



# International Students Ambassador Program

International Students' Safety and  
Well-Being

Police & Students Working Together

Inspector Roger Best NSW Police Force



# The Troubled Times

Thousands of Indian students have held a noisy protest in central Melbourne, venting their frustration over recent violent attacks on Indian students.

Sydney Morning Herald May 2009.



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# The Troubled Times...

## India fury on student bashings

By Matt Wade, Delhi, and Sushi Das

29 May 2009 — 12:00am

- The Indian Government has demanded that Australian authorities do more to protect Indian students after a series of brutal attacks in Melbourne that have left victims in hospital.
- As the violence made headlines across India for a second day, Indian Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna issued a statement in Delhi saying he was "appalled" by the attacks.



Earlier this month 21-year old Sourabh Sharma was bashed on a train.



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# The Troubled Times...

## Scarred, scared and wanting to go home

Sydney Morning Herald 16 May 2009 — 12:00am

- Sourabh had high hopes for a new life. Then he was bashed and now wants to go home.
- *It was about 8.45pm Saturday. He was listening to the radio through his phone. He had a backpack containing \$650 in cash for rent and fees for his hospitality management course. At Aircraft station, between Laverton and Hoppers Crossing, six young men got on. "Hair untidy and smelling bad," said Sourabh. They took his phone and bag and kicked him in the head and face and ribs, laughing and racially abusing him. He cried. "It was like they were playing a cruel game."*
- The Federation of Indian Students of Australia say they know of 60 serious assaults in Melbourne in a few years. Many go unreported.
- Solicitor Scott Ashley from the Wyndham Legal Service said he heard that some assailants had called it "Indian hunting".
- The police came on Wednesday, the transit safety division...
- India's top envoy to Australia has criticised Victoria Police for its "lack of sensitivity" in dealing with several attacks on Indian students in Melbourne. Comments by police that Indian students should move to safer suburbs were "absolutely not warranted," she said.



# What is the role of Police

- Obviously the arrest and charging of the offender(s) sit squarely in the scope of police business, as does the care & rights of the victim.
- But what about the wider implications? The international student sector was estimated to generate, as Google tells me, “a record **\$20.3 billion** in export income for Australia in 2015/16 – up 8 per cent from the previous 12 months.” Now in excess of **\$30 billion**
- What role does the Police have protecting a record \$30 billion?
- If a business is faced with fraud / extortion / theft etc then police have a clear role.
- In the case of assaults / racism towards international students we have a situation where the unlawful actions of an offender have a financial impact upon an industry – police should act. The lack of perceived appropriate response from police exacerbated the situation – police should fix the issue.
- What can the NSW Police do to ensure the issues faced in 2009 are not replicated in NSW at any time.



# More than just protecting an industry

- The NSW Police Force is absolutely a customer service focused organisation
- Statement of values:
  - Each member of the NSW Police Force is to act in a manner which:
    - (a) places integrity above all,
    - (b) upholds the rule of law,
    - (c) preserves the rights and freedoms of individuals,
    - (d) seeks to improve the quality of life by community involvement in policing,
    - (e) strives for citizen and police personal satisfaction,
    - (f) capitalises on the wealth of human resources,
    - (g) makes efficient and economical use of public resources, and
    - (h) ensures that authority is exercised responsibly.



# Students as Victims

- Not all victims are equal
- The police routinely put more resources into certain victim sectors such as domestic violence or child sexual assault
- International students face unique challenges that can make them more susceptible to being victims of crime – fear of reporting, lack of understanding of social norms etc



# The NSW Police Ambassador Program



# The Ambassadors

The NSW Police in partnership with the Department of Industry, Study NSW, has developed an International Students Ambassador Program to commence in March 2018.

The aim of the program is to improve the confidence of international students (and their families) in their safety and security while studying in NSW.

The selected ambassadors will take part in an 'Awareness of Policing' program which will be two-day residential course at the NSW Police Leadership Centre, University of Western Sydney, Richmond campus. Meals and accommodation will be provided on site (accommodation in 3.5 star rated single motel suites).

The 'Awareness of Policing' program will consist of practical demonstrations and activities where participants will play a 'hands-on' role in simulated policing scenarios. Participants will also receive presentations on current relevant crime trends, crime prevention tips, safety tips, fraud/scam prevention tips, road safety awareness, and instructions on using various means to report crimes. There will also be training in leadership, public relations and crisis management. Once trained it is expected that the ambassadors will be able to take the crime prevention information and share it in their campus communities to assist fellow international students learn crime prevention skills/strategies. On-going information flow between the ambassadors and the NSW Police will be facilitated by local NSW Police Crime Prevention officers and on-line engagement.

The residential phase of the program is on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

**The program acknowledges the unique challenges faced by International Students coming to Australia to study....**



# Ambassador Program Residential Phase Schedule

Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2018		
0830	Course Administration	Insp. Best
0900	Opening and Welcome	Commissioner Fuller
0930	Program Overview & Objectives – Ambassador Roles	Insp. Best / Nuala Myatt-Bocarro
1000	Reporting Crime / Stay Safe in our State	Rima Elhage/Tim Venn
1030	Morning Tea	
1100	Dog Squad Scenario	Sgt Wilson
1245	Lunch	
1330	Redfern Legal – Sexual Assault / Harassment	Sean Stimson
1430	Police Negotiators Scenario	D/Insp Hales
1600	Issues Facing International Students	Insp. Best / CPOs
1700	Day closure	
1900	Course Dinner	
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2018		
0830	Leadership	Supt. McFadden
0930	International Student Engagement Strategies – Desk Top Exercise	Insp. Best / CPOs / Veronica Millar
1100	Media Scenario	Shaun Fewings
1230	Lunch	
1315	Media – Review	Shaun Fewings
1330	Forensic Services Group Scenario	FSG Unit
1530	Afternoon Tea	
1545	Future Program Strategies / Roles	Insp. Best / CPOs
1630	Course Closure	Supt. Trench



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# Ambassadors Media Role Play



# Identified issues confronting International Students coming to Australia

## Identified issues facing international students:

- Who can I trust
- Where can I get help
- Discrimination from services – what can I do about it
- Language barriers
- Bias against international students secure employment
- Consumer rights awareness
- Knowing about cultural norms and practices
- Travel concession card access
- What is a crime in Australia
- Fear of police – not reporting issues / crimes
- Understanding role of police
- Fear of Visa revocation
- Fear of immigration officials
- Targets of scams
- Road rules
- Accommodation – finding and rights



# Possible Information Hubs

## Information Hubs for distribution of key messages:

- O-week
- International Students Office
- At time of application
- Airport
- Immigration Agents
- University web-sites
- Universities newsletters
- Standalone website
- Social Media



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# One issue that shocked

- The Ambassadors were an amazing group of intelligent confident young people who were without doubt inspirational, yet even in this group there was an astounding fact:
- International students, including our Ambassadors, have been the victim of crime and not reported it to police due to mistrust and fear... this is absolutely unacceptable!



# Global Scope Project – Armidale Police & UNE International Students

Global Scope engages teams of university students, with the support of consulting mentors, to deliver 3 or 6 week business projects to clients including NSW government departments, business, and NGO's.

The Armidale project is based around the NSW Police Ambassador program, specifically looking to validate the issues list identified by the Ambassadors and to identify ways to overcome them.



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# Global Scope Project Outcomes

- Survey completed by several hundred international students identified key issues as:
- Failure to report for a variety of reasons
- Access to information when it is required
- Providing **timely & relevant** information the key
- Information hubs:
- NSW Police Safety APP
- Pre-departure and arrival hubs
- Victorian International Students Web-site  
<https://www.meldmagazine.com.au/>



# Where to now

- Discuss...



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