

# Ministerial Forum on Multicultural Affairs an important first

The first national Ministerial Forum on Multicultural Affairs is underway in Brisbane, which FECCA describes as an important first step towards sharing best practice and promoting social cohesion across the country.

The Forum was announced at FECCA's national conference in October last year, after FECCA wrote to all State and Federal Ministers responsible for Multicultural Affairs to propose the establishment of a standing intergovernmental forum on issues that affect culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians.

FECCA presented to the Forum via video link this morning and addressed a range of issues affecting CALD Australians.

FECCA called on Ministers to recognise the need for an appropriately resourced, national anti-racism strategy and campaign to promote social cohesion, dispel myths and stereotypes and educate the community and businesses around how to deal with racism.

FECCA also advised the Forum that any public communications strategy relating to COVID-19 will need to be inclusive of CALD people with varying degrees of English language proficiency, and that FECCA has the capacity to facilitate focus groups to assess community relevance and understanding of translated materials.

FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos congratulated the Queensland Government for hosting the Ministerial Forum and for inviting the peak body for CALD Australia to participate.

"FECCA thanks the Queensland Government for taking leadership in this area, and the other States and Territories for participating in the Forum," she said.

"Meeting at this level is important if we are going to develop meaningful strategies to promote social cohesion in Australia, and we hope that this is the first of many such Forums.

"Crucially, we asked the Forum that they consider supporting FECCA's proposal for an appropriately-resourced national anti-racism strategy designed to combat the rising tide of racism in Australia.

"Such a campaign would be a very practical measure that would improve public safety and make all Australians from CALD backgrounds feel more safe."

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