

Natasha McLaren-Jones MLC  
Committee Chair  
Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

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Dear Natasha

Thank you on behalf of YHA and Backpacker Operators Association of NSW for the time of the Committee today to hear our submissions regarding the development of youth tourism in regional NSW.

In particular we thank you for your interest and the broad grounds that were covered in the hearing.

We took two questions on notice;-

Firstly, whether student visas provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship allowed enough flexibility at the end of courses for students to travel around. The brief answer is that students on short courses have an extra month added at the end of their visa after their course whilst students on longer courses have longer periods. Students can also apply for a tourist visa although in this case the new supplementary visa fees come into play as a deterrent.

For your further information here is an extract from the DIAC website re student visas.

### Length of stay

This visa allows you to stay in Australia for the duration of your course. It permits multiple entries to Australia. Dependent family members who come with you to Australia are usually able to stay the same length of time as you, but they cannot stay once you have left the country.

Your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) policy must cover the full period of your visa. Your student visa can be granted up to the maximum duration outlined in the table below.

Duration of course	Duration of visa
Longer than 10 months and finishing at the end of the Australian academic year (November - December)	Your visa will usually be granted to March 15 of the following year.
Longer than 10 months (finishing January - October)	Your visa will usually be granted for two months longer than the duration of your course.
10 months or less	Your visa will usually be granted for one month longer than the duration of your course.

You need to ensure that your OSHC policy covers the entire length of your visa or your visa may only be granted until the expiry date of your OSHC.

**Note:** If your student visa expires before your graduation, you can apply for a Visitor visa. You will need a letter from your education provider which states the date of your graduation.

Secondly, with respect to initiatives in New Zealand to control roadside and car park camping by those in campervans please refer to <http://www.camping.org.nz> which is a website developed by the New Zealand Tourism Industry Association. You will see that the main message is "Please stay in holiday parks, Department of Conservation camping grounds or other designated areas" the further message is "If in doubt, assume nothing – always ask" and also "Where can I camp? Assume nothing. Always ask a local!"

Destination NSW will have further information as a result of its participation in a series of meetings in 2010-11 convened by CMCA which brought together all stakeholders including the companies hiring campervans. We would stress that the issue of campervans is a national one and would recommend that the matter be approached on a national basis.

Yours sincerely

Julian Ledger  
CEO