



Supplementary Submission No 17

Inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationship with the economies of the Gulf States

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Response to Questions on Notice for Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (Trade-Sub-Committee)

Any impact on Australian universities of the success of the University of Wollongong campus in Dubai

We understand Australian universities are aware of the success of the University of Wollongong Dubai campus, though have been wary of setting up their own onshore campuses in the UAE given the accreditation difficulties being faced by UOW D. Griffith University is undertaking a feasibility study to determine whether or not to establish a Dubai-based campus. A number of Australian universities have been recently courted by an influential UAE businessman/former diplomat to establish a combined Australian university (including the ANU and Curtin University). They are, however, treading warily.

Alumni Associations – Are there any or do we plan to facilitate their establishment?

We are all aware of the importance of involving alumni in current and future promotional activities.

There is a lot of talk about facilitating alumni involvement, but activities will have to be driven by the Australian Government. DFAT throughout the region has indicated its willingness to be involved in anything organised by AEI Middle East.

Formal Associations have not yet been established, but AEI Middle East has proposed active alumni involvement next financial year. AEI Middle East will work in cooperation with IDP to set-up formal committees in the region. Incorporation issues vary throughout the Gulf States, so an "Association" may be difficult and expensive to establish.

Involvement from W.A. universities/institutions in the Gulf States

WA is a preferred destination for students from the Gulf States. A lot of goodwill was established in 2002 when the WA Minister of Education visited the region, with the Vice Chancellors of each of WA's universities.

In particular, the University of Western Australia, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University and TAFE WA are very active in the region.

The non-stop Dubai-Perth flights (which only take 11 hours) have resulted in increasing trade flows in educational services.

Is there any Australian involvement in the Qatar Education City and Dubai Knowledge Village initiatives? Do we have any comments on the success of these Centres?

The University of Wollongong in Dubai has a second teaching campus at Knowledge Village. The University of Southern Queensland recently formed a partnership with

a local company at Knowledge Village. There are issues relating to accreditation and style of operation at Knowledge Village, and AEI Middle East has advised universities to be cautious in looking to operate from this free-trade zone. There is little clarity on regulatory issues.

There is no Australian involved in Qatar's Education City development. This development is small right now, but as Qatar is highly influential in the region, it should be a successful initiative. A formal bilateral agreement would help encourage the flow of educational services.

Is there any interest in, or prospects for, Australian agriculture-related courses in the Gulf States to complement our trade in agricultural products?

Right now there is little interest from the Gulf States in agricultural related courses. However, the University of Adelaide has a number of Iranian PhD students undertaking agricultural research. There are opportunities for agricultural research collaboration between Iran and Australia (as well as trade).

Interest in or prospects for I.T and Distance Education

There are issues in the Gulf States regarding accreditation of Degrees awarded from online or distance studies which may prevent the Gulf national population from studying in this mode. However, as the Gulf States are heavily populated with expatriates, there are a number of students enrolled in distance courses. Australia has much to offer the region in its expertise in distance and online learning, particularly instructional design of online courseware.

Any activities by TAFE colleges in the Gulf region

AEI Middle East has proposed a VET / ELICOS Roadshow to the UAE, Qatar and Oman in late 2004, which would be a whole of government effort (in particular, working in partnership with Austrade to organise the Roadshow). Much of this visit would look to changing the perception of vocational education and training in the region, profiling the Australian Qualifications Framework (ie pathways), and profiling TAFE activities and courseware. TAFE WA is the most active TAFE provider in the region, through onshore teaching and recruitment to Perth.

AEI International Student Enrolment Data Extract: January 2004

Middle East Enrolments 2002 and 2003 - Nationality by Sector

Year	2002
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Sum of Number	Sector					Grand Total
Country	ELICOS	Higher Education	Other (Non-Award Courses, Enabling Courses)	Schools	VET	Grand Total
Bahrain	12	32	13	1	34	92
Iran, Islamic Republic of	65	194	9	21	16	305
Kuwait	31	30	12	4	12	89
Oman	159	166	58	2	84	469
Qatar	76	3	7		17	103
Saudi Arabia	64	42	2	7	13	128
United Arab Emirates	103	98	43	4	33	281
Grand Total	510	565	144	39	209	1467

Year	2003
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Sum of Number	Sector					Grand Total
Country	ELICOS	Higher Education	Other (Non-Award Courses, Enabling Courses)	Schools	VET	Grand Total
Bahrain	22	64	18	1	55	160
Iran, Islamic Republic of	125	346	7	65	17	560
Kuwait	20	58	11	2	15	106
Oman	205	283	70	14	118	690
Qatar	131	9	2		82	224
Saudi Arabia	142	85	11	11	15	264
United Arab Emirates	185	135	66	10	75	471
Grand Total	830	980	185	103	377	2475

DEST
Public Hearing 29 March 2004

Middle East - Country by Sector 2002 and 2003

Year	2002
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Country	Sector					Grand Total
	ELICOS	Higher Education	Other (Non-Award Courses, Enabling Courses)	Schools	VET	
Bahrain	12	32	13	1	34	92
Kuwait	31	30	12	4	12	89
Oman	159	166	58	2	84	469
Qatar	76	3	7		17	103
Saudi Arabia	64	42	2	7	13	128
United Arab Emirates	103	98	43	4	33	281
Grand Total	445	371	135	18	193	1162

+ 305 (IRAN) = 1467

Year	2003
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Country	Sector					Grand Total
	ELICOS	Higher Education	Other (Non-Award Courses, Enabling Courses)	Schools	VET	
Bahrain	22	64	18	1	55	160
Kuwait	20	58	11	2	15	106
Oman	205	283	70	14	118	690
Qatar	131	9	2		82	224
Saudi Arabia	142	85	11	11	15	264
United Arab Emirates	185	135	66	10	75	471
Grand Total	705	634	178	38	360	1915

+ 560 (IRAN) = 2475