

*** Attention Education Journalists: **Friday September 25, 2009** ***

Government to Tackle Research Workforce Challenges

The Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) welcomes the Federal Government's response to *Building Australia's Research Capacity*, the final report from the House of Representatives Inquiry into Research Training and Research Workforce Issues in Australian Universities.

Under the stewardship of Maria Vamvakinou as chair, the House of Representatives committee put to the Federal Government a detailed and well-informed analysis of the key issues underpinning Australia's teaching and research capacity. It is worth noting that recommendations in the final report had cross-party support, and were unanimously endorsed at the general meeting of the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) in December 2008.

Positive steps have already been made by the Federal Government in response to the challenges outlined in the report, including the upward adjustment to the Australian Postgraduate Award and the move toward more appropriate indexation arrangements announced in the 2009-10 Federal Budget. These are important first steps toward sustaining Australia's teaching and research capacity now and into the future.

In its response to the report the Federal Government has indicated it will address a number of important recommendations as part of the Research Workforce Strategy announced earlier this year. Among these are recommendations to improve the flexibility and the fitness for purpose of research education policies and programs, including the Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) and International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS) schemes, and other important measures.

Overall the Federal Government has demonstrated a willingness to move ahead on important measures in support of postgraduates and early career researchers. The Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations looks forward to working with the Federal Government on moving ahead with important reforms in this area.

A detailed overview of the Federal Government's response to *Building Australia's Research Capacity* is available at:

www.capa.edu.au/files/inline-files/CAPA_Reps_Response_Summary_Sep09.pdf

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