



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday 11 March 2010

THE BAIRD REVIEW, NOT BEFORE TIME

The Migration Institute of Australia (MIA) welcomes the timely and necessary release of the Baird review of the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000*.

Commissioned by Education Minister Julia Gillard and developed by former MP Bruce Baird, the report, *Stronger, Simpler, Smarter ESOS: Supporting International Students*, reviewed 150 submissions, including from the MIA.

‘This is a most significant review, with far reaching implications for current and prospective international students in Australia,’ said Maurene Horder, CEO of the MIA.

‘The MIA has been seeking such reforms for some time and I am pleased to see this report address the severe and longstanding problems that have existed for some international students in the flawed Australian educational marketplace.’

The report suggests that the needs of students who wish to gain permanent residency must be linked to real labour market opportunities, a view the MIA supports. ‘The distortions of our skilled labour program can only negatively impact Australia’s ability to provide its migrants with a fair go,’ said Horder.

The review’s proposal to amend the *Migration Act 1958* to become more flexible to the needs of student visa candidates is particularly encouraging, as this change would provide more realistic education timelines, allowing for legitimate problems or delays students encounter to be addressed.

The report’s recommendation that the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* be amended to require a fully independent complaints body is similarly promising.

‘These recommendations would provide our international students with much greater considerations and protections than the current arrangement allows,’ said Horder. ‘We look forward to the implementation of many of the review’s recommendations and findings.’

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