

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.3 – AEI Group

DEST Question No. E154_05 and E155_05

Senator Stott Despoja provided in writing.

Question:

- a) According to the current form 990i Visa Application Charges – March 2004 available on the DIMIA website, the student visa application charge is \$400, which includes \$111 for the International Education Contribution. According to the form “the student visa application charge includes.....\$111..... which contributes to the Australian Government’s initiatives to support international education through the activities of the Department of Education, Science and Training.” Does this amount include the \$85 (27%) increase to the Student Visa Charge introduced in July 2003 to fund the Australian Government’s scheme “Paying for a Better Education”? Are these one and the same thing?
- b) Of the \$111 International Education Contribution (IEC), would you please provide an accurate breakdown of the total allocation of the funds raised from the IEC. Please provide information as to the allocation of these funds to the following areas: Student Information Services Charge (a charge previously included in the student visa application fee); Monitoring of the ESOS Act; compliance through DEST; Administration of the AEI; Administration of the PRISMS system; Administration of the Student Visa Program; Marketing of Australian International Education overseas; Services provided to international students; Consolidated revenue.

Answer:

International Education Contribution

- a) The \$85 is a part of the total \$111 International Education Contribution. The contribution was increased to help fund the international education measures announced in the 2003/04 Budget.

International Education Contribution Revenue

- b) All funds raised from the IEC go to consolidated revenue. Appropriations are made to DEST based on the expected revenue. For the Budget period 2003/4 to 2006/07, \$79.5 million will be appropriated to DEST.

The appropriations are provided to support the quality, diversity and sustainability of Australia’s international education. More specifically the funds are used for international promotions, information for students, developments and enhancements of the Study in Australia website (recently translated into two new languages: Arabic and Russian), addressing offshore quality assurance, scholarships, improving the recognition of Australian qualifications and streamlining government services. As the relevant appropriations become part of the broader DEST funding for international education it is not possible to attribute specific IEC amounts to each of these activities.

The IEC encompasses the original Student Information Service Fee, which was introduced in 1996/97.