Safety of International Students Research Project

The Australian Institute of Criminology is undertaking a research project on the safety of international students in Australia. The project will compare the rate of crime against international students with the rate of crime against the broader Australian population.

To enable this research the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) intends to release data to all Australian police jurisdictions and the Australian Institute of Criminology in a data-matching exercise to identify international students who have been victims of crime. The release of this data is required as Australian police jurisdictions do not collect statistics on a victim of crime's citizenship or visa status.

To enable the release of this data, DIAC submitted an application for a Public Interest Determination by the Privacy Commissioner and this was granted on 7 May 2010. A copy of the department's application can be located on the Office of the Privacy Commissioner website.
See: Public Interest Determinations

There will be safeguards in place to ensure that the data released by DIAC is protected. All state and territory police agencies are subject to the relevant state and territory guidelines pertaining to the handling of all personal information in the public sector, including collection, storage, use, destruction and access to any personal information. No personal information from the Australian Institute of Criminology's research will be published.

It is proposed that data will be provided on international students who have been in Australia and held a Student visa since 1 July 2004 **and** held a passport from People's Republic of China, India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia; and United States of America.

These countries were the five largest source countries of international students in Australia during this period.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship provided a period of 21 days for individuals affected by the release of this data to have their details removed from the project. This 21 day period ended on 30 May 2010 and it is no longer possible for individual records to be removed.