

## Update from VCAM Review Chair

2 March, 2010

I would like to provide an update of the VCAM Review, of which I am chair, and also address some recent criticisms of the review process.

- The committee which was formed in December last year has met twice in regular sessions while continuing to review the more than 350 submissions which have been made so far.
- Upon application, key student groups were offered extensions to the deadlines for submissions and further important material is expected to be received by the end of this week.
- In addition, most of today was scheduled to meet and hear from key stakeholders in the process, including the SaveVCA representatives.
- Notwithstanding that this is a busy week in the arts calendar, thirteen of the fourteen members of the committee were available for parts of the day and all but two groups of invited guests (who will be rescheduled for later in the month) participated.
- The commentary of the SaveVCA group was constructive and well presented. The committee valued their input which did not reflect any unreasonable pressures of deadlines; nor did other presentations from people for whom this issue has been one meriting steady and longstanding consideration and reflection.
- At this stage in the process, early concerns about the composition of the committee, terms of reference etc feel very dated and irrelevant. There is a lot of heavy lifting still ahead but committee members are approaching complex issues honestly and professionally, as one would expect.
- Two further meetings are scheduled in March plus another full day forum. Time has also been set aside for up to five sessions for people who see a reason to address the committee but have not received an invitation. Details of how to participate will be posted on the VCAM website.
- Notwithstanding that the period of the review included Christmas and university vacations, the range and quality of inputs received to date and those expected, together with parallel processes of personal consultations suggest that our deliberations will be properly informed.
- Allegations that this review is a stunt, its output predetermined are uninformed and, frankly, insulting.

The form of VCAM, the needs of its students, its curriculum, staffing, relationships with industry partners including music teachers and so on reflect the diverse components of a complex and important arts organization that merits thoughtful debate and analysis. This review is partway through such a process.

Ziggy Switkowski