

Ethnic Communities
Council of Western
Australia

2020-2021 Annual Report





CONTENTS

| | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 03 | Acknowledgements |
| 04 | ECCWA constitutional objects |
| 05 | About ECCWA |
| 06 | ECCWA's vision, mission and values |
| 07 | ECCWA's management committee |
| 08 | President's message |
| 10 | Executive officer's report |
| 12 | Policy, advocacy and lobbying |
| 17 | Policy submissions |
| 33 | Staff, volunteers and students |
| 34 | Programs and projects |
| 39 | Work with the media |
| 41 | Events |
| 47 | Treasurer's report |
| 48 | Financial report |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Partners and funding bodies

ECCWA extends its gratitude to the following (listed in alphabetical order) for their financial and other (in kind) support and assistance

- Bendigo Bank, North Perth
- City of Armadale
- City of Belmont
- City of Stirling
- City of Vincent
- Curtin University of Western Australia
- Department of Finance
- Lotterywest
- Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
- Ishaar Multicultural Women's Health Centre
- Multicultural Services Centre of Western Australia
- Metropolitan Migrant Resources Centre
- Orana Women's Refuge
- Office of Multicultural Interests of WA

Peak bodies

ECCWA is a member of the following peak bodies and extends its appreciation for the support and assistance it received during 2020-21.

- Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
- Community Employers Western Australia
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Shelter WA (on a reciprocal basis)
- Health Consumers' Council (on a reciprocal basis)

ECCWA Consultants Panel

The following people accepted our invitation to be members of the above panel and we extend our thanks and appreciation for their support and guidance.

- Jenny Au Yeong, (Former CEO, EDAC)
- Dr. Indira Pattni, (Management Consultant and Clinical Psychologist)
- Dr. Susan Lee (BA, MPH, DIntH)
- Mr Ramdas Sankaran (CEO of Multicultural Services Centre WA)
- Peter Rozsy (Migration Agent)

The management committee extends its thanks and appreciation to all ECCWA members both long term and recent. ECCWA is fortunate that well established agencies, both mainstream and multicultural that service migrants and refugees are now its members. With their support ECCWA has effectively advocated and lobbied on many issues of concerns and its substantial achievements as detailed in the report that follows are ample testimony of their resilience and determination.

ECCWA Constitutional Objects

- 1. To foster participation by ethnic communities in the development of a cohesive, culturally pluralistic Australian society bearing in mind the historical contribution which all ethnic communities have made to the development of the same.**
- 2. To act as the peak body for ethnic communities in Western Australia, which shall advocate for the rights of ethnic communities in ensuring the protection of these rights.**
- 3. To participate in government and quasi government bodies established for the purposes of developing the Council's objectives.**
- 4. To promote joint action and co-operation between ethnic communities on issues of common concern while assisting and encouraging the full participation of ethnic groups in the community in the social, economic and cultural life of society**
- 5. To ensure the rights of the ethnic communities including effective participation in decisions which affect them, and encourage the sharing of community resources.**
- 6. To provide multi-lingual welfare and counselling services to assist the aged, women, children, youth and ethnic people with disabilities.**
- 7. To render such assistance as the Council shall consider appropriate for the relief of persons in necessitous circumstances.**
- 8. To provide interpreting and/or translating services in specialized area of need.**
- 9. To do and to perform all acts, matter and things as are charitable and for benevolent purposes having public benefit in accordance with the law of the State of Western Australia and the law of the Commonwealth of Australia and to disseminate any information within a Social Justice framework that achieves the objectives of the Council in ensuring equity and access to and for ethnic communities**
- 10. To increase the awareness of the public that Australia is a Multicultural Society.**
- 11. To render any other assistance, services or facilities that the Council might consider necessary as the need arises.**
- 12. To undertake any other activity to promote multiculturalism and ethnic welfare.**



ABOUT ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL OF WA



The Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia, established in 1975, has been providing advocacy services for multicultural groups and communities in Western Australia for over 45 years and is a member of the national Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA). Through its various programs over the years ECCWA has been able to provide various forms of advocacy and support to its members. ECCWA has over 75 Community and Organisational members across the State of Western Australia and has relationships with various Government agencies at Local, State and Federal level. The website will inform you of the various services and programs the Council provides.



Vision

A fair and just society, one in which all people are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the community and are supported to reach their full potential, where diversity is valued and people live in harmony.

Mission

To work with member non-government stakeholders to ensure:

- Ethnic community participation and consultation in decision making at all levels
- Provision of research and policy
- Access to all information and equitable share of government and community resources
- Just and harmonious relations within our multicultural community
- A consultative, advisory and training service to government and non-government organisations

Values & Principles

In working towards its vision, the Ethnic Communities Council WA encompasses the following values and principles:

- Human Rights
- Equity
- Social Justice
- Participation
- Representation
- Empowerment
- Participation and Representation
- Community harmony
- Citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- Collaboration and cooperative partnerships
- Integrity, respect and responsibility
- Strong leadership
- Ethical standards of administration and management
- Openness and accountability to stakeholders and the community.



ECCWA **MANAGEMENT** **COMMITTEE**



Office bearers

President: Suresh Rajan

Sr. Vice President: Rahim Ghauri

Secretary: Virendra Parikh

Treasurer: Rahim Ghauri

Vice President (Women): Mamta Kochhar

Vice President (Youth): Seren Ulusoy



Management Committee

Ranjit Ratnayake

Michael Wu

Satish Nair

Champo Ngweshe

Jim Taylor

Karla Benitez

Carmelita Baltazar

Ridzuan Mohammad



WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



I am unsure whether I have ever had an “Uninteresting” year of any kind while I have been involved with ECCWA over the last twenty years. Every year brings its own set of challenges and tribulations and this year has been no different. There have been a myriad issues that we have dealt with. Most of these are mentioned elsewhere in this report.

However, probably the one item that has been the most far reaching has been the issues that arose on April 3rd. On that date we were contacted by one of MSCWA’s former employees to advise that there had been a death of a child in the Malayalee community and there was a family looking for support. We sprang into action soon thereafter and arranged for the media to publicise the matter. And of course the girl who died was Aishwarya Aswath. And over the next six or so months we have been mired in the issues that have been arisen after her death. There are a host of cultural and linguistic issues that have played out here. We have been keeping the Minister for Multicultural Interests informed along the way.

In Aishwarya’s case we pushed hard for an external inquiry into the events of the night and the procedures at Perth Children’s Hospital to be established and the Government then appointed me to that panel as the family representative. We have been able to bring to the attention of that enquiry panel our concerns in respect of all the cultural nuances and mores that appear to have been missed. We will continue to work with governments to ensure that the hospitals become a place where we have a sense of safety and care.

To this end, WA Government has recently released the Aishwarya Model of Care which will be rolled out across the hospitals in this state. As a starting point it has been introduced at PCH and it addresses the major concern that we had, and that relates to the parental concerns for their child. Hopefully we will never ever see a situation such as occurred in Aishwarya’s case.

Beside this matter the usual plethora of things have occupied our year. Pandemic issues and vaccine rollouts have been the dominant matter and we have been involved in a host of things that we are working with government and agencies on to ensure a high take up rate of vaccine protection amongst our communities. If you are one of those who have not had your vaccine yet, can I urge you to attend to that as soon as possible. Should you require any assistance in accessing the vaccine, please don’t hesitate to contact us and we will guide you through the process.

Another issue that has come across our radar in recent times is the issue of parents not being considered “immediate family” for the purposes of lockdowns and border closures. Our communities are often separated by vast distances from their parents and grandparents. Our Prime Minister has recognised that this will have a deleterious and undesirable impact on the mental health status of our communities. To this end the PM has asked that we reconsider the definition of “Immediate Family” to include parents. The difficulty that then arises is that even if this is done at a federal level, our parents and grandparents may be able to come into the country but because of state border closures and caps on arrivals, they may not be able to come to their place of choice. We will continue to work with relevant groups to ensure we get change happening.

We have had a very productive relationship with WA Police over the last twelve months. Deputy Commissioner Col Blanch has been very receptive to addressing the issues we have raised with them. Probably one of the more significant ones has been the one involving a young Ghanian lady in Parmelia who was manhandled and badly traumatised as a result of inappropriate action by WAPOL. The matter was dealt with promptly and the police officers in question are being disciplined.

There is much that still needs to be done. Our Council continues to work at a level far greater than any funding we receive. A lot of that is because of the enormous amount of time our Board members put in to the advocacy space both at the council and elsewhere. For that I thank them very much.

To our staff, thank you for the huge efforts you have put in again. No one comes into this sector unless they have a passion for the issues and a desire to see human rights preserved. Our staff and volunteers have this in abundance. They continue to work far more assiduously than ever and we owe a lot of our success to them

Our Members make up this organisation. We urge you all to be more involved with our Board and Committees and make your voices heard. We rely on you to bring us the information that we need to be able to effectively advocate on your behalf.

Our funding bodies have continued to recognise that we do good work. We thank them for their confidence.

Thank you all for your assistance. Let us all go forward together.

Suresh Rajan
President, ECCWA



EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT



The last two years have seen all of us face times like we have never seen before. The effects of Covid -19 have changed the world as we have known it and whilst those of us living in Western Australia have been extremely fortunate we have had to deal with the impacts of a lockdown, changes in employment, increased mental health issues, increased family and domestic violence, racism, homelessness etc.

ECCWA believed that this is a time when a community needs to work together and hence, worked hard in 2020-2021 to consolidate the partnerships and relationships we have developed with CaLD communities, Government and non-government agencies. It was extremely important to us that we hear the voices of our CaLD community members and ensure that they were empowered to voice their views and engage in decisions that would impact them. To this end, ECCWA organised various Community consultations such as a community consultation done in partnership with the Health Consumer's Council of WA on how Covid -health information needed to be imparted to the CaLD communities ie what worked what didn't and what needed to happen! We then used this feedback to ensure that all levels of government and the Community Service sector were aware. We also learnt how independent and how pro-active CaLD communities can be in doing through volunteers, various activities that helped care and protect their communities. We are now also working with CaLD Communities to increase the Vaccination rate and are happy to assist communities to develop the best options for themselves. Other consultations, we held involved a joint consultation with our national body the Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia into a response to the Aged Care Royal Commission report, and also a consultation in conjunction with Palliative Care WA on the needs of the CaLD community.

One of the clearest messages I received during this period was that the larger CaLD communities were well placed to respond quickly to issues and to be quite creative, smaller communities however often were without a voice as they did not have the infrastructure or the means to ensure they were heard. These communities need the support of ECCWA not only as a voice but to assist and empower them, access the infrastructure required whether through grants or facilities. To this end, and in response to the various Government initiatives in Covid-19 ECCWA was able to obtain a grant to upgrade and refurbish our conference/training facilities in North Perth and also to redesign the ECCWA office premises in North Perth to create more private offices for access by members – our Multicultural Community Hub. Community Languages WA already operates out of this Hub.



ECCWA also wanted to engage and be easily accessible to member organisations and in response to Community members, have opened an office South of the River in Cannington. A Community opening event will be held early in 2022. This office will be our Multicultural Community Hub for the South.

The above projects and program initiatives mentioned in this Annual report 2020-2021 have all been based on the needs of CaLD communities who have come forward and engaged with us.

This in turn has helped us to remain focussed on our objectives and during 2020-2021 ECCWA, continued increasing our membership and helping to provide services for our member organisations. We now have 75 Community members and this is steadily on the increase.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board members who have supported me and the staff and volunteers for their passion, diligence and efforts.

I have spent much time in 2020-2021 meeting other CEO's of member organisations and CaLD Community Leaders to gain an understanding of what they see are the key issues facing them and the significant gaps in services and will continue to do this in 2021-2022.

This provides me with the opportunity to explain the direction of the ECCWA, the importance of systemic advocacy with a consolidated voice, and to encourage organisations and communities to work together particularly when faced with the impacts of the pandemic and its fallout.

My goal, continues to be creating a strong peak body with a consolidated voice on systemic advocacy particularly in a climate where there is still great uncertainty.

**Vivienne Pillay
Executive Officer**



POLICY, ADVOCACY & LOBBYING



In 2020-2021 ECCWA continued to work closely with culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities, relevant government and non-government agencies to achieve its vision of a diverse, fair, just and harmonious society in which all people have the opportunity to participate to reach their full potential.

Below are some of the initiatives undertaken by ECCWA in support of its vision.

1. POLICY, ADVOCACY & LOBBYING PROGRAM

Our policy and advocacy program focuses on ensuring that systemic barriers that impede access of ethnic and religious minorities (ERM) and culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) individuals and communities and inhibit their participation in decision making processes of government and community are effectively addressed or removed.

In 2020-2021 there were a number of initiatives undertaken by ECCWA to achieve this by enhancing the participation of ERM and CaLD people in the decision making, processes of government and community and by advocating for equitable access of ERM and CaLD people to programs and services provided/funded by governments at the national, state and local levels.

Examples of the various activities undertaken are listed below;

Meetings: ECCWA has either organised or participated in the following meetings:

1.1 Meeting with Minister Papalia the Minister for Multicultural Interests

The Hon. Minister Paul Papalia continued funding in 2020-2021 for ECCWA at the level of \$120,000 and ECCWA would like to thank him for this. Though this was not an increase in funding it did offer a level of stability for ECCWA especially during the difficult times and aftermaths of Covid-19. This core funding has allowed ECCWA to consolidate our core activities of Member support and Sector development and also has allowed us to work closely with Communities seeking their feedback and views and that of the views of various Service providers.

In August 2020 members of the ECCWA Board met with the Minister and raised a number of issues such as the increased effects of Covid-19 on already difficult mental health issues within the CaLD community. Mental Health issues particularly a need for Clinical Mental Health Services that are CaLD specific with CaLD specific Mental Health programs and practitioners was seen to be critical especially in helping with Suicide prevention. With the significant impact of COVID-19 on employment and also specifically on Temporary Visa holders (e.g. work visa holders, International students, casual workers etc.) and with the upcoming end of Job-Keeper in September 2020 there were already indications that there would be a huge demand for services. Add the increased number of Family and Domestic Violence incidents and the demand for Mental health Services was significant. ECCWA has and will continue to advocate for the CaLD Sector to be appropriately funded to provide clinically supported mental health services.

In relation to Family and Domestic Violence, ECCWA stressed that the FDV Service Sector needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is able to provide support to victims/survivors for up to 2 years at least from separation (high risk period) for CaLD clients and also that there needs to be properly funded services for victims who do not wish to separate but continue to live with the perpetrator. This is a primary issue for CaLD communities and our FDV sector is not set up to respond appropriately. Other key areas that were raised were RACISM incidents that occurred during Covid 19 and notifying the Minister of the launch of the RACISM Matters website. ECCWA also raised concerns that for some time there has been a lack of understanding in the CaLD Community about various aspects of Aged Care including issues such as Powers of Attorney, Guardianship, Living Wills, access to Aged Care and the need for Palliative Care. ECCWA advised the Minister that ECCWA, to ensure that the Senate Enquiry received appropriate feedback, coordinated a CaLD consultative forum in conjunction with Palliative Care WA.

Meeting with Minister Toni Buti the Minister for Multicultural Interests

Our President Mr Suresh Rajan met with Dr Tony Buti soon after his appointment to the position of Multicultural Interests Minister. It was a very productive meeting and Dr Buti has agreed to meet with our management committee when he has settled into his position. Our Council looks forward to a productive and meaningful relationship with the Minister and his office and staff.

1.2 Meeting with WA Police on numerous occasions in respect of a number of pressing issues

Our President has met with WA Police on a number of occasions to advance issues of concern to the CaLD communities. Our relationship with WA Police has always been a very cooperative one and we are working to maintain that. We have been able to effect considerable change to Police procedures and policies and we hope that the Community Policing model we have in WA will continue to ensure engagement and dialogue at the highest level. There is a lot to be done in the racism space and we value the relationship we have with Deputy Commissioner Col Blanch and others at WAPOL.

1.3 CEO Roundtable – Digital Literacy Skills and support for Vulnerable Communities and Individuals.

Anglicare WA created a CEO roundtable in 2020-2021 and invited ECCWA executive officer Vivienne Pillay to participate. This roundtable consisted of the various CEO's of a number of NFP's in WA and we were looking to assess what supports were needed in WA for the Vulnerable Communities and individuals including the impact of Digital literacy skills. This forum has continued on into 2021-2022 and is now in the process of developing some key ideas and principles for a project known as Community Service Sector Vision Project. The group is the Behaviour Change Collaborative.

1.4 Meeting with Regional Director of Dept of Home Affairs and Community Engagement team

President Suresh Rajan has met with the Regional Director of Home Affairs and we hope to have her at our Board meetings soon.

1.5 Labor Party Multicultural Policy Meetings

Vivienne and Suresh met with representatives of the Federal Labor Party to discuss the direction that the Labor Party should be following in relation to its Multicultural policy. We provided feedback in relation to visas, family domestic violence, mental health, racism and other issues and the very productive meeting resulted in ECCWA being invited to have a further discussion with the Federal Labor Multicultural Policy Committee. ECCWA President Suresh Rajan and Ramdas Sankaran CEO of MSCWA had a meeting with Peter Khalil, the Chair of Labor Federal Multicultural Policy Committee.

1.6 Meeting with Peter Khalil -Chair of Labor Federal Multicultural Policy Committee

Suresh Rajan and Ramdas Sankaran met with Peter Khalil who chairs the Federal Labor Multicultural Policy Committee. The Labor party needs to make its multicultural policy far more inclusive and accessible and this is something that we have fed back to the committee. We do the same with all sides of politics that seek our input.

1.7 Meetings with ABS for the 2021 Census -working closely to ensure CaLD communities are supported

With the Census occurring in 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics contacted ECCWA to get assistance to make contacts with Community leaders and to help promote the importance of the Census. We agreed to assist the ABS and provided them with feedback on their processes and linked them to various communities and encouraged them to be sensitive to the cultural needs of the various communities.

1.8 WA Peaks Forum – WA Community Of Social Services (WACOSS)

ECCWA is a member of the WACOSS Peaks Forum and the Executive Officer attends them regularly on a monthly basis. Key issues such as the Sustainability and Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) Supplementation which was raised in 2019-2020 continued to be of importance and relevance in 2020-2021. In addition in this year there was much discussion about the need for the Department of Finance to have a more active and accountable role in relation to procurement. This led to DOF creating a State Commissioning proposal which all communities were given an opportunity to provide feedback on. The ECCWA submission can be found on our website.

1.9 FECCA Board Meetings- General and Disability Sub-committee

FECCA continues to advocate for the National Communities of CaLD people. They are working particularly in the Aged and Covid response areas in recent times as they represent the major issues of concern to our communities across the country. Like most National agencies, shut downs have meant that it is not possible to have face to face meetings or conferences. This has restricted some of our activities but we work around the issues involved. We continue to provide advice and assistance to the Federal agency to ensure best practice is maintained.

1.10 FECCA CEO's Forum

The Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia is our National peak body. To ensure all the states are in constant communication and able to share ideas and issues, the CEO of FECCA organised regular 6 weekly CEO meetings. Our Executive officer Vivienne Pillay participates in these meetings to ensure WA is working collaboratively and consistently with the other ECC's in Australia. During the Pandemic, this was very beneficial as many of the issues were consistent Nationally and we were able to advocate to State and Commonwealth Governments in a consistent manner. Recently, we have been working together to encourage the Covid Vaccination program and ECCWA is encouraging communities to work with us to engage in the vaccination program. Other ways in which ECCWA works with FECCA was for example, the joint consultation held in Perth for CaLD members on the Royal Commission report on Aged Care. ECCWA plans to work more closely with FECCA in the year ahead.

1.11 Women's Issues

- Family and Domestic Violence – this sadly is still a major issue which we continue to work on. ECCWA as a member of the Ishar led multicultural consortium continues to support the training and education being provided to communities through the Free from Family and Domestic Violence Program which explains to communities what is FDV and to service providers on how to be culturally responsive.
- ECCWA is also a member of the MSCWA led FDV consortium with Ishar that is training Multicultural Wellness Connectors to be leaders in their community to stand up against FDV. This is known as the Vimauna program.
- Employment issues including equity of remuneration and opportunity
- Impacts of Covid-19 particularly during the lockdown -pressures of home schooling, social isolation etc

1.12 Meetings with various Local Governments.

In 2020-2021 ECCWA focused on building strong relationships with the various Local Government bodies across the State. We did this to ensure that a CaLD voice was present and to encourage and ensure that the voice of local CaLD communities was being heard. Below are some of the Councils ECCWA has worked with.

- Meetings with City of Joondalup
- Meetings with City of Wanneroo
- Meetings with City of Stirling including participation in their Reconciliation Event
- Meetings with City of Victoria Park – Healthy relationships strategy meetings – 6 weekly.
- Meetings with City of Armadale – EO is also a member of the MAG here

1.13 SERC Meetings since Covid-19 these have been fortnightly

ECCWA is a member of the State Emergency Relief Committee and hence hears regularly about the difficulties being faced across the State. ECCWA provides a CaLD perspective and is able to bring forward the views of CaLD Service providers and is also there to make recommendations on ways to assist the CaLD Community.

1.14 CEWA Forums-such as Sustainability and ERO forums

Vivienne has participated in a number of CEWA organised events in 2020-2021. These included forums on sustainability and ERO, employment issues, pre-election forums and in more recent times, impacts of Covid -19 requirements on various employment sectors. CEWA provides ECCWA with a forum where these issues can be discussed with other like minded NFP organisations to ensure consistent presentations to Governments. ECCWA's participation in these forums ensures a CaLD perspective is always considered.

1.15 Meeting with NBN to discuss CaLD strategies

Anglicare with NBN organised for meetings where CEO's of various NFP organisations could provide feedback on the impacts of NBN, use of digital strategies etc on the vulnerable communities we serve. ECCWA was keen to present the difficulties faced by many in the CaLD community including lack of access to IT, inability to pay for internet or to purchase laptops and Ipads etc. This was very evident during the Covid-19 lockdown when schooling was expected to be done online. This led to NBN looking at the various opportunities that may be available for vulnerable communities.

1.16 Other Meetings where ECCWA were involved in Advocacy and Policy

- Victims and Their Families Workstream (taskforce linked during COVID) -fortnightly
- Consultation with IAAAS regarding Protection visas etc.
- Focus group on Mental Health & AOD for CaLD Communities
- COVID-19 and impact on Poverty in WA forum
- WAPHA and ECCWA consultations on covid National Pandemic Response Plan Conversations.
- Community Disaster Resilience Strategy Forums
- Meeting with Dr Tien (Chung Wah President)
- WA sector Advocacy forums
- Conducted consultations for membership organisations reviewing their services for CaLD Communities
- CEDA Justice forums
- Meeting with CEO of Harmony Alliance
- WA ACE Forums
- Meeting with Institute for Respiratory Health re: CaLD digital (COVID) project

POLICY SUBMISSIONS

Submissions:

- ECCWA submission to Residential Tenancies Act review
- ECCWA/ Ishar FDV submission to Senate inquiry
- Public consultation on English language requirement and the new sponsorship framework for the partner visa program
- ECCWA's support for FECCA's request to ethnic data count in Australian census-
- Amended ECCWA Submission for the Senate Select Committee on Temporary migration
- Covid 19-Community CaLD Conversations in conjunction with Health Consumer's Council of WA
- ECCWA submission on Partner Visa Reforms
- ECCWA submission to the Disabilities Royal Commission

ECCWA response to the Residential Tenancies Act (1987) (The ‘Act’) Review

Background

As a significant number of the members of the Ethnic Communities Council of WA (ECCWA) Inc are from an economically disadvantaged backgrounds and ,at times, face race-based discrimination due to a number of factors ,which include , interalia, having large families, being visibly different due to their race, cultural dressing or religious beliefs. Members of this group are vulnerable on a number of fronts as tenants or potential tenants, accordingly, ECCWA welcomes and fully supports the State of Western Australia (‘WA’) Government’s review of the Act.

About the Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc.

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA is Western Australia’s peak ethnic umbrella organisation and its objects include interalia:

- To act as the peak body for ethnic communities in Western Australia, that shall advocate for the rights of ethnic communities in ensuring the protection of these rights.
- To ensure the rights of the ethnic communities including effective participation in decisions which affect them, and encourage the sharing of community resources.
- Ensure that ECCWA’s policy positions contribute to Government policy making;
- Promote and safeguard the interests of CaLD communities in WA;
- Disseminate WA government information to the Ethnic Communities.

ECCWA takes an active interest in all aspects of multiculturalism, culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) affairs and acts on behalf of all ethnic communities in WA. ECCWA has been providing advocacy supports (systemic and individual) to multicultural communities for 45 years and is a member of the Federations of the Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA).

Through the Ethnic Advocacy and Support Team (EAST), ECCWA provides specialised advocacy supports for individuals who are unable to access Government funded services.

For more information about ECCWA, please refer to our Website at: www.eccwa.org.au/

This response is based on feedback received from its management committee, its member agencies that provide services to people who are renting and also those who are homeless and/at risk of being homeless as well as other stakeholders.

1.Tenancy issues for ECCWA members:

ECCWA members often report that due to their lack of English language proficiency and limited knowledge of the RTA, on many occasions, as a result of being new immigrants, they experience significant disadvantage when searching for rental accommodation in the private rental market. Some of the matters referred to ECCWA regularly are the terms of a lease agreement relating to the length of the lease , rent increases at the end of that term if renewal is sought ,maintenance of the property and limitations in terms of making the property ‘home’ such as the hanging of wall pictures/family photographs and the keeping of pets.

The lease agreement itself and other documents such as Property Condition Reports (“PCRs”) are complex legal documents which are hard for tenants with limited language skills to read and comprehend.

Landlords can claim breach of the conditions of a lease which are not understood to force a tenant to vacate a property masking the real reason which could be cultural/religious intolerance. Many of our clients are sublessees of the Housing Authority as defined in Section 71A of the RTA. Accordingly, the Housing Authority is bound by the provision relating to the RTA relating to a lessee and a sub lessor, but fails to meet its obligations mainly in terms of the maintenance of the property. Our clients have often complained about their frustrations in having even routine maintenance undertaken in view of having to deal with both the owner and the Housing Authority. The RTA authorises a tenant to engage tradespeople to perform maintenance, however the latter are reluctant to undertake this work without approval from either the lessor or the sublessor as, in many cases, they have had to resort to Court proceedings in order to recover payment. Poor language skills is a significant barrier to our clients having to negotiate with all parties and navigate a system that they are unfamiliar with.

Financial hardship is a major factor for our clients seeking appropriate rental accommodation and accordingly are exposed to exploitation. The various types of visas held by migrants also play a major part. International students for example are on short term visas with limited opportunity to obtain anything more than casual underpaid employment. This has a major impact on their ability to rent and often leaves them to become sub-lessees with little to no rights.

Many people on low incomes, are from CaLD backgrounds and/or are those with disability. Often, they find it difficult to pay upfront payments such as option fees, bonds, and rent in advance. Option fees are particularly unreasonable if potential tenants are required to make more than one application per week. The Option fee is unnecessary and causes difficulties for the tenants and should be abolished. The potential tenant may be required to make a deposit and if the application is rejected, the deposit should immediately be paid back to the tenants.



The Northern Suburbs Community Legal Service (NSCLS) reported that one client from a NESB was charged up to \$10,000 to renovate the Lessor's house where the damages were not caused by the tenants. Tenants are often bullied to pay the cost or give up the bond to the Lessors or, by failing to do so are threatened with lease termination.

Sometimes, the rental property goes on sale during the lease period. The tenants are often forced to keep their property properly cleaned and open it for viewing. However, the lessors do not contribute towards the cost of deep cleaning neither is there respect for the privacy of the tenants if they wish to have a quiet time to themselves on the weekend.

In addition, there are specific problems faced by those people with disabilities which exacerbates the already difficult circumstances we have already mentioned above. For example, the Department of Housing may provide the person a wheelchair accessible dwelling or a place close to the amenities like the doctor's surgery, children's schools, public transport, close to the intersections where there are traffic lights with audible signalling if the person is blind, etc. They often push tenants out of the Homeswest dwellings when the family's income raises over \$500.00 per week giving no consideration to the person's accessibility needs.

This policy strongly discourages people from getting a job and working for the fear of losing their accessible house.

Furthermore, particularly in the private rental market as most landlords and real estate agencies can find other tenants who may not have any accessibility needs, they often refuse to spend their money to make any modifications to meet the tenant's disability access needs. The tenant is usually expected to pay for the modifications and then has to return the house to its original state upon vacation. These are additional costs many of our clients cannot afford.

The Multicultural Services Centre of WA Inc. provides housing advocacy to people on low incomes from CaLD backgrounds and has made the following recommendations which ECCWA endorses;

- The signing and return of the PCR to the owner by the tenant with comments after signing a new lease should be compulsory to avoid disputes when the tenant vacates.
- When a lease is renewed, or a variation to the lease is signed with the existing tenant, a revised PCR should be provided to the tenant incorporating improvements or rectifications made during the preceding tenancy period for comments and signature. Alternatively, each time a rectification of issues or an improvement is made during the tenancy, the owner and tenant should both sign on a prescribed form which records the rectification or improvement. This would then eliminate the need for a revised PCR.

- Rental property inspection by an accredited inspector should become compulsory with the inspector's report to remain valid, for example, for 5 years. The inspector should have the authority to categorize properties based on their condition. These categories should be disclosed when a property is made available to rent so that asking rents match the condition of the property and not the median rent of the area in which the property is located.

- The owner must rectify issues with the property identified in the inspection report before the property can be rented out. This will eliminate the current safe harbor that owners have in the "subject to viewing" by the tenant provision that allows tenants and owners to enter into agreements for sub-standard properties that go on to exacerbate tensions between both parties.

When the tenant is being charged out of the Bond after vacating, it should be compulsory for the owner to provide the tenant with the invoices, preferably to be cleared by the tenant. The Bond Administrator should not dispose of bonds until this step is complete.

ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL OF WA (ECCWA) & ISHAR MULTICULTURAL WOMENS HEALTH SERVICES (ISHAR)



SUBMISSION

RE: PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT AND THE NEW SPONSORSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR THE PARTNER VISA PROGRAM

31 MARCH 2021

ABOUT ECCWA

ECCWA is the state's peak ethnic umbrella organisation and its objectives include *inter alia*:

- To act as the peak body for ethnic communities in Western Australia, that shall advocate for the rights of ethnic communities in ensuring the protection of these rights.
- To ensure the rights of the ethnic communities including effective participation in decisions which affect them, and encourage the sharing of community resources.
- To do and to perform all acts, matter and things as are charitable and for benevolent purposes having public benefit in accordance with the law of the State of Western Australia and the law of the Commonwealth of Australia and to disseminate any information within a Social Justice framework that achieves the objectives of the Council in ensuring equity and access to and for ethnic communities.

In fulfilling these objectives ECCWA has responded to many inquiries, consultations etc. organised by State and Commonwealth government agencies. ECCWA places a strong emphasis on Human Rights and would strongly argue that a Human Rights framework is essential for the complex issues surrounding migration.

ECCWA has also established the Ethnic Advocacy and Support Team (EAST) which is a team of advocates and volunteers aiming to provide advocacy and support to CaLD persons facing challenging life events. While this service, was not set up to be a specific FDV service, since its commencement EAST has worked with a number of individuals and families impacted by FDV.

ECCWA (through EAST) also established and currently coordinates the CaLD Advocacy Network which includes a number of agencies such as Ishar, The Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors, and Multicultural Women's Advocacy Service. As a result of this mechanism, the ECCWA has developed sound expertise on what is happening with regards to service system responses within CaLD communities.

ABOUT ISHAR

Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Services was officially opened on August 10th, 1992 and in 2020 celebrates 27 years of service. Ishar's Mission is To provide inclusive, holistic and culturally sensitive services for women and their families promoting healthy communities. Ishar operate with a philosophy grounded in the 'Social Model of Health' and have adopted a style of service that focuses on the healing of lifestyle related problems that detrimentally affect the health and well-being of women of all ages, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In other words, the 'medical' condition of women seeking the services of the centre is not separated from the real-life interconnections of personal, social, cultural, economic, race, age and gender related problems.

Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Services provides a range of holistic services to women from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds. Ishar is a LGBTQI friendly service and welcomes women of any sexual orientation, anyone who identifies as a woman and anyone who was assigned female identity at birth. Women are provided with information, advice, counselling, training and/or support so that they are empowered to deal with the problems themselves, or they are referred on to another agency for specialised assistance. We believe that women are the centre of the community, if the women are empowered this has a systemic effect on families and community. Ishar has provided vital services for approximately 4600 women from over 100 ethnicities making over 50,000 service contacts.

INTRODUCTION

ECCWA and Ishar would like to thank the Department of Home Affairs for conducting this public consultation process on these important issues impacting CaLD communities.

There is general agreement from ECCWA and Ishar that having a basic level of proficiency with the English Language is important to assist migrants with understanding their rights and responsibilities within Australia. This is also important for gaining and maintaining employment, interacting with government and non-government agencies and developing relationships and networks with the broader community.

As organisations that have day-to-day contact with many people who may be directly impacted by these proposed changes, there are a number of issues and concerns that we believe need to be addressed by the Department as part of this process.

Please find below responses to the specific questions posed in the Consultation Paper, an outline of key issues relating to the proposed reforms and key recommendations for consideration by the Department of Home Affairs

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Part A – ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

1. What level of English language proficiency and skills would Partner visa applicants and permanent resident sponsors need to function independently in Australian society, including to access essential services and employment?

From the perspective of having a functional level of English, migrants should be able to effectively communicate with essential service agencies and with prospective and current employers. We believe it is important for anyone coming to Australia on the Partner visa to have a basic level of English i.e. ability to read, write and speak in English - approximately Level 5 IELTS so they can understand their rights and responsibilities in Australia, to communicate independently with people in the community and with service providers, and to receive education in matters regarding their health and safety.

We acknowledge that having the ability to speak English is important to enable people to integrate into Australian society, gain an education, find meaningful employment and make social connections. It is also a key part of feeling safe and being able to access support services in Australia across a range of agencies. We consider having attained a basic level of conversational English, after a two-year period to be a fair requirement and believe this will assist partners to maintain a level of autonomy in the community.

In practice, our agencies come across many clients who have come to Australia on a Partner visa, with minimal English proficiency and after a few years we have realised how the compatibility between the couple changes because they don't speak the same language.

Given the role of Permanent resident sponsors, it is reasonable to expect them to have a basic level of English proficiency that would allow them to undertake the following activities – self-advocacy to seek services, go about their lifestyles using transport, shopping, paying bills, getting driving lessons, enrolling children in school etc. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that the sponsor may be employed, has less time for English language classes and therefore may take a longer time to reach a basic level of English. In these cases, they should be afforded a longer time to acquire a higher level of English proficiency. The sponsor is responsible for supporting their partner and needs to have at least basic English requirements.

Our major concern is what exactly is considered a functional level of proficiency in the English language and how will this to be determined? There are layers of complexity that need to be acknowledged, before we can determine one's proficiency in the English language. For example, we have supported many domestic violence clients whom we can easily understand without using interpreters, during face to face consultations, phone consultations, text/email and also in collaboration with legal services and partner agencies. These interactions have required clients to share their personal story, participate in complex risk assessments, apply for court orders, fill out forms etc. Yet these same clients struggle to order a coffee or speak over the phone because others in the wider community struggle to understand them during very basic conversations.

There are also cases where people who speak English fluently and have University level education yet have repeatedly failed English tests. A case we know of personally is a University Graduate Engineer who failed his English test 29 times before being granted Australian residency (<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/testing-times-mohab-sat-english-test-29-times-before-achieving-australian-residency>). We need to avoid such situations from occurring.

The push towards a requirement to have a level of English which allows someone to 'function independently' in Australian society is complex. For example, how does this reflect on the countless people who for all practical purposes have a functional level of English that enables them to socialise, study, work and contribute to society but simply cannot score high enough on a formal English Language test? It is concerning to us "how many hoops they will have to jump through just to pass a test that people of other English-speaking foreign countries do not have to jump through?" This is clear discrimination and will have a major effect on families, communities and the potential social cohesion of our society as explained more later. It will also significantly, increase the cost and wait times for visa applicants when already there is significant wait times.

Also, what is the definition of "function independently" being applied in this context? For example even if their English is functional, interpreters for example should still be provided for medical, legal or other services that use specific jargon or technical terms that people might not be familiar with. There are many people in our community who from time to time need the support of external agencies to represent them or advocate on their behalf. In these circumstances will the person still be deemed to be functioning independently in the community?

We strongly believe, that the level of proficiency in English can be assessed in different ways other than the traditional English tests usually requested by the Department. These could take the form of verbal tests, multiple choice, short answer, assignment completion etc.

2.What should constitute a reasonable effort to learn English in the context of AMEP participation? What other types of evidence could be accepted for the purposes of assessing whether an applicant has made a reasonable effort to learn English?

There are many other activities, other than AMEP that help people to fully immerse themselves in the English language such as having employment, volunteering, studying and being part of various clubs and social groups. Evidence of participation in any of these activities, should be considered as part of the assessment process. Evidence could include support letters or statutory declarations from their employers or supervisors, church leaders, team captains etc. In the case they were undertaking other studies they could provide the enrolment confirmation, copies of assignments completed or a letter from the lecturer or educational institution.

The visa applicant can commence learning English as soon as they apply for the visa. As mentioned on page 2 of the public consultation paper – “Partner visa applications are processed in two stages and Partner visa applicants will only need to meet the English language requirement at the 2nd stage assessment which is often two years after the provisional Partner visa application is lodged”. If the Partner has travelled to Australia on the provisional Partner visa they can study English by attending the government-funded AMEP classes if they have not already done this in their country of origin. Evidence of regular class attendance and achieving appropriate scores should be ample evidence for demonstrating reasonable effort to learn English.

Before arrival in Australia (if possible), applicants should be offered free basic English classes via any of the approved testing agencies. The applicant may have completed a course in basic English (conversational) in their country of origin. Undertaking these opportunities would demonstrate reasonable effort to learn English. The Sponsor applicant would then need to provide relevant documentation that they have completed a basic level of English through AMEP upon their arrival.

Partners should have to either attend AMEP classes in person or if not suitable due to having multiple children/transport issues/carer responsibilities etc, then online classes should be undertaken. Partner visa applicants would then have to produce evidence of completion via a certificate from AMEP. Letter of support from the teacher/instructor regarding their attitude and progress regarding the classes.

Similar to the recognition of prior learning process, if people were undertaking volunteer work, gainfully employed, linked in with early settlement services such as a SET program, attending faith-based groups that speak English, attending clubs and social events where English is spoken – this should contribute to demonstrating ‘a reasonable effort’. This also acknowledges that learning and acquiring language can occur in a variety of ways, not just through formal classes.

3.What evidence should be accepted to satisfy the English language proficiency requirement for Partner visa applicants and permanent resident sponsors?

This proof of English language proficiency is normally provided by taking an English language test which assesses the applicant's ability to read, listen, write, and speak English. It must be noted that English has been described as one of the hardest languages to learn and it takes time, which must be given with opportunities to learn through the AMEP. We have every confidence that new migrants will eventually learn English and contribute significantly to the Australian community.

Other evidence for demonstrating English language proficiency could include:

- **Documentation showing evidence of maintaining competence in English e.g. emails, forms, correspondence prepared by the Sponsor or applicant**
- **Having friends/social networks and speaking English with them**
- **Seeking or having employment, earning income and paying tax**
- **Supporting letters from employers, supervisors, educators etc**
- **Providing copies of the assignments they have done for AMEP**

At present the Department of Home Affairs recognises certain English language tests for Australian visa purposes. All of these English language tests can be taken at a variety of test centres worldwide. The various centres and test dates can be checked on the websites of the respective providers and examination dates can be booked online. These agencies, could be encouraged to in collaboration with the Australian Government, devise a more basic test for women who may not have high levels of education due to various factors. The Department should take into consideration if the applicant, particularly women who may have lived in refugee conditions for long periods or where formal education was curtailed due to war, traditions of younger marriages and childbearing and create and offer a more basic test (conversation) that may be considered reasonable. These women can still learn English although it may take a longer period than a woman who has higher education levels. We need to acknowledge that the ability to speak and listen to English comes first and more quickly and then writing, reading and comprehension take much longer to grasp.

Applicants should only need to demonstrate a basic level competency in English language listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Applicants who do not meet this basic standard in the English language should be given more opportunities to learn the language and resit the test until they pass, rather than be failed after the current number of allowed attempts. A number of testing methods could be utilised by the Department including course-based tests/assignments, verbal test, multiple-choice tests, short-answer tests - dependant on the best way for each individual to demonstrate their proficiency.

4. In what circumstances should a person be exempt from needing to meet the English language requirement? What evidence should be accepted to support a claim for an exemption?

We believe there are a number of circumstances or scenarios where exemptions to the English language requirement could be justified:

- **Existence of intellectual or learning disabilities, some medical conditions (themselves or close family member), or age (extremely elderly persons). Documented evidence could be provided from appropriately certified medical and health professionals, e.g. GP, Geriatrician, OT, Speech Therapist etc**

- Where the person is illiterate in their own language and/or have had no or minimal formal education for various cultural or practical reasons. Evidence could be provided from family, health and social service providers where appropriate
- Where domestic violence is occurring and the perpetrator is using coercive control. Evidence could be provided from family, health and social service providers where appropriate
- Where someone has spent years in refugee camps and are suffering from the impacts of torture and trauma. Those experiencing mental health distress or suffering from PTSD, may need on-going psychological support before being expected to learn another language to the required level of proficiency within the required time
- Possibly those who do not have long-term/stable accommodation – this might be relevant where someone finds it difficult to prioritise learning English if other basic needs such as stable housing are not being met
- Exemptions could also be considered for someone who is fluent in multiple languages and/or bilingual – demonstrating their ability to acquire new languages. They could be supported to learn English through a longer or more intensive process
- Individual cases and situations must be considered when granting an exemption to the English language requirement. For example, consider a scenario where a mother comes to Australia without her partner, is the carer of a child with special needs and she is making all attempts to adapt to a new way a life and is focused on surviving. Learning and building a new language might be a lower priority for her compared to keeping her child safe and nourished
- In considering exemptions to the English language requirement, the Department must acknowledge that for some people it can take longer as an adult to learn a second language.

5. What other strategies can the Department adopt to support prospective Partner visa applicants and permanent resident sponsors to prepare for the introduction of the English language requirement, both in the lead up to and after the implementation of the new requirement?

The Department needs to make clear statements about the requirements for both the sponsor and the partner, actively promote the new changes through various media channels, provide information to both applicant and sponsor on how to prepare adequately and to state clearly that approvals could take 2 years.

There needs to be an extensive promotional campaign educating all permanent resident sponsors, partner visa applicants, multicultural communities and the organisations that work directly with migrant populations. This should include a variety of culturally appropriate promotional messaging including through radio, print media, posters and social media platforms. Many organisations across Australia such as ECCWA and Ishar can, with appropriate resourcing play a key role in helping to educate the community regarding these potential changes.

The proposed changes should only be implemented after a considerable period of time where the information has been made widely available to the community and they have had time to understand the changes and can prepare themselves accordingly.

Once the changes have been implemented, English classes should be made available to everyone regardless of their location of residence. The current migration system encourages people to move to regional/rural areas where there are less support services available, compared to the main/major cities. The Department needs to acknowledge that many migrants could be struggling to access a range of services including support to learn English. It is common for new migrants to not have their own private transport when first arrived in Australia, so making the English classes available either face to face or online would increase access.

Should English tests such as the IELTS or TOEFL be the accepted way to demonstrate English language proficiency, then AMEP should be teaching students how to pass these specific tests. These tests do not accurately reflect how most people use the English language and communicate on a daily basis. For example, to pass the writing component of these tests, you need to have the ability to organise an idea and develop it into a short essay, which can be challenging for many people even in their own language. In fact there are many people who have been born and raised in Australia with English as their first language, who would struggle with this task.

Migration Embassies could offer a system of assistance via education agents who can assist applicants to learn English in their country of origin as a means of preparing and having a better outcome when their English proficiency is tested here in Australia. Participation in such opportunities would also demonstrate considerable effort to learn English even before applicants arrive in Australia.

In those cases where an applicant has a disability, or is unwell or is not literate in their own language, then additional support could be provided in the form of home/online tutors. This could be arranged through outsourcing this service to trusted and approved volunteer-based organisations. Willingly engaging in such a program would clearly demonstrate reasonable effort to learn English.

There needs to be consideration of the consequences if someone does not meet the English language requirement within the two-year period and having in place an appropriate appeals process.

PART B – NEW SPONSORSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR THE PARTNER VISA PROGRAM

What types of adverse information should be subject to disclosure under the new sponsorship framework?

Any adverse information that reveals what would be considered unlawful behaviour in Australia should be subject to disclosure under the new sponsorship framework. This should be clearly communicated to both parties, to avoid there being any 'unpleasant' surprises further into the application process. This may include for example someone already having several existing wives and the array of other illegal activities that a person may be engaging in.

The Department already checks an applicant's criminal background to ensure the person's behaviour is consistent with Australian values. Issues such as domestic or family violence, procuring or facilitating female genital mutilation and involvement in gangs and organised crime will clearly be flagged. Any applicant who fails the integration requirements will have their application refused.



Are there other issues that should be considered in the development and implementation of the new sponsorship framework for the Partner visa program?

In our work, we see many women who arrive on Partner visas who have no English language skills and who are sometimes experiencing severe domestic violence from their partners. We believe some of this could be avoided if both sponsor and applicant are educated in what domestic violence looks like in all its aspects including financial, emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual, mental, sexual, social, moral, etc. and are given relationship counselling and other support whilst still being on the provisional partner visa.

In disclosing information to another party, the Department needs to consider issues around privacy and confidentiality and there may be situations where disclosing sensitive information to another party could lead to potential harm to either party or their family members. The safety of the Partner visa applicant must be paramount.

There could also be situations where some minor criminal offence has taken place, many years previously – how will this situation be addressed?

PART C: OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO THE PROPOSED REFORMS

Underlying discrimination

These proposed changes will discriminate against certain cultural groups, resulting in a negative impact on families, communities and social cohesion. The fact that only people from specific foreign countries will be affected by this policy change points to a sense of privilege and discrimination. The changes mean, that countries such as the USA, UK, Canada etc where English is the main language will get priority over people from other countries, where more will be required of them just to complete the application process.

There is concern about how a number of countries have been selected to meet the requirement only by applicants needing to hold a valid passport, which underlines discrimination towards other countries. It is also not clear how educational qualifications obtained in other countries, that are instructed in English will be assessed by the Department.

There is concern that the proposed changes represents what is a worldwide movement to erode and limit immigration from non-white non-English speaking countries. Conflating the ability to speak English with broad social cohesion is disingenuous, dangerous, and overly simplistic. This implies that people speaking different languages has a negative impact on our social cohesion across the Australian community. This nationalistic perspective appears to be the underlying driver towards targeting migration from English-speaking countries.

Exacerbating existing barriers for Partner visa applicants

Given the significant barriers already facing Partner visa applicants such as cost, long waiting times, instability, and many other restrictions, we are concerned that this additional requirement will exacerbate their situation by increasing the time spent in Australia on temporary visas.

There are also concerns that the proposed changes to the Partner visa program will act as a barrier to people who wish to marry from within their own culture and country of origin, where English is not the first language. There is concern that the requirement for English proficiency will act as a barrier to people from non-English speaking countries from coming to Australia and will take away the freedom from multicultural communities to marry the person they love.

These changes will also impact all existing/long-term Australian citizens and restricts their choices for whom they can marry, based on the nationality of their partner and their level of proficiency in the English language?

Potential barriers to learning English

We ask that the Department for Home Affairs considers the following issues:

- **Barriers other than possibly having a disability have not been mentioned in the consultation paper and more importantly does it have to be a formally diagnosis? Most people might not have access to and/or have knowledge of such processes. If this is required, this may cause further delays in processing visa applications due to the possible waiting times for an official diagnosis**
- **Importance of obtaining formal advice from language consultants in regards to the timeline of expected language acquisition**
- **The location of the English learning centres and the timing and accessibility of these courses is critical. Even though there is unlimited tuition available, there needs to be acknowledgement that everyday real-life will have an impact on learning a new language**
- **What are the specific methods of teaching English, is it based on best-practice, are there visual aids or alternatives ways of learning being implemented**
- **Financial and time costs associated with learning English and attending classes**

Assumptions and Propagation of Negative Stereotypes

The proposed changes appear to be based on assumptions and promotes negative cultural stereotypes including:

- **An assumption that migrants do not want to learn English**
- **The proposed changes conflates a lack of English proficiency with increased FDV. FDV is not specific to people from non-English speaking countries with one woman a week dying from FDV in Australia from a range of backgrounds. What percentage of this cohort have come to Australia under Partner visas?**
- **The proposed changes conflate a lack of English proficiency with education level, which are very different issues**
- **The proposed changes appear to promote the concept that migrants are to be feared and are of bad character**
- **Stereotypes are also embedded in the policy changes i.e. the assumption that women are vulnerable and need to be protected from their partners/sponsors**

Setting a Precedence

We have some concern that these changes on the Partner visa conditions could set a precedence for future similar provisions being made for other visas.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

We implore the Department for Home Affairs to seriously consider the following recommendations:

- 1. Provide further information and justification for these proposed changes to CaLD communities and organisations that work with them**
- 2. Address the issues of access and equity to all services for CaLD communities across Australia**

- 3. Provide further opportunity for the community to provide their views on these proposed changes**
- 4. Consider other methods for assessing English language proficiency, as an alternative to the traditional English language test**
- 5. AMEP to teach students how to pass the specific English Language tests utilised by the Department**
- 6. Obtain expert advice from language consultants in regards to the expected timeline for new language acquisition**
- 7. Consider and address the various barriers (as outlined in this submission) facing migrants in the process of learning English**
- 8. Provide further opportunities to extend the learning period beyond the allocated AMEP hours**
- 9. Consider the development of practical English language test that more accurately reflects day-to-day communication especially for Partner visa applicants**
- 10. Clarify the process for appeal where there is a failure to meet the English language requirement within the 2-year period**
- 11. Provide greater clarity on how the educational qualifications that are instructed in English will be assessed by the Department**
- 12. Provide greater levels of FDV prevention and support services across all Australian communities - with a specific focus on improving culturally secure responses when working with CaLD communities**
- 13. Provide assurance that English language requirements are not being considered for other visa types**

Tender Submissions

1.ECC Core funding

1.1 ECC Core funding - \$120,000 from OMI was received for the Financial year 2020-2021.

1.2 We were successful in negotiations with Curtin University for \$30,000 for 2019-2021 to partner in a Research Project for:

Improving health outcomes and service delivery for Australian culturally and linguistically diverse overseas born people in relation to STIs and BBVs

The above is a national research project being undertaken by Curtin University and ECCWA as project partners and with other partner organisations in the other states (e.g. Centre for Ethnicity and Health and Relationships Australia SA).

1.3 We were successful as part of a Consortium with ISHAR, MMRC, MSC and Orana Women's Refuge Inc. for DCS \$200,000pa FDV capacity building grant. This Consortium led by Ishar will see a minimum of \$25,000 p.a. for 4 years commencing from 2019-2020 being allocated to ECCWA for its contribution to the FDV work.

1.4 WACOSS PEAKS CAPACITY BUILDING Grants: We were successful in obtaining \$22980 for 6 months from June 2020 till December 2020 to create a programme addressing RACISM in WA through a website known as Racism Matters and by providing an Advocate and Education Programmes that assist to help Maintain Cohesion in WA.

1.5 OMI Capital Grant for \$110,000 was received in May 2021 to allow us to refurbish Multicultural House 20 View Street North Perth. This capital improvement has allowed us to upgrade our conference facilities and to create a Community Multicultural Hub

1.6 Speak My Language Project ML Project – this is a project being led by ECCNSW and ECCWA is a partner. The grant is from Jan 2021 till December 2022 and is for \$202,000

2.Other Tender Submissions and Outcomes

Unsuccessful tender and grant applications

2.1 Aurizon Grant (\$20,000) Connecting Women to Futures

2.2 We were unsuccessful for the Lotterieswest Grant -Strengthening and Adapting organizations for \$220,000.

2.3 We were unsuccessful in the Police Grant application for \$33,000 to upgrade the Law of Land DVD into a digital updated version.

2.4 Scanlon Grant (\$20,000)

We are continuing to look at all funding opportunities through Government agencies, Philanthropic Organisations etc

Staff, Volunteers and Students

ECCWA currently employs part-timers the equivalent of 1.3 FTE and has other projects that fund other key positions that value add to the organization. All 8 staff in ECCWA are part-time but are passionate and committed to the organization its vision and objectives.

ECCWA supports its staff through the use of volunteers and students. In 2020-2021 ECCWA had a number of volunteers provide support to the organisation in various capacities. This was essential to help us to be able to keep in constant contact with our Community members, conduct consultations and pursue grants etc.

We also actively recruited and trained 3 volunteers to assist in the Ethnic Advocacy Support Team and to provide Admin support particularly in the area of Tenders and Communications in the latter half of 2019-2020 and they commenced in the new financial year of 2020-2021.

ECCWA also actively supports student placements and has had student placements from the McCusker Centre for Citizenship at UWA and Curtin University. We have also had student placements from the North Metropolitan TAFE. We look positively at these opportunities as ways to help educate the students but also as an opportunity for us to learn from their very vast talents. These students consistently add value and make a difference in our communities.

ECCWA will also be looking to have more volunteers involved with its services in 2021-2022 as this is an invaluable resource and often the volunteers come with incredible experience and knowledge that adds value to the Services we provide.

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS





RACISM MATTERS

In 2019-2020, ECCWA applied for and won a grant from WACOSS to address the issue of maintaining social cohesion in the world of COVID-19. This grant was made in June 2019 and hence this 6 month project commenced in 2020-2021.

The plan, was multi-faceted and three main strands were identified. The first strand was the development of a website separate to that of the ECCWA; the second was the creation of a training/education package that was suitable for delivery to the communities, local governments and then to other interested parties, such as educational institutions; and the third was the advocacy that we provide to support the people who have made reports on the new website.

- The website is called Racism Matters and can be accessed via www.racismmatters.com.au

- The report form is user-friendly and brief, and has provision for anonymity. The questions are logical and, in some cases, require simple responses and in others, allow for more detail to be included. De-identified data will be obtained from the responses to help build a database of discriminatory or racist behaviour.

This project highlighted not only individual incidents of racism but also some systemic issues within some employment areas that needed to be addressed. ECCWA through its advocacy has been looking into how these systemic issues can be addressed and has commenced communications with the necessary bodies.

- Though the funding ceased for this project mid-year, it was very evident that this website and the work being done on Racism by ECCWA was of great importance, hence this website and the support for individuals who access it is now part of the core business of ECCWA.

Ethnic Advocacy and Support Team (EAST)

Ethnic Advocacy and Support Team (EAST)- provides support and assistance to individuals who either cannot get support from Government funded advocacy support services or choose not to access those services eg: services are delivered by a mainstream provider only and they wish to be assisted by a Multicultural Organisation. It's a fee for service program. However, all fees were waived for 12 months 2020-2021 due to CoVID-19.

It is a small service with 0.53 paid FTE and 2 volunteers and during the past 12 months, the Ethnic Advocacy and Support Team (EAST) assisted and supported 46 clients from 23 countries: Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Turkey, Iran, Vietnam, Ghana, Taiwan, China, Iraq, Cambodia, Nigeria, Burma, Italy, Philippine, Brunei, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sudan, Liberia, Somalia and Tanzania.

60 percent of clients were domestic violence related, and some of them needed long term assistance;

15 percent of them had financial hardship;

10 percent needed assistance with visa issues;

05 percent needed support regarding teenager issues;

05 percent referred for counselling sessions;

05 percent needed assistance and support due to stress and family issues.

EAST is a unique service in that it provides support services to persons who may not be eligible for any other Government funded support services and offers a wrap around service.

The East team provide support to clients from across the State and with the opening of our Cannington premises we now have an advocate 2 days a week at Cannington and 2 days a week at North Perth. EAST continues to be very busy with referrals from various sources.



Curtin University Research Project

Curtin Sexual Health survey:



The Ethnic Communities Council of WA was part of the Curtin Project that started in 2020 and ended in May 2021. ECCWA played a significant role in the recruitment of participants through-out the study due to the strong engagement and connection it has with community members and diverse organisations. In the beginning of 2020, peer research training was conducted to all ECCWA team members. This training assisted staff members to conduct focus group discussions for pilot studies. The pilot study provided feedback from several community members on the survey before submitting to nationally. The Migrant Blood-borne Virus and Sexual Health Survey (MiBSS) aimed to investigate CaLD people's knowledge, attitudes, and practices with respect to STIs and BBVs, and to collect baseline data. Data was collected using an English survey that was also translated to several languages. Surveys were made available online and in paper form.

After receiving the required material recruitment from Curtin University, the recruitment process of eligible participants in Western Australia started in June 2020 till May 2021. Eligible participants were 18 years of age or older and were born on South-East Asian, North-East Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa. Methods of recruitment comprised of sending direct invitation to our community members list using email, telephone, and social media platforms, promotion through printed advertisements and social media (e.g. newsletters, Facebook), and face-to-face approaches during community events and outreach activities.

We promoted the survey through the official ECCWA website, sending the online survey to all our members via emails and using events to promote the survey. With COVID 19, promoting the survey face to face became slow and hard. We also recruited community leaders who were trained as peer researchers.

The period of recruitment started in September 2020 to May 2021, and necessary precautions were taken in response due to COVID-19. At that time paper forms were affected, and online surveys were promoted.

Speak My Language

Speak My Language (SML) is a partnership program by the Ethnic Communities Council of WA and Ethnic Communities Council of NSW that involves CALD and Indigenous Australians with disabilities, and their supporters, sharing real stories and experiences via podcast, broadcast, and online. The initiative will be delivered across Australia in 2021, 2022. SML is funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) as part of the NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) and is led by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW.

The stories will be made available in 25 languages about living well with a disability, and they will inform people about skills and resources available in the community to support people to live well.



FDV Multicultural Consortium Projects

Free From Family Violence

Free from Family and Domestic Violence is a project funded through the Department of Communities to a Consortium led by Ishar that is responsible for providing training to Communities and the FDV sector and Mainstream and Multicultural Organisations who may assist women and children experiencing FDV. The other Consortium members are Orana women's refuge, MMRC, MSCWA and ECCWA. The EAST team help in the delivery of this training to community organisations.

Community Sessions

From October 2019 to June 2021 we conducted 28 Community workshops for various community groups and Education organisations -specific CaLD classes. This meant we accessed 1045434 men and women and informed them about what FDV is and the sector responses available.

Vimauna

Vimauna is another new project that the Consortium of MSCWA, Ishar and ECCWA are involved in. It is primarily for 12 months, led by MSCWA and is focused on training Community leaders to be Multicultural Wellness Connectors who help educate communities on FDV. This project commenced late in June 2021 - where recruitment of MWC's commenced.

Sector Training

In addition to the Community Sessions we also provided Culturally responsive training that was designed specifically for the mainstream providers. This saw us provide 12 workshops for 198 Service providers from Women's refuges, Police, Dept of Justice and Social Workers in the main hospitals

WORK WITH THE MEDIA

3.0 Work with Media

Several issues that we covered with regard to policy, advocacy and lobbying were reflected in our media releases. A list of media releases has been provided.

3.1 Media Involvement

We issued the following Media releases:

Media Releases: (A sample are listed below and are available on our website)

- Media releases on Perth Children's Hospital – re: Aishwarya Ashwath
- Media release: ECCWA commends the changes to AMEP.
- Media release: ECCWA Commends Immigration Revamp Suggestions

3.2 Communications and Social Media

- ECCWA Bi- Monthly News
- ECCWA promotional booklet
- ECCWA -Quarterly Equity Newsletter due to Covid-19 was put on hold and only a Spring edition was issued in 2021.
- Websites: ECCWA Website and Racism Matters Website
- Facebook: Multicultural WA has various events and posts
- ECCWA Annual Report
- International Women's Day booklet
- Flyers: Racism Matters, Healthy Relationships Workshops, Pre-Election Forums, Speak My Language.
- Eventbrite advertising of events
- Radio Interviews on racism

An Article written in ECCWA Equity by ECCWA President Mr Suresh Rajan

A lot of the work that we have done since the last Equity magazine has been documented elsewhere in this issue. From my perspective the last few months appear to have been more of the same as we battled with issues of racism, disadvantage, improper human rights treatment of minorities and all with a pandemic in the background.

Amongst the most complex of issues that we dealt with was the passing of seven year old Aishwarya Aswath at Perth Children's Hospital in April this year. As many of you would be aware, I have worked very closely with the family of little Aishwarya to achieve what we all want. Nothing we do now nor into the future is going to change the fact that we have lost an extremely vibrant and engaged little member of our community. However, we and the family have advocated very strongly on this matter to make sure that there will not be another death of this kind in the future.

As part of the advocacy in relation to the above matter, I have been appointed to the External Panel that is inquiring into the circumstances of her death. This panel will report its findings to the Director General of the Department of Health somewhere around the middle of September. We hope that this report will shed light on the circumstances of her passing and changes to policy and procedure to ensure it does not happen again.

Let me also emphasise that our thoughts and good wishes lie with Aswath, Prasitha and their three children. We have been concerned for the need for them to seek professional, culturally appropriate grief counselling to assist with coping with what has happened. I also want to pay tribute to the many other bereaved parents who reached out to us with their own stories of neglect and loss through interactions with the medical system. There is much work to be done here and we will continue to be vigilant to ensure that the systems are appropriate for the people requiring them.

Aside from this matter we, like everyone else in the community have been consumed by the Covid 19 issues. We have been advocating with the health professionals so as to ensure our CaLD communities get information and access to services that are inclusive. We will continue to make our voices heard herein.

At the Federal level we are concerned about what has happened with the Labor party where they have jettisoned Kristina Keneally into a safe seat when they had someone from the CaLD community ready to take up the position. The sidelined candidate, Ms Tu Le, is a Vietnamese Australian Lawyer and was clearly representative of the vast majority of that seats cultural diversity. And yet again, Labor chose to go with the mainstream rather than embrace diversity. Sadly, this will be a major consideration for advocates in this area for some considerable time.

There is so much more work that needs to be done herein. It is imperative that we hear about the acts of racism and disadvantage that you are facing and dealing with. Our webpage "Racism Matters" gives you the opportunity to report these matters to us under protection of anonymity. This will allow us to raise the issues at the appropriate levels of the hierarchy.

Lastly, we were able to get some considerable traction with the matter of a young Ghanaian lady who had been quite brutally dealt with by WA Police. The Deputy Commissioner who engaged with us in bring that issue to completion, Col Blanch, was very receptive to issues that we raised. We will work with Deputy Commissioner Blanch in the next few weeks and months to make systemic change to Police procedures and systems. We will keep you informed of any developments therein
Suresh Rajan



Events

Events Held or Attended

4.0 MULTICULTURALISM, INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY HARMONY PROGRAM

Goal: Our objectives is to always ensure that the benefits of Multiculturalism and multicultural citizenship are achieved and CaLD and wider communities are provided with the information, skills and opportunities to promote Integration and Community Harmony.

ECCWA sought to achieve the above by increasing awareness of and addressing issues relating to racism, discrimination and community harmony within ethnic and the wider communities

ECCWA has either organised or attended the following events:

- Pakistanis In Australia - Launch of FDV Video project.
- Healthy Relationships Training -Delivered to the Pat Giles Centre
- CaLD webinars for Primary Health workers with ASHM
- Webinar – Delivering quality and Culturally Responsive telehealth services in conjunction with Health Consumer’s Council of WA
- ECCWA/FECCA Consultation on WA Royal Commission report on Aged Care .
- Chung Wah Chinese New Year celebrations
- WA Skills Summit
- Multicultural Awards Night
- Consultation/briefings on Australian Governments pilot to support Women on temporary visas who have experienced FDV
- United in diversity -Community Event in City of Belmont
- Black Lives Matter protest.

Community Consultative Forums.

ECCWA is committed to hosting a minimum of 3 Community Consultative Forums each financial year. In 2020-2021 a number of forums were held.

4.1 Silent March

Family and Domestic Violence Silent March November 2020- ECCWA participated in the Silent March in November 2020 and had a stall at the event promoting its role and the services offered by EAST. Sadly, 2020 saw a number of persons killed due to Family and Domestic Violence. ECCWA continues to be actively involved in the FDV Sector working with the Women’s Council for FDV Services and other Peaks as we continue to advocate for changes in the FDV Service sector to acknowledge the need for a sector response that is not simply Crisis based but is one that recognises Cultural needs and the wish of many CaLD women and families to remain in their relationships with support to curtail the violence and abuse.

4.2 Consultation organised for Palliative Care WA to get CaLD Community feedback.

This was a successful forum with much information being provided to them from a CaLD perspective and has led to ECCWA and Palliative Care WA looking to see how we can work together to improve the services faced by CaLD community members. In particular the importance of education on Enduring Powers of Attorney, Guardianship and on Advance health directives.

4.3 City of Stirling Reconciliation Day Forum where ECCWA President Suresh Rajan did a presentation and was part of a panel.

Vivienne Pillay Executive officer of ECCWA and Suresh Rajan -President of ECCWA were invited to attend the City of Stirling Reconciliation Day Forum. Suresh was also invited to do a presentation which was very well received and was also a member of a panel discussing the importance of reconciliation. This was a great networking event. ECCWA plans to do more work in this area in 2021-2022.

4.4 Pre-Election Forum

It is the ECCWA practice before every election (State or Federal) of bringing together the major parties to address our communities, and answer questions. This year the Pre-Election Forum (PEF) was held on February 24th in the evening. The WA Greens were represented by Alison Xamon, MLC; the Labor Party represented by the Minister the Hon. Paul Papalia MLA, and the Liberal Party by the Hon. Tjorn Sibma MLC, who fielded questions from the many community members present. Each of the 3 was allowed a 7-minute presentation followed by questions from the floor on matters of particular interest and concern to ethnic, faith and other minorities. The event concluded with 3-minute wrap-up by representatives of the 3 parties.

Under normal circumstances it would not be difficult for us to come up with a report card of our impressions of the performance of the parties, but Covid 19 impacted many of our community members in ways that could not have been foreseen, but which needed to be addressed by our elected representatives.



President Suresh Rajan, Paul Papalia MLA and Ramdas Sankaran

4.5 The 2021 Laki Jayasuriya Oration delivered by Nyadol Nyuon

This event proudly sponsored by



4.6 International Women's Day (IWD)

On 24th March 2021 ECCWA held an event to celebrate International Women's Day. The theme of the night was "Women in Leadership", and our event showcased the endeavours of women showing leadership in many fields. It was attended by more than 230 people and was a great success. The night was made possible by the generous financial donations from our sponsors MSC, Ishar and Women's Health and Family Service, Computing Australia, Bendigo Bank and fund-raising during the night for one of the fabulous prizes donated by Amano's restaurant, a limousine voucher from Ubique Limousines of Perth, hampers from the Good Grocer IGA, a hair & makeup voucher, and many others.

The event started with a bang –a drumming performance by students from the Perth Sinhala School, followed by dances from young women from the same school. We also had some hula demonstrations from Pasifika Women Perth, who inspired the audience to the extent that many people got up and joined in!

The keynote speaker was Zeliha Iscel who spoke about her leadership in the area of the empowerment of people with disability.

We were also entertained by the beautiful singing and playing of Li-Jene Gan, who then played while everyone lined up for their dinner at the buffet tables. The food was provided by a wide range of contributors, who supplied us with beautiful food from Lebanon, Thailand, Italy, India, Sri Lanka, Vietnamese, and Indonesian.

On a serious note, we heard from our MC Natasha de Souza and Dr. Zarrin Siddiqui, both speaking about their achievements as women leaders, in spite of many obstacles. We also watched two YouTube videos produced by the Pakistanis in Australia Inc (PIA) supported by WA Police which looked at the family violence between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and ways to prevent it.

Meredith Hammat MLA, also spoke about the incredible statistic that women make up nearly half of the elected members of the WA state Labor party. This is huge progression towards the recognition of women in leadership, which fitted well within the theme of the night.

The success of the night was the result of many hours of work from our staff and the additional assistance we received from our sponsors and the Macedonian Community of WA.



Sri Lankan dancers



Vice President (Women) Mamta Kochhar and Miriam Kauhiva Pasifika Women Perth



EO Vivienne Pillay and Meredith Hammett MLA



Pasifika Women



4.7 ECCWA/FECCA Consultation on Royal Commission Aged Care Report.

The Federation Of Ethnic Communities' Councils Of Australia (FECCA) is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community. FECCA sought a national response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care from diverse multicultural communities and together with ECCWA facilitated a WA response to the Royal Commission report. On Friday 18th June, at the City West Lotteries House, over 30 members from community organisations and aged care providers attended the conference to provide feedback on Aged Care services for CaLD communities, to identify problems and to contribute ideas for change in the future. This forum was very successful with a considerable amount of information being provided and was a forum where members of the various Communities felt comfortable to provide their feedback openly.



TREASURER'S REPORT



The financial report for 2020-2021 includes:

- Statement by Committee
- Committee's Report
- Income and Expenditure Statement
- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Notes to the Financial Statements

Financial Health

We ended the year as we have in recent years with an operational surplus, thanks to the efforts and dedication of staff and volunteers.

In 2020-2021 ECCWA received \$120,000 funding from the Office of Multicultural Interests and also were successful in obtaining funding from various grants allowing us to employ additional part-time paid staff who, together with our volunteers, has made it a very successful year.

In addition, this year we were fortunate to receive a Capital Improvements grant from the Office of Multicultural Interests for \$110,000 which has been used to refurbish our premises at 20 View Street in North Perth allowing us to have modern up to date Conference/training premises that can be utilised by members. The ECCWA offices have also been redesigned to allow for the creation of a Multicultural Community Hub and we are very pleased to have Community Languages WA operating out of the Hub.

ECCWA has been advised by Minister Buti's office that our funding for \$120,000 will continue for 2021-2022 and with other projects already committed to 2021-2022 looks to be another busy year for ECCWA. We hope however, that ECCWA will soon be able to receive a Service agreement that will allow ECCWA to have the opportunity to plan and recruit staff on a permanent basis.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank our Accountants Eventum Accounting and Mr Andrew Pereira from amwAudit who undertook with due diligence, the Review of this year's financial statements in accordance with relevant provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the office bearers' who have had to shoulder the responsibilities of the ECCWA in a voluntary capacity for so many years and to recognise the efforts of our diligent and dedicated staff.

In particular, I would like to recognise the efforts of our President Mr Suresh Rajan and our Executive Officer Mrs Vivienne Pillay.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the ECCWA Board for their valuable contribution in monitoring the Council's finances.

Rahim Ghauri
Treasurer



Financial report



AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

To: the Committee members of Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc.

In accordance with Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, I am pleased to provide the following declaration of independence to the committee members of Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc. As the lead director for the review of the financial report of Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2021, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021 there have been no contraventions of:

- the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the review; and
- any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the review.

Dated this 26th day of October 2021

AMW Audit

AMW AUDIT
Chartered Accountants

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BJT' with a stylized flourish.

BILLY-JOE THOMAS
Director & Registered Company Auditor



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REVIEW REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL OF WA INC.

Report on the Financial Report

We have reviewed the accompanying financial report of Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc. ("the Association") which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the income and expenditure statement, statement of changes in equity for the year ended on that date, notes to the financial statements comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and the statement by committee.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee members are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012* and for such internal control as the committee members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion on the financial report based on our review. We conducted our review in accordance with Auditing Standard on Review Engagements ASRE 2415 *Review of a Financial Report: Company Limited by Guarantee or an Entity Reporting under the ACNC Act or Other Applicable Legislation or Regulation*, in order to state whether, on the basis of the procedures described, we have become aware of any matter that makes us believe that the financial report is not in accordance with the *ACNC Act* including: giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date; and complying with the Australian Accounting Standards and *ACNC Act*. ASRE 2415 requires that we comply with the ethical requirements relevant to the review of the financial report.

A review of a financial report consists of making enquiries, primarily of persons responsible for financial and accounting matters, and applying analytical and other review procedures. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in an audit. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our review, we have complied with the independence requirements of *ACNC Act*.

Basis of Qualified Conclusion

The financial report for the financial year ended 30 June 2020 was not audited or reviewed by another auditor. We were unable to verify the accuracy of the opening balances. Accordingly, we are not in a position to and do not express an opinion on the comparative figures for 2020. Since opening balances enter into the determination of the financial performance, we were unable to determine whether adjustments might have been necessary in respect of the income and expenses for the year reported in the income and expenditure statement.

Qualified Conclusion

Based on our review, which is not an audit, with the exception of the matter described in the Basis of Qualified Conclusion paragraph, we have not become aware of any matter that makes us believe that the financial report is not in accordance with the *ACNC Act* including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b) complying with the Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the financial report and *ACNC Act*.

Emphasis of Matter- Basis of Accounting

Without further modifying our conclusion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of the *ACNC Act*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Emphasis of Matter – COVID-19

We draw attention to Note 4 to the financial report, which describes the impact of COVID-19. COVID-19 was declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11 March 2020. The situation has been and continues to evolve very quickly. Significant economic damage has been seen globally and locally in Australia and Western Australia. The final financial impact of this Pandemic is unknown but may be significant to the operations of the Association. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

AMW Audit

AMW AUDIT

Chartered Accountants

Address: Unit 8, 210 Winton Road, Joondalup, Western Australia



BILLY-JOE THOMAS

Director & Registered Company Auditor

Dated at Perth, Western Australia this 18th day of October 2021

Not-For-Profit-Association Report

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc

ABN 91163351869

For the year ended 30 June 2021

Prepared by Eventum Group Unit Trust

Contents



| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | Statement by Committee |
| 4 | Committee's Report Income and Expenditure Statement |
| 6 | Statement of Financial Position |
| 8 | Statement of Changes in Equity |
| 9 | Notes to the Financial Statements |

Statement by Committee

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc For the year ended 30 June 2021

The Committee has determined the Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc is not a reporting entity and that this Special Purpose Financial Report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in note 1 to the financial statements.

The Committee declares that in the Committee's opinion:

- a) there are reasonable grounds to believe the the Association is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- b) the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed on Behalf of the Association in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* by:

Sign: SRajan

Suresh Rajan

President

R Ghauri

Rahim Ghauri

Treasurer

Dated this 19 day of October 2021

Dated this day of 19 Oct 2021

Committee's Report

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc For the year ended 30 June 2021

Committee's Report

Your committee members submit the financial report of Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

Committee Members

The names of committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

| Office Bearers | Position |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Suresh Rajan | President |
| Rahim Ghauri | Senior Vice President/ Treasurer |
| Mamta Kochar | Vice President (Women's Interests) |
| Seren Ulusoy | Vice President (Youth Issues) |
| Virendra Parikh | Secretary |
| Vivienne Pillay | Executive Officer |
| Management Committee Members | |
| Jim Taylor | |
| Michael Wu | |
| Karla Benitez | |
| Satish Nair | |
| Ridzuan Mohammad | |
| Carmelita Baltazar | |
| Ranjit Ratnayke | |
| Champo Ngweshe | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Principal Activities

ECCWA Vision

A fair and just society, one in which all people are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the community and are supported to reach their full potential, where diversity is valued and people live in harmony.

ECCWA Mission

To work with member organisations, the community, government and non- government stakeholders to ensure:

- Ethnic community participation and consultation in decision making at all levels
- Just and harmonious relations within our multicultural community
- A consultative, advisory and training service to government and non government organizations
- Provision of research and policy
- Access to all information and equitable share of government and community resources

Policy and Advocacy

ECC's advocacy, policy and information program has the following objectives:

- Ensure that ECC's policy positions contribute to Government policy making
- Promote and safeguard the interests of CALD communities in WA.
- Facilitate dissemination of state government information to ethnic communities.

Citizenship and Community Relations

- Enhance culturally and linguistically diverse community awareness and understanding of citizenship and promote their participation in citizenship related activities.
- Promote harmonious relations between ethnic communities as well as between ethnic communities and the wider community.

Going Concern

This financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business. The ability of the association to continue to operate as a going concern is dependent upon the ability of the association to generate sufficient cashflows from operations to meet its liabilities. The members of the association believe that the going concern assumption is appropriate.



Mr Suresh Rajan (President)

Date 19 / 10 / 2021



Mr Rahim Ghauri (Treasurer)

Date 19 / 10 / 2021

Income and Expenditure Statement

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc
For the year ended 30 June 2021

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Income | | |
| Donation (Others) | 12,030 | 455 |
| East Income Client Fees | 591 | 1,055 |
| ECC Member Subscriptions/Fee | 120 | 1,400 |
| FECCA | 4,545 | 2,236 |
| Fundraising East | 1,065 | 360 |
| Grant Monies to ECCWA | 142,979 | 165,091 |
| Grant Monies for Capital Grant - North Perth Refurb | 72,727 | - |
| Hire of EEC Facilities | 8,665 | 3,165 |
| Interest Income | 378 | 359 |
| International Women's Day | 4,401 | - |
| Sitting Fees | 2,409 | - |
| Sundry | 580 | 597 |
| ATO Income | | |
| ATO Cash Stimulus Boost | 5,468 | 16,403 |
| JobKeeper Income Received | 75,000 | 24,000 |
| Total ATO Income | 80,468 | 40,403 |
| Fundraising | | |
| Project Income | 124,216 | 58,973 |
| Total Fundraising | 124,216 | 58,973 |
| Total Income | 455,174 | 274,094 |
| Gross Surplus | 455,174 | 274,094 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Advertising | 4,449 | - |
| AGM/MC/EC Meetings/Functions | 2,068 | 2,196 |
| Bank Fees | 100 | 66 |
| Cannington Rental Costs | 3,333 | - |
| Cleaning | 2,475 | - |
| Computer & IT Expenses | 8,797 | 11,363 |
| Conference & Other Sponsorship | 417 | 518 |
| Conference/Seminar/Legal Fees | 262 | - |
| Consulting & Accounting | 6,132 | 2,036 |
| Depreciation | 795 | 784 |
| East Client Emergency Expense | 1,750 | 205 |
| East Operating Expense | - | 273 |
| Expense International Women Day | 5,991 | - |
| FECCA Meeting Exp. | - | 5,358 |
| General Expenses | 139 | 835 |
| Insurance | 5,917 | 4,284 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Membership Fees | 136 | 136 |
| Motor Vehicle Expense | 2,055 | 2,915 |
| Office Expenses | 8,871 | 5,366 |
| Postage | 26 | 9 |
| Photocopier Lease | 4,253 | - |
| Printing & Stationery | 989 | 510 |
| Rates & Taxes | 828 | 782 |
| Repairs and Maintenance | 3,364 | 822 |
| Sitting Fees Expense | 1,759 | - |
| Subscriptions | 1,790 | 1,888 |
| Superannuation | 24,212 | 12,280 |
| Telephone & Internet | 3,284 | 3,007 |
| Trainings | - | 2,230 |
| Travel and Accommodation | - | 63 |
| Wages and Salaries | 273,919 | 144,736 |
| Annual Leave Accrual | 16,838 | - |
| LSL Accrual | 4,685 | - |
| Total Expenditure | 389,635 | 202,663 |
| Operating Surplus for the year | 65,539 | 71,430 |
| Net Surplus for the year | 65,539 | 71,430 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc
As at 30 June 2021

NOTES 30 JUN 2021 30 JUN 2020

Assets

Current Assets

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | 2 | 207,679 | 150,597 |
| Cash Flow Boost Receivable | | - | 6,403 |
| Term Deposits | | 60,290 | 30,221 |
| Total Current Assets | | 267,970 | 187,220 |

Non-Current Assets

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------|--------------|
| Property, Plant and Equipment | 3 | 13,719 | 9,699 |
| North Perth WIP Building | | 72,727 | - |
| Total Non-Current Assets | | 86,446 | 9,699 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| Total Assets | | 354,416 | 196,919 |
|---------------------|--|----------------|----------------|

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Unexpended Grants | | 72,277 | 22,980 |
| GST Payable | | 25,002 | 3,713 |
| PAYG Withholdings Payable | | 6,260 | 6,411 |
| Annual Leave Provision | | 16,838 | - |
| Total Current Liabilities | | 120,377 | 33,104 |

Non-Current Liabilities

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------|----------|
| Long Service Leave Provision | | 4,685 | - |
| Total Non-Current Liabilities | | 4,685 | - |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Total Liabilities | | 125,062 | 33,104 |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| Net Assets | | 229,354 | 163,815 |
|-------------------|--|----------------|----------------|

Equity

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| Retained Earnings | | 229,354 | 163,815 |
| Total Equity | | 229,354 | 163,815 |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Changes in Equity

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc
For the year ended 30 June 2021

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Equity | | |
| Opening Balance | 163,815 | 92,384 |
| Increases | | |
| Profit for the Period | 65,539 | 71,430 |
| Total Increases | 65,539 | 71,430 |
| Total Equity | 229,354 | 163,815 |

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements

Notes to the Financial Statements

Ethnic Communities Council of WA Inc
For the year ended 30 June 2021

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act WA. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity. Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission (ACNC).

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

Property, Plant and Equipment

Building and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all PPE is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Employee Provisions

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee provisions have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Cash on Hand

Cash on hand includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. Dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

Grant and donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds, which is generally at the time of receipt.

If conditions are attached to the grant that must be satisfied before the association is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Accounts payable and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the association during the reporting period that remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| 2. Cash and Cash Equivalents | | |
| Bendigo 156354797 | 207,033 | 150,162 |
| East Operating Petty Cash | - | 335 |
| Petty Cash | 100 | 100 |
| Petty Cash ECCWA | 546 | - |
| Total Cash and Cash Equivalents | 207,679 | 150,597 |

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| 3. Property, Plant and Equipment | | |
| Office Equipment | | |
| Office Equipment at Cost | 4,815 | - |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | (11) | - |
| Total Office Equipment | 4,805 | - |
| Building -9/155 share 20 View Street | | |
| Building at Cost | 26,149 | 26,149 |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation | (17,235) | (16,450) |
| Total Building -9/155 share 20 View Street | 8,914 | 9,699 |
| Total Property, Plant and Equipment | 13,719 | 9,699 |

4. Events Subsequent to Balance Date

Covid-19 was declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11 March 2020. The situation has been evolving and continues to evolve very quickly. Significant economic damage has been globally and locally in Australia and Western Australia. The final financial impact of this Pandemic is unknown but may be significant to the future operation of the Association.



ECCWA

20 View st North Perth 6006 WA

64-66 Kent street, Cannington 6107, WA

9227 5322

www.eccwa.org.au

admin@eccwa.org.au