

FECCA welcomes Ministerial Forum on Multicultural Affairs and launches Reconciliation Action Plan

FECCA has welcomed the announcement by Queensland Minister for Multicultural Affairs Stirling Hinchliffe that Queensland will host a Ministerial Forum for Multicultural Affairs in 2020.

The Forum will be the first of what FECCA hopes will become a regular, standing series of forums to be shared between the states.

Minister Hinchliffe made the announcement via video message this morning at the FECCA National Conference, which this year is being held in Hobart on 10-11 October.

The Ministerial Forum will operate in a similar way to COAG meetings and will be able to provide advice to Governments and other institutions on policy decisions that affect CALD Australians. Advocacy groups such as FECCA will also have opportunities to participate in the Forum.

The announcement comes after FECCA wrote to all State and Federal Ministers responsible for Multicultural Affairs in August 2019 to propose the establishment of a standing intergovernmental or national forum on issues that affect culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians.

FECCA has also used its national conference to launch a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) designed to help foster a culture of mutual respect and harmony between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse people in Australia.

The RAP sets out 15 actions that FECCA will deliver on over the next 12 months to grow respect and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples both within FECCA as an organisation and in the broader CALD community.

The FECCA Reconciliation Action Plan is available at http://fecca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FECCA-RAP_WEB.pdf

FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos congratulated the Queensland Government for taking leadership on the Ministerial Forum.

“FECCA believes that a collaborative to multicultural issues would assist in the development of effective and coherent national policies,” she said.

“This forum has the potential to help bring Australia’s diverse communities closer together to the benefit of all Australians.

“That advocacy groups such as FECCA will be able to contribute to this Forum will strengthen its relevance and help identify practical policy solutions for issues that impact our communities.

“Accessibility for CALD Australians to health and aged care services, settlement of migrants and strategies to combat racism are examples of areas where coordination between the states could be of great benefit.

“FECCA congratulates the Queensland Government for taking leadership in this area, and we encourage all other states and the Federal Government to confirm they will attend the Forum.

“This year’s conference is also historic with the launch of FECCA’s first Reconciliation Action Plan.

“As the peak national body for the advocacy of multicultural affairs, we see it as FECCA’s responsibility to support reconciliation efforts.

“The Reconciliation Action Plan sets a path for us to follow to build greater respect and stronger relationships between our communities as we work towards a more inclusive and equitable future for all Australians.”

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