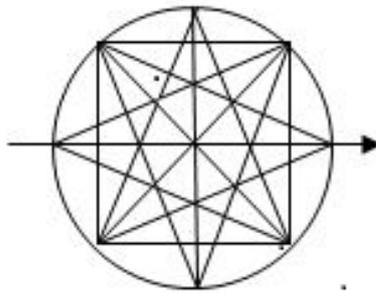


Chairs:

Sam Navarria: Mob: 0432 975 558
Cynthia Shaw: Mob: 0466 157 906



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MIGRANT SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE (Eastern Region)

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

Reg. No. A0017562S

Minutes

October 2, 2020

Zoom meeting – 9:30 am – 11:00 am

- 1. Acknowledgement of Country – Cynthia Shaw**
- 2. Welcome – Sam Navarria**
- 3. Attendance**

Present

Giuseppe Ardica	Services Australia
Dilnaz Billimoria	Whitehorse Interfaith Network
Marisa Briant	Link Health and Community
Iresha Buthgamuwa	Eastern Community Legal Centre
Mervat Dahdoue	MIC
Krishani Dassanayake	CCOEI, Community member
Helen Forbes-Mewett	Monash University, Associate Professor Sociology
Marilyn Gurry	CCOEI
Prya Hewage	ATO, Migrant Education
Varvara Ioannou	Food for Thought Network Inc.
Helen Jurcevic OAM	Women's Friendship Group Manningham President
Moses Lado	Level Crossing Removal Project
Duy Le	Industry Capability and Inclusion, Level Crossing Removal Project, Senior Project Officer
Sarah Martinelli	City of Whitehorse, Community Development Officer - Diversity
Dan Martinez	Silver Dollar Media
Jenny Mitchell	Whitehorse Manningham Libraries CALD Branch Manager
Sam Navarria	MSC/CCOEI
Tamika O'Brien	NEAMI National
Saarah Ozeer	Bounce
Con Pagonis	CCOEI, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria Senior Volunteer
Carole Pondevie-Lay	Melbourne Polytechnic Community Liaison and Engagement Manager
Ada Poon	Centre for Holistic Health, Service Coordinator
Vicki Selimi	Services Australia Multicultural Services Officer
Cynthia Shaw	CCOEI Secretary, MSC
Bwe Thay	Swinburne University, Community Liaison Officer
Sui Ting Tse	CCOEI President

Apologies

Jessica Bishop	MIC East Melbourne
Gitta Clayton	CHBC/Winter Shelter and Sharing Hope
Chris Cosgriff	CCOEI, Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Ambassador
Heather Cosgriff	CCOEI, Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Ambassador
Gina Etienne	Eastern Health, Manager consumer/community

Belinda Haydon	Link Health and Community
Ken Pang	CCOEI Volunteer
Madeleine Parker	DET Senior Project Officer EAL
Meghana Patel	Community
Elizabeth Sidiropoulos	Victoria Police (unable to attend Zoom meetings – Victoria Police
Rachel So	Women's Health East
Clary Verbunt	Nieuw Holland Dutch Elderly Social Club, CCOEI
Rebecca Wickes	Monash University
Guests	
Chin Tan,	Australian Human Rights Commission, Race Discrimination Commissioner
Parsu Sharma Luitai	Refugee Communities Association of Australia, General Secretary

4. **Minutes - MSC 4 September 2020 meeting**

Moved Cynthia Shaw, Seconded Sam Navarria.

5. **Business Arising** – incorporated in the meeting agenda.

6. **Correspondence** – circulated via email to members of the MSC

7. **MSC 2020 Calendar**

Updated/reviewed due to CoVid-19 restrictions and event cancellations. Suggestions have been included in the new calendar for 2020: Mental Health (September); Covid-19 and social inclusion (October), Education and Employment (November) and Family Violence services – ECLC - (December); LGAs supporting communities during and post Covid-19 (to be considered in 2021 calendar); Digital Inclusion (to be considered in 2021 calendar). Sam said that we would follow a formal process to develop the 2021 Calendar and need help from MSC members to get it right in terms of focus, topics and speakers.

8. **Meeting Focus: Covid-19 and social cohesion**

Speaker: Race Discrimination Commissioner Chin Tan, Australian Human Rights Commission

Sam Navarria, MSC Co-Chair welcomed Chin Tan to the meeting providing a [short bio](#).

Chin commenced by thanking the MSC for the invitation to address the committee. He said that it was important for communities to have direct access to him and for him to listen and talk to communities hearing issues firsthand. He acknowledged the challenges being faced by people in Victoria. He thanked all MSC members for their work towards a more equal and just society.

Chin said that racism occurs on many layers and can be very hurtful. Racism is the unequal treatment of others based on race. It can take many forms such as jokes or comments that cause offence or hurt, sometimes unintentionally. Name calling, verbal abuse, and in its most serious form can also manifest itself through physical violence. Chin also spoke about prejudice and systemic abuse.

The Australian Human Rights Commissioners include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioner; the Age Discrimination Commissioner; the Children's Commissioner; the Disability Discrimination Commissioner; the Human Rights Commissioner; the Sex Discrimination Commissioner as well as the Race Discrimination Commissioner. Chin recommended that members access the resources section on the website <https://humanrights.gov.au/> particularly the Education section <https://humanrights.gov.au/education> where there are a wide range of resources and materials available. He encouraged greater use of these resources.

Chin said that CoVid-19 has resulted in a new covert type of racism and he understands the frustration of not being able to access equal work and other opportunities. He said *human rights* is work never ending. With CoVid-19 there are currently about a third more complaints and increased incidents of racism. Lockdowns have raised issues in respect of the rights of people resulting in high level discussions. He said that all Australians should feel comfortable and safe in their own communities. To tackle all types of racism it is

important to start with children, training the new generation. With the *Racism Stops with Me* campaign, Chin said that the campaign has been refreshed highlighting the obligation of communities to play a role. Families have been encouraged to have conversations about their own attitudes and to identify racism and prejudice. He said that prejudice is in everyone and affects the way we perceive others. In terms of CoVid-19 Chin said “the virus does not have a race” i.e. anyone can test positive.

In closing Chin said he would be happy to sit in on future MSC meetings to participate with the committee as “instruments of change”.

On behalf of the MSC Sam thanked Chin and wished him success in the work of the Human Rights Commission and initiatives within his portfolio. He also welcomed his participation at any of the MSC network meetings.

9. Refugee Communities Association of Australia (RCAOA). Parsu Sharma Lital, General Secretary

RCAOA is a new organisation launched in February, which works with grass roots communities. “*For refugees, with refugees, by refugees*” is their mission. RCAOA is an independent refugee-led peak national advocacy organisation providing a unified voice for people with a lived refugee experience in Australia. RCAOA is active in every Australian state and territory.

RCAOA started CoVid relief with no money, initially supported with funds raised through their own committee members. They helped families by delivering emergency food relief, e.g. working with the Vietnamese community they delivered food such as chicken, eggs, flour, and oil. When the Commission flats were locked down, tenants were at risk and vulnerable, and the RCAOA provided meals going from home to home even when others wouldn't deliver to homes where the residents were CoVid positive. In addition they distributed hundreds of masks to vulnerable people. They have received tons of donated food which they delivered. Some people were living on one meal a day, and some were going hungry under lock down. The RCAOA reaches out to people who do not have their transport and have to use public transport to fetch food. Many people feel ashamed about their situation and having to ask for help, and do not want people to know - they say “*don't take a photo*”.

Parsu encouraged people to help with donations, connections to organisations who can assist, as every little bit helps. Go to the RCAOA [website](#) to find out more.

Sam thanked Parsu for his attendance and his introduction of the RCAOA, and said that the help provided by RCAOA to the community is down to earth and practical. He offered Parsu the opportunity to return to update members on the work of the RCAOA.

10.	Reports: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Helen Jurcevic OAM – President Women’s Friendship Group (WFG).<ul style="list-style-type: none">Informed the MSC about the risks of older people wearing masks and descending stairs with a number of falls causing hospitalisation due to visibility issuesWFG have made hundreds of 3 layered washable masks and one of their members is happy to make more. Contact Helen if anyone is interestedWFG Birthday, 25th September, sent a birthday card to every member with a coffee bag, tea bag and a chocolate heart. It was very uplifting for the women.Mervat Dahdoule – MIC is delivering some exciting projects:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Family Violence project – contact the MICCommunity Connect program – linking individuals to the NDISVolunteering and employment related information – young people finding their English is deteriorating due to lockdown. Volunteers are linked to someone with needs using digital platforms like Zoom, forming friendships and helping online. Volunteer living in Sydney helping through technology.
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	<p>3. Carole Pondevie-Lay – Melbourne Polytechnic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swinburne Employment Online Forums for AMEP students on 4th November. Opening to students right across the region to take part. Students will get really relevant information and employment trends for certain areas giving students a better idea about pathways they need • Volunteer Tutor Scheme - Conversation clubs. These have been well received by students and volunteers – Term 4 a new club starting for women with young children centred on songs, rhyme and stories to learn English. If you know of a volunteer who would like to take part or a student please let Carole know. • More information will be provided in upcoming CCOEI eNews newsletters. <p>4. Con Pagonis - CCOEI eNews: Informed members of a new series in the CCOEI eNews Newsletter on <i>Employment Pathways</i>. He said that he welcomes Carole and others to send articles to include in the series. He said if anyone has anything on the Employment Pathways front then to send the content to him on email with a weblink ASAP - conpagonis@computersmiths.com.au</p> <p>5. Dan Martinez – Silver Dollar Media Dan reminded members of the upcoming third Multicultural Twilight Concert on Sunday night. Over 14,000 people have been reached so far. He also reminded everyone of the fourth and final event which will be the grand finale on 18 October at 6:30pm. Dan said it has been great to see so many MSC members participating, sharing, commenting etc. He thanked Con for getting CALD media attention such as in Neos Kosmos. He said “Make sure you like the Facebook page and get your friends to like the page and watch the events”. Dan took a photo of the MSC Meeting for the CCOEI Annual Report. Contact Cynthia/Sam for a copy of the photo.</p> <p>6. Council elections (Saarah Ozeer). Saarah has been a member of the CCOEI and the MSC for some time. She informed members that she is running as an Independent for the Tarralla Ward Maroondah Council. Saarah said she is an ordinary person hearing the voices of the community. Sam suggested members read the Council’s page about the candidates if they would like to know more</p> <p>7. Vicki Selimi – MSO Services Australia (report provided by email) Vicki informed MSC members that there were many upcoming changes all available on the website. Vicki put together a timeline of upcoming changes –see the last page of the minutes.</p>

Next MSC Meeting: Friday 6 November 2020

Focus:

- 1) Employment Education and Training during and post Covid-19
- 2) Review of MSC and planning MSC calendar 2021 - Survey

NOTE: Please remember to send your written reports for the minutes to assist the chairpersons and also to ensure the minutes are accurate. Your assistance is appreciated. To contact the chair (Cynthia or Sam Navarra) please use this email: chair.msc@gmail.com

Report from Vicki Selimi, MSO Services Australia.

Services Australia - Timeline of upcoming changes

- The [Coronavirus Supplement](#) of \$550 per fortnight is available until **24 September 2020**. It's been extended until 31 December 2020 at a rate of, \$250 per fortnight.
- The [asset test waiver](#) ends in September. This affects you if you're getting JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance or Parenting Payment. We'll contact you to ask you to [update your asset details](#) online before **24 September 2020**.
- [Asset test limits](#) also apply from **25 September 2020**. Use your [Centrelink online account](#) to update your assets before 25 September 2020, so we can pay you the right amount. Payments will be cancelled from 25 September 2020 if your asset value is over the limits.
- From **25 September 2020** the income free area for JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance for job seekers increases to \$300 per fortnight. This means you can earn more but still get the maximum payment rates.
- From **25 September 2020** there are [changes to the JobSeeker Payment partner income test](#). – web site – can earn up to \$3086.11 from \$3070.80. Income free threshold increases to \$300
- From **25th September** there is an increase in income for JSP/YAL/FHA(farmers) from \$106 to \$300 pfn. Allowing JS to earn more before payment affecting.
- From **25th Sept** the supplement will be \$250 per fortnight. You'll get \$550 if your reporting period includes Thu 24th Sept. This means when you report on or before 7th Oct your supplement will be \$550. When you report from 8th Oct onwards the supplement is \$250
- From **28th September** changes to Flexible Mutual Obligations – allowing job seeker to undertake study or training while looking for work. Get job seeker to discuss with Jobactive Provider or online services for approval and update Job Plan.
- From **28 September 2020**, [JobKeeper Payment](#) will reduce from \$1,500 to \$1,200 per fortnight. This rate reduces to \$1,000 per fortnight from **4 January 2021**.
- When the JobKeeper payment rate reduces on **28 September 2020**, you can start an early claim for Jobseeker Payment. You can review and submit this claim up to 2 weeks before your JobKeeper payment is due to end. Once we get your claim, we'll work out if you can get this payment based on your circumstances
- Speak with your employer and start your claim early for a Centrelink payment. Do this if you won't be kept on after JobKeeper Payment ends. You can start a JobSeeker Payment claim up to 13 weeks before your situation changes
- From **7 December 2020**, there are [changes to the way you report your income](#). You'll need to report to Centrelink the gross employment income you have been paid in your reporting period.
- Our temporary waiver for waiting periods ends on the **31 December 2020**. After this date, the waiting periods might apply again.
- The Coronavirus Supplement ends on 31 December 2020.
- The [JobKeeper Payment](#) reduces to \$1,000 per fortnight **from 4 January 2021**.
- JobKeeper Payment ends on **28 March 2021**.

Please refer to Services Australia website for more information:
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au