

More restrictions in the USA

on the move



Livia Castellanos has recently become the new Marketing Officer for Latin America

at the ESL Centre at the University of Regina in Canada. Ms Castellanos previously studied at the university's ESL Centre for 12 months. She said of her time studying at the centre, 'It was an amazing and enriching year and I want other Latin American students to enjoy the same rewarding experience.'



The Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations (Fiyto) appointed

Peter Kruyt as its Director General earlier this year, to take over from Peter de Jong. Mr Kruyt has been the senior Marketing Manager of the Gouda Insurance Company in the Netherlands for the last three years and was previously actively involved in Fiyto as the manager of Isis insurances.

next issue

In Issue 4 2002, Destination Analysis will examine trends in UK independent schools.

International students who wish to study in certain fields of science and technology in the USA will be subject to increased scrutiny when applying for a visa, after plans for a new federal committee to screen certain visa applications were unveiled in May. The Panel for Science and Security will consider factors such as an applicant's previous education and training, their country of origin and the specific area of study the student wants to pursue. It will then provide recommendations to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service as to whether a visa should be issued.

News of the new panel was greeted with enthusiasm by college representatives in the USA who had feared that the committee would try to prevent foreign students from taking courses in fields such as chemical engineering, nuclear technology, biotechnology, advanced computer technology and robotics. Victor Johnson, Associate Executive Director for Public Policy at Nafsa: Association of International Educators, told the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 'We are pretty encouraged by the fact that they do seem to be going about this the right way.'

The new panel is the result of deliberation by a committee made up of officials from the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy and officials from several cabinet-level departments, which was set up in October to discuss the presidential directive, 'Combating terrorism through immigration policies'. The directive was issued in order to

address security fears in light of the terrorist attacks on New York last September and has resulted in a succession of changes to the student visa system (see *Education Travel Magazine*, January 2002, page 2).

In April this year the US Senate unanimously passed the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act, which will require educational institutions to provide electronic information to the State Department regarding the enrolment of international students until the full implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). The programme, which will track international students through a national database, is due to be fully operational by 30 January 2003, although some colleges can begin setting up the SEVP system from July this year.

Students from Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria - all countries which the US government claims sponsor terrorism - are now required to undergo new background checks and all international students have to give officials more information about themselves, including the names and addresses of family members.

International students are also no longer able to enter the USA on a visitor visa with the intention of switching to student status at a later date. While the majority of students enter the USA on a student visa, it had previously been possible to start a course of study while waiting for confirmation of student status.

IDP concentrates on the UK and USA

IDP Education Australia made bold moves into the UK and the USA in April this year, with the launch of IDP-UK in London and the opening of a new student resource centre in Washington.

The new services now available to students in London are part of a strategic plan to raise the profile of Australia as a study destination to students throughout Europe. According to

IDP statistics, the number of Czech, Norwegian, Swedish and German students studying in Australia has more than trebled between 1994 and 2000.

'Increasing numbers of British students are also discovering Australia is a great place to study, but perhaps not as rapidly,' said Lindy Hyam, IDP Chief Executive. 'We will be working with educational

institutions in Britain to encourage a two-way flow of students between our countries.'

Lenka Chroncova, from the Student Agency in the Czech Republic, reported that Australia had become more popular with her clients in recent years. She said that students were attracted by 'the possibility to gain a work permit which allows the client to earn money during their stay'.

Peter Geisinger, Media and Corporate Relations Manager at IDP Education Australia, emphasised that the new offices in the USA and UK would compliment existing local agent activities. 'IDP Education Australia works cooperatively where we can, and in a number of ways, with local agents in those countries where we have student services offices,' he said.

agent speak

Q. Do you assist your clients with any welfare problems while overseas on a study trip?

'We make sure that all our students have at least a couple of international phone cards issued by local phone companies which they can use to call home or us any time with no cost, and also where they will be assisted in the local language.'

Betty Wolff, BEW Network, Argentina

'I make for my students a personalised 'Guide for Students' and there are many subjects in the guide, [such as] information on immigration, weather, money, host family rules, cultural differences, food, taxes, visas, flights, personal security during travel and common

problems. For me, it is rare to have a problem with my clients [because of] good preparation before travelling.'

Virginia Cruz, Altrium Turismo-Brazil, Brazil

'The schools I deal with are usually very helpful and will try their best to smooth things out quickly. Cultural differences and unrealistic expectations can cause problems between host families and students. I usually warn students what to expect and what they should or should not do in their homestays before they [go].'

Rowena Chan, Asiaworld Education Services, Hong Kong

Success for Alphe in Las Vegas

The Alphe USA workshop held in Las Vegas in April this year was deemed a success by both participants and organisers alike. The workshop attracted a broad mix of participants, with schools representing nine different countries, including France, Germany, Canada, the USA and New Zealand, and agents from 14 different countries.

Roció Westfall-Mansilla, from the Universidad del Mar in Chile, said that there was a 'good mix' of agents and schools. He also praised the laid-back atmosphere. 'I was able to talk about programmes in a relaxed manner,' he said.

Matthew Northover, Alphe Organiser, said that creating a friendly and personal atmo-

sphere in which effective business could be done was a main priority. 'At all the Alphe workshops we aim to create an effective working environment while providing a good agent to educator ratio. This year there was a ratio of almost 2:1 agents to educators,' he said.

Scott Stensrud, from Hawaii Pacific University, said that the highlight of the workshop for him was, 'meeting agents face to face and spending some free time with them so we get to know each other as people and develop a relationship'.

Yemi Onagoruwa, from Bridgeway Overseas Admissions Centre in the UK, also praised the workshop venue. 'Everything was perfect,' he said.

