



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 19 July 2000

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Education Queensland International

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (9.50 a.m.), by leave: Today I will launch Education Queensland International—a new branch of the Department of Education of the Queensland Government, responsible for international education programs.

Education Queensland International is responsible for expanding previous programs and developing new ones, enhancing the international and domestic profile and establishing Education Queensland as a national leader in international student programs. The new vision for the branch is to support and facilitate the internationalisation of Queensland Government schools.

Education Queensland International is a fully commercial branch of Education Queensland. No taxpayer funds are used in the provision of these programs. All its programs are self-funding, with large and significant returns to individual schools, the wider education system and economic development of Queensland. Its objectives are—

- to increase international student numbers by 30% in 2001 and double the numbers in 2002. That will bring the number to more than 800 full-fee paying students;

- to provide international students with opportunities to achieve academic excellence in a safe, friendly and caring environment;

- to provide opportunities for cultural growth, enhanced academic achievement and development for Queensland students as a result;

- to provide Education Queensland schools with significantly enhanced international exposure; and

- to ensure Education Queensland's international reputation as a world leader in the provision of education to students will continue to grow.

As a result, Education Queensland's interests in exporting and economic development at whole-of-State and national level will be significantly increased. Education Queensland International's activities are in the main focused in the following program areas—

- senior schooling/university preparation programs;

- university pathways programs;

- study abroad programs;

- distance education;

- offshore programs;

- group study tour programs; and

- international aid and development consultancy projects—expert educational advice.

Education Queensland International will play a vital role in the Queensland economy. As a general rule, for every 20 students attracted to the State system a new teacher is employed. Based on current trends, this indicates that another 20 teachers will be employed in the next 18 months. For every teacher employed for these international students, additional support staff such as teacher aides

are also needed. Again, on current calculations that means probably another 10 to 20 support staff. However, the benefits to the Queensland economy do not stop with the employment of extra staff.

If the numbers increase by the anticipated amount, we will need an additional 300 to 400 families to be involved in the Homestay program. Currently, Homestay families receive on average \$165 a week for each student. That means an extra \$2.5m to \$3m into the Queensland economy. International students also pay fees, again generating an additional \$3.4m in revenue. These new developments, on top of current figures, equate to over \$12m being injected into the Queensland economy before any of these students buy an orange juice at the local store.

Education Queensland International is also looking to intensify its involvement in overseas consultancies. We want to use expertise within Education Queensland to benefit students in other nations. Not only will this provide significant development opportunities for our current staff, it will be a significant revenue generator for the department.

Attractive as these economic outcomes are, the main objective of the program is educational. Among our Queensland students it will foster an engagement with the world around us, enlarging their minds and broadening their horizons. Also, it will enhance our moral position in the world by making us the provider to nations of one of the most precious gifts that can be bestowed—a good education. I invite any honourable member who is interested to join me at the launch at 3 p.m. on the Speaker's Green.
