

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
Legislation Committee

Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005

Submission no: 143

Received: 17/06/2005

Submitter: Miss Victoria Hards
President

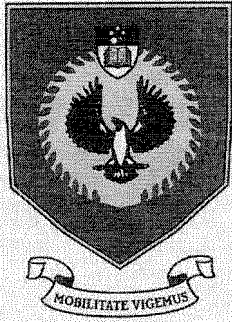
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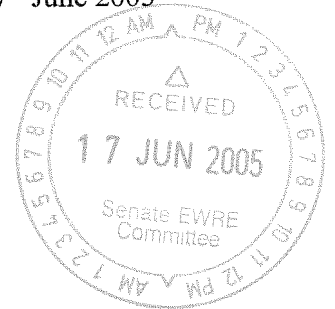


Adelaide University Sports Association Inc.

ABN 92 057 571 187

17th June 2005

Committee Secretary
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia



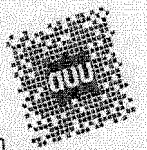
Dear Chairperson,

Below is the Senate Submission for the Adelaide University Sports Association for Consideration of the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee in the Inquiry of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-Front Student Fees) Bill 2005.

Senate Submission

Adelaide University Sports Association

Formed in 1896 the Adelaide University Sports Association is the first coeducational University Sports Association in Australia and currently administers 38 Clubs. The Adelaide University Sports Association (AUSA) offers a wide array of sporting activities, which give students an opportunity to participate in competitive and recreational sports. Through this relationship between University education and sport, the University of Adelaide produces graduates with qualities of leadership, self-esteem, and social awareness that are promoted through participation in extra-curricular activities. Involvement in a University Sporting Club promotes cross-disciplinary social interaction, as sporting clubs are not restricted to a single field of study. University Sport in its present form is a training ground for community leaders



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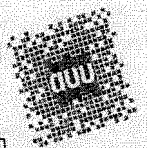
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and sporting administrators whose expertise benefits all Australians. As a sporting organisation we are very proud of our history and have been leaders in South Australia in Sporting Administration. For better understanding of the AUSA a selection of achievements and facts are listed below.

- In 1921 Sir Howard Florey was presented with a Blue in Tennis.
- The Adelaide University Hockey Club is the largest Hockey Club in South Australia
- The AUSA funds 6 Scholarships each year.
- The Adelaide University Football Club is the largest AFL Club in Australia
- Wayne Jackson (AFL CEO 1997-2003) received a Blue in Football in 1963.
- The Adelaide University Soccer, Rugby and Football Clubs are the inaugural members of their respective State Organisations.
- 37% of Rhodes Scholars from Adelaide University have received Sporting Awards from the AUSA.
- The Adelaide University Judo Club is the largest and most successful Senior Judo Club in South Australia.
- Kate Slater (Gold Medallist 1996 Atlanta Olympics – Rowing) was presented with a Blue in 1996 for Rowing.
- The Adelaide University Gliding Club is the only university gliding club in Australia.
- In the past 5 years over 1000 students have participated in Intersarsity Sports such as the Australian University Games.
- No elected member of the AUSA has ever received honorarium.
- There have been only 5 Executive Officers in our 109 years of existence.

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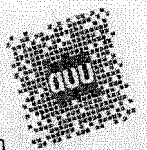
Impact of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-Front Student Fees) Bill 2005:

If this Bill is legislated in its current form the effect would be drastic. The areas it would affect most are:

- Administrative support to clubs
- Insurance – personal and accident insurance of students and associate members, asset and equipment, public liability and insurance for all volunteers
- Risk Management
- Facility and Grounds Maintenance
- Recurrent and Capital Grants to clubs for large equipment such as Boats, Scrum Machines etc
- Interspersity Sport

Sports Association Administration

Currently the AUSA has 2.7 staff members, an Executive Officer, an Administrative Officer and a Part time Projects Officer. The introduction of voluntary student unionism would lead to the AUSA not being able to afford staff to oversee and to help administer our 38 clubs. Without employees the AUSA will find it impossible to ensure all clubs are without major problems, have a training venue, have a match venue and are providing quality sport and physical recreation to students. There would also be no office to advertise the clubs on campus to new and existing students. However the foremost responsibility of the AUSA is to ensure risk management is appropriately managed and that the activities students participate in are safe. Without



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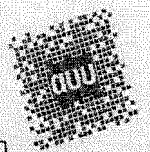
staff members, we can not ensure all physical activities members of the AUSA partake in are safe.

Sporting Clubs

The introduction of voluntary student unionism will have varying effects on each club but with a common theme. Membership fees for students will increase considerably. Without financial support from the AUSA (from the student services fee) there will be no possibility for the expansion of the club, no maintenance or upgrades of facilities and no opportunity for the purchase of new equipment. If voluntary student unionism is introduced the quality of university sport will spiral downwards rapidly assuming the club survives. Without administrative support from the AUSA the clubs will struggle to run effectively, currently all clubs are run by volunteer committees but depend on the staff of the AUSA to administer leases, grounds maintenance, and administer all insurances, property and leases.

Intervarsity

Intervarsity at the University of Adelaide as at many Australian Universities has a long and proud history. Voluntary student unionism would impact on the ability of the AUSA to participate. If this legislation is introduced the sporting clubs will have enough difficulty in ensuring the survival of their own club without the added prospect of competing in intervarsity. The AUSA will not be a member of Australian University Sport if the current legislation is passed, therefore students of the University of Adelaide would not be eligible to compete in the Australian University Games, Southern University Games, Australian University Championships and World University Championships. Many graduates of the University of Adelaide describe



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intervarsity as one of their favourite memories of University and it would be a terrible shame to bring an end to a university tradition.

Insurance

Currently the AUSA provides:

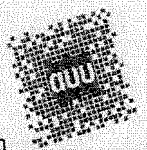
Accident Insurance for all members which covers medical expenses for injuries sustained during Club activities. This also covers loss of income to working students.

Personal Accident for Volunteer members to ensure valued helpers assisting the club have some protection. This enables the clubs to enlist the assistance of parents, friends and general community members to aid in the functioning of their club and individual events.

Marine Insurance for all hulls, this pertains to clubs such as Boat, Water Ski, Scuba Diving, Wind Surfing, Sailing, and Mountain. For example, in 2003 a boat was stolen from the Adelaide University Water Ski Club, fortunately the boat was insured, the boat was replaced and the club was able continue to function.

The AUSA has a comprehensive public liability insurance to protect all members of the clubs and the association. This enables all clubs and the AUSA to function as an organisation without the risk of frivolous litigation.

Asset and Property Insurance protects the AUSA and the Clubs from theft, vandalism, malicious damage and weather damage. Unfortunately the AUSA and its clubs have



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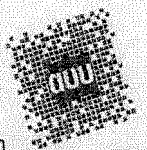
been the victim of such events and it is this insurance that permits the Clubs to function effectively.

The AUSA provides Director Liability Insurance to protect it's volunteer Board of Management. This allows the AUSA to recruit volunteers to aid in the operation of the organisation and its clubs.

The implementation of this legislation would expose the AUSA to all types of litigation and would have a drastic effect on the ability of the AUSA to attain the valuable help of volunteers when they cannot protect them. The ability of the AUSA to retain Marine, Asset and Property Insurance would be almost impossible, without funding the AUSA will not be able to afford the Insurance Premiums and members will be without Accident and Medical Insurance.

Student Physical Health and Wellbeing

The physical health and wellbeing of students at the University of Adelaide is of prime importance. Physical health is a pivotal aspect of a given individual's social function. At the AUSA we strive to provide the most affordable and cost effective sporting and physical well-being facilities and services to our members and the community at large. The current Australian Government has as its focus the physical well-being of all Australians. Given that this is the case, it is imperative that any legislation which will impact the physical health and wellbeing of Australians should be reconsidered and adjusted.



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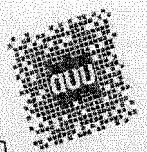
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Women in Sport

The AUSA has been instrumental in the growth of women in sport in South Australia. In 1911 the first women's Blues were awarded to Miss B Crump and Miss M. Fowler for Hockey, and Miss M. F. Proud was elected a representative of the General Committee of the AUSA. Today female students have the opportunity to participate in 36 different Clubs and currently the Executive Officer and the President are both female. The AUSA has lobbied for Women in Sport for nearly 100 years and have been very successful in the inclusion of females in many sports. In 1995 the Adelaide University Rugby Union Club Women's team were the inaugural team in the Women's Competition in South Australia. The AUSA provides an environment where women can participate in sport without the fear of discrimination, and where women can succeed in their chosen sport.

University Community

The AUSA is an integral part of the University Community and provides physical recreation for not only students but also staff and alumni. University is a total experience and in addition to the obvious academic pursuits of students, and the social life of campus, the AUSA and its Clubs provide the opportunity to become involved in the sporting life of the university and enjoy the resulting social, cultural and personal health benefits. The introduction of voluntary student unionism threatens the integrity of the university community by undermining its ability to provide the services that make your time at university one of the most important and rewarding of your life. It is the University of Adelaide that all Clubs represent and supports the University in all its activities and is proud of its heritage. This heritage is threatened by the introduction of this legislation and the resulting imposition of the majority of



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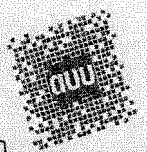
costs back onto the individual students. Voluntary student unionism punishes student involvement in the life of the university by destroying the community approach and replacing it with a user pays system which flies in the face of everything the University, the AUSA and its Clubs have represented for over one hundred years.

Rural and International Students

The AUSA provides an environment for all students to meet fellow students and members of the Adelaide community. The AUSA helps rural and international students to become active members of the university community and to establish a new friendship and support base. Starting university in a new city, state or country for students can be intimidating for students and the AUSA is a non discriminatory organisation that all students can be involved in and enrich their university experience. If this bill is legislated it will become much more difficult for rural and international students to settle in to university life and could lead to an increase in university drop-out rates.

Best possible scenario for AUSA: No VSU or VSR

To guarantee the survival of the AUSA and its 38 Clubs this legislation must be amended or rejected. The best possible scenario for the AUSA would be the total rejection of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-Front Student Fees) Bill 2005. However in this political environment the AUSA accepts that the Federal Government does have an agenda which includes implementing voluntary student unionism and pleads with the Federal Government to amend the legislation to exclude Sport and Physical Activity. This model is the Voluntary Student Representation model introduced into Victoria some years ago.



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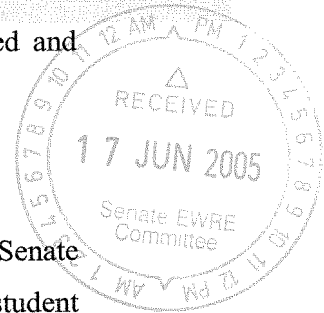
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This model would allow the University to collect a fee for services provided and would guarantee some funding and the survival of the AUSA.

End Statement

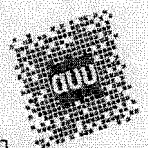
In conclusion the Adelaide University Sports Association implores that the Senate Committee considers the submission of the AUSA and the impact voluntary student unionism will have on university sport. We ask that you recommend to the Senate the exclusion of University Sport and Physical Recreation from the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-Front Student Fees) Bill 2005. We also ask that you recommend the model of Voluntary Student Representation to ensure the survival of University Sport. For more information please do not hesitate to contact me personally.



Yours sincerely,

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