

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2022–23 Budget Estimates
17 May 2022

PORTFOLIO: MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

Witnesses:

- The Hon. Ros Spence MP
- Ms Nicola Young
- Ms Brigid Monagle
- Mr Mike Hubbard

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

QUESTION 1

- a) **What are the 30 organisations the Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund funded to upgrade their community facilities?**
- b) **What are the 500 projects the Multicultural Festivals and Events Program funded, through 340 organisations?**

Mr NEWBURY: Thank you. Minister, in relation to the slides, do you mind if the department takes on notice the 30 organisations to upgrade and build multicultural community facilities, and also on the next slide the 500 projects with 340 community organisations? If you would not mind taking those on notice, that would be really terrific.

Hearing Transcript, p. 2

Name of Committee member asking question: Mr Newbury

RESPONSE

Answer:

The list of the 30 organisations funded to upgrade their community facilities through the Multicultural Infrastructure Community Fund in 2021-22 is available on the Multicultural Affairs website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund>.

The 2021-22 Multicultural Festivals and Events Program supported more than 500 festivals and events to take place between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022. The lists of the 511 festivals and events funded through the Multicultural Festivals and Events Program in 2021-22 are available on the Multicultural Affairs website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-festivals-and-events-program>.

The reference to 340 organisations and 500 projects relates to the Priority Response to Multicultural Communities grant program administered by the CALD Communities Taskforce. This program has delivered more than 500 projects, with 340 organisations funded in 73 local government areas. The lists of funded organisations in 2021-22 is available on the Multicultural Affairs website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-response-multicultural-communities-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

QUESTION 2

2. Of the over 500 events funded through the \$1.1 million Multicultural Festivals and Events program, how many are outstanding and how many have had funding recouped or have not gone ahead?

Mr NEWBURY: In relation to the \$1.1 million for the festivals and events program that was in the slide, did all of those events occur? So when the \$1.1 million went out, did all of those events occur? Because we have had COVID.

Mr HUBBARD: Not all of them. When there are 500 events in a given year, absolutely they have not all gone ahead. We have had a mix of them. About 90 per cent of the events that we have funded in the past year we have wanted to be in-person. Some of those have been impacted by COVID, as you would expect, over the course of last year. The department has continued to offer to work with organisations to reschedule, rescope or amend the timing of those events.

Mr NEWBURY: With that 90 per cent, do you have any kind of oversight on how many did occur?

Mr HUBBARD: Not off the top of my head. Apologies. No, I do not.

Mr NEWBURY: No, it was not a trick question; it was—

Mr HUBBARD: The majority did. There were a reasonable number, as you would expect, either where a geographic region had an outbreak or an organiser had something which impacted their ability to pull together the event.

Mr NEWBURY: So is there some tracking? Once the money goes out, what happens?

Mr HUBBARD: Yes, absolutely. When we enter into a contract with the organisation, there are a range of milestones and there is regular dialogue between the department and them. If the event cannot proceed for whatever reason, there will be a conversation between the department and the grant recipient about what will be done to reschedule or rescope.

Mr NEWBURY: And if, for example, the time has passed, does the money get recouped?

Mr HUBBARD: The general principle that we have is that we want the event to go ahead. We put the emphasis back on the organisation that is receiving the funds, so if they want to reschedule within the next six to 12 months, then we have a conversation with them about that. If that was the case, no, they would not need to return the funds. If for some reason they did not want to go ahead with the event and they had expended money, then we would have a conversation with them about whether there are unspent moneys that they may need to return. But that is at the organisation's discretion usually, and as I said, the general preference is to go ahead.

Mr NEWBURY: It is by their choice?

Mr HUBBARD: Sorry, it is not at their discretion, I should say. We try and work with them to make it happen. It is only where they are saying, 'We can't' or they do not want to go ahead with the event that we would be looking to recoup funds.

Mr NEWBURY: Would it be possible to get on notice some understanding of those events and where that is up to at some point in time, in terms of how many are outstanding or how many have been recouped or chosen to not go ahead, and any kind of understanding of those—what was it—500 events?

Mr HUBBARD: I mean, in terms of recoups it might literally be a handful. I would suggest it is less than five.

Mr NEWBURY: Whatever the number is is whatever the number is. I am just talking about it in terms of an understanding of the program. I was just looking for a point in time of how it is going.

Mr HUBBARD: Yes.

Mr NEWBURY: Is that okay?

Mr HUBBARD: Yes, I am happy to take that on notice. I do not have that figure to hand.

Hearing Transcript, p. 3–4

Name of Committee member asking question: Mr Newbury

RESPONSE

Answer:

Of the 511 festivals and events funded through the 2021-22 Multicultural Festivals and Events program to be delivered between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022:

- As at 24 May, no grants have been cancelled from the 2021-22 Multicultural Festivals and Events program.
- 142 events have been rescheduled due to impacts of COVID-19.