

# FECCAe-NEWS

The Newsletter of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

## WELCOME TO THE APRIL / MAY EDITION OF FECCA'S E-NEWS

I normally take the opportunity in the e-news introduction to reflect on the work of FECCA over the past month. However, the recent conversation in the public space on 'Australian values' has led me to reflect on my own journey to becoming an Australian.



I came to Australia by boat as a teenager not knowing much English and knew very little of Australia's history. I was one of the many millions of Australians that arrived from across the sea, in search for a better life, and made this country my home. Whilst I was not born in Terra Australis, I have learned to love this land above all others. I learned to love the humour (as difficult it is to grasp at first by newcomers), I love the landscape, I am amazed by its history and even grew to like four-and-twenty-pies!

Peter Hudson, one of Australia's greatest Australian Rules players, taught me to love AFL and I have followed Hawthorn from the first time I watched this strange and fascinating oval ball game. Whenever I travel overseas nowadays, after three or four weeks, I cannot wait to get back home to Brunswick where I can put my feet up and fully relax. It is only in Brunswick that I feel home now. I have lived in this old Melbourne working class suburb for the best of my life, and Brunswick is my refuge.

The Prime Minister, Malcom Turnbull has called for 'strengthening the criteria for those that want to become Australian citizens and ensuring that those applying adhere to 'Australian values'. There will be a new test to draw this out. The Prime Minister also announced that to qualify for citizenship a minimum 'competent' standard of English is required—higher than that required for some Australian universities.

This announcement got me thinking about Australian values after more than forty years in my 'new' country. At first, I could not think of a single 'value'

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# WELCOME TO THE APRIL / MAY EDITION OF FECCA'S E-NEWS *continued*

that was exclusively 'Australian' as all things that I took in consideration are, in effect, universal values: to be a good person; to be compassionate to your fellow human beings; to contribute to the welfare of the community; and to be a person that upholds the laws of the land.

My Italian-Australian mother taught me these 'Australian' values in her native Italian language (she never mastered English). These values were—and are still—shared by the multicultural communities in Brunswick, no matter from which part of the world they come and independent of whether their English is poor, 'competent' or fluent.

I have served as Mayor of the City of Brunswick and Mayor of the City of Moreland. In these roles I officiated hundreds of citizenship ceremonies. I met and got to know new Australians who were highly qualified with perfect English and others who spoke little or no English. All the people that I met at these ceremonies, whether they were doctors or grandmothers that were looking after their grandchildren, had one thing in common: they were so proud of becoming Australian citizens. Over the years, I have become friends with many new arrivals, and these relationships continue to remind me that the contribution to our society of people from different cultural backgrounds is immeasurable.

It is a fact that Australia's lingua franca is English and those that cannot speak it well are at a disadvantage. Most people in Australia that do not speak English or speak it very little are fully aware of their disadvantage. These are usually older people and people that arrived in Australia in their later years. These cohorts of people also make a great contribution to the Australian society either by assisting in bringing up their grandchildren or in volunteering in their community or church group.

We in Australia have a unique chance to develop unique 'Australian values' that would distinguish us from the rest of the world. We are one of the most cultural diverse countries on earth. It is not an exaggeration to say that we are a microcosm of this planet.

One of the fundamental issues that we all have to face is the Constitutional Recognition of Australia's First People. As we are coming up to the 50th Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum, we need to collectively face up to and recognise the Indigenous people of this country in our highest statute: Recognition in our Constitution.

Our multiculturalism should start by encouraging everyone to be proud of who they are and of their cultural background. But equally, we should all be curious about other cultures and learn from each other. It is not by chance that the most tolerant members of our society are those that have travelled most and those that have studied other cultures. It is natural to fear the unknown and we fear most when we are ignorant of the other. We are in an excellent position to be the beacon of the world and demonstrate that a better and peaceful world is possible.

To the extent that we continue to improve our cohesive and harmonious multicultural society, then and only then, we will be able to talk about 'Australian values'.

**Joe Caputo**  
Chairperson

**Federation of Ethnic Communities'  
Councils of Australia (FECCA)**

# FECCA NEWS

## FECCA Conference



### FECCA 2017 WEBSITE NOW LIVE

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils and the Multicultural Council of Northern Territory are pleased to announce the website for the 2017 Conference is now live.

[www.fecca2017.com.au](http://www.fecca2017.com.au)

This includes the Call for Abstracts and Registration. Abstracts are being encouraged as presentations and workshops. The Committee encourages a diverse range of workshop types. They are keen to see the use of different methods of learning and interactions such as the use of innovative discussions, creative arts and other unique learning opportunities. Visit the Call for Abstracts Page by clicking the link below.

[www.fecca2017.com.au/call-for-abstracts/](http://www.fecca2017.com.au/call-for-abstracts/)

If you have any questions please contact the Secretariat on + 612 9436 0232 or via email [fecca2017@conceptevents.com.au](mailto:fecca2017@conceptevents.com.au).

### KEY DATES

#### Registration Opens

Now Open

#### Abstract Submission Opens

Now Open

#### Abstract Submission Closes

26 July 2017

#### Notification of Acceptance

9 August 2017

#### Early Bird

16 August 2017

#### Accommodation Deadline

18 August 2017

#### Conference Dates

8-10 October 2017

# FECCA NEWS

## FECCA responds to proposed Changes to citizenship laws

FECCA has responded to the Government's announcement last month proposing changes to Australian Citizenship laws by calling on the Government and other political leaders to ensure that any changes to the citizenship process are based on robust empirical evidence and not political considerations.

In particular, FECCA expressed concern about any changes to the citizenship process that might unfairly target some of Australia's most vulnerable arrivals, such as refugees, through punitive tests rather than education and support.

FECCA also expressed its opposition to the extension of the time period required between the granting of permanent residency and the opportunity to apply for citizenship.

For more information on FECCA's statement on the proposed changes see [here](#).

FECCA encourages community organisations and interested individuals to make a submission to the consultation on the proposed changes as laid out in the [Strengthening the test for Australian Citizenship \(PDF\)](#). You can submit your views on this paper by 1 June 2017 to [citizenship.submissions@border.gov.au](mailto:citizenship.submissions@border.gov.au)

## FECCA makes submission to the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) Bill 2017* Inquiry

FECCA made a submission to this inquiry on the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) Bill* expressing its support for the bill which aims to reinforce Australia's commitment to protecting vulnerable workers including migrant workers, international students and other CALD workers. The Bill improves protection of vulnerable workers by enhancing the investigatory powers of the Fair Work Ombudsman and introducing additional responsibilities to prevent wilful blindness regarding systemic exploitation.

FECCA also restated its position that penalties remain ineffective for reducing the incidence of exploitation unless accompanied by measures to address coercion related to the contingency of immigration status upon employment status and the absence of support networks, advocacy and legal services.

In our submission, FECCA made the following recommendations:

- In addition to increased penalties: the legislation should include measures which create immigration-status amnesty for complainant employees whilst claims are being investigated and to be maintained if complaints are upheld.
- Measures should be adopted which ensure adequate support for advocacy on behalf of, and provision of information to, vulnerable workers about their rights and how to pursue those rights.

For FECCA's full submission see [here](#).

# FECCA NEWS

## FECCA represents CALD Australians living with disability in its submission to the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020

This month FECCA made a major submission representing CALD Australians living with disability to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry into the delivery of outcomes under the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 (NDS).

In its submission FECCA highlighted that more than one million people with disability in Australia come from a CALD background, constituting close to one quarter of the total number of people living with disability in Australia. These individuals encounter compounded vulnerabilities

FECCA stressed the importance of translating and interpreting services and urged the NDS to identify CALD people with a disability in their reporting on outcomes. Through collecting detailed data on CALD people with a disability, the implementation of strategies and distribution of resources can be improved.

FECCA also urged the NDS to recognise and support advocacy bodies who work on behalf of CALD people with a disability through increased and continuous funding for groups with detailed knowledge of the communities, their issues and challenges.

For the full FECCA submission on the NDS Strategy see [here](#).

## The 2017/2018 Federal Budget and FECCA's Pre-Budget submission

The Treasurer, the Hon Scott Morrison MP will deliver the Federal Budget on the 9th of May.

Watch out for FECCA's response to the Budget and measures that have particular relevance for CALD communities.

Earlier this year FECCA submitted and published our comprehensive list of proposals regarding Government funding priorities in 2017–18. These included the following recommendations:

1. Support CALD young people find a pathway to work
2. Continue to bridge gaps in equity and access to Government services
3. Continue to promote the policy of Multiculturalism
4. Prioritise actions focusing on migrant women in the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children

5. Establish a dedicated grants fund to support the implementation of the National Diversity Framework for Ageing and Aged Care
6. Ensure sufficient funding to multicultural sector organisations to empower and strengthen the capacity of CALD communities to participate in the NDIS
7. Provide targeted funding for a national multicultural mental health structure that would ensure mental health reforms achieve positive outcomes for CALD individuals and communities
8. Fund a one year program of an interpreter training and accreditation model to increase the supply of trained and credentialed interpreters in new and emerging community languages.

For the full pre-Budget submission see [here](#).

# FECCA NEWS

## Following the announcement of changes to temporary working visa scheme FECCA urges the Government to ensure protection of vulnerable workers

Last month the Government announced its decision to reform the 457 visa and the rules relating to temporary working visas. FECCA has called on the Government to ensure that migrant workers coming to Australia under any new temporary visa scheme will be protected from exploitation and abuse.

FECCA has been working closely with a range of partners and stakeholders on the issue of exploitation of migrant workers to advocate on their behalf and to encourage broader society to recognise the contribution of migrant workers to Australia's economy and society.

For example, this month led by the Salvation Army's Freedom Partnership to End Modern Slavery and with partners the Uniting Church in Australia's Justice

and International Mission and the Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH), FECCA made a submission to this important Parliamentary Inquiry into Establishing a Modern Slavery Act.

The comprehensive submission called for the introduction in Australia of a dedicated anti-slavery act and an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and made representations on issues including forced labour, transparency in supply chains, trafficking, migrant worker exploitation and forced and early marriage.

The full submission on Modern Slavery Legislation can be found [here](#).

For our media release on vulnerable workers and the changes to the working visa regime see [here](#).

## Announcing new members of the FECCA team

It's an exciting time at FECCA! The Secretariat has had some fantastic new additions to our team. FECCA's new staff members bring expertise in law, ageing and disability, gender, Islam, new and emerging communities and settlement. The whole team at FECCA looks forward to working closely with our members and stakeholders.

### **Cristina Giusti, SENIOR POLICY AND PROJECT OFFICER, AGEING AND DISABILITY**

Cristina Giusti is of Italian background and grew up in Australia. She speaks fluent Italian. Cristina understands first-hand the importance of an inclusive multicultural society where cultural diversity is celebrated and accepted. Cristina brings with her expertise in ageing, aged care and disability.

### **Benjamin Smith, SENIOR POLICY AND PROJECT OFFICER**

Benjamin is a former practicing solicitor with experience in the fields of family, criminal and

administrative law. During his time in practice Benjamin worked with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and gained a unique insight into many of the issues impacting those communities.

### **Dr Alia Imtoul, POLICY AND PROJECT OFFICER**

Alia is of Libyan Arab and Anglo Australian background. She has a long career working in diverse communities particularly Muslim communities, Spanish speaking communities, and Indigenous communities.

### **Dr Janecke Wille, POLICY AND PROJECT OFFICER**

Janecke has extensive experience in issues relating to multiculturalism, settlement and the work of civil society. She is a doctor in Sociology from the Australian National University (ANU). The focus of her research was the settlement experiences of the South Sudanese community in Canberra.



# STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Select Committee on Strengthening Multiculturalism

FECCA encourages ethnic community organisations and interested individuals to make a submission to the recently announced Strengthening Multiculturalism Select Committee. The Committee will inquire into and report on ways of protecting and strengthening Australia's multiculturalism and social inclusion. This is a great opportunity for organisations interested in supporting and promoting Australia's prosperous and successful multicultural society to shape the debate. The terms of reference are.

- a. the views and experiences of people from culturally and linguistically diverse, and new and emerging communities;
- b. the adequacy and accessibility of settlement and social inclusion services and resources available to individuals and communities;
- c. the adequacy of existing data collection and social research on racially motivated crimes;
- d. the impact of discrimination, vilification and other forms of exclusion and bigotry on the basis of 'race', colour, national or ethnic origin, culture or religious belief;
- e. the impact of political leadership and media representation on the prevalence of vilification and other forms of exclusion and bigotry on the basis of 'race', colour, national or ethnic origin, culture or religious belief;
- f. how to improve the expected standards of public discourse about matters of 'race', colour, national or ethnic origin, culture or religious belief;
- g. how to better recognise and value the contribution that diverse communities bring to Australian social and community life;
- h. the potential benefits and disadvantages of enshrining principles of multiculturalism in legislation;
- i. the potential benefits and disadvantages of establishing a legislative basis for the Multicultural Advisory Council, or for an ongoing Multicultural Commission; and
- j. any related matters.

The closing date for submissions is **12 May 2017**. See [here](#) for more information and details of how to make your submission.

## Department of Human Services Multicultural Services Team – new videos added to support customers

The DHS has added two new videos for multicultural customers and community organisations.

One video provides an overview our department's multicultural services, the other focusses on our Multilingual Phone Service. The videos are available in English and the following ten languages: Arabic, Assyrian,

Cantonese, Karen, Korean, Mandarin, Persian (Farsi), Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

The videos can be accessed from our [Information in your language webpage](#), (scroll down to the 'Watch' option under each of the languages), and also directly from our department's [YouTube channel](#).

# STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Mission Australia's Annual Youth Survey

FECCA encourages people between the ages of 15 and 19 to participate in Mission Australia's annual youth survey. We also encourage our members to share this with their networks.

Please include the code for Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia: **93301** when participating in this survey. The survey is now live online at [www.missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey)



**MISSION AUSTRALIA**

The closing date for responses is Monday **31 July 2017**. A full report of the findings will be released later this year and will be available for download at [missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey](http://missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey)

Contact for more information:  
[youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au](mailto:youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au)

### Promotional toolkit

To help you promote the survey on your website, social media and noticeboards and in newsletters, we have created a toolkit which you can access from:

[missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurveytoolkit](http://missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurveytoolkit)

## ACOSS Post-Budget Breakfast

Our partner organisation, ACOSS, is hosting a Post-Budget Breakfast. The ACOSS Post-Budget Breakfast provides a critical opportunity to come together to discuss the impacts of the federal budget from the perspective of the community services sector, civil society and people experiencing poverty and inequality.

Join ACOSS CEO, Cassandra Goldie, a dynamic panel of high profile commentators and fellow representatives from civil society for a robust discussion as we move beyond politics and short term analysis and apply a focused, critical lens in four key areas of Budget scrutiny: poverty and inequality, climate change, community services and housing affordability.

Tickets include à la carte cooked breakfast, fresh baked pastries, coffee, tea and juice, thanks to the generosity of ACOSS Platinum Partner, the University of Technology Sydney.

Register now for the

**acoss**  
Post-Budget  
Breakfast

Aerial Function Room  
UTS, Ultimo

Monday 15 May 

**Date:** 15 May, 2017

**Location:** Aerial UTS Function Centre Level 7, Building 10, 235 Jones Street Ultimo

**Time:** 7:30-9:30am

**Registration:** <http://budget.acossevents.org.au>



# STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## 2017 Refugee Week

The Refugee Council of Australia (ROCA), the organisers of Refugee Week, have revealed the 2017 Refugee Week poster image. This year's poster features Hani Abdile and Ravi Prasad, of Sydney cafe Parliament on King.



Ravi established the cafe in his front room to train people seeking asylum and refugees to work in hospitality, and Hani—a performance poet and author from Somalia who is just 22 years old—works there on weekends.

We often hear about peoples' journeys to Australia and the difficulties that they face upon arrival. We rarely hear about what people from refugee backgrounds get up to in their day-to-day lives, and the amazing contributions that they make to this country. As we approach Refugee Week, ROCA will be sharing many more stories of the incredible ways in which refugees in Australia give back to their adopted home.

Key dates for your diary:

- Refugee Week Launch (NSW): 16 June
- Refugee Week Launch (South Australia): 20 June
- Refugee Film Festival: 18–23 June (Vic) 17–18 June (NSW).
- Festival of Welcome (Vic): 24 June

ROCA would love to hear about the events that you've got planned in your towns. Please submit them using the button below and we will promote them for you.

[Register an event](#)

[Sponsor Refugee Week 2017](#)

## Anthony LaPaglia and Melanie Lynskey set to shine in new SBS crime drama featuring an outstanding South Sudanese Australian cast

SBS is pleased to announce two internationally acclaimed actors are set to star in SBS's new Australian drama series, *Sunshine*. The four-part crime thriller's cast includes multi-award winning Anthony LaPaglia (*Balibo*, *Lantana*, *Without a Trace*) and Melanie Lynskey (*Two and a Half Men*, *Togetherness*, *Heavenly Creatures*). Starring alongside LaPaglia and Lynskey will be some fresh and

exciting new faces, including an outstanding **South Sudanese Australian** cast seen for the very first time on Australian TV.



# STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Study to explore the prevalence, experiences and impacts of image-based abuse

The Social Research Centre and RMIT University have been contracted by the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner to conduct a nationwide study exploring the prevalence, experiences and impacts of image-based abuse (i.e. non-consensual sharing of intimate images) amongst women in Australia aged 15–45.

The purpose of the discussion is to help us to understand the context and circumstances in which this occurs, and the kind of supports that are needed, particularly for CALD women and stakeholders. This will inform the development of resources to assist victims

of image-based abuse. We will also be speaking with women who have experienced this form of abuse.

FECCA encourages our members to get involved with this important study. An information sheet which contains further details about the study can be found [here](#).



## 2017 Multifaith Calendar

Get information about the major holy days and festivals for Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

Whilst this list is not exhaustive it is comprehensive to represent each of the religions in good faith.

[Read more](#)



## Financial information comes in all languages

The Department of Human Services can provide FIS Officers to give a range of seminars in locations all around Australia throughout the year. Topics include:

- superannuation
- approaching retirement
- Age Pension
- aged care
- investing in property
- investing in shares

FIS seminars are free. FIS Officers can tailor their talks to cover what the audience wants to know. For example, the University of the Third Age regularly invites a FIS Officer to visit. That helps keep their members up to date on changes to payments, income and assets.

### Next steps

Find out when our [seminars](#) are in your area. You can even ask for a FIS Officer to visit your group by calling our [FIS phone line](#).

# MEDIA

## FECCA in the news

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/04/20/immigration-should-be-made-easier-not-harder-fecca>

<http://www.australianageingagenda.com.au/2017/04/20/consultation-underway-expanded-aged-care-diversity-strategy/>

<http://www.thefilipinoaustralian.com/news/index.php/2017/04/21/caution-must-be-exercised-in-changing-australias-citizenship-laws-fecca/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/20/world/australia/citizenship-turnbull-integration-immigrants-refugees.html?mwrsm=Email>