

Media Statement

WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2009

Auditor-General's Report: International Students: risks and responsibilities of universities

Universities are achieving their goals for international students, are aware of the importance of, and risks associated with, international students and generally complied with their legislative service obligations says **Auditor-General, Des Pearson**.

The report tabled in Parliament today examined how well three universities, accounting for nearly 50 per cent of international students enrolled in Victorian universities, managed the risks and met their service obligations to international students.

The report reveals that while there has been a steady increase in international student enrolments and thus revenue, the collection of data on student satisfaction while at university has only recently been addressed.

The Auditor-General found the universities' risk management frameworks were in line with the applicable standard. However, management of operational risks by faculties and schools was of variable quality within and across universities, and one did not systematically manage risks at the operational level.

The Auditor-General also found that universities had a good understanding of, and generally complied with their service obligations. However, universities with contractual relationships for course delivery needed to regularly review this relationship to ensure that risks and obligations are clearly detailed in their contractual terms.

'Since the audit was completed, the issue of the safety of international students has arisen', Des Pearson says. 'While pastoral care obligations of universities do not typically extend to safety off-campus, these recent events highlight why it is important to remain proactive in identifying and analysing risks as they emerge', he added.

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The full text of the report is available on the office's website: www.audit.vic.gov.au

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