



30 May 2008

Ms Maria Vamvakinou  
Chair, Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Innovation  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Vamvakinou,

The University of the Sunshine Coast welcomes the present inquiry into research training and research workforce issues and appreciates the opportunity to make this submission. We have read the draft submission by the Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies group and strongly endorse their recommendations.

The University of the Sunshine Coast is a relatively new institution with a rapidly growing cohort of HDR students. As such, we particularly agree with/support:

**Recommendation 1:**

That the number of RTS places available to Australian universities be increased.

**Recommendation 2:**

That government fund the full cost of each HDR program and abolish the high cost/low cost divide.

**Recommendation 3:**

That the RTS scheme funding formula be modified to allow the splitting of HDR completions between pairs of Australian universities in order to recognise joint provision of PhDs.

**Recommendations 4, 5 and 6 respectively:**

To increase the APA stipend by at least 30% per annum tax free with appropriate indexation, to increase the length of the APA stipend to 3.5 years with an optional six month extension, and to increase the number of IPRS awards.

**Recommendation 8:**

That there be a full review of the suite of government funded programs that provide support for industry links for PhD students.

**Recommendation 9:**

That the government supports an active research agenda to inform quality improvement in HDR programs and outcomes.

In addition, we agree with the DDOGS assertion that more funding needs to be made available to support early career researchers and postdoctoral positions to enhance the transition from research candidature to the research workforce.

We would further emphasise the critical role of HDR students in building the research profile of regional and smaller institutions and the regions they serve. Allocation of places should acknowledge this synergy and its importance to the future growth and development of Australia as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Hill'.

Professor Greg Hill  
Acting Vice-Chancellor