

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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11th July 2012

Cc: Consul General, Australian Consulate-General
Cc: First Secretary, Australian Embassy

To whom it may concern,

Re: Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

RMIT University has the largest international branch campus of any university in the world, in Vietnam. RMIT's Vietnam campus can be considered a key success for Australia – Vietnam relations. Indeed, many Australian government officials make a point of visiting the campus as part of their Vietnam itineraries. RMIT Vietnam is, rightly so, something in which all Australians can be proud – a demonstrably successful venture, which is making a direct contribution to improving the lives of individuals, the community, and the education system of Vietnam.

The campus currently has more than 5,000 students, and has more than 2,500 graduates now contributing to the workforce of Vietnam. RMIT was the first and is still the only fully foreign owned university in Vietnam, it has achieved a pre-eminent place in the higher education sector of this country, with only a little over 10 years in operation.

RMIT hopes to achieve much more for Vietnam. RMIT is known for our work in technology and our links with industry, and we can use these skills far more for the benefit of Vietnam's development. To do so, we will need various types of support and hope that the Australian government will assist where possible.

For the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, RMIT would like to bring to the attention of the government key issues for an Australian educational institution doing business in Vietnam. These issues have been highly problematic and costly barriers to operations and ongoing investment in Vietnam. The issues are as follows:

- **Labour code**, particularly as it relates to limiting the employment and retention of the best available staff, particularly where such staff are not from Vietnam
- **Re-registration** processes and constraints for a university operating in its full capacity within a community
- **Higher education legislation** – requires clarification, particularly around autonomy of universities

We would be happy to provide further information on any of the above points of issue. Please contact my Senior Executive Officer for information, Dr Michelle Vickers:
michelle.vickers@rmit.edu.vn.

The Australian Embassy (Hanoi) and the Australian Consulate-General (Ho Chi Minh City) have been particularly strong supporters of RMIT Vietnam and often assist with these and other difficulties, and may also provide additional insight into the particular challenges for Australian higher education providers in Vietnam.

Yours sincerely,



For Professor Marilyn Liddell AM
President and General Director, RMIT University Vietnam
Vice-President, RMIT University