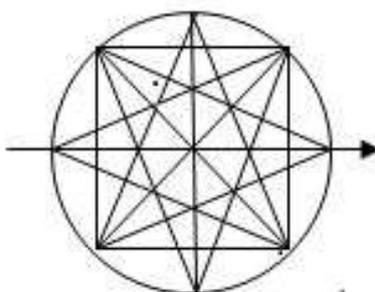


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Standing Committee of the Communities' Council on Ethnic Issues (Eastern Region)

Inc.

Reg. No. A0017562S

Minutes**April 5, 2019****Whitehorse Community Centre, Level 1 Conference Room,
79 Mahoneys Road, Forest Hill.**

- Welcome** – Bwe Thay opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and paid respect to their elders, past present and emerging. Bwe said that this acknowledgement would become an Agenda Item and a regular part of each meeting. Aunty Irene's suggestion that the Acknowledgement of Country be shared amongst members will be adopted. Each meeting a volunteer will be requested for the following meeting. Gina Etienne of Eastern Health volunteered for the May meeting.

2. Present

Sally Brooks	MIC, Strategic Engagement Coordinator
Iresha Butngamwa	ECLC, Community Development Coordinator
Geoff DeYoung	DHS, MSO
Gina Etienne	Eastern Health, Manager Consumer/Community
Helen Forbes-Mewett	Monash University, Senior Lecturer and Researcher
Leigh Gilmore	Sheriff Office Eastern, Sheriff Officer – Koori and Multicultural Liaison
Helen Jurcevic	Women's Friendship Group Inc.
Ben Lam	CPSSN, Volunteer
Adrienne Meakin	Lote Marketing, Director
Sam Navarria	CCOEI
Madeleine Parker	DET, Senior Project Officer EAL
Carole Pondevie-Lay	Melbourne AMEP, Melbourne Polytechnic, Community Liaison & Engagement Manager
Rafek Mikhail	Mr Creator
Vicki Selimi	DHS, Centrelink, Multicultural Services Officer
Cynthia Shaw	CCOEI
Elizabeth Sidiropoulos	Victoria Police Eastern Region Multicultural Liaison Unit, MLO
Bwe Thay	Swinburne University. CCOEI
Johnny Tran	Victoria Police MLO
Sui Ting Tse	CCOEI, President
Paul Waite	Manningham Council, Coordinator
Mylene Wheeler	Lote Marketing
Zhera Yalcin	Kara House, Case Worker
Apologies	
Gitta Clayton	Links – CHBC, Community Engagement Coordinator
Krishiani Dassanayake	CCOEI
Jacquie Arulanandam	MIC, Settlement Support Worker
Rick Comfort	DHS Centrelink, MSO
Mervat Dahdoule	MIC
Judy McDougall	MIC, Senior Project Officer

Jenny Mitchell	Whitehorse Manningham Libraries, CALD Branch Manager
Penny Moore	City of Maroondah, Community Development Officer
Katrina Myers	Box Hill Institute, Program Manager, AMEP & SEE
Barbara Reeckman	Melbourne Polytechnic, AMEP, Pathways Guidance Coordinator,
Clary Verbunt	Dutch Community, CCOEI
Guests	
Fiona Calkin	Senior Sargent, Victoria Police
Marika Manioudakis	Senior Manager SAGE and MABEL Program, ECLC

3. Minutes MSC March 2019

Moved Sui Ting Tse and Seconded Elizabeth Sidiropoulos – accepted.

4. Business Arising – incorporated in the agenda but two items required updates:

- **DHS request for venue evacuation details (OHS): the following aspects were covered:**

- Exits
- Lockdown procedure and behaviour: lock/isolate area; switch off lights; call 000;
- Evacuating disabled people including those in wheelchairs;
- Contacting centre security for lesser events

- **DHS automatically generated debt recovery communication: consequences**

Actual cases recounted of people from Myanmar: depression, mental health and anxiety, shame, and suicide, Course of action: talk to community leaders to seek case studies and examples; write letters to the Department; MSOs available to speak to communities in relation to debt prevention. MSO noted that some automated communication also referred to DHS owing money to recipients for incorrect payments. If anyone has any information that refers to case studies please speak with Bwe Thay.

5. Correspondence.

Information circulated via email and noted at the meeting Email from Kate Jeffrey, Link Health and Community that she would be leaving Link Health on the 4th April. Cynthia and Sam commented on the great contribution made by Kate to the MSC over a number of years and that she would be missed. Cynthia said it was always sad to lose a good worker and would like to thank Kate in person.

6. Meeting focus: Family violence - a question of human rights.

Marika Manioudakis, Senior Manager of SAGE and MABEL program, Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC).

Marika spoke about the ECLC Family Violence project that she manages. It was set up with a strong volunteer focus with many lawyers volunteering their time to assist clients experiencing family violence. They see both victims and perpetrators where they sit down to explain procedures to do with intervention orders etc. With low funding new ways of responding to community needs needed to be creative and different. Working through Maternal and Child Health Centres they were able to engage with pregnant women at a very vulnerable time of their life. Barriers included the feelings of shame in relation to family violence. Having a baby is a stressful time and many women find it too difficult to engage with police during this period. ECLC works through MCHC nurses as they are trusted by women – the collaboration is a new early intervention approach that works. Some women may not be ready to open up about family violence. ECLC do not advertise their service to ensure they do not put anyone at risk, and the service is private and confidential. They protect their relationships and are careful not to harm the relationship between a nurse and a woman. They tread carefully and all referrals go through nurses. They will attend play groups and inform women about how to access FV supports. They listen to women and tailor programs to suit individuals. Clients have been in contact and said “My nurse told me to trust you”. If in a crisis situation the client can inform over the phone (can also text) then FV worker can call her back.

Marika said that the statistics on violence against women in Australia are shocking, and the ECLC has seen an increase in the number of women accessing its services in relation to family violence. There is a growing knowledge about family violence experienced in pregnancy and early parenthood, and about children's exposure to domestic and family violence. According to a recent study, one in five mothers experienced emotional and/or physical abuse by an intimate partner in the year after having a baby. This translates to 14,000 Victorian families a year affected by family violence in the course of a child's first year of life.

Clear conversations are initiated with regard to the safety of children between ECLC FV workers and clients where women feel safe to disclose impacts on children.

Support, Advice, Guidance, Empowerment program (SAGE) for women experiencing family violence.

Marika said that this program is where a Lawyer and a Family Violence Advocate work together in a co-case management model. The FV Community Lawyer provides legal advice and casework and the FV Advocate provides Advocacy and case management such as safety planning and risk assessment, emotional and practical support, referrals etc.

Marika handed out a brochure to MSC members on the SAGE program.

Fiona Calkin, Senior Sergeant, Family Violence Regional Training Officer VicPol

During her presentation Fiona spoke about the new VicPol Family Violence Unit and the new Victoria Police website. Fiona is a Training Officer at the new Centre for Family Violence located at the Police Academy. She said that all Police Officers, including new graduates, receive 3 weeks of foundation training. There is a focus on understanding the barriers as well as the relationship to power and control. Fiona is one of 21 Trainers in the Outer East and provides on the job training. There is a strong focus on understanding what the risks are to FV and that it is a crime. All ranks up to Superintendent are required to undergo the training.

Specialist training has resulted in a different approach from reactive to proactive in order to prevent future harm. A recommendation of the Royal Commission on Family Violence is to improve risk assessment. In response, a special risk assessment tool has been designed and will be released in July. The tool will predict future serious harm and capture all relevant information to manage proactive responses.

Case study

"Barbara" is a victim of under reported elder abuse. The perpetrator is her 49 year old son. There are also two grandchildren aged 18 and 19 years old. Abuse took the form of grandchildren stealing her money, verbal abuse from the 18 year old grandson with further demand for money and a car. Barbara's bankcard had to be replaced 8 times. Barbara was unable/reluctant to report her son and his children to the police. However, neighbours called Police when the abuse escalated and her son smashed her phone. They found a Cannabis growing operation in place in her house. An intervention order was issued. The Police liaised with organisations such as ECLC and Edvos and a Public Advocate was appointed. Barbara needed additional assistance due to financial hardship caused by the abuse, she was unable to pay her bills; however with help all the bills were waived.

Fiona said that in future the new special risk assessment tool would help people like Barbara to predict the risk of future abuse.

New Victoria Police Website "Working to keep our community safe"

Fiona demonstrated the new website at <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/> The Quick exit button is a safety mechanism for FV victims who may have to access the website with the FV perpetrator in the vicinity. At one click of the button the screen disappears. Please note however to advise clients to also delete it from browsing history.

On behalf of the MSC, Cynthia and Sam thanked Marika and Fiona for the valuable on the ground work that they and their organisations are doing in FV.

7. MSC 2019 Calendar of meetings, events and forums.

2019 MSC CALENDAR

MSC meeting dates	Meeting focus	Forums/functions/events dates and working groups
04 Jan	No meeting	
01 Feb	Humanitarian Settlement Services - focus on Victoria & Eastern Metropolitan Region: overview of services; recent changes and data on new arrivals (country of birth, ethnicity, faith, gender, age, etc.), who is settling in the Eastern Region, and where, what are their needs and aspirations? Michael Cresham, Team Leader HSP, AMES Australia; Josh Power, Senior Manager SRSS, AMES.	
01 March	Indigenous Welcome and Traditions Explained: what is a Welcome Ceremony, who can officiate, what is the difference between a Welcome Ceremony and an Acknowledgement of Country, what is the correct wording to use when making a speech etc. Aunty Irene Norman, Elder, Mullum Mullum Community Member, Member of Yeng Gali, Talented Artists and Weaver; Jill West, Indigenous Service Officer, DHS The MSC meeting focus will lead into the Mullum Mullum CCOEI Harmony Day celebration planned for Saturday 16 th March.	Harmony Day events – Mullum Mullum and CCOEI Harmony Day Celebration. (Working Group: Chris; Heather; Gitta; Felicity, Leigh, Bwe and Cynthia). Speakers, participants and activities to be explored by the working group. <u>Venue:</u> Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place. Date Saturday 16 th March.
05 April	Human Rights with a focus on CALD and family violence: ECLC, Marika Manioudakis, Senior Manager SAGE and MABEL program; VicPol FV Unit. Senior Sergeant Fiona CALKIN, VicPol Family Violence Regional Training Officer	
03 May	Mapping Social Cohesion Professor Andrew Markus, Monash University	
07 June	Refugee Week event will replace the normal MSC meeting. <u>Venue:</u> Willis Room, Whitehorse Civic Centre, 397 Whitehorse Road Nunawading. A focus on tracing refugee families through the Red Cross. Suggested presenter: Ivana Demasi. Refugee stories: song, dance and crafts. TBA.	
01 July	No meeting	
02 Aug	Homelessness. The Winter Shelter Project (Gitta Clayton) Suggested additional presenters Elijah Care Uniting Wesley. TBA	
06 Sept	Overseas supported initiatives: The Hope Project – Thai/Burma Border (Gitta) Other projects – TBA.	
04 Oct	MSC meeting and CCOEI AGM Venue: Willis Room, Whitehorse Civic Centre 397 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading Victoria Police – Youth Initiatives TBA	Youth Education Training and Employment forum and expo. A separate Eastern Region Event. Steering Committee to be set up - TBA
02 Nov	Safety and the environment with a focus on CALD: flood, Fire, water (swimming) awareness and behaviour. Essential services (MFB, SES, Fisheries). Concerns for new migrants who are unaware of the law/environmental dangers; OR gambling and CALD MSC review of 2019 and plan 2020 activity.	
06 Dec	Planning and celebration: Finalize 2020 MSC Calendar. End of year celebration.	

Other MSC Calendar Topics suggested: Emerging communities in the EMR; people seeking asylum and Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) holders; Refugee Health Nurse Service.

World special days & local events to note: (relevant to the work of the MSC for 2019)

21 March: Harmony Day (also the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)

13-19 May: Law Week Victoria

21 May: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

20 June: World Refugee Day

10 October: World Homeless Day

16 November: International Day for Tolerance

25 November: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

3 December: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

10 December: Human Rights Day

18 December: International Migrants Day

8. Reports

Women's Friendship Group Inc. (Helen Jurcevic)

- International Women's Day lunch at Council 8th March – over \$9,000 was raised for their Cambodia Project
- Coats for the Homeless project. Three coats cost \$100. This project was also mentioned at the last meeting and is well worth supporting through the Order of Malta (Sir James Gobbo)
- Women's Friendship Group Cultural Diversity Day BBQ Friday, 22nd March 2019, A very successful event with women from diverse backgrounds telling their stories.

Melbourne Polytechnic Volunteer Tutor Service (Carole Pondevie-Lay)

- The VTS is offered in the AMEP. Volunteers provide the service in the home, in public places e.g. libraries and community centres. The service is available to students who are also enrolled in classes;
- In Eastern, around 90 adult migrants and refugees, mainly women, are waiting for tutors. Volunteers urgently needed. Publicising VTS and volunteer training through Councils, organisations, etc. Training is 15 hours, includes online training. Volunteers can provide the service for as little as 1-2 hours a week.

DHS (Geoff deJong) – DHS Budget 2019-2020

1. [Better Targeting of Support for Refugees](#)

- This measure changes Jobactive arrangements for newly arrived refugees that get an activity tested payment from 1 January 2020.
- Newly arrived refugees will only be required to enter into Jobactive services once they've been getting a payment for at least 12 months. This replaces the current period of 6 months.

2. [New Regional Visas — Population Package](#)

- This measure supports regional Australia through the Government's migration planning package.
- The government has announced two new regional provisional visas. Holders of these new visas will be able to live and work in regional Australia. These new visas provide a pathway to permanent residency.
- Holders of the new visas will have access to the same welfare payments and services available to permanent resident visa holders. Existing waiting periods, including the Newly Arrived Resident Waiting Period will apply.

VicPol (Liz Sidiropoulos) – VicPol. Liz reminded members of the TRADE PATHWAY - CALD Youth Careers Forum that the MMSSN Working Group is organising in partnership with Holmesglen TAFE.

Previous information provided: The forum targets young people from CALD backgrounds, who may be

interested in exploring trade vocational options. Young people of all genders are encouraged to attend. Promotion of this Forum & Expo has been through schools. The invitation is extended to all CALD young people in the community and organisers need assistance in identifying those young people who might benefit from attending the event.

Date: Thursday 16 May 2019 (9.45am – 1.15pm)

Venue: Holmesglen TAFE, Waverley Campus, 595 Waverley Road, Glen Waverley.

If any MSC members can help promote this event to CALD young people or know of young people or need to speak with organisers please contact Pamela Kosij on 9518 3241 or contact email

Pamela.Kosij@monash.vic.gov.au or contact Liz Sidiropoulos.

VicPol (Johnny Tran)

- Croydon Multicultural Festival was opened by the VMC Commissioner and turned out to be a very successful weekend event.
- Program re: Missing Persons. Searching for people who are missing. The current trend for young people at risk of going missing is those around 15 years old in the Outer East. Factors include tensions at home etc.

MIC (Sally Brooks)

- Film fund raising event “Constance on the Edge” on Thursday March 21, well attended and successful
- Jessica Bishop will be on maternity leave – Rebecca will be acting in the role
- Randika Wijekoon – FV Project June
- MIC can now work with Asylum Seekers
- MFB / Family Day in the school holidays

Sheriff’s Office (Leigh Gilmore) Noted issue of people receiving driving fines when they have just earned their licence.

Eastern Health (Gina Etienne)

Provided written information (distributed). Most women disclose FV to their health professional above any other member of the community. The Royal Commission recommendation was for *whole of hospital responses*.

Eastern Health secured the **Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Project** funding.

Achievements to date include:

- For Patients: 3650 staff received training to enable them to notice the warning signs and respond sensitively and respectfully and to connect victims of FV to support services
- For Staff: FV Workplace Support Program includes a Health FV Advocate, phone consultation, counselling and support. Manager training to recognise, respond and support staff.
- Partnerships: Health Justice Partnerships with Eastern Community Legal Centre provide health and legal assistance to antenatal and elderly patients. In recognition that legal problems can impact health, adding a lawyer to the healthcare team will strengthen Health and Legal institutions’ practices in relation to FV. In addition the Partnership may influence and contribute to policy change and reform in regards to FV within health settings.

Together in Harmony event (Cynthia Shaw)

This community event was also held last year and was nominated for a HART Award at that time.

Cynthia said the event was attended by over 200 people over the day. The purpose of this Harmony

event was to connect the Indigenous community with newly arrived migrant and refugee communities in

a fun family event, to break down barriers, share cultural traditions, promote understanding and inclusion and make new friends. Chris & Heather Cosgriff (MMIGP); Gitta Clayton (CHBC); Leigh Gilmore (Sheriff's Office), Thong Tawng (Foundation House); Howard Tankey (Reconciliation Group) Penny Shipman and Sarah Gibbs (CHBC Interns) were part of the Steering Committee with many other helpers. Activities included a Smoking Ceremony, songs, dances and weaving by refugee communities from Chin and Karen backgrounds (thanks to Gitta and Thong for arranging). The Sheriff's Office, Melbourne Fire Brigade, La Trobe Community Health, The Hope Project, Aunty Irene's weaving/art and others had information/display tables. Activities for children included: Hip Hop Workshop; Indigenous Dance Workshop; drawing and colouring in tables. The powerful Harmony Tree, sketched by Chris Hume (MMIGP), was a huge attraction (thank you to Chris Hume as well as students from the Louise Multicultural Community Centre, Sarah and Penny, who helped make the harmony message leaves). Three huge hampers were awarded for various prizes. The *Easter Hamper* was kindly donated by Commonwealth Bank was very much appreciated.

9. Initiatives and innovations (for noting) – incorporated in the 2019 MSC calendar.

10. Next MSC Meeting: Friday 3 May 2019, 9.30 –12.00.

Focus: Mapping Social Cohesion

Guest presenter: Professor Andrew Markus, Monash University

Venue: Conference Room, Level 1, Whitehorse Community Resource Centre, 79 Mahoney's Rd, Forest Hill.

NOTES: (1) For past and current CCOEI and MSC documents, including meeting papers and guest presentations, visit www.CCOEI.org.au **(2)** To contact Cynthia Shaw or Sam Navarria on matters relating to the MSC please use chair.msc@gmail.com