



Fostering Multicultural Values

Minutes of Meeting held 21 April 2005

Attendance: As Per Attendance Sheet

1. Welcome

2. Confirmation of minutes

3. Guest speaker Mueen Albreihi talked about the situation of Iraqi Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) holders (there are about 2000 Iraqi and Afghani TPV holders in Victoria), who are at the moment in the process of having their visas reviewed. More than likely many will either be sent back to Iraq despite the fact that Iraq is still a very unsafe place, or their Temporary Protection Visas will be extended thereby extending the period of uncertainty for the holder. As Mr Albreihi explained both of these paths are causes of anxiety for Iraqi TPV holders because there is no guarantee about the safety or the future for them and their families

It was unanimously agreed by DECC that this is an unacceptable situation and that DECC will do what it can to assist the TPV Holders in trying to be heard.

A forum concerning these issues is to be held on 21st June 2005, which is International Refugee Day. More information will be available closer to that date.

4. Reports:

The DECC seminar "Community Engagement: Smokescreens and Mirrors?" held on the 14 of April, was a great success with 200 people attending from a large variety of institutions and councils from across Victoria. An enjoyable and informative day was had by all, and congratulations to Dalal Smiley for organizing such an informative and topical event.

DECC will be putting forward two more community grant applications:

- One concerning disability within ethnic communities: an investigation to find out whether disabled people and their families in ethnic communities are getting the support they require.
- One concerning an extension of the Darebin's Australians Cards Project being conducted by the Connies. Four more cards will be added about Darebin's Sporting heroes with the Commonwealth games next year in mind.

The Connies have been busy at a number of events such as citizenship ceremonies, the Community Engagement Seminar, and various primary schools. The cards have been very successful and they have many more events planned for the rest of the year.

Gaetano Greco urged DECC members to attend council meetings and put forward their complaints and suggestions in the meetings so that councillors are informed of the issues of ethnic communities are directly from those communities.

Gaetano Greco also urged DECC members to sign the Community Accord at the council meeting held on 2nd May. The General Accord is a set of general principles and practices based around respect and co operation agreed to by council in regard to ethnic communities.

Meeting Finished at 8:45

April Correspondence

Received

- **Bank statement**
- Application forms for information sessions available on Glaucoma by **Glaucoma Australia**
- Information from **Chinese Community Social Services Centre Inc.** about a series of gatherings held for Chinese speaking women in the northern region. They will be held over April – June and will focus on women' health.
- An acknowledgment of receipt from **ABC** to Edwin Entwisle regarding the program proposal *Faith: The Art of Believing*.
- Information from **Volunteering Australia** regarding **volunteer assistance** for Community Organisations. Information on how to advertise for a volunteer is provided.
- Notification of Approval of **“Strengthening DECC’s Volunteers’ Base”** project grant from Minister of Victorian Communities John Thwaites.
- Payments for **Community Engagement: Smokescreens and Mirrors Seminar**.