state sector, employment conditions precludes any significant after hours involvement from personnel (in fact agents (even from offshore), other international students and local charities have to deal with much of the out of office hours welfare, security and emergency issues onshore)

### **Benefits:**

Ideally any international candidate who wishes to study in Australia will do so in a learning environment with students from all continents, including Australian domestic students. This not only benefits and enriches the international students, and prepares them for life in Australia (if planning Permanent Residency PR) but Australians also.



## 7. Student visa system:

System has improved over the years and more transparent via Department Immigration and Citizenship DIAC website. Study visa processing differs from country to country and course category i.e. English, School, Vocational Education & Training VET, Higher Education etc.

Candidate feedback would be interesting but concerns we are aware of include:

- insufficient living funds.
- vague PR outcomes from course pathway
- student visa “compliance” used by institutions to discourage students from raising issues onshore
- MARA agents, it is very clear many are gaining MARA registration through rote learning for an exam.....but unable to give sound advice on actual cases.
- no institutional personnel, nor any other Australian citizen, can offer any visa or migration advice thus candidates are left guessing or accessing informal advice from e.g. other students, family, etc..

### Follow up:

- Survey feedback required from all stakeholders i.e. students, institutions, education agents, MARA agents, DIAC and Embassies
- AL4 countries (India, China etc.) are required to show funds for up to two years for study, travel and living costs as part of the offshore Pre Visa Assessment process, but should also be required to show funds used and available at regular intervals? (appears to be common practice that funds shown for PVA, especially living costs and future study fees, are often not accessible after commencing study)
- Require face to face interviews with all AL4 candidates versus paper based application, to ensure bona fides
- Clear advice about student visa rights and access to independent authority e.g. Ombudsman?
- Offshore DIAC conducts regular workshops for education agents which could be complemented by more local information on Embassy website?
- Explain PR pathways publicly i.e. a good preparation for life in Australia with an Australian qualification, improve assessment of skill shortages and demand so more up to date i.e. timely (for the Australian public who do not believe there are skill shortages). If compliance issues and recommendations to improve quality are enforced, many PR related issues will subside or disappear.

### Benefits:

Increased transparency of visa system, DIAC improving PVA investigation offshore to ensure compliance and student PR applicants make a seamless fit into Australian society.

## **8. Student support and advocacy**

On one hand the responsibility of the institution and must not only be promoted, but made accessible as an integral part of studying and living in a first world democracy. This accessibility, due to cultural issues, cannot be just physical face to face, but regular surveys (anonymity must be an option) to ascertain what issues or concerns may exist. Additionally, international students must be made aware of outside organisations, not just for international students, but also Australian bodies e.g. Salvation Army. AIEC would fully support an Ombudsman provided they are fully independent, observe privacy laws, absolute confidentiality and can investigate anywhere within whole sector and make recommendations.

## **9. Employment rights**

Again institutions, as part of orientation, have duty to explain rights and responsibilities of students in the workplace, plus liaise and cooperate with related stakeholders e.g. hospitality unions, welfare officers, teachers etc. for feedback and advice. Again, standard issues would emerge if there was an opportunity to give feedback.

## **10. Appropriate pathways to permanency**

Multiple issues include actual shortfall in skills, which occupations, numbers, where and till when is a particular skill in demand?

Australians also need to be informed of this, because more Australians could take up occupations in shortage, but with ageing population and decreasing tax base, also means there would be a continuing need to entice international candidates into skill shortage residency pathways (against northern hemisphere competitors).

Definite time frames are required for how long an occupation is on Skilled Occupation List SOL, Migration Occupation Demand List MODL or Critical Skills List CSL thus allowing all stakeholders to plan, i.e. no short term knee jerk changes but medium long term notification of orderly changes.

For TAFE and VET colleges especially, how to ensure these are not merely commodity or cash cow courses for residency? Actively ensuring very high academic and training standards which would probably require much more intrusive evaluation by independent assessors, compared to now? Demand both VET and university sector provide related vocational and professional internships?

Study for PR pathway is an excellent system, but barring such students from applying for PR will send message out that Australia does not recognise its own qualifications, i.e. candidates with Australian qualifications would be penalised, while foreign awards and qualifications would be rewarded under the migration point system?

## **11. Benchmarks**

Every institutions should have valid and meaningful benchmarks for all areas of activity already as good management, as international literature has highlighted the importance in managing quality in education (and other services), but appears to be cultural reasons for benchmarks not to be adopted by Australian education sector?

### **Learning/Teaching**

Australian education sector, in theory, has much expertise to ascertain what needs to be benchmarked and assessed by referring to the clients and stakeholders. This includes students, skills assessment bodies, employers, competency frameworks etc. then ongoing compulsory evaluation is needed (overseen by Australian Quality Agency) to enforce corrective action when needed, and to publish results for the public and prospective candidates.

Major obstacle in Australia is again cultural resistance from both institutions and teachers toward any transparent assessment or evaluation of teaching and learning quality e.g. students can offer feedback on teaching materials but not on their actual teaching or learning experience which they are paying for?

Aware that the Baird Review of ESOS will include round table giving international students opportunity to air their views. Unfortunately this exemplifies the patronising attitude toward international students (the expensive nuisance to be tolerated), they should be given opportunity to do so at anytime, not at the invitation of the industry or the government?

### **Counselling Advice**

Prospective candidates could be assisted greatly by institutions and related bodies making better quality information available, and accessible e.g. online. Many non Australian agents and onshore international administrative officers do not have any Australian occupational experience, and in the case of the latter, cannot offer any advice on visas and migration (which is what most candidates must learn).

### **Education Agents**

Pierlonline developed the Education Agents Training Course which some institutions demand as compulsory for agents, but this is not a solution as bad agents need only rote learn and pay to gain award, i.e. test is empirical and can be redone till pass mark attained. There does not appear to be any direct linkage between empirical knowledge it is testing and an education agent performing their role professionally and ethically?

The best judge of all round agent performance (not just selling or empirical knowledge) including the quality of advice and application process, are students who can offer feedback via satisfaction surveys. Additionally, institutions could attempt to engage agents in ongoing dialogue related to marketing, but the author has not been aware of any Australian institution having a marketing strategy

developed with agent(s), institutions again especially state sector, work independently of agents?

## **12. Marketing and Promotional Benchmarks - Marketing or Travel Rorting?**

Marketing and promotion of Australian education requires much more scrutiny and analysis as internationally we have seen expensive and ineffective travel via “state government approved international travel plans” becoming the focus of industry personnel, while avoiding more effective marketing via internet channels and existing students?

Aware that many state institutions (simplistically) benchmark marketing/promotional performance on offshore education fairs and events e.g. how many enquiries, how many brochures distributed, how many attendees if fair, how many meetings, how many applications (although an application is merely expression of interest i.e. start of application process over months) etc. Where there needs to be accountability, agent is responsible.

Under the ESOS Act marketing has been defined, incorrectly or narrowly, as purely promotions to students and families, which many argue encourages (state sector especially) frequent travel to offshore events while ignoring the best marketing channels, onshore students, internet and agents (not to forget being available to solve welfare and other issues onshore)?

However, concrete results or accountability for candidates i.e. numbers who actually commence and reach census date are then apportioned to agents (in addition to arbitrary recruitment targets without analysis of each market) ?

Curiously some state institutions and the majority of private institutions do not attend fairs because they are not effective yet many still persist? These events not only take significant resources when onshore Australian personnel attend (airfares, accommodation & allowances), but are something of a fait accompli (even if agent does not recommend) and first question asked from state institutions when making agreement i.e. when is a good time to visit, or when is the next education fair in your city or region?

However, the marketing issue is that fairs are not adequately analysed for outcomes, raw enquiry and application numbers are not enough (especially when many events attract people wandering in off street), fair time frames are too short compared with process via agents and internet.

**The whole attitude is exemplified by former La Trobe Vice Chancellor “Uni chief quits over travel row”.**

***Feedback from senior personnel:***

***“Why do we need a marketing strategy, we already have an approved travel plan?” (Senior TAFE International Director, 2008)***

This unfortunately is indicative of how (mid and senior) institutional personnel working in the international area of state sector see their role, to focus upon travel offshore (perceived status)..... You do not find management in travel companies and airlines travelling offshore to 2-3 day physical

promotional events trying to book clients directly? They use agents and the internet, while focussing upon quality control, developing their product and dealing with agent enquiries onshore.

### **Useful Promotional or Recruitment Analysis Framework:**

1. How are all candidates for one particular country market recruited: direct online, agent online or offshore fair/event?
2. Further, how did candidates become aware of institution web search, word of mouth, agent, promotional event, home institution advice etc. etc. If offshore events account for less than 5% of candidates but take 50% of marketing budget, why continue to invest in them?
3. If events do account (in theory) for a significant proportion of all candidates it is not valid to count raw applications as there is no obligation to commit to course of study. From those applications how many became offers, then Confirmations of Enrolment (CoE), then visa, candidates commencing in Australia and finally candidates remaining till and through the census date?
4. The internet, offers a rich picture and analysis, marketing recruitment channel and chance to accurately measure consumer behaviour of any market provided an institution has a **web optimisation strategy (ATDW Australian Tourism Data Warehouse online marketing ekit) with international industry reports suggesting this should be emulated internationally as best marketing practice.**
5. This of course includes strategy and cooperation with offshore agents e.g. reciprocal web links, inclusion in directories and online promos, with Google Analytics installed. Unfortunately, although the tourism sector is taking on virtual or internet based market development and marketing, most in the international education sector prefer not to use the internet in deference to the industry's "accepted marketing practice", i.e. travelling offshore to events.....

### 13. Other Related Matters

**Marketing or Travel Rorts?** Why does the Australian education export industry, with access to education and training sector's wealth of marketing expertise and practice, still invest massive amounts of public money into travelling offshore for one off physical promotional events? At best it is very anachronistic and old style of international promotion, at worst it is travel rorting.

Why has the writer of this submission, after working in international education for over 15 years in teaching, management and marketing never been aware of any Australian institution having a marketing strategy? If institutions actually developed marketing strategy through ongoing feedback with students and stakeholders, they would not need to travel and international students would not only have higher levels of administrative service and welfare support onshore, but also have a superior education experience in Australia.

**Australian Education International DEEWR Study in Australia** website has never been optimised to be most effective online i.e. appears more about revenue raising from institutions for key markets (AEI DEEWR claims they do not and are not responsible for marketing in any shape or form, but then comment publicly on Australian and international education market?).

Similar to state international education websites where more importance is placed not on internet via website, but personnel travelling to offshore physical events, promoting website and state via physical banner....? (defeats the purpose?). For critical marketing mass in the most significant marketing arena, i.e. internet, it would be ideal if all state and regional education websites came under one Study in Australia website, along with tourism, migration and investment (Council Of Australian Government COAG matter), as in case of tourism there are too many official bodies, state organisations, committees and groups in Australia for effective marketing to be conducted.

**Education Agents** (Pieronline) empirical test i.e. rote learn "answers" to pass and gain award (like Citizenship test), after paying money to Pieronline who are a non profit NGO monopoly, conflict of interest? **Like International Federation of Travel Agents AFTA** accredited agents, many education agents would be happy to become accredited under a fair and meaningful system (plus marketing Australia all year round) but quid pro quo, i.e. any accredited agent can provide service for prospective candidates for any institution and receive commission for candidates who commence.

**International English Language Testing System IELTS** Has become too well known, developed in Australia and UK (by British Council & Cambridge Exams) and favoured because it is majority Australian owned (International Development Program IDP owned by Universities Australia, and Seek). Issues include lack of supply i.e. wait list in many regions as owners of exam choose not to invest resources while it is the monopoly test for any DIAC migration related visa application and it is now coachable, i.e. can learn strategies and systems to pass. Solution is simply to pare back monopoly position of IELTS and like in the past allow use of internationally recognised tests including TOEFL, Cambridge, Pitman etc. which are all comparable and well supplied internationally.

**State qualifications and skills accreditation?** If the EU and different sovereign states with different languages can have award and qualification mobility across borders, surely Australia can manage same across state borders? Frequently commented upon by international candidates and Australians living on borders, especially tradespeople, health/medical and teachers, another matter for COAG.

#### 14. Conflict of interest or corruption?

News reports in 2009 regarding violent incidents against Indians students is not only a wake up call re. student welfare, but that also that the industry is undergoing more media scrutiny. Appears to be the perception that it is the private sector colleges that are the root cause of all issues yet you will find best practice and highly satisfied candidates within a majority of the private sector institutions.

There should be concerns however in the state sector which through privilege of autonomy has been under limited scrutiny, while at best conflicts of interest, and professional misconduct have been occurring. We cannot comment because anyone involved is very careful, nothing is ever written down (same as no marketing strategies one less management control and record) and preference for verbal face to face conversations, plus state institutions habit of threatening to break agent agreements if agents raise any issues (similar to threats of visa reporting to complaining students).

The areas of conflict and potentially unethical conduct fall under several activities:

- travel for promotion or marketing practice is rife as outlined previously, a taster for now, which TAFE International Marketing Manager prepared for offshore promotional event at a resort location in Asia Pacific, where a planned exhibition had been cancelled well ahead of time, but they still went as they had approval anyway (at public expense?). Which State's TAFE International personnel sent out agent broadcast on email celebrating fact their international travel plans had been approved, yippee!
- offshore campuses, several universities have lost millions through investing in offshore campuses resulting in failures. Of those responsible none have been sanctioned?
- offshore training ventures & projects e.g. an Australian TAFE visited Hungary 7-8 times in an (incompetent) attempt to find a training partner because their boss and her husband (and their own teaching personnel based in Australia) wanted to work in Central Europe on an Australian salary (before they retired).
- public university campuses (and resources) being used by permanent and other employees to seed their own enterprises e.g. past examples of businesses promoted through university email include home stay, education agency, consulting business etc. Public sector regulations and ethics in the past precluded any member of personnel from having outside commercial interests, and those resigning (due to technical knowledge gained) could not work in same private sector/occupation for two years?
- private companies given monopolies on university preparation courses, without public tender, unclear establishment procedures, while university personnel are subcontracted as teachers, and management given senior positions in private company with shares and other benefits? Many similar examples where the public institution commercialises part of their revenue operations then awards positions and shareholdings to senior staff.
- flagrant rorting of travel opportunities and expenses under the guise of institutional business, marketing or personnel (personal?) development, e.g. European International Education Association EAIE Madrid Annual Conference, professional development travel opportunity, [Australian EAIE Conference participants 2009 listed here](#), another export success where over hundred Australian international education administrators will attend in 2009. Total bill including one side trip in Europe would be minimum of \$AUD1million, this is a sector crying

poor, have they not heard of the internet and video conferencing?

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