



Submission No 2

Inquiry into Australia's Overseas Representation

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Dr John Carter
Inquiry Secretary for the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir

Parliamentary review into Australia's Overseas Representation

We are pleased to make this short submission in relation to the Parliamentary review into Australia's Overseas Representation. We will focus on the first of the terms of reference, the activities of Australia's overseas missions, and limit our submission to one small point.

International education is often seen as a great export earner for Australia . Not only is international education a great export earner, it is also a fantastic introduction to Australian culture for people who are hopefully to be their country's future business, community and political leaders. Therefore international education can play a great role in Australia's soft diplomacy and future export strategy.

When international students returned to their home country, they become a large potential soft power for Australia.

We therefore propose the following:

Every Australian Embassy in the South East and South Asian regions should foster the creation of an "Australian Alumni". Many senior political and business leaders in the Asia Pacific region have received some or all of their education in Australia. We should maximise the diplomatic, cultural and business advantages to all countries by keeping track and fostering a lifetime cultural connection between former students and our country. While some universities are doing this, surely the Australian government should do so as part of a soft diplomatic outreach.

Whilst some universities are sponsoring the creation of their own alumni, and some business leaders are setting up their own groups, we believe it would be in Australia's great interest for the fostering of an Australian alumni to be a crucial part of Australian overseas missions in countries that have high representation within the Australian international education market.

Yours sincerely


Andrew MacLeod
Chief Executive Officer