

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE SENATE

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

PERSONS REFERRED TO IN THE SENATE

**STAFF AND FACULTY OF
GREENWICH UNIVERSITY**

101ST REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2001

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REPORT

1. On 17 September 2001 the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Margaret Reid, received a submission from Mr Jack Marges, on behalf of the staff and faculty of Greenwich University. It concerned a matter purportedly raised by Senator Carr in the Senate on 7 June 2001, and also referred to statements made by Mr Michael Gallagher, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. The President referred the submission to the Committee of Privileges under Resolution 5.

2. On examining the *Hansard* reference given in the submission, the committee discovered that the comments were not made in the Senate but during a hearing of the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Legislation Committee during examination of estimates on that day. Normal practice would be for the matter to be forwarded to that committee. The Committee of Privileges noted, however, that on 25 June 2001 Senator Carr referred in the Senate to the administrator of Greenwich University and, later in his speech, made the following comment:

Every single allegation that I have made about Greenwich University ...
has been demonstrated to be correct.

3. In order to finalise this matter, the committee considered it appropriate under the circumstances to treat the submission as falling within the provisions of Privilege Resolution 5. Necessary adjustments have been made to the content of the submission to accord with this decision; in accordance with Privilege Resolution 5(7)(b), all changes to the submission have been agreed to by the committee and Mr Marges.

4. The committee draws attention to paragraph 5(6) of the resolution which requires that, in considering a submission under this resolution and reporting to the Senate, the committee shall not consider or judge the truth of any statements made in the Senate or of the submission.

5. The committee **recommends**:

That a response by Mr Jack Marges, on behalf of the staff and faculty of Greenwich University, in the terms specified at Appendix One, and agreed to by Mr Marges and the committee, be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Robert Ray
Chair

APPENDIX ONE

**RESPONSE BY MR JACK MARGES, ON BEHALF OF STAFF AND
FACULTY OF GREENWICH UNIVERSITY, AGREED TO BY MR MARGES
AND THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES
PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 5(7)(B) OF THE SENATE
OF 25 FEBRUARY 1988**

It has been brought to our attention that on Monday, 25 June 2001, Senator Carr referred in the Senate to certain inaccurate and misleading comments made at hearings of the Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Legislation Committee on 7 June 2001, during consideration of estimates for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. The comments related to the qualifications of staff and the academic faculty at Greenwich University and the content of certain curricula offered by Greenwich University. I am writing on behalf of the staff at Greenwich University who are concerned at the implications of these statements made under parliamentary privilege. The comments made to the legislation committee directly attack the reputation and academic credibility of all of us, and we seek to have this injustice corrected.

It was stated that there is a lack of qualified faculty and core staff to supervise academic activity at Greenwich University. However, the administrative headquarters of Greenwich University on Norfolk Island is staffed by well qualified individuals who are responsible, together with the Deans, for engaging and supervising academic faculty. The Registrar has a PhD from London University, the Academic Dean has a PhD from Sydney University, the Bursar has an economics degree from the Australian National University, and the Academic Officer has an Honours degree from Sydney University and is a PhD candidate at Wollongong University. This core staff assists the Deans in the process of appointing new faculty, they oversee and facilitate the ongoing administrative matters relating to faculty, and are charged with ensuring that only fully qualified individuals are admitted to the faculty of Greenwich University. Greenwich faculty are expected to meet rigorous requirements in order to serve as course instructors or student committee members. There are currently 163 Faculty, 157 of whom have a PhD. All of these faculty members had their highest degree verified at the time of appointment, and only those whose degrees were awarded by an accredited university (nationally accredited and listed on the UNESCO World List of Universities) were accepted as faculty members. Indeed the majority of our faculty are PhD graduates from highly regarded North American and British universities including Cornell, UCLA, Harvard, Walden, Northwestern, New York and London, to name a few. In rare cases, individuals who are recognised experts in their fields have been accepted to the faculty with less than a doctoral degree. These include three members of faculty whose highest qualification is a Masters degree, and three registered Medical Doctors who are recognised for their area of specialisation. Only a small number of faculty (less than 10%) are graduates of Greenwich University; Greenwich graduates are only considered for faculty positions if they have an exceptional student or postgraduate record.

The standard of graduate theses and dissertations has been criticised. However, the Review Committee who visited the university headquarters on Norfolk Island did not read any manuscripts, but had only a short time to glance at the titles of a handful of examples. In fact had the committee members asked, they would have found that the material they glanced at was not pertinent to their investigation, but were documents from the period prior to the establishment of Greenwich University, Norfolk Island. At the time of their brief visit (less than four hours) to the university, no students of Greenwich University (Norfolk Island) had submitted or completed a manuscript. Furthermore the committee members did not seek to speak to any students or faculty members.

It was stated that there is a lack of systems in place to coordinate communication amongst academic staff. This is demonstrably untrue. The University has an excellent vehicle for conducting ongoing dialogue amongst faculty, administrative staff, and faculty governance committees, in the form of the University's Academic Council and Academic Oversight Committees, and the following online private on-line forums are in place for this purpose: Academic Council, Committee on Research, Committee for Academic Support, Committee on Curriculum and Instruction, Committee on Outreach and Development.

It was wrongly stated at the Senate committee hearing that Greenwich University offers programs in Deep Sea Settlement and Deep Space Settlement. Greenwich University does not, and never has, offered Deep Space Settlement or Deep Sea Settlement Programs as part of its curriculum. This would be abundantly clear to anyone reading the documentation supplied to Mr. Gallagher and DETYA. It is noted that not one page of the extensive documentation supplied to DETYA has been placed before the Senate, neither the Submission documents nor the response to the Report.

Mr. Gallagher has criticised the programs in Computer Science offered by Greenwich University because they do not teach students to “design and construct” or “fix” computers. Mr. Gallagher has failed to understand the very significant difference between computer scientists who design software, as opposed to computer technicians and hardware engineers who design and fix the physical components of a computer and peripheral equipment. The Greenwich University degrees in Computer Science do not pretend to have anything to do with computer hardware design or repair. They are specifically for students who wish to work in the information technology arena as computer scientists with roles in statistics, actuarial and mathematical analysis, operational research, numerical analysis, cryptography, database design, graphical design, systems development and programming.

We request that the above be admitted into the public record as it is essential that these inaccuracies be corrected in order to avoid defaming the credentials of Greenwich University staff and faculty.

Jack Marges
on behalf of the staff and faculty of Greenwich University

