



Migration Institute of Australia
Leading professionalism in the migration field

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Profession Calls for Stronger Crack Down on Migration Fraud

The Migration Institute of Australia (MIA) has called for the Department of Immigration to step up its efforts to weed out illegal operators after the Department revealed yesterday that an alleged racket had been uncovered targeting overseas students.

The allegation, involving falsifying of documents, is just the tip of the iceberg according to MIA CEO, Ms Maurene Horder. "Back in May 2008 we reported some 60 cases of suspected illegal activity to the Department of Immigration for investigation, some of them involved overseas students," she said.

"Investigation and legal prosecution is the Department of Immigration's domain and migration professionals want to see that power used to vigorously pursue scam artists.

"Whether these people are unregistered 'agents', education agents or indeed registered agents, the profession wants them weeded out.

"If any registered agent is reported to us for improper activity we act immediately through the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) to have any breach of the Code of Conduct appropriately sanctioned.

"MARA though, has its limitations - including its investigative powers - which won't change when it is absorbed into the Department of Immigration in July. So, it really is vital that the Department step up and implement its authority more broadly to get rid of the many rogue operators and scam artists who are out there."

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About MIA - *The Migration Institute of Australia is the professional association for Australian migration service providers worldwide. It represents almost 2,000 registered migration agents who provide services to families, businesses and industries.*

About MARA – *The Migration Agents Registration Authority regulates the profession. Its key responsibilities are the registering of agents and overseeing of disputes, complaints and disciplinary actions.*

Through a Deed of Agreement, The MARA was created and placed under the auspices of the professional body – MIA – following recommendations of a Parliamentary enquiry in 1997. The Deed expires on 31 March 2009.

On 9 February 2009, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, announced that as from July 1, the Department of Immigration would take over the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA). The MARA has been operated under statutory self-regulation by the Migration Institute of Australia (MIA) since 1998.