

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE AND FURTHER INFORMATION AGREED TO BE SUPPLIED AT THE HEARINGS

Hon Robin Scott MP

MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

QUESTION

What is the schedule of Vicky the Truck?

(Page 8 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

Vicky has received a large amount of interest from a number of event organisers throughout the state. The schedule for 2017 is currently being finalised with a number of tentative events in place. Vicky will tour the South-East suburbs in August, regional Victoria in September and November, Northern and Western suburbs in December and inner-city suburbs in December and January. See tentative schedule attached.



Vicky 2017 schedule
of events.xlsx

QUESTION

Given that there is not specific budget reference to the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), please:

- a. indicate the total budget allocated for the VMC in 2016-17 and 2017-18.
- b. advise of the allocated funding for salaries and oncosts
- c. provide a copy of the VMC strategic plan
- d. how many staff are dedicated to the VMC in fulfilling its role as an independent statutory body

(Pages 6-7 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

Through a Machinery of Government change in November 2016, Office of the VMC staff in the Department of Premier and Cabinet were included in the establishment of the Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC) division. A function of the MASC division is to support the VMC in delivering its Statutory obligations under the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011.

The 2017-18 budget for the VMC is under development.

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The 2017-19 VMC Strategic Plan is currently in draft and will be finalised in October 2017. The VMC's Objectives and Functions are set out in the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011.

The Office of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, which provides secretariat services and coordinates the business of the VMC, currently has six staff. In addition, the Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC) Division has a further 61 staff who deliver multicultural programs and services on behalf of the Premier, the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. For example, in 2016-17, staff of the Division provided secretariat services to the VMC's eight Regional Advisory Councils, drafted three reports, organised community consultations and provided events coordination for Cultural Diversity Week, the Multicultural Awards for Excellence, and drafted event briefs and speeches for the Chair and Commissioners, amongst many other services for the VMC. The pooling of resources has improved administrative efficiencies and increased access to expert advice and services for all agencies dedicated to multicultural affairs and social cohesion, continued to preserve the VMC's independence, and strengthened the work of the VMC.

QUESTION

In relation to the funding allocated for community projects and the reparation and restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo, please provide further details on how these projects are selected, and what selection process the Department goes through.

(Pages 7-8 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

St Paul's application underwent the same assessment process as all other applications received through the Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts (CICP) program. The assessment process is:

- *Primary assessment by program officers (internal – MASC) against the relevant program objectives and assessment criteria as outlined in the program guidelines;*
- *External/Independent panel assessment and funding allocation (panel typically includes VMC, Departmental and external representation with relevant expertise to the grant program)*
- *Internal MASC executive review of funding allocation;*
- *VMC endorsement*
- *Ministerial approval (discretionary grants)*

QUESTION

How will the migrant workers centre build upon safety and security in employment for vulnerable workers?

(Page 9 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

Victoria's first government funded migrant workers' centre will be established in Melbourne to support and advocate for workers who are exploited in the workplace. Funding of \$1m per annum will be provided for the Migrant Workers' Centre (the Centre) in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

The new Centre will be an advocate for the rights of migrant workers and international students; provide education and information to migrant workers and international students about their rights, proper wages and safe working conditions; and provide case management support and referrals where and when exploitation is happening to assist workers to seek redress, including recovery of wages.

The Centre will work closely with a range of sector stakeholders, including migrant resource centres, community legal aid centres, unions and employer groups, to build upon and coordinate supports and services. The Centre will also develop strong relationships with relevant regulatory authorities and government agencies, including WorkSafe Victoria and the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Victoria garners considerable economic benefits through attracting skills and international students (valued in the billions of dollars). The Centre is a wise investment to safeguard the rights of migrant workers and reaffirm the reputation of Victoria as a world leader for study and work opportunities.

QUESTION

In relation to the multicultural policy statement, please provide a list of faith communities that were consulted and what dates consultation with these faith communities occurred.

(Page 10 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

The Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG) was established in February 2008 in response to recommendations from the 2007 Premier's Multifaith Leaders Forum. The MAG currently consists of approximately 25 senior representatives from Victoria's diverse faith communities (including various Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist and Baha'i communities). The MAG is an advisory body which represents the voice of Victoria's faith leaders to the Victorian Government through the Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. The MAG aims to ensure ongoing dialogue between the Victorian Government and Victoria's faith leaders and communities, and assists the Government to understand and appropriately respond to situations which arise in diverse faith and multicultural communities around Victoria.

A key role of the MAG is to provide advice and opinion regarding the development of a range of government policy from the perspective of the faith communities they represent. The MAG meets on a regular basis and is chaired by the chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission. The MAG was consulted on a number of occasions regarding the development of the Multicultural Policy Statement. This included consultation at the early stages of the statement's development as well as specific focused briefings prior to the release of the statement and the associated campaign in February 2017.

QUESTION

With respect to the 'Multicultural affairs and policy and programs' output (Budget Paper No.3, p.309) please indicate:

- a. the total number of grants approved, depending on category (including the 20 per cent from the regional-rural split and the remaining 80 per cent)
- b. who is the responsible for the grant allocation (VFMC as well as OMAC?)
- c. the dates the applications open
- d. the expected date of the announcements.

(Page 10 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

The 2017-18 grant programs have not been finalised.

The Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion division (formerly OMAC) administers the delivery of the multicultural affairs grants program in conjunction with the VMC (they provide input to program guidelines and panel assessments).

The 2017-18 Multicultural Festivals and Event (MFE) program closed on 18 April and assessments are underway. Announcements are expected to be made in the coming months.

The 2017-18 Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts (CICP) program opened on 4 July 2017. The CICP program supports the restoration or construction of community facilities used by culturally diverse communities and enhancements to cultural precincts through providing culturally themed infrastructure. Announcements are expected to be made at the end of the year 2017.

The 2017-18 Community Harmony (CH) grants program is also expected to open shortly. The CH program aims to promote social cohesion and community harmony while actively standing against exclusion and marginalisation. Announcements are expected to be made at the end of the year 2017.

QUESTION

The Minister has indicated that, for the allocation of grants, 'there is an assessment panel, which actually comprises the Victorian Multicultural Commission, staff from the multicultural affairs social cohesion division, independent experts and/or external representatives, and then there is a ratification process'. Please provide the Committee with the details of the composition of the panels for different grants.

(Page 10 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

Several panels have convened for the 2016-17 Multicultural affairs community grants programs. External/Independent panels commonly have two or more VMC Commissioners and Departmental and external representation with relevant expertise to the grant programs. A range of panels have been listed below for different grants:

2016-17 Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts (CICP) panel:

- 2 VMC Commissioners
- Departmental representative
- Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) representative
- Global, Urban and Social Studies - RMIT University representative

2016-17 Multicultural Festivals and Events (MFE) panel:

- 2 VMC Commissioners
- Chairperson, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
- Manager, Regional Partnerships, Creative Victoria

2016-17 Community Harmony (CH) panel:

- 2 VMC Commissioners
- Chief Resilience Officer, DPC
- Community representative from Foundation House
- Department of Health and Human Services rep
- Manager, Multicultural and Social Cohesion Division (MASC)

Multicultural Sports Grants program panel:

- Acting Assistant Director, Community Sport and Recreation, Diversity, Community Participation, Sport and Recreation, Department of Health and Human Services
- Manager, Settlement Coordination, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Principal Adviser, Victorian Multicultural Commission

QUESTION

Regarding the Multicultural Ministerial Business Council, please indicate if this still exists as there is no reporting on it since 2014-15.

(Pages 11-12 of the Multicultural Affairs portfolio transcript)

ANSWER

The Hon Philip Dalidakis, Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade established the Multicultural Ministerial Business Council in February 2016.

In early 2017, the VMC established the Victorian Multicultural Commission Chamber of Commerce Round table. The first meeting of the chamber was convened in April 2017.

The following questions were submitted to the Chair from a PAEC Member who was absent from the hearings:

QUESTION

Within the \$42.8 million investment in cultural diversity, \$2 million is allocated for establishment of a Migrant Workers Centre to prevent workers being exploited through under payments and poor working conditions. Who will be setting up the Centre, what does this initial investment cover and how will the ongoing costs of running the centre be met?

ANSWER

To facilitate the establishment of the Migrant Workers' Centre (the Centre), the Government has secured the support of an external consultant, George Lekakis AO Management and Professional Consultancy. Mr Lekakis brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise drawn from more than two decades of experience in the multicultural area. Mr Lekakis will be supported through the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division).

The initial investment of \$2 million over 2017-18 and 2018-19 will support the establishment and operating costs over the two year period. This will include costs associated with:

- *establishment of the Centre*
- *staffing and operations*
- *information and communication resources*

The initial investment of \$2 million over two years will be sufficient to operate the Centre over this period. Consideration of further Victorian Government funding will be based on the outcomes produced over 2017-18 and 2018-19 and evaluation findings, including demonstrated need for the continuation of services and activities through the Centre.

QUESTION

Delivery of the Government's anti-racism plan has been costed at \$1 million. We know that anti-Islamic attitudes represent a significant problem and we understand that the Government's own research has highlighted this. Can you provide more detail than is in the budget papers on the objectives and cost per objective of the anti-racism plan?

ANSWER

The objectives of the Anti-Racism Action plan are;

- *Ensuring every Victorian has the same legal protections under the law*
- *Empowering members of the community to respond to racism – with a focus on women, bystanders and young people and children*
- *Developing school and early childhood curriculum materials to tackle discrimination;*
- *Targeting race based discrimination in rental and other accommodation*
- *Reporting racism - through a comprehensive review of how racism is reported and recorded*
- *Develop new curriculum materials for **Respectful Relationships** education that focuses on mutual respect and challenging negative attitudes, prejudice, discrimination and harassment*

The government has committed \$1 million to develop the plan.

QUESTION

Section 7, Question 20 (p 21) of the Questionnaire by the Department of Premier and Cabinet outlines a new performance measure to measure Victorians' engagement in social cohesion programmes, to be measured by the number of Victorians reached by components of an initiative, ie that have seen a television spot. A basic measure of reach is not considered best practice in understanding public engagement on an issue, and certainly not in relation to understanding behaviour change. In relation to measuring engagement with social cohesion initiatives, are there any plans in place, and are these budgeted for, to undertake qualitative research and or quantitative research beyond a basic reach measurement to understand the impact of these initiatives and make an informed assessment regarding value for money?

ANSWER

The Government has a clear commitment to reform and innovation to ensure good public policy and service delivery that clearly demonstrates its value to the community. For example, traditionally governments have assessed performance by measuring what it does (i.e. counting what gets delivered; acquitting resources expended; documenting what services exist) and not necessarily on what has been achieved (i.e. outcomes).

An outcomes approach is central to better government as it has the potential to provide rigorous and transparent reporting of government investments. The approach to outcomes development in Victoria aims to provide a consistent language and architecture to ensure that government measures the right things and in the same way. Bringing consistency will promote transparency, improved communication and sharing of information.

As announced in the Multicultural Policy Statement, "Victorian. And Proud of it." the Government has made a commitment to develop the 'Whole of Government Multicultural Outcomes Framework'. This framework will be built around five domains including: Victorians are safe and secure; Victorians are healthy and well; Victorians are able to participate fully; Victorians are connected to culture and community; and, Victorians have equal rights and opportunities.

The development of this framework will provide a more complete assessment of multicultural and social cohesion programs across government than limited or one off pieces of research, and has been budgeted for as part of the current budget commitments announced in May 2017.