The Hon. Andrew Stoner MP  
Deputy Premier of NSW  
Minister for Trade and Investment  
Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 8 November 2013

WARNING ISSUED TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The NSW Government and the education sector have issued a warning to international students in relation to the activities of the Overseas Students Association (OSA), a subsidiary of the National Liaison Committee (NLC).

Deputy Premier and Minister for Trade & Investment Andrew Stoner said the NSW Government, through a strong partnership with the education sector, was determined to ensure the safety and welfare of international students.

“The OSA is purporting to represent international students in NSW, however, it is not supported or recognised by the NSW Government, education providers, industry peak bodies or international student organisations,” Mr Stoner said.

“We have acted swiftly to protect our international students with a co-ordinated response across Government and the education sector to the activities of the OSA which have raised some serious concerns.

“This warning offers sound advice to international students regarding the OSA and confirms that the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) is recognised as the representative body for international students in NSW.

“NSW values international students and we are honoured that they opt to study in our state at our fine educational institutions.

“We are determined to ensure they can study, work and play in a safe and friendly environment.”

Convenor of the Vice-Chancellors’ Committee, Professor Caroline McMillen, said the 11 universities in NSW have come together to tackle shared concerns about the activities of the OSA on their campuses.

“We do not recognise the OSA as an organisation operating in the best interests of international students,” Professor McMillen said.

“The OSA has disrupted student elections, there have been many reports of threatening and bullying behaviour, and some OSA representatives have been banned from campuses.

“We welcome coordinated action across Government and the education sector to protect the interests of our international students.”
CISA National President Thomson Ch’ng said the international education sector recognised that CISA was the national peak body for international students.

“CISA has contributed enormously to the international student community over the past three years,” Mr Ch’ng said.

“Universities, colleges and TAFE know that the OSA and NLC do not serve the interests of international students. I hear reports from students about the intimidating behaviour of NLC representatives. I personally have received intimidating calls.

“Unfortunately many international students do not know that the OSA is not a genuine international student body.

“That's why this statement is so important. It's brought the whole sector together to warn international students that the OSA is not recognised or supported by Government, CISA or education providers.”

STUDENT WARNING ATTACHED

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