Dear Madam / Sir,

I understand that Monash University is providing a whole of University submission to the Committee which has my full endorsement. However in this submission, which I provide in my role as Academic Director of the Monash Berwick and Peninsula campuses, I wish to provide additional information relevant to these campuses which may be of interest to the committee.

These campuses provide higher education opportunities for many students living in the City of Casey, the Shire of Cardinia, the Shire of Mornington Peninsula, the City of Frankston and beyond. These regions do contain many schools with relatively low Year 12 to Higher Education participation rates.

I wish to make comments in relation to the following Terms of Reference of the Enquiry:

(a) Variations in the number and type of university applications, offers, acceptances and completions in different metropolitan, rural and regional areas; and,

(g) Strategies to address any barriers contributing to geographic differences in participation in higher education.

Current Activities at Berwick & Peninsula

A forum for collaboration with Chisholm TAFE, local LLENS, local secondary schools and local government has been established at each campus. At Berwick this is called the South East Education Forum (http://www.berwick.monash.edu.au/EducationForum/), and at the Peninsula campus it is called the Peninsula Education Precinct (http://www.monash.edu.au/campuses/peninsula/community/PEP.html).
administration has worked actively within these fora to engage the local educational providers to build greater participation in higher education and to lift the profile of education within the community generally. The activities currently undertaken by the University at Berwick and Peninsula, some of which are undertaken in collaboration with other parties, are listed below for the information of the Committee.

1. Pathways to Monash degrees offered at Berwick and Peninsula from courses undertaken at Chisholm TAFE campuses have been agreed and publicised locally through brochures and information sessions in an attempt to encourage some students to use a TAFE course as a pathway to a Monash degree.

2. The Schools Access Monash (SAM) [http://www.monash.edu.au/access/schools.html](http://www.monash.edu.au/access/schools.html) has resulted in the establishment of partnerships with a small number of under-represented secondary schools near each campus. This has involved Monterey Secondary College, Dromana Secondary College and Westernport Secondary College at Monash Peninsula and Cranbourne Secondary College and Pakenham Secondary College at Monash Berwick. SAM provides activities and programs designed to lift the level of aspiration for University study and the level of academic achievement of students at the participating schools. While the results have been very positive at some schools, there has been very little change at others. The current SAM program has involved activities such as those listed below.

   a. Contributions by Monash staff to Year 12 motivational events arranged by the schools
   b. Information sessions for parents of school students
   c. The production of a SAM brochure for students and parents detailing vital information about university including costs, scholarships and bursaries, entry pathways and common university terms
   d. Free VCE Revision lectures
   e. Year 11 and 12 have visited the Caulfield, Clayton, Berwick or Peninsula campuses to hear detailed talks on courses and participate in interactive sessions from their faculty of interest. This has included a campus overview and morning tea.
   f. A Monash staff member and an equity scholarship recipient have attended each school to run a presentation on scholarships available at Monash University and to help students fill in the application form for Monash University scholarships and provide information about the SEAS application.
   g. Professional development for teachers on mentoring students
   h. Motivational presentations
   i. Scholarships
   j. Tutoring by Monash students

3. While the South East Education Forum and Peninsula Education Precinct have conducted many successful activities such as campus visits for secondary school students and VCE revision classes involving many hundreds of local Year 12 students, the impact of these activities on higher education participation rates is unknown.
4. The Diploma of Tertiary Studies (http://www.monash.edu.au/study/coursefinder/course/2552/), which has been offered at Monash Gippsland for many years, has been introduced at Monash Berwick in 2008 to provide another entry pathway to all degrees offered from Berwick and some degrees offered from Peninsula for those students who do not meet Monash entry standards. Students undertake two university preparation units and six first year degree units as part of the year long study program. Provided students reach a defined level of achievement, they are admitted to 2nd year of a degree with some credit. Thirty eight students have been admitted to this program in 2008.

Observations on the Monash Berwick & Peninsula Context

Monash University offers academic programs at Berwick and Peninsula. The Peninsula campus, which supports about 3,500 students, has a distinctive academic theme of health and wellness and offers 22 undergraduate courses from the faculties of Business & Economics, Education and Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences. The Berwick campus, which supports about 1900 students, offers a limited range of undergraduate courses from Business & Economics, IT and Arts. Students who do not meet the Monash competitive entry standards may seek alternative pathways to Monash degrees such as the Monash Diploma of Tertiary Studies, Monash College or studies at a TAFE or another University with a lower entry standard. Some courses previously offered at Berwick have been withdrawn due to an insufficient level of demand from students able to meet Monash competitive entry standards.

1. State Government support for the systematic development and evaluation of pilot programs with an evaluation component, jointly developed by Monash and local under-represented secondary schools would be a very useful way forward. There are many underrepresented schools within the regions served by these two campuses. However, while SAM has been very successful at some schools, only five under-represented schools are currently involved in the program at Berwick and Peninsula. There are two primary reasons for this. The SAM program is expensive to operate in terms of the University resources dedicated to each school. It is planned that each school should participate in the SAM program for at least five years to provide maximum impact. Additional funding from State Government for such programs would enable the participation of more underrepresented schools.

2. The ‘On Track’ survey shows that transport is a key factor enabling / inhibiting participation in higher education. Both the Berwick and Peninsula campuses suffer from lack of adequate public transport connections.

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a. The Monash Peninsula campus is located approximately 1.4kms from Frankston Railway station abutting the Leawarra Railway station on the Frankston - Stony Point railway line. Access to the campus via train and buses is limited. The electrified train line terminates at Frankston with a very limited, infrequent and slow service to the campus via the Stony Point line. The electrification of the train line to the Leawarra Station or beyond, and a bridge over/under the rail line for road traffic, would significantly improve access to the campus from surrounding areas. Currently local bus services are also inadequate with infrequent service to the campus. A Department of Infrastructure review of local bus services was completed in 2007 and if the consultants’ recommendations are adopted then the bus services will be greatly improved. Upgrading of public transport on the Monash Peninsula campus would make the campuses more accessible to people living within the region.

b. Although the Monash Berwick campus is located within a few hundred metres of the Berwick Railway station, access to the campus via public transport is very difficult for students living at Cranbourne, requiring a bus trip to Narre Warren railway station followed by a train trip to Berwick railway station. Upgrading of public transport access to the Monash Berwick campus would make the campuses more accessible to people living within the region.

I do hope that the Committee finds these comments useful.

I would of course be prepared to elaborate on any aspect of this submission should the Committee wish to obtain more information.

I wish the committee every success in its endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Phillip Steele.