

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome 3
Output Group: 3.3 – Support for the Australian education and training export industry and international relationships.

DEST Question No. E986_06

Senator Wong asked on 15 February 2006, EWRE Hansard page number 142.

Question:

(With regard to compliance matters under the Education Services for Overseas Students [ESOS] Act 2000, associated with Bridge Business College Pty Ltd [Bridge])

Senator WONG

So Bridge has been investigated by DEST during the current financial year for reasons other than this ministerial exemption issue?

Ms Laker

That is correct.

Senator WONG

In relation to what matters—attendance requirements?

Ms Laker

Attendance recording and reporting requirements.

Senator WONG

Can you provide details of the nature of those investigations and the outcomes?

Ms Laker

I certainly can provide you with the details of the outcomes and the broad range of matters that we investigated.

Answer:

Compliance of Bridge Business College Pty Ltd with the ESOS Act 2000

In July 2005, the Department investigated Bridge's compliance with the ESOS Act 2000 and its National Code. As a result, Bridge was found to be in breach of:

- Section 19(2) and Section 20 of the Act (attendance or satisfactory academic performance reporting); and
- Paragraphs 30 and 35 – 39 of the National Code (full time enrolment and record keeping).

In response to these breaches, the Department imposed conditions on Bridge's registration on 30 August 2005 and conducted further compliance monitoring visits to assess Bridge's compliance with the imposed conditions.

At the first of the visits, Bridge was found to be breaching the conditions on its registration and the Department asked them to show cause why its registration should not be suspended or cancelled.

Following submissions from Bridge, a further compliance monitoring visit in January 2006 identified that Bridge was now complying with all the conditions on its registration. Consequently, the condition which prohibited Bridge from recruiting and enrolling students into three of its courses was removed. Two conditions relating to attendance reporting, recording and monitoring remain imposed.