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**Message from SCOA
Acting Chair
Michael O’Hara**


I write to you today as acting Chair, given that Cedric Manen is on leave this month. It has been a big few weeks for the settlement sector, with the celebration of the Migration and Settlement Awards and the launch of the Parliamentary Friendship Group on Productive Diversity and Settlement. Canberra was host to the best of the settlement sector for the Awards and I congratulate all the nominees and winners. It is heartening to see the work of innovative programs and dedicated case managers acknowledged so publicly, in the Great Hall at Parliament House in front of our nation’s leaders. For more information on the Awards see page13.

Earlier in the day the launch of the Parliamentary Friendship Group on Productive Diversity and Settlement took place in the Senate Alcove. MP Bert van Manen and Senator Lisa Singh co-chair this new friendship group, which will provide an opportunity for Parliamentarians to gather and show their support for effective settlement of migrants and refugees. We are keen to work with the Friendship Group to help strengthen dialogue and understanding of the important place settlement holds in building our productive nation.

I know we are all waiting to hear about the funding for settlement programs, in particular the Settlement Grants Program. SCOA has been in regular dialogue with the Government on these issues, we have been informed that the forthcoming Federal Budget and the Government response to the Commission of Audit report should provide clarity for the sector in regards to future funding. The Federal Budget will be released on Tuesday 13th May.

SCOA has been watching with concern the developments around the proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act, in particular the repeal of section 18c, you will have seen an email from me earlier in the month with information on this important issue. Like many of our members, SCOA is also making a submission to the Minister

We have decided it is wisest to defer the date of the Third National Settlement Conference, which was originally going to be in August, to April/May 2015. Timing was tight and there is still some uncertainty about priorities and directions with the Government, so to be sure we could put on a fantastic event which engages with the issues and the government in the most constructive manner we have pushed back the date for the conference.

Con't Message from SCOA Acting Chair - Michael O'Hara

You will see on page 5 an invitation to attend a training session SCOA is sponsoring for members and the sector, "Navigating Government". The one day workshop is tailored to the settlement sector and I encourage you to attend.

SCOA Executive committee recently met with senior officials in DSS, at our regular quarterly meeting. The meeting covered a range of issues, with a particular focus on strengthening the links between settlement programs and the programs DSS provides to vulnerable communities. Exploring the potential synergies and possibilities which the machinery of government changes provide highlights the strong connections settlement agencies have within their communities.

Thank you,

Michael O'Hara – Acting SCOA Chair

Message from SCOA Executive Officer- Sky de Jersey



It has been great to see so many of you at our recent national consultations – thank you for participating, sharing your ideas and local wisdom with us. As a national body we rely on hearing from you, our members, about what is happening in your area. The national consultations are an important time of year where we can connect with your priorities and hear directly about the transformative power of settlement support in the lives of migrants and people of refugee background across Australia. We are currently working on the minutes and collating the report from the consultations and will share both when they are complete.

I recently attended a conference on Collective Impact, and then SCOA's Policy Practice Forum in March included a presentation on Collective Impact also. For more information on this innovative approach to working to create social change please see page 6.

SCOA is progressing work on the National Settlement service standards. I'm hoping if you are in Sydney or Melbourne I'll see you at one of our workshops, otherwise please join in the national teleconference or call me directly. For more information on this please see page 5.

Ideas for the dedicated research portal, tentatively called "Maktaba" (Swahili for library) are taking shape. Working with the Brotherhood of St Laurence we are undertaking a development process which begins with a facilitated design workshop to inform the scope and features of the website portal.

There have also been a few opportunities to make submissions in the last few weeks, specifically on the second action plan on preventing violence against women and their children and on housing, both issues many of you have mentioned in our recent consultation.

SCOA participates in meetings with DIBP senior officials and other non-government organisations on a regular basis. Recent meetings have highlighted the impact of the changing profile of the humanitarian program – there has been a significant increase in places this year to the proposer supported visa category (202) which will flow through over the next few months as DIBP issues visas.

Thanks for sending through so many fantastic photos from Harmony Day - it is great to see orange take over (even if just for a day!).

Sky de Jersey – SCOA Executive Officer



News from the Department of Social Services (DSS)

Machinery of Government

As you know, the administration of settlement services and multicultural affairs has transferred to the new Department of Social Services (DSS). The transitions to these new arrangements were formalised under *Section 72 of the Public Service Act 1999* on 7th November 2013.

Settlement and Multicultural Affairs officers have now commenced moving to their new physical locations. Northern Territory officers relocated at the end of February and South Australian officers in March.

The National Office staff commenced their work in new premises as of Monday, 7th April 2014.

Other states will move in the next coming months. DSS State and Territory Managers have begun to write to service providers and key stakeholders providing their new address details.

The 2014 Settlement Grants Program Rural and Regional Conference

"Loved it."

"Great choice of presenters."

"Thanks ... for the selection of trainers; innovative, highly skilled, providing information, tools & food for thought for improvements."

"This year was the best ever!!!"

The abovementioned feedback captures the spirit of the 2014 NSW Settlement Grants Program (SGP) Rural and Regional Conference.

The 3-day annual event, held in Sydney 4-6th March 2014, as part of the SGP National Training Strategy, attracted 40 workers from funded organisations based in regional locations across NSW, the ACT and NT.

In recognition of the unique challenges faced by workers in non-metropolitan based settings, the Conference provided an opportunity for discussion of current issues and service delivery challenges as well as workshopped innovative and best practice approaches to implementing SGP work program objectives. Participants also appreciated the networking and information-sharing opportunities that the Conference provided.

This year, leading community development practitioners challenged participants with fresh ideas and strengths-based approaches to their work with multicultural communities, emphasising the need for ongoing evaluation and service improvement. These sessions proved to be the highlight of the Conference, with participants walking away feeling inspired and committed to implementing key lessons learned from their experiences with the trainers and each other and many are already looking forward to next year's Conference!



News from DSS continued....

Regional Settlement

The settlement of refugee and humanitarian entrants to regional areas has been taking place for several years now, with all levels of government acknowledging the considerable benefits of regional settlement in relieving pressure on metropolitan cities as well as enhancing regional communities through the cultural diversity that comes with refugee settlement.

Today, the Department of Social Services (DSS) directly settles refugee and humanitarian entrants in all capital cities around Australia as well as 17 regional sites, most of which are located in the eastern states.

So, how does the government decide who to settle in regional areas and what are the challenges?

It comes down to whether an individual or family has any existing family links or social connections in Australia prior to arrival, we have seen how beneficial this support is to new arrivals and we facilitate this where possible.

It is estimated that around 80 per cent of refugee and humanitarian entrants who settle in Australia have existing links, with the majority residing in Melbourne and Sydney reflecting past settlement patterns. It is the remaining 20 percent of arrivals who are 'unlinked' or do not have any existing contacts in Australia where regional settlement is considered.

There are several factors we take into consideration before determining the regional settlement location for an individual or family. Some of these include the availability of suitable accommodation, essential services and training opportunities as well as the ability of new arrivals to connect with and feel safe through a welcoming community.

In 2011, a report titled *'The Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals'* (SONA) offered several positive findings on the outcomes of new arrivals settling in regional locations compared to their counterparts in metropolitan areas and concluded that these cohorts were more likely to speak English well, be employed and be happier with the size of their home in contrast with their counterparts in metropolitan areas.

For policy makers working in the settlement space, regional settlement can also present some key challenges.

When looking to establish and maintain a regional settlement site, it is of importance that a known flow of referrals or 'critical mass' is present to ensure specialised programmes and services are maintained, such as interpreting services, health and medical practitioners and education programmes. Sustained client numbers are also needed to establish community associations and places of worship.

The 2013-14 Humanitarian Programme comprises of 13,750 places, of which 2,750 places are set aside for the Protection Visa component, 6,500 for Refugees and 4,500 for Special Humanitarian Programme (SHP) entrants, the highest SHP allocation in several years. These figures alone present a challenge for regional settlement, as it means there are fewer unlinked clients whose final settlement destination is flexible and who can be referred to regional areas.

Extension of Humanitarian Settlement Contracts

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Services, Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, announced on 18th March 2014, the Australian Government's ongoing commitment for Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) until 2017.

The Australian Government has extended the contracts of 15 service providers to continue to deliver HSS around Australia.

A process to procure the services of an additional service provider in the Northern Perth and Western Australia region was advertised on the Government's procurement website, AusTender, on 30 January 2014 and closed on 25 February



What is happening at SCOA...

SCOA's State Consultations

SCOA's annual State Consultations period was held last month. The consultations are held with members and key stakeholders for every state and territory and a separate regional teleconference.

Parliamentary Friendship Group Launched

On 24th March SCOA in partnership with the Migration Council of Australia launched the Parliamentary Friendship Group on Productive Diversity and Settlement (PFG).

The launch was opened by Senator The Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells. The bipartisan group is co-convened by labour Senator Lisa Singh and liberal MP Bert van Manen.

The event also included launch of the latest Scanlon Foundation Research, [Mapping Social Cohesion](#). This research enhances the understanding of the impact of immigration on social cohesion in Australia. For the first time it included a separate report on targeted on Local Areas.

National Settlement Standards Workshops

Workshops on the National Settlement Service Standards will explore: the key principles underpinning settlement; what is successful settlement; the key elements of settlement service standards and the process for assessing agency settlement practice.

Melbourne: Wednesday 30th April, AMES Multicultural Hub, 506 Elizabeth Street (opposite the Queen Victoria Market) Melbourne, 9.30-1pm

Sydney: Friday 2nd May, SSI offices, 2/158 Liverpool Road, Ashfield, 9.30-1pm

Teleconference: Tuesday 6th May, 2-3.30pm (Eastern Standard Time)

A discussion can be found [here](#).

To register please email Kat O'Neill at mso@scoa.org.au

SCOA Sector training – Navigating Government

SCOA and Millwood Consulting are offering training in *Navigating Government More Effectively*.

Sydney – Wednesday, 30th May

Melbourne – Monday, 2nd June

Brisbane – Monday, 26th May

(Training is all day, lunch included)

Participants will develop their technical skills to:

- Identify and engage with key decision makers affecting their policy areas and objectives, including Ministers, MPs and Senators, political staffers and bureaucrats;
- Build capacity to promote and progress public policy objectives through political, parliamentary and bureaucratic processes;
- Leverage opportunities to influence public policy outcomes, particularly through local political representations;
- Manage organisational systems for expanding impact and effective advocacy; and
- Write policy and advocacy documents for impact – including policy submissions, pre-Budget submissions, legislative submissions and media and external communications.

Cost: \$225 (SCOA Members), \$275 (Non-SCOA Members), plus \$15 Workbook

For further information on how to register email Kat O'Neill at mso@scoa.org.au



What is happening at SCOA con't...

SCOA Submissions

Over the last month SCOA has prepared submissions to the [Development of the Second Action Plan under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22](#) and [Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing](#).

Policy Practice Forum – Collective Impact

SCOA's Policy Practice Forum (PPF) brings together SCOA members and stakeholders to discuss emerging policy research and issues, with a view to informing effective advocacy and developing the settlement sector research agenda. It also provides an opportunity to share your organisation's research projects.

The latest PPF was held in March and focused on Collective Impact with special presenter Kerry Graham from the Centre for Social Impact at the University of New South Wales.

Collective Impact is a framework to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is an innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organisations and citizens to achieve significant and lasting social change.

It is premised on the belief that no single policy, government department, organisation or program can tackle or solve the increasingly complex social problems we face as a society. The approach calls for multiple organisations or entities from different sectors to abandon their own agenda in favour of a common agenda, shared measurement and alignment of effort.

For more information on Collective Impact see the PPF minutes [here](#).

If you or someone at your organisation is interested in attending SCOA's PPF please email Kat O'Neill at mso@scoa.org.au.

National Settlement Policy Network Teleconference

The National Settlement Policy Network (SPN) is a joint initiative of the [Refugee Council of Australia \(RCOA\)](#) and the [Settlement Council of Australia \(SCOA\)](#) to enable our members to participate in planning joint advocacy on settlement issues.

The SPN teleconference held the 18th February 2014 focused on the issue of local government and settlement and speakers included:

- Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia;
- Rolf Fenner, Senior Policy Advisor, Australian Local Government Association;
- Con Pagonis, Multicultural Policy Advisor, Municipal Association of Victoria; and
- Cr Gaetano Greco, Mayor of Darebin Council.

The report for the February SPN can be found [here](#).

National Settlement Policy Network (SPN) Teleconference

Thursday 8 May 2014

2:00-3:30pm ACT, NSW, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria

1:30-3:00pm SA, NT

12:00pm-1:30pm WA

Supporting humanitarian entrants with a disability

To attend a hub in your state please contact Kat O'Neill at mso@scoa.org.au



Where do migrants live? – New ABS data

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released new data looking at [where migrants live in Australia](#) based on data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. It provides a useful tool for accessing information about where migrants are from, how long they have lived in Australia and the settlement patterns of specific ethnic groups in urban and regional areas.

The new ABS data highlight settlement trends of migrants in capital cities, particularly Sydney, Melbourne and Perth which collectively represent 60% of all migrants in Australia. It was found that suburbs located in or near city centres are strongly favoured by migrants as are suburbs situated near universities.

In the coming months, more detailed information from the census will be released as part of the ABS Migrants Census Data Enhancement (CDE) Project. The CDE initiative improves and expands the range of official statistics available to Australian society in an effort to aid government policy making, program management and service delivery.

There is also a wide range of useful migrant statistics available for free from other sources at the [Migrant and Ethnicity Topics at a Glance](#) portal through the ABS website.

The Global Flow of People

Explore new estimates of migration flows between and within regions for five-year periods, from 1990 to 2010.

The Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital has released an interactive graphic of global bilateral migration flows. The clever circular plot shows estimated migration flows between ten world regions for a specific five-year period of time. There are 4 time sections to explore starting from 1990 up until 2010. The interactive graphic shows the flow for regions and specific country-by-country graphics.



To access the interactive map click the link below!

<http://www.global-migration.info/>

RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME



Regional settlement, Queensland style!

MDA continues to support regional settlement through our work in the Queensland regional centres of Rockhampton and Toowoomba. We remain strong believers in the wide-ranging and somewhat unique opportunities that regional Australia presents new arrivals.

We also observe with keen interest the Queensland Government's recent announcements around plans to entice greater numbers of migrants and refugees to resettle in regional areas outside the south-east corner, aligning with its 30-year vision for more balanced, state-wide growth.

Rockhampton

Refugee arrivals, notably single men, have been drawn to Rockhampton in numbers since 2010, attracted by abundant employment opportunities in two of the state's largest meatworks. Employment turnover was initially very high but since MDA established a Rockhampton office in 2012, turnover at the meatworks has reduced dramatically. The positive aspect of people hanging around for longer is that communities are now really flourishing and becoming ever more part of Rockhampton's broader social, cultural, and economic landscape.

Homeownership provides perhaps the most compelling possible indicator of successful long-term settlement, and to this end things in Rockhampton have been changing quickly! In recent months, MDA Rockhampton case managers have responded to past and present clients who are looking to purchase their own piece of Rockhampton paradise!

Long-term settlement is also bringing about a new diversification in employment away from the meatworks and towards a wider array of sustainable employment pathways in the trades, hospitality, community services and so on. This provides yet another avenue for stronger community integration as more and more former refugees are now assuming work roles that align more closely with the mainstream Rockhampton community.

A recent highlight of the MDA Rockhampton team was this year's Harmony Day celebrations on 21 March, including a morning tea hosted at the Rockhampton City Council Library. Rockhampton's inaugural Nowruz (Persian New Year) celebrations were also a great success, with a BBQ bringing together around 150 people from Rockhampton's Iranian, Kurdish and Hazara Afghan communities. MDA is grateful to the Rockhampton Regional Council for allowing this event to fall under the Council's public liability.

Toowoomba

Last year, Toowoomba joined only two other councils in Queensland in being declared a Refugee Welcome Zone by the Refugee Council of Australia. This was an exciting development for all of us at MDA and has set the tone for future events to follow.

A particular highlight in recent months has been our work supporting the resettlement of large numbers of Hazara Afghani women and children in Toowoomba under the Women at Risk program (visa subclass 204). This has involved supporting the settlement of a new community with particular needs, necessitating the recruitment of new staff, including casual cultural support workers. It has been great to witness the openness of this new community in relaying their experiences and background to the wider community in different ways, helping build bridges and break down community misperceptions.

At the time of writing, Toowoomba is on the cusp of opening its first mosque (due to open 30 March) which highlights in a different way just how much the face of Toowoomba has changed in recent years. As our numbers of Muslim clients in Toowoomba continues to increase, the development of the new mosque provides yet another way for community integration while helping meet a growing need for Toowoomba's Muslim community.

Article provided by Multicultural Development Association, Queensland

Enabling Rural Migrant Settlement in the Limestone Coast Region

A new research project is underway in the Australian Population and Migration Research Centre at the University of Adelaide. This project, in partnership with the Migrant Resource Centre of SA and the Local Government Association of SA, is looking at the patterns of new migrant settlement in the Limestone Coast region of South Australia. There is growing interest in the valuable economic and social role of recently arrived overseas migrants in rural and regional areas. In the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of immigrants settling outside of large capital cities. It is important to understand how, where and why these settlement patterns are developing and what this means for rural and regional communities, their residents, and their economy. The aim of this project is to achieve a better understanding of the patterns and processes of international migration in rural regions of South Australia in order to facilitate the adjustment of the migrants and maximise their contribution to regional social and economic development.

In order to understand more about these settlement processes the research team wants to know:

- Why do some migrants choose rural locations over urban locations for settlement?
- What social and economic impacts do migrants have on local communities?
- What are the movement patterns of migrants in rural areas – do they tend to stay long term in these areas or just temporarily?
- What factors within the community encourage or discourage long term settlement?

This project involves conducting at least 90 in-depth interviews with new migrants to understand what brings migrants to rural and regional towns, the experience migrants have living in these communities and how successful settlement can be achieved.

There has been some measure of success in the Limestone coast region of South Australia with regional migration settlement schemes. In addition this area has seen a marked increase in un-planned, organic settlement. By highlighting the causes, implications and outcomes of these new migrant settlement patterns, this research will provide information to policy makers, service providers and most importantly, rural and regional communities on how new migrants are making positive differences to local communities.

The Australian Population and Migration Research Centre is very grateful for the support and contributions of the SA Migrant Resource Centre, the Local Government Association of SA and the four local councils from the Limestone Coast involved in this project.



If you would like more information or would like to be a part of this study please contact Dr Helen Feist at the University of Adelaide on (08) 8313 3560 or email: helen.feist@adelaide.edu.au.

Article and photos courtesy of MRCSA

Mapping Social Cohesion – Scanlon Research

On the 24th of March 2014, Professor Andrew Markus launched the latest Scanlon Foundation Mapping Social Cohesion research. This research showcased two specific reports: the 2013 Local Areas Report and the 2013 Recent Arrivals Report.

[The 2013 Local Areas](#) survey was conducted in 2013 as an extension of the Scanlon Foundation Social Cohesion Research Program. The survey focuses on immigration and the impact of cultural diversity. For the first time the research includes targeted surveys carried out in major cities for five urban and/or regional areas of immigrant concentration including: Logan and Atherton Tablelands in Queensland, Mirrabooka in WA, Murray Bridge in South Australia and Shepparton in Victoria.

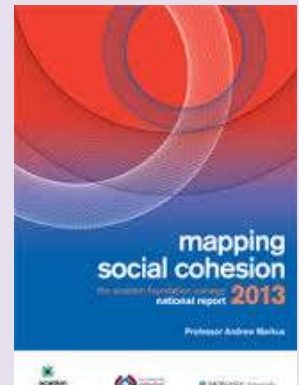
The survey findings are informed by the Scanlon-Monash Index of Social Cohesion which is composed of five domains of social cohesion identified as: belonging, sense of worth, social justice and equity, participation and acceptance/rejection.

The survey found relatively minor variations across local areas for the domains of belonging, worth and participation, with larger variation within domains of social justice and acceptance/rejection. The data collected from these regional areas is extremely valuable as it can support the development and delivery of government programs and inform the settlement sector on issues of social cohesion.

[The 2013 Recent Arrivals](#) survey was carried out to collect further information about Australia's current immigration program, particularly the attitudes and outlook of skilled and highly educated entrants.

The survey was completed by over 2000 participants, most of whom arrived between 2000 and 2010. A key and consistent finding from the surveys was the high level of overall satisfaction with life in Australia of the recent arrivals, in particular with regard to financial situation and happiness.

You can find more information within the full 2013 Mapping Social Cohesion Report [here](#).



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR CULTURAL SHIFT: SYMPOSIUM ON SUPPORTING MIGRANT AND REFUGEE FAMILIES THROUGH SETTLEMENT

Date: Thursday June 5, 2014

Time: 9:00am - 4:30pm

Venue: Novotel Parramatta NSW

Cost: \$65.00

Registration: www.regodirect.com.au/culturalshift



culturalshift:
symposium on supporting migrant and refugee families through settlement
June 5, 2014, Novotel Parramatta • for information, speakers and registration → www.regodirect.com.au/culturalshift



Fairfield MRC - Building sustainable partnerships for refugee housing advocacy

A survey of NCOSS-affiliated services in 2013 revealed that housing is, once again, the most common issue community service clients seek support for. For those services supporting settling refugee communities, the economic and practical challenges housing presents to recent arrivals is particularly acute. This is particularly so in Sydney, the city shown to have the fourth highest housing prices/income in the world.

Settling refugee communities face Sydney's exorbitant rents, typically, on incomes which NCOSS has identified as being, on average, grossly inadequate. These communities face cost burdens well beyond average. They frequently send large remittances to their home country while also providing support to destitute colleagues and asylum seekers of their national origin living in Australia. While settling they lack the local knowledge and budgeting knowhow which finds bargains and cuts economic corners. In these circumstances, the high cost of Sydney's housing exacts a significant toll on refugees' resilience and capacity to settle.

Advocacy for refugee housing which is affordable, appropriate and secure nevertheless faces critical challenges. As a UN report has noted, any special housing provision made for refugees risks alienating other identified high-needs groups. At worst, it may summon a cry of local 'queue jumping'. There is, moreover, a view popularised by Bob Carr, that housing shortages pushing up prices are primarily due to population increases attributable to migration.

Refugees are the most publicly prominent part of Australia's migration intake, like it or not. They therefore stand to be blamed unfairly for the housing crisis and may be resented if they receive assistance to cope with its effects.

Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre has worked for many years to champion housing rights for refugees. It has co-convened the Fairfield Housing Taskforce with firstly Fairfield Council and more recently, Liverpool Council. Its strategy has been to build and sustain partnerships with other agencies which focus on housing affordability needs across social groups. Building strategies which address housing needs for all high needs groups can also build the political strength to make significant gains.

Supporting planning for social equity outcomes for Western Sydney has provided a powerful means to establish long-term regional alliances. A recent initiative of the Western Sydney Housing Coalition (a regional housing advocacy group first convened through a FMRC project position in 2010), jointly with the Western Sydney Community Forum, has set in motion a long term partnership to drive social wellbeing outcomes potentially available through the development of Sydney's second airport. Meeting in the Casula Powerhouse to discuss 'Affordable Housing and Sydney's Second Airport' on 27 March, the Coalition/Forum heard presentations from Liverpool Mayor Ned Mannoun, Professor Peter Phibbs (USyd), Mark Thornell (Population Health), Fiona Hague (UNSW), Peter Conroy (Leichhardt Council), Mary Waterford (Western Sydney Community Forum) and Peter Butler (Western Sydney Housing Coalition).

The focus of the meeting's discussion was the social outcomes promised in the decades ahead as the second airport develops. How can the development be engineered to ensure jobs for disadvantage groups historically linked to Western Sydney? How can planning ensure integrated 'liveability' measures, including affordable housing?

The 'Affordable Housing and Second Airport' discussion is certainly a long-term and ambitious social justice project, but if the second airport (at time of writing, yet to be announced) is to bring broad community benefits, refugee advocates need to join with others asking the social justice questions now.

For more information visit: <http://cabracc.org.au/fmrc/WesternSydneyHousingCoalitionpublications.htm>

Article and photo courtesy of Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre



Pictured: Uncle Steve and panellist Mike Thornell at Housing and Second Airport forum 27 March in Casula Powerhouse



New Multilingual Video “Do you need help applying for an Australian visa?”

Have you seen the new video produced by the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority?

This video “Do you need help applying for an Australian visa?” can be viewed on the Authority’s website at <https://www.mara.gov.au/news-and-publications/news/videos/>. It has been translated into six community languages and is also available on the *ImmiTV* channel on *YouTube*.

The Authority would like to encourage you to use this link to the video on your own website or in advertising material. This will educate people on the importance of ensuring their migration agent is registered and also provide guidance on how to find a registered agent. They will also get a clearer understanding of the role of the Authority and the services they provide.

The documents “Consumer Guide” and “Your rights – tips for using a registered migration agent” are also available on the Authority’s website www.mara.gov.au in 30 community languages. These documents provide useful information to members of the community who are looking to engage a migration agent.

Please contact the Authority at info@mara.gov.au if you would like any further information.

RELIGION IN 21ST CENTURY AUSTRALIA APRO Forum

7 May 2014

10.00 am-5.00 pm

Macquarie Room, Parliament House
Macquarie Street, Sydney

This one-day forum will provide a timely opportunity to advance discourse on a range of issues related to the role of religion in Australia in the 21st century. It will bring religious and community leaders together in exchange of views with government officials, academics, and interested community members.

\$10 registration (which includes lunch) payable at the door

To register or for more information email: natalie.mobini@bnc.bahai.org.au





Mirrabooka Multicultural Centre Officially Opened

On 12th March the Mirrabooka Multicultural Centre in WA was officially opened by Parliamentary Secretary Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells with local member for Stirling The Hon. Michael Keenan MP, Minister for Justice.

The Mirrabooka Multicultural Centre aims to support newly arrived families and strengthening communities. The new Multicultural Centre will provide a hub that welcomes cultural groups, cross-cultural communication and ensures a sense of belonging in the diverse suburb.

It is expected that the Centre will be used for a wide range of activities including English language classes, homework classes, transition to work programs, cultural events and celebrations, community meetings, private consultations and counselling services, informal drop-in and casual computer use for community groups.

Ms Fierravanti-Wells said the new centre will be “A place that will contribute to social cohesion and cross-cultural communication and a place where everyone in the community can come for meetings, cultural celebrations or training.”

The Mirrabooka Multicultural Centre project has been managed by Stirling Council. The City of Stirling received \$182,700 from the Federal Government under the Settlement Grants Programme to develop and run programs at the centre for groups and individuals.

For more information visit the City of Stirling’s website:
[Mirrabooka Cultural Centre](#)



The C20 (or ‘Civil Society 20’) is a platform for dialogue between the political leaders of Group of 20 (G20) countries and representatives of civil society organisations. Through the C20, civil society can have a say in the discussions shaping our global economy.

In 2014 Australia is the president and host of the G20. The G20 is a key decision-making forum for the global economy. It aims to shape the global economic agenda, promoting growth and economic resilience. The membership includes most of Australia’s largest trading partners. The issues discussed by the G20 like economic reform and tax, trade, infrastructure investment, anti-corruption, development and employment, shape billions of individual lives as well as government agendas.

C20 Key Issues:

- Inclusive Growth and Employment
- Infrastructure
- Climate and Sustainability
- Governance

C20 Summit:

Civil society from Australia and abroad will be gathering for the C20 Summit in Melbourne 20-21 June.

The C20 Summit is a unique opportunity to be involved in the discussions shaping our global economy.

For more information on the C20 and C20 Summit visit: <http://www.c20.org.au/>



Second Annual Migration and Settlement Awards

Celebrations were held for the second annual Australian Migration and Settlement Awards at Parliament House on the evening of 24th March.

The awards, led by the Migration Council of Australia (MCA), recognise the good work of organisations and individuals that assist new migrants and refugees to settle, to feel included and to participate in their new communities. The awards are bi-partisan attended a both Prime Minister of Australia The Hon Tony Abbott MP and Leader of the Opposition The Hon Bill Shorten addressing attendees.

Award categories include Settlement Innovation won this year by SCOA member *Welcome to Australia* for their Walk Together Program which saw 12,000 walking in 15 major cities and regional centres across Australia aiming to change community attitudes and create a culture that welcomes new Australians.

Other categories include Caseworker of the Year, Business Inclusion, Sports Leadership, Journalism Excellence, Diversity and the Law and a Lifetime Achievement Award. [For a list of all winners visit this link.](#)

"The quality and spread of shortlisted finalists - across geography and industry sectors – shows us that diversity is becoming more important and relevant to individuals and organisations in Australia," Ms Carla Wilshire, EO of the MCA.

SCOA would like to congratulate all organisations and individual who were shortlisted for an award including SCOA member SydWest Multicultural Services for their Multicultural Mens Group social group. [A list of shortlisted nominees can be viewed at this link.](#)

"Win or lose: is it really how you play the game?"

Sports Participation Conference & Sports Technology Expo 2014

Friday, May 2 2014 - Moonee Ponds, Melbourne

The 2014 Sports Without Borders Conference brings together the complete picture – sportspeople, club officials, volunteers, policymakers, government funders, government and local government workers, peak bodies, and sports administrators.

Panel of speakers include Hon Peter Dutton (Federal Minister for Sport and Minister for Health), Hon Hugh Delahunty (Victorian Minister for Sport and Recreation), Senator Nova Peris (Northern Territory), Pippa Grange (Director of Bluestone Edge), Russell Hoye (Director of the Centre for Sport and Social Impact at La Trobe University) and Con Pagonis (Municipal Association of Victoria).

For more information or to register visit: <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/swb2014>



Multicultural Enterprises - Social enterprise farm

Multicultural Enterprises Australia (ME) is working towards making it easier for individuals from a diversity of cultures to prosper economically and socially in Australia.



ME Farm Manager, Andrew proudly displaying his organically grown garlic crop

ME's main social enterprise, ME Farm, has recently moved from Mt Annan to Fairfield. ME Farm aims to educate the local community about sustainable backyard veggie growing and be a hub providing sales support, supplying growing kits and other resources for those who want to take it to a commercial level. Currently we are running 'Working Bees' to set up the farm site. Anyone who would like to engage with us can contact mefarm@cabracc.org.au.



Article courtesy of Fairfield MRC



“You have a story to tell” – UNHCR Project

The “You have a story to tell” project is part of UNHCR’s 2014 World Refugee Day celebrations.

From 20th June resettled refugees are being asked to write and submit their personal settlement stories. UNHCR is asking for your help to reach resettled refugees. Please disseminate this information through your networks.

Follow the link below to find out more and how to submit stories:

[YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL](#)

Please note the UNHCR website for World Refugee Day will not become active until early June.





New AHURI Research on Transport Disadvantage Associated with Lower Income Housing

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) have released its new research on the extent and effects of transport disadvantage associated with lower-income rental housing.

The research addresses the question:

Do lower-income renters, in being constrained to live in more outer-urban sub-markets, face significantly greater risks of transport disadvantage thereby potentially weakening employment opportunity and other life chances?

The research focuses on Melbourne and Sydney areas. It will assist housing policy-makers to engage with new transport research that offers opportunities for affordable policy interventions to alleviate this disadvantage.

The analysis shows in how, to varying degrees, all classes of public and private housing available to people on low incomes are over-represented in areas of poor to non-existent public transport accessibility.

To view AHURI's positioning paper on Transport Disadvantage and Low Income Households visit:

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/projects/p51003>

Victorian Peak Bodies Campaign for Social Housing Reform

Victoria's peak bodies for housing, homelessness and domestic violence have joined efforts to create a new vision for social housing releasing their plan for reform in Victoria, *Making Social Housing Work*.

The groups have called for a broad Affordable Housing Strategy that addresses social housing shortages. The report's recommendations include:

- An investment of \$200 million per year for 20 years in additional new social housing;
- Transfer of stock from public housing to community housing to introduce new revenue while maintaining existing stock and current tenants;
- Changes to private tenancy laws to make private rental more secure;
- Making the National Affordable Housing Agreement work better by including other Commonwealth housing programs in it;
- Making the National Rental Affordability Scheme a permanent program as it contributes to the supply of new affordable housing stock;
- Reforms to Commonwealth taxes so that the \$45 billion in indirect tax assistance each year to investors and homeowners contributes to the supply of new dwellings;
- Replacing stamp duty with a flat land tax, to stimulate investment in large scale rental housing, and ease the tax burden on homebuyers when they can least afford it;
- Measures to improve the financial problems in public housing, and change the way the Government delivers housing services.

The report can be viewed on the VCOSS website at this link: [Making Social Housing Work](#)



SCOA Member Profile...

Multicultural Community Services Central Australia

Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia (MCSCA) has been supporting migrants, refugees and new arrivals in Alice Springs since 1985. It is the only multicultural settlement organisation in Central Australia.

In 2003 a new delivery model and a revised constitution allowing for a more diverse range of services to migrants and refugees led to a name change and a new organisation under the name of Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia Inc. Funding for the service now comes through the NT Government's Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and the Australian Department of Social Services (DSS).

Interest in Australia for harmonious settlement of migrants and refugees has increased over the years and settlement in Rural-Remote-Regional Australia remains a priority at both the Commonwealth and Territory levels of government. At the local level, Alice Springs is very keen to receive and facilitate integration of people from many diverse countries. Government agencies and community services are ready to assist, and in the private sector, employers are supportive of workers who are here to stay.

In 2002, the need to offer settlers of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds the support required to adapt and integrate to the Australian way of life was identified in Central Australia. The sole organisation that offers this support is MCSCA. It provides services as the first port of call for these communities.

The Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program offers a culturally sensitive orientation to Australian life and ongoing activities and events that promote harmony in the community.



Pictured Marguerite Baptiste-Rooke, Coordinator of Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia

SCOA Member Profile con't...

Multicultural Community Services Central Australia



The orientation to Australia assists arrivals to become more self-reliant and be able to participate in their communities. It includes casework and group information sessions on a range of topics. It also assists the newly arrived to identify their goals and interests and develop a shared purpose to promote a sense of identity and belonging.

The NT Office of Multicultural Affairs also supports MCSCA with funding. This funding is used to engage with community groups to encourage participation in community and civic life. Programs provide information to the multicultural community and obtain feedback and views to identify emerging trends and patterns on multicultural issues. It assists the multicultural community to access services through referrals and provision of information, and builds capacity of community organisations to support its members. It is also used to liaise and network with key stakeholders, including government and non-government agencies; organise an annual forum, provide safe and supportive environments for migrants to share their stories and achievements and a quarterly newsletter is produced.

The MCSCA will be celebrating its "Big Day Out in Harmony" on 31st May 2014 at the Alice Springs Town Council Lawns. There will be performances from a wide variety of multicultural groups, an ethnic costume parade, food stalls, kids' activities and short films from the Colourfest Multicultural Film Festival.



Alice Springs Desert Festival Sunset Street Parade



Alice Springs Desert Festival Sunset Street Parade

Article information and photos courtesy of Multicultural Community Services Central Australia



New Advocacy Body for NSW Multicultural Youth

Settlement Services International (SSI) has announced the establishment of a new advocacy body for multicultural youth in NSW.

Multicultural Youth NSW will be an independent youth advocacy body and the voice for youth from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This organisation will respond to the unique needs of, and multicultural youth, it will assist these young people to have a voice in their state.

The multicultural organisations which form SSI will pool their resources to provide initial funding to form the organisation along with leadership and support.

SSI and its member organisations make up a large proportion of agencies providing services for multicultural youth in NSW.

A specialist youth project coordinator will manage day to day operations with support from a steering committee.

The steering committee will be formed shortly comprised of three young people as well as a representative from youth organisations, Migrant Resource Centres and SSI.

The new body is expected to be formed within the next 12-18 months.

Non-for-Profit Real Estate Agency Opens in Melbourne



Australia's first non-for-profit real estate agency has opened its doors in Melbourne.

Home Ground Real Estate is a social enterprise that will provide expert property and tenancy management services to investors and socially minded property owners.

The scheme is operated by HomeGround Services one of Melbourne's largest homelessness and housing agencies.

The proceeds of the Home Ground Real Estate Agency venture will be reinvested into assisting a growing number of individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and rely on HomeGround Services for housing and support services.

HomeGround's CEO Dr Heather Holst said "We have seen a steady increase in the number of people who need assistance with services that can help prevent them becoming homeless and assist those who are already experiencing homelessness."

Landlords in Melbourne can now choose to have their property managed by HomeGround Services, with the agent's commission funding housing for the disadvantaged. The agency will match a landlord and client to a property taking a lower commission and ensuring the property maintenance.

HomeGround hopes to roll out its model across Australian cities soon.

Visit their website at:

<http://www.homegroundrealestate.com.au/>



Improved Foundation Skills Training for Refugees and Migrants

Last month the Department of Industry called for expressions of interest to develop and deliver Professional Development Workshops aimed at trainers ensuring they competently deliver foundation skills education to new migrants and refugees.

The workshops will assist the Department of Industry to implement their [National Foundation Skills Strategy \(NFSS\)](#). The strategy brings a national focus to improving education and employment outcomes for adults with low English language, numeracy, literacy and employability skills. These foundation skills underpin workforce participation, productivity and social inclusion. They are a particular issue for some of Australia's new refugees and migrants. Trainers must assess these new Australian's foundation skills and identify their training needs plus provide training in Australian workforce culture.

The Professional Development Workshop's content will focus on delivering the foundation skills frameworks: [Australian Core Skills Framework \(ACSF\)](#) and [Core Skills for Work Development Framework \(CSWDF\)](#). These frameworks are now available to Vocational Educational and Training (VET) practitioners as tools to assess foundation skills and develop vocational skills. They are increasingly being embedded into the national training system which is why the Department of Industry will be conducted the national workshops.

The Department of Industry is expected to be undertaking this exercise in training, trainers over the next two years to June 2016 in capital cities around Australia.



SCOA Welcomes Its Newest Member OOFRAS!

Occupational Opportunities for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (OOFRAS) is a network of occupational therapist.

OOFRAS's mission is to stimulate and support the occupational therapy profession to engage people with refugee experiences and embody the

World Federation of [Occupational Therapist's Position Paper on Human Displacement](#).

In Australia occupational therapists engage refugees and asylum seekers in a variety of roles across the spectrum of health and human services sector, for example case management roles in the settlement sector, clinician roles in the mental health system, coordinator roles in non-government activity programs, life skills programs within the community sector.

OOFRAS is incorporated in Queensland and run entirely by donations and volunteers. Its membership is open to anyone working in accordance with their vision and mission regarding the occupational needs and rights of displaced people.

Visit the OOFRAS website at: <http://www.oofras.com/>



HARMONY DAY

SCOA would like to share these photos from our member's Harmony Day 2014 Celebrations. Harmony Day is celebrated 21st March and is a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home.



Harmony Day celebrations in Hobart -Image courtesy of City of Hobart



Nowruz Festival 2014 – Image courtesy of MRCSA



SSI staff and volunteers at Harmony Day celebrations- image courtesy of SSI



ISHAR staff Gladys, Joanne, Katherine at Harmony Day celebrations – Image courtesy of ISHAR



Iktumburwa Dance Group_Harmony Day 2014 – Image courtesy of Fairfield MRC



Want to contact SCOA? We'd love you to!

A good place to start is your state representative. Please see the details below.

You can also contact staff in the Sydney office:

Sky de Jersey SCOA EO eo@scoa.org.au phone: 02 8065 5225	Kat O'Neill Membership Services Officer mso@scoa.org.au phone: 02 8065 5225
Tasmania Cedric Manen - CHAIR CManen@mrchobart.org.au 03 6221 0999	New South Wales Clement Meru cmeru@fmrc.net 02 9727 0477
South Australia Eugenia Tsoulis – DEPUTY CHAIR Eugenia@mrdsa.com.au 08 8217 9500	Victoria Rosemary Kelada rosemaryk@spectrumvic.org.au 03 9496 0200
Western Australia Michael O'Hara - SECRETARY michael.ohara@mmrcwa.org.au 08 9345 5755	Victoria Michael Martinez Michael.martinez@diversitat.org.au (03) 5221 6044
Australian Capital Territory Dewani Bakkum – TREASURER ceo@marss.org.au 02 6248 8577	Queensland Kerrin Benson kerrinb@mdabne.org.au 07 3337 5400
New South Wales Violet Roumeliotis – Deputy Secretary ceo@ssi.org.au 02 8799 6702	Northern Territory Joe De Luca ceo@mcnt.org.au 08 8945 9122

If you would like to contribute to future editions of the Settlement News in 2013, please contact Kat O'Neill at mso@scoa.org.au, or call 02 8065 5225.