

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

Migrant Information Centre
(Eastern Melbourne)



MIGRANT INFORMATION CENTRE
eastern melbourne



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Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

Annual Report 2017/2018

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OVERVIEW

SETTLEMENT

1,281



Individual
Clients

5,630



Case
Sessions

100



Information
Sessions

CHILDREN & YOUTH



120 primary and secondary school students attended a homework support program session every week



17 weekly playgroups were held with an average of 131 parents, grandparents and pre-school aged children attending a program every week



293 young people aged 12-25 years were assisted with one on one casework support

FAMILY SUPPORT

18 women who were experiencing or at risk of experiencing family violence were supported through one on one counselling



REFUGEE COMMUNITIES & ASYLUM SEEKERS



7 community associations were supported to build their capacity to better meet the needs of their communities



19 individuals and families seeking asylum or holding a Temporary Protection Visa or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa were supported to access critical support funds

FOR OLDER PEOPLE & PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

220 people aged over 65 years were supported to access Aged Care Services



360 referrals were made to external services to help clients access the support they need



37 people aged under 65 years who have a disability were supported to access disability services



About Us

Our Purpose

The Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) supports culturally and linguistically diverse people and their families, older people, people with disabilities and their carers, community groups and service providers in the Eastern Region of Melbourne to enhance their settlement and access to services and strengthen their participation within the community.

Our Region

The MIC operates in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. The region covers the Local Government Areas of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

Our Vision

The MIC will take a lead role in the coordination of current, relevant information and the provision of services that will strengthen and stimulate opportunities to enhance the lives of new and existing migrant populations of the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

Our Values

MIC operates with:

- Honesty and integrity
- Respect for the individual and the community
- Equality and fairness
- Commitment to the communities in which we serve
- Professionalism
- Probity





Our Objectives

The objectives of the MIC are to:

- Provide poverty support and emergency relief programs to migrant families and individuals suffering financial crisis, destitution, misfortune, helplessness and sickness
- Deliver post-arrival services relevant to new migrants and refugees in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (the region) to ensure effective local settlement and orientation;
- Enhance direct provision of settlement services to migrants in the region;
- Provide a primary focus for settlement planning, coordination and delivery in the region, with the objective of ensuring effective and culturally sensitive service provision to migrants by mainstream agencies;
- Enhance existing links with and between a range of service providing agencies in the region;
- Identify service gaps and/or shortfalls in relation to migrants by mainstream agencies within the region and provide advice and assistance related to appropriate service delivery in the development of new, alternative or additional services for migrants to bridge gaps and shortfalls;
- Assess duplication of service within all areas of migrant settlement and to facilitate an effective network grid for the minimisation of duplicate services;
- Investigate technology-based solutions for the provision of information on services available within the region to the wider community; and
- Carry on any other activity, which in the opinion of the majority of the Board of Directors would comprise the spirit and intent of the Board.



Our Service Model

Our service model is based on the needs of the communities we serve.

The needs of the communities in which we serve are identified through:

- Consultations with migrant communities across the region;
- Recurring or new trends identified through the provision of service; and
- Consultations with other service providers through mechanisms including MIC convened working groups or MIC participation on networks and working groups coordinated by other service providers.

Our Customers

The Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) has four customer groups:

- Newly arrived migrants and refugees, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and others who identify as diverse and who seek access to aged care or disability services, residing in the Eastern Region of Melbourne
- Local Agencies
- Local Communities
- Local Businesses

The MIC assists each group to obtain information about each other.

Although the four groups have distinct service requirements, there is also a common theme - they are seeking information and advice about each other.

It is the responsibility of the MIC to identify and put in place mechanisms that strengthen linkages between the four groups that enable them to more effectively resource each other.

Our Staff

In 2017/2018 MIC employed 37 paid staff. Between them they speak 29 languages. The role of each staff member is detailed below:



Jessica Bishop

Jessica is the MIC's Manager, responsible for the overall day to day management of the Centre and its staff, financial management and guiding strategic direction in partnership with the MIC Board.

Jacquie Arulanandam

Jacquie is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle in the region. In 2017/2018 Jacquie worked to engage with 18 to 25 year olds under this program, and also facilitated the Cool Kids and Rainbows Program. Jacquie's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

San San Aye

San San is a project worker responsible for assisting at the playgroups and school holiday programs. San San's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. San San speaks Karen.

Tara Barmby

Tara is a settlement caseworker who assists refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Tara also facilitates a pre-school music program for 3-5 year olds and their parents and a homework support program in Croydon.

Wesley Bawia

Wesley is a project worker for the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategic Partnership and Capacity Building Program. Wesley works with the Falam Chin, Mizo and Karen communities to build their capacity to settle successfully. This program is funded by the Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. Wesley speaks Falam Chin, Mizo, Burmese and German. Wesley also works as a caseworker under the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Niquita Bekker

Niquita is a settlement caseworker who assists refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Niquita also facilitates three multicultural playgroups. Niquita's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Niquita resigned from MIC in June 2018.



Sally Brooks

Sally is the MIC's Strategic Engagement Coordinator, responsible for identifying gaps in service delivery for people from refugee, migrant and asylum seeker backgrounds and working to implement appropriate responses. Sally's work is funded by Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division.

Lorraine Busuttil

Lorraine is responsible for facilitating four homework support programs in Croydon, Mooroolbark and Ringwood and facilitates school holiday programs for children. Lorraine's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Pui Yee Chan

Pui Yee is the MIC's finance worker. Pui Yee speaks Cantonese and Mandarin.

Zhaohua Chang

Zhaohua is a project worker who co-facilitates playgroups for grandparents and grandchildren from Chinese backgrounds. Zhaohua speaks Mandarin.

Virginie Charoux Mindiel

Virginie is responsible for administration and reception work. Virginie speaks French.

Mervat Dahdoule

Mervat is the volunteer coordinator under the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program and she works as the project worker for the Community Visitors Scheme project. In 2017/2018 Mervat also facilitated a social support group with Arabic speaking women. Mervat speaks Arabic.

Rebecca Dunsdon

Rebecca is a settlement caseworker assisting refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Rebecca also coordinates new referrals into the MIC's settlement services. Rebecca's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Tial Hnem

Tial assists refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Tial speaks Hakha Chin. Tial's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program



Amber Huang

Amber assists refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Amber also facilitates playgroups for grandparents from Chinese backgrounds and their grandchildren. Amber's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Amber speaks Mandarin and Cantonese.

Geraldine Jeremiah

Geraldine is one of the workers responsible for the Access and Support Program. This program is funded by the Department of Health to assist people aged over 65 years to access aged care services and the Department of Health and Human Services for people under 65 years to access disability services, where due to their diversity face barriers to accessing services themselves.

Geraldine speaks Bahasa Malaysian and Bahasa Indonesian.

Iva Jurkovic

Iva is responsible for individual counselling and facilitating support groups for women from CALD backgrounds who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing family violence. This project is funded through the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services. Iva is also a settlement caseworker assisting refugee and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle. Iva speaks Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian.

Deedar Khudaidad

Deedar is one of the workers responsible for the Access and Support Program. This program is funded by the Department of Health to assist people aged over 65 years to access aged care services and the Department of Health and Human Services for people under 65 years to access disability services, where due to their diversity face barriers to accessing services themselves.

Deedar speaks Hazaragi, Dari/Farsi, Urdu/Hindi/Punjabi, Pashto.

Barbara Laug

Barbara is a project worker for the Medium Grants Family Violence Prevention Program. This program is funded through the Victorian Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. Barbara speaks German.



Kyithai Niku Lawnsang

Kyithai is a project worker responsible for assisting with the MIC playgroups. In 2017/2018 Kyithai also worked on a project to help parents of kindergarten children to engage with the kindergarten and participate on parent committees. Kyithai speaks Hakha Chin.

Daniel Lian

Daniel is a settlement caseworker who assists refugee and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to secure and maintain private rental housing. Daniel speaks Burmese, Hakha Chin and Falam Chin. Daniel's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Safieh Loulagar

Safieh speaks Farsi and Dari and is a registered migration agent who provides migration advice to refugees and clients eligible under the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs, Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS) and to humanitarian entrants through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Esera Maung

Esera is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle. Esera speaks Karen. Esera's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Judy McDougall

Judy's responsibilities include supporting migrant and refugee community groups and working with local agencies to support people from CALD communities. Judy's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Sophie McKenzie

Sophie is a settlement caseworker assisting refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region. Sophie's work in this program is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. In 2017/2018 Sophie also worked on a project that aimed to build the skills of community and faith leaders from Chin backgrounds from Burma to better understand and respond to mental health needs within their communities. This program is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services.



Khuang Mang

Khuang is a project worker for the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategic Partnership and Capacity Building Program, funded by the Victorian Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. This program works with refugee communities to build their capacity to settle successfully. Khuang, who speaks Hakha Chin, works with the Hakha Chin community in particular.

Steve Mung Munsuang

Steve is a project worker for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategic Partnership and Capacity Building Program, funded by the Victorian Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. Steve works with the Zomi/Zo/Tedium Chin communities to build their capacity to settle successfully. Steve also works as a settlement caseworker and this component of his work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Steve speaks Zomi/Tedium Chin.

Saturnino Onyala

Saturnino is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle in the region. Saturnino's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Saturnino speaks Sudanese Arabic and Acholi.

Mehul Patel

Mehul is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle in the region through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Mehul also delivers the driving education programs funded by VicRoads designed to increase the safety of drivers and pedestrians and to help new drivers to gain their licence. Mehul speaks Hindi and Gujarati.

Sawm Suante

Sawm is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle in the region. Sawm speaks Zomi/Tedium Chin and his work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Linda Tan

Linda is one of the workers responsible for the Access and Support Program. This program is funded by the Department of Health to assist people aged over 65 years to access aged care services and the Department of Health and Human Services for people under 65 years to access disability services, where due to their diversity face barriers to accessing services themselves.

Linda speaks Cantonese and Mandarin.



Robyn Tan

Robyn is settlement worker, responsible for facilitating the Homework Support Program at Manchester Primary School in Mooroolbark. Robyn's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Jessica Thompson

Jessica is responsible for assisting young people from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds to successfully settle in the region. Jessica's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Randika Wijekoon

Randika is responsible for assisting young people from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds to successfully settle in the region. Randika's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Randika speaks Singhalese.

Stephen Yang

Stephen is one of the workers responsible for the Access and Support Program. This program is funded by the Department of Health to assist people aged over 65 years to access aged care services and the Department of Health and Human Services for people under 65 years to access disability services, where due to their diversity face barriers to accessing services themselves. Stephen speaks Mandarin and Cantonese. Stephen resigned from MIC in March 2018.

Houra Zare Lavassani

Houra is a settlement caseworker who assists individuals and families to successfully settle in the region. Houra's work is funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Houra speaks Farsi.

Wanling Zhang

Wanling is one of the workers responsible for the Access and Support Program. This program is funded by the Department of Health to assist people aged over 65 years to access aged care services and the Department of Health and Human Services for people under 65 years to access disability services, where due to their diversity face barriers to accessing services themselves. .
Wanling is also a registered migration agent and provides migration advice to refugees and clients eligible under the Department of Home Affairs, IAAAS and the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program. Wanling speaks Cantonese and Mandarin.



Volunteers and Student Placements

A number of people have volunteered their time to support the work of MIC over the past 12 months, including 84 volunteers and 32 students who completed a placement as part of their TAFE, University or Secondary School program. The MIC greatly appreciates their work and acknowledges that without their contribution the breadth of our programs and services would not have been possible.



Chairperson's Report

MIC delivers a number of programs to assist individuals, families and communities from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds to successfully settle into life in Australia and to participate fully in their local communities.

Our work delivers services and programs for people of all ages from pre-school aged children at playgroups through to older people who are seeking information on aged and residential care services.

In 2017/2018, the work of the MIC included:

- Provision of Settlement Support Services, including casework and group programs for people from refugee backgrounds and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to support their settlement in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne.
- Family Support Services including one to one counselling for women, healthy relationships programs for couples, gender equity programs, women's leadership programs and family camps.
- Children's and Youth Services including playgroups, homework support programs, therapeutic groups for children, holiday programs and a range of youth activities.
- Support for migrant and refugee community associations and leaders to build their capacity to better support members of their community.
- Support for asylum seekers and people on Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas, including assistance to access crisis funds and participate in activities.
- Support for older people and people with a disability, through the provision of casework to assist people to access appropriate services and facilitating group programs.

In August 2009 Hannah Kinross, a MIC staff member was tragically killed in a plane crash whilst preparing to walk the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. In Hannah's memory the MIC and her family established the 'Hannah Kinross Fund' used to assist young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to participate in sports and other healthy activities. In 2017/2018 \$12,347 was raised through fundraising for the Hannah Kinross Fund. The fund assisted eight young people to join local sports clubs, enhancing their settlement through providing an opportunity for them to participate in social and recreational activities with other young people in their local area.

In Hannah's memory, the MIC also presents an award to the staff member whose work over the previous 12 months best reflects the mission of the MIC. The Hannah Kinross Award for 2017/2018 was awarded to Randika Wijekoon.



In 2018/2019 MIC will continue to build its client base and its work with both migrant and refugee community groups and local agencies. Our work will include:

- Providing casework services to people from refugee backgrounds and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to support their settlement in EMR.
- Holding six weekly homework support programs for secondary and primary school students from refugee and migrant backgrounds across the region.
- Holding over one hundred information sessions with refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency on local services and life in Australia.
- Providing employment and education specific casework services to people from refugee backgrounds and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to help them to find work and/or engage in education and training.
- Delivering seven weekly playgroups for parents and grandparents from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds and their preschool aged children/grandchildren.
- Delivering a music therapy group for children who are transitioning into kindergarten and their parents.
- Delivering healthy lifestyles and parenting programs.
- Facilitating a range of programs and activities to support the successful settlement of young people aged 12 to 25 years from refugee backgrounds and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency.
- Holding support groups for women who are experiencing, have experienced or are at risk of experiencing family violence.
- Working with community leaders of refugee communities to build their capacity to better meet the needs of their members.
- Assisting asylum seekers to access essential services and critical support funds.
- Providing family relationships programs and men's and women's support groups for couples from refugee backgrounds, leadership and financial literacy programs for women in partnership with Women's Health East and respectful relationships programs for newly arrived young people in schools.
- Assisting people from diverse backgrounds to access Commonwealth funded home support programs and younger people with disabilities to access appropriate services.

The support provided to MIC by our funding bodies, including the Australian Government, Department of Home Affairs, Australian Government, Department of Social Services, Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division, Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services, and local Councils is greatly appreciated. On behalf of the Directors and staff, I would like to express my appreciation for their continued support.



I would also like to acknowledge the support and contribution of my fellow Directors of the MIC. Their ongoing volunteer involvement with the centre is critical to the MIC's continued success. MIC is governed by a Board of Directors with up to eight members. In 2017/2018 two Directors, Ms Viviane Chemali and Mr Tony Daquino resigned from the Board. Ms Rebecca Burdon and Ms Claire Smith were appointed to the roles of Directors in July 2018. I would like to acknowledge the service of our two outgoing Directors and thank both Tony and Viviane for their contributions to the organisation.

Finally, I would like to thank the wonderful staff and volunteers of the MIC for their ongoing commitment to providing quality services to support the individuals, families and communities accessing the MIC. I congratulate Jessica and her team on a fantastic year's work.



Peter McPhee
Chairperson

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

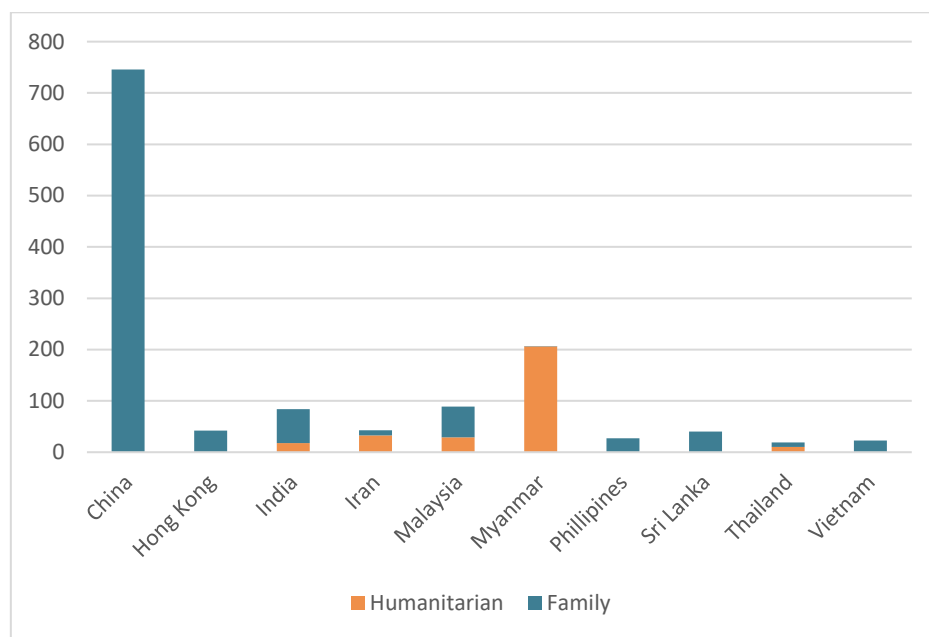


Client Services

SETTLEMENT IN THE EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGION OF MELBOURNE 2017/2018

The most common countries of birth for people who have settled in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne in the year ending June 2018 are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Settler Arrivals in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne by Country of Birth and Migration Stream 2017/2018



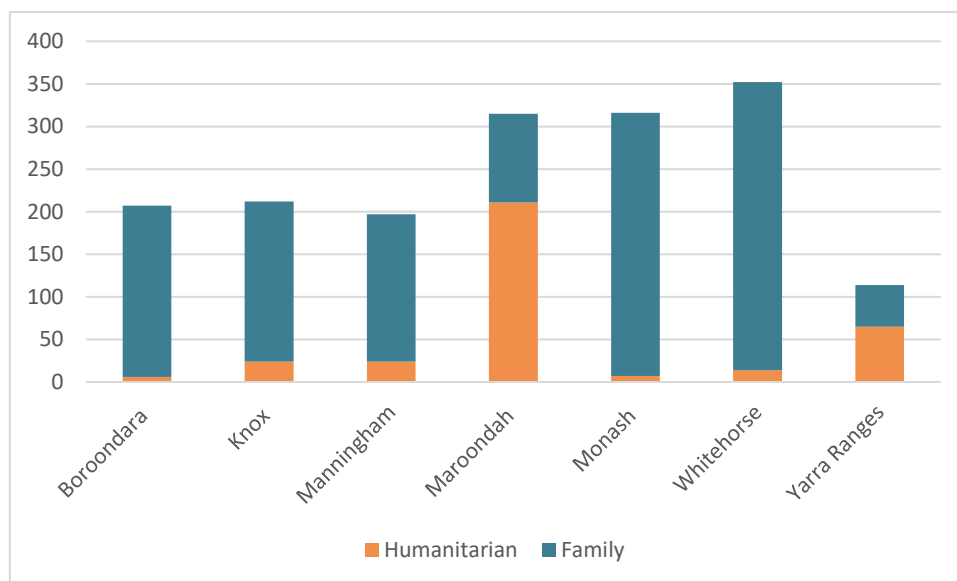
*Source: DSS Settlement Data Pivot Table September 2018 *Countries with <5 arrivals are not included in the graph*

As Figure 1 shows, the largest number of people settling in the region were born in China (746) followed by Myanmar (207). The largest number of humanitarian entrants were from Myanmar (206). People who accessed MIC services in 2017/2018 were born in over 27 different countries.

Figure 2 depicts where settler arrivals are living across the region illustrating that the largest number of family stream migrants have settled in Whitehorse (338) and Monash (309), and the largest number of humanitarian entrants in Maroondah (211) followed by Yarra Ranges (65). MIC casework services were provided at our Box Hill office and at our outreach offices at Ringwood and Croydon as well as at Swinburne Croydon campus. Group programs were held at schools and community venues across the region close to where the target communities have settled.



Figure 2: Settler Arrivals by Migration Stream and Local Government Area 2017/2018



Source: DSS Settlement Data Pivot Table September 2018

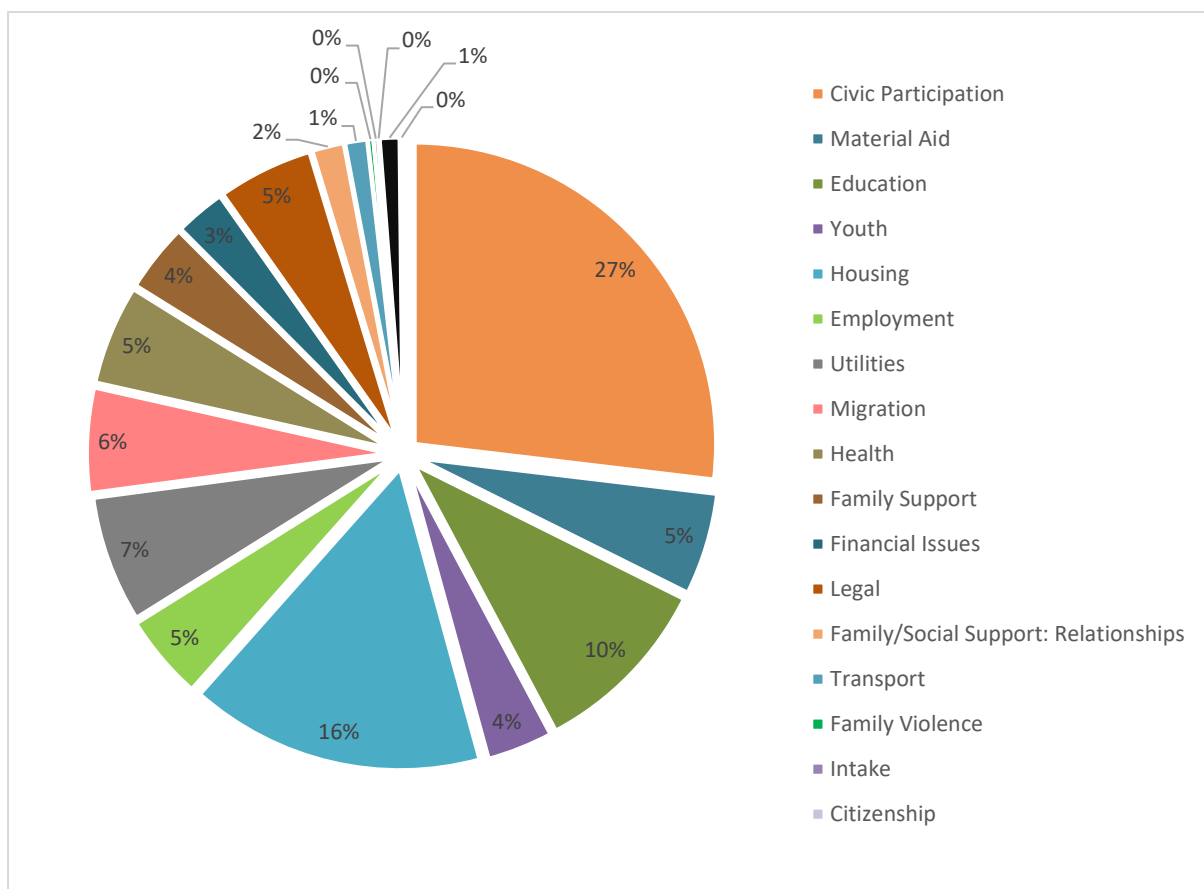
SETTLEMENT SUPPORT

Casework

In the year ending June 2018, staff provided one-on-one settlement assistance, funded through the Australian Government Department of Social Services to 1281 individuals from refugee backgrounds and people who are family stream migrants with low English language proficiency living in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. Services were provided through more than 5,630 client contacts.



Figure 3: Issues presented by clients accessing Settlement Services 2017/2018

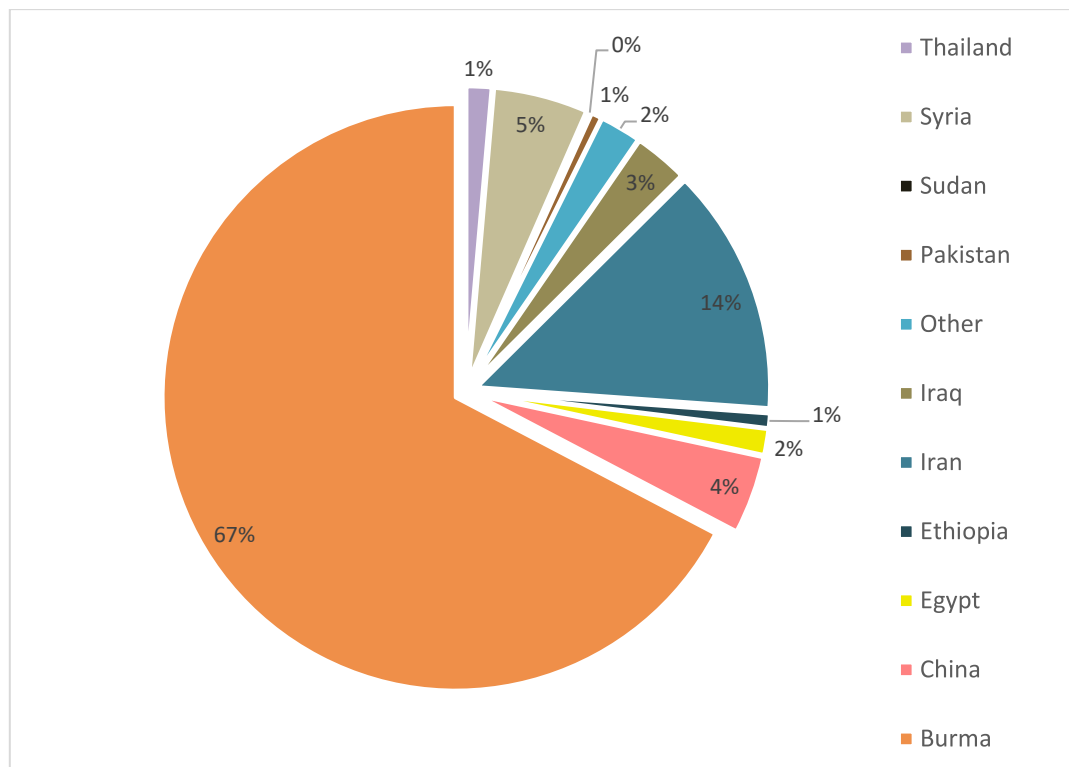


As Figure 3 shows, the areas where staff provided assistance were varied. The largest number of enquiries related to civic participation (1297), which includes facilitating pathways to better participate in the wider Australian community.



Figure 4 shows the largest number of contacts were born in Burma and Iran.

Figure 4: Country of birth of clients 2017/2018



In addition to providing settlement services from the MIC's office in Box Hill, services are also provided five days per week at the MIC office in Croydon and at the MIC office in Ringwood, and one day per week at Swinburne TAFE Croydon Campus. The MIC youth settlement workers also provided a weekly outreach service at Melba College, Ringwood Secondary College, Yarra Hills Secondary College, Mooroolbark Secondary College and Blackburn English Language School (Maroondah Campus).

"MIC shows us and teaches us how to access the services and when I struggle, I can call MIC and they help me."
~ Settlement Services Client

In December 2017 and June 2018, MIC conducted random telephone surveys of clients who had accessed MIC settlement services over the past six months to identify the extent to which the services assisted people to successfully settle. Ninety-two people responded to the survey in total.

Survey results indicated a high level of satisfaction with 95% stating they felt that the assistance they received from MIC helped them to settle successfully in Australia, 97% found MIC staff helpful and easy to understand, 98% stated they would recommend the MIC to their family and friends and 95% stated they believe MIC teaches them how to solve problems on their own.



Comments included:

- *Keep up the good work please*
- *MIC helps me, I will always refer my friends*
- *I always get help from MIC, and I was accompanied by them when I had to go to other services.*
- *MIC is very useful and helpful, I am able to use other services without an interpreter. MIC shows us and teaches us how to access the services and when I struggle, I can call MIC and they can help me.*
- *Why MIC not helping people who stay here for over 5 years? Sometimes we also need help.*
- *The MIC organised an interpreter when I could not understand and I refer my family to the MIC's services.*
- *I will come back to MIC when I need help*
- *Good service*
- *If the workers could help us to find jobs*
- *If I want anything I speak to my caseworker and she helps me a lot*
- *We didn't have to use MIC much, but they very nice and helpful*
- *MIC is good I am getting lot of help*
- *I am happy with MIC*
- *I would like to volunteer with MIC, they helped me a lot*
- *I want to thank MIC for everything*
- *MIC help me with everything and I'm happy*
- *Thank you very much MIC*
- *I have a relationship with MIC for two months now and so far all good*
- *Caseworker should help more with looking for houses*
- *Thanks to MIC staff for all their help*
- *Happy with our services*
- *Basically happy with MIC services*
- *Very helpful and useful and would like to say thank you for a great help since we arrived in Australia*
- *Happy with our services, we need to improve the knowledge of migrants and how to link with more organisation for migrants*
- *It would be good for MIC to help people in other services like pensioners*
- *Please keep helping us, such a good help*
- *No other comments, I get help from MIC a lot*
- *Thank you for your services!*
- *(My caseworker) helps me a lot*
- *I am happy with MIC services, but on one particular day I dropped by without any appointment and had to wait for one hour*
- *I am very happy with MIC. MIC helps with any problems.*



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Cool Kids and Rainbows Program

The Cool Kids and Rainbows Program is a therapeutic program for primary-school aged children of refugee backgrounds. The program supports children in developing life skills to assist them to integrate into Australian life. Through discussion, play, art and craft, games and activities, the program explores emotions, feelings, coping strategies and skills to support the settlement process.



Cool Kids and Rainbows Program 2017

In 2017/2018 MIC delivered two, eight-week Cool Kids and Rainbows Programs (Term 4 of 2017 and Term 2 of 2018). In Term 2 of 2018, the program ran for the first time in partnership with Foundation House. The combined skill set of the MIC Settlement Worker and Foundation House Counsellor Advocate enabled the program to support participants and make referrals to Foundation House at the conclusion of the program where it was identified that children and their families would benefit from further support.

In the first program there were 7 participants - children of Afghan, Arabic, Dari and Farsi speaking backgrounds. In the second program there were 8 participants - children of Farsi, Hakha Chin, Karen, Mizo Chin and Zomi Chin speaking backgrounds.

Topics covered across both programs included individual strengths, identifying feelings and emotions, life in Australia at school and home, understanding bullying, personal space and the role of friendship. The conclusion of the Cool Kids and Rainbows programs were celebrated as a group with a Tenpin Bowling Day and a Craft Party.

School Holiday Programs



School holiday program to the Royal Melbourne Zoo 2018

MIC delivered twelve School Holiday Programs for children. These programs included two excursions to the Melbourne Zoo (22 participants), a three-day Bike Education Program (11 participants), two excursions to Luna Park (22 participants), two excursions to the Victorian Skating Centre (22 participants) and three art and craft days held in partnership with Maroondah City Council (33 participants).

The MIC children's School Holiday Program aims to provide a safe and playful space for children to interact, meet new friends and engage in new activities. The days give the children opportunities to do activities they may have never done before, such as roller skating, or see something they have never seen before, such as a koala. The days are gratefully supported by MIC volunteers, alongside MIC staff.



Homework Support Programs

The MIC facilitated six Homework Support Programs (HSP) in 2017/2018. Three HSPs were offered at the Croydon, Mooroolbark and Realm libraries targeting secondary school students and three HSPs were held in primary schools in Croydon, Heathmont and Mooroolbark. The HSP assists children and young people to do their homework, improve their written English, reading and comprehension skills, develop study skills and routines as well as providing opportunities for children to make new friends and build their social skills. All programs which are held weekly during school terms are facilitated by MIC staff and trained volunteer tutors.



An average of 120 students attended the programs on a weekly basis, with a total of 200 students participating in a program across the year. The average weekly attendance for each program was:

- Croydon Primary School (31 students)
- Great Ryrie Primary School (39 students)
- Manchester Primary School (19 students)
- Croydon Library (11 students)
- Mooroolbark Library (8 students)
- Realm Library (12 students)

Homework Support Program, 2018

Feedback from students, parents and teachers indicated a high level of satisfaction with the programs, with 70% (115 out of 165) of primary school aged students reporting that the program helped them with their work in class and 97% (34 out of 35) of secondary school students reported that the program helped them with their homework and work in class. 100% (68 out of 68) of parents surveyed reported that they think this program has helped their children in their school work. In addition, 73% of primary teachers (11 out of 15) reported an improvement in the overall performance of students in class.



Figure 5: Feedback from Primary School Students who attended HSP 2017/2018

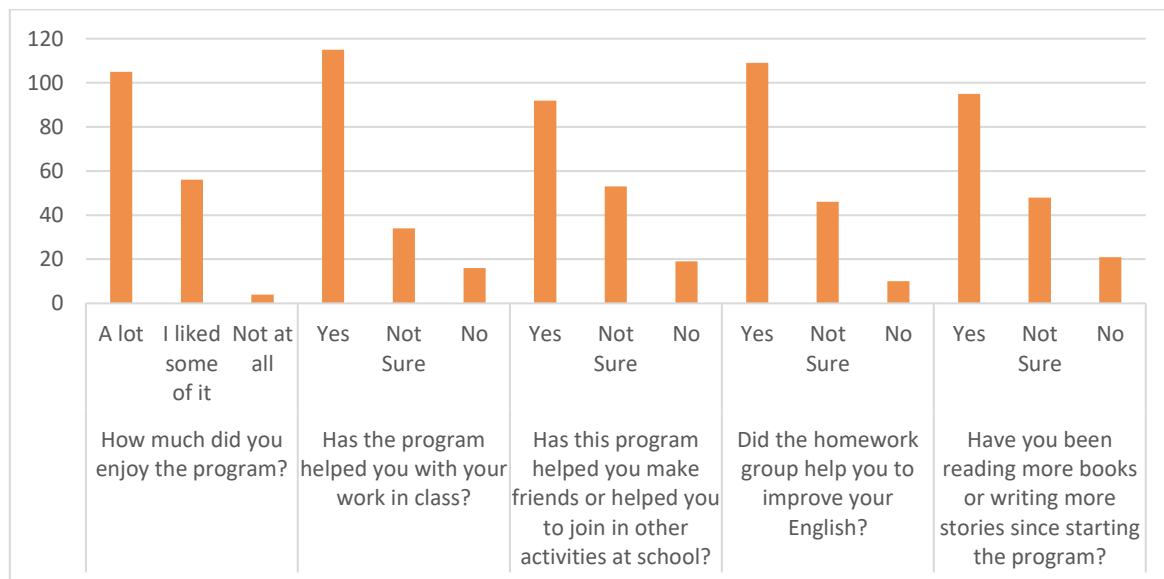
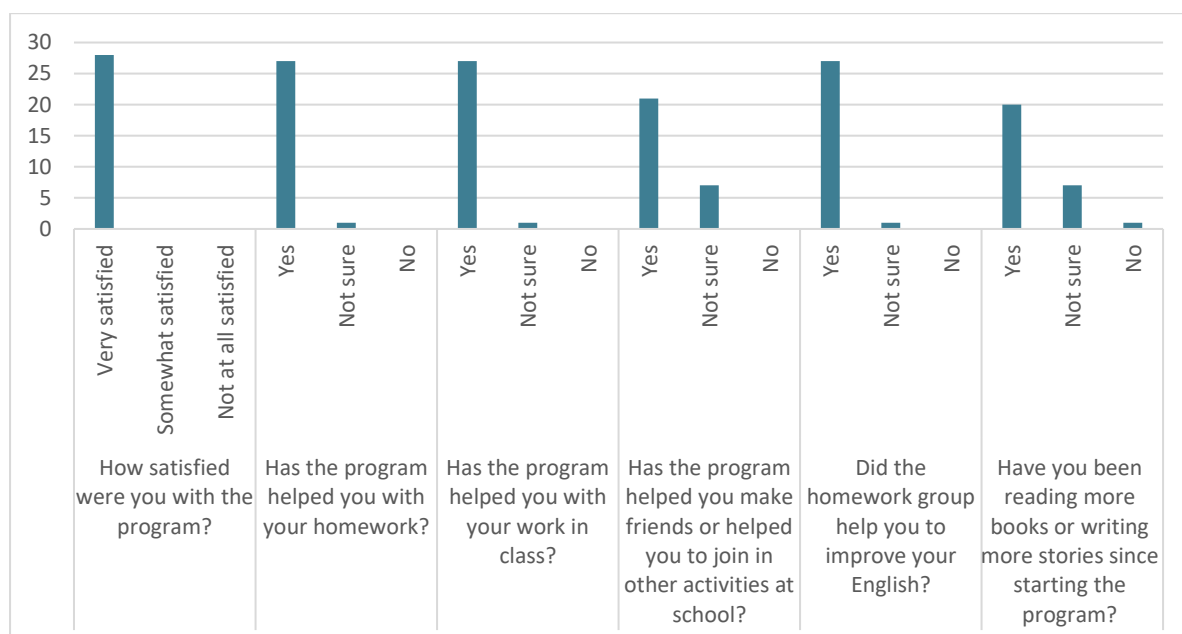


Figure 6: Feedback from Secondary Students who attended HSP 2017/2018



Comments from students who participated in the program included:

- The activities that have helped me are the essay writings and the maths with tutors. Also being here has improved my speaking and my confidence.*
- This program has helped me up to date with my schoolwork. Before I joined the program I am always behind the class and sometimes felt that I am a failure. Since getting the support from the program my results are rising gradually and I have improved in all of my subjects.*



Homework Support Program, 2018

- It helps me with every activity that I need to do. Especially with my school assignment and because of this homework program I get a high mark and award at school.*
- I would like to thank everyone at the homework club for helping us.*
- I like the spelling and doing worksheets. It is helpful when the teachers correct my English which helps me to learn the right way.*
- I really enjoy this program and I want it to go on and on.*
- It helped me with making more friends. I also learn new stuff like science.*
- I really like the volunteers, they are really caring, kind. And I like because my grades improve.*
- Working one-on-one with the tutors to help improve my maths helped me a lot. The snack table was also great, to have a break before getting back to work.*
- Reading and writing and problem solving helped my English and my mathematics knowledge and had improved a lot since I joined the program. I've also gained confidence in my public speaking and the program allowed me to make new friends through my school.*

The program also sought feedback from parents. Comments from parents included:

- This homework program is very helpful for kids and myself.*
- Very happy with homework class. My child has improved a lot from attending homework group.*
- Thank you very much for your help, you look after our children, helping them with their school work and you did what we cannot do.*
- I see improvement in not only learning but also behaviour. I see that this is a very good program.*
- I would like to thank everyone who is involved in the program to help my children improve their reading, writing and spelling skills.*



The MIC also seeks feedback from teachers for the three programs facilitated in local primary schools. Comments from teachers included:

- *I know my students really enjoy the program and it provides them with opportunities to read, etc. with someone - an opportunity they don't get in English at home.*
- *The kids LOVE homework club!*
- *Great program. Supports children and importantly, their parents.*
- *Lots of improvement orally and written.*
- *Thanks for the support!!*

Multicultural Playgroups

Through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program and with funding from the Shire of Yarra Ranges Supported Playgroup Initiative, the MIC facilitated three weekly playgroups in 2017/2018 targeting parents from multicultural backgrounds and their preschool aged children.

In 2017/2018, 97 playgroup sessions were held with an average attendance of 38 parents and children attending the Ringwood playgroup, 30 parents and children attending the Croydon playgroup and 15 parents and children attending the Mooroolbark playgroup.



Playgroup excursion to Puffing Billy 2017

In addition, a music therapy group was facilitated in partnership with Eastern Access Community Health (EACH). The program included playgroup activities followed by a structured singing and learning component led by the EACH preschool music therapist. This program specifically targets children aged 3 to 5 years to help them prepare for kindergarten and/or primary school. The program had an average of 16 children and parents attending the 31 sessions held over the year.

In 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 MIC facilitated a new program, a group specifically for new mothers and their babies under 12 months old. The program, facilitated in conjunction with Maroondah Maternal and Child Health Service, recognised that many women from newly arrived refugee backgrounds were having their first children in Australia, away from the support of their own mothers and/or other extended family who would have traditionally helped them with their babies and supported them with advice and information about parenting and child development. Due to language and cultural barriers, many of these women are not able to participate in local mainstream mothers' groups. The group therefore provided a space for new mothers to learn about caring for a new-born and topics discussed included baby development, nutrition and breast-feeding, baby massage and other health topics and provided an opportunity for the mothers to discuss any challenges and ask questions in a supported environment.

All playgroups offered parents an opportunity to learn about positive parenting and the Australian service system through presentations at the groups by Refugee Health Nurses from EACH, Foundation House, Centrelink, Maroondah City Council and Eastern Community Legal Centre. In addition, information sessions on walking safely with young children, flu vaccinations and dental health were held and a child restraints clinic where parents could have their child's car seat checked to ensure road safety.



Fourteen excursions were also held for playgroup participants where families visited the Melbourne Museum, Maroondah Children's Week event, the Royal Botanical Gardens, local libraries and parks.

Feedback from parents was very positive with 100% of respondents stating that attending playgroup made them feel happy, that their children were better prepared for kindergarten or primary school and that coming to playgroup has made them feel supported in their parenting role. 100% of respondents stated that their children have enjoyed all playgroup activities, they have gained knowledge about looking after their children in Australia and services in their local community and they feel playgroup is good for their family. 81% responded that playgroup has helped them improve their English and 94% of responders stated that they are socializing more with other people now that they have been attending playgroup.



Playgroup participants enjoying outdoor play 2018

Two swimming programs were provided for the families who attended the playgroups – one for babies and the second for their preschool aged children. An average of 27 babies and parents attended each of the 8 sessions for babies and 31 children and parents attended each of the 8 sessions for the preschool children's swimming program.

Feedback comments from playgroup participants included:

- *My child improve her English speaking*
- *I love this playgroup*
- *Excellent, thank you very much for this playgroup*

Playgroups for Grandparents from Chinese Backgrounds

Through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program, three Chinese grandparents' playgroups were held in Mount Waverley, Mitcham and Ringwood. The Mount Waverley playgroup also received funding from Monash City Council and the Ringwood playgroup received funding from Maroondah City Council.

The Ringwood program was a new initiative, established in response to the growing number of newly arrived older people from Chinese backgrounds living in the area and congregating in public spaces such as the library and local parks with their grandchildren, for whom they are the primary carers during the day. The Ringwood playgroup was held weekly from October 2017 to June 2018 with an average of 28 grandparents and grandchildren attending the 28 sessions held for the year.

The Monash playgroup was held every second Tuesday in Mount Waverley and the Mitcham playgroup every alternate Tuesday. In 2017/2018, 19 playgroup sessions were held at Mount Waverley with an average of 27 grandparents and children attending each session and 19 sessions at Mitcham with an average of 28 grandparents and children attending each session.

Each playgroup offered structured activities as well as free play. Structured activities included speakers on topics relating to raising children in Australia e.g. toilet training, screen time, pedestrian safety, childhood development, music programs, story times and indoor and outdoor activities. Birthdays and traditional Chinese festival celebrations were held during the last session of each term. For free play, indoor and outdoor play equipment was provided and the grandparents and grandchildren were encouraged to engage in activities together and with other group participants.



100% of the feedback received from grandparents stated that the program benefited both the grandparents and the children: the grandparents have learnt about services in local communities, socialised more with other people and had more knowledge of how to look after grandchildren in Australia; and the children have enjoyed activities at playgroup.

Comments received from grandparents about what other activities they would like to see at playgroup included:

- *Information about immigration policies and Centrelink*
- *Teach some simple English*
- *More singing and dancing*
- *Hope to have activities every week instead of fortnightly*
- *More outdoor activities*
- *It is good to have more activities to help the child development*
- *Extend the time of the playgroup*

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

In 2017/2018, MIC held 100 group information sessions for over 2818 people who had settled in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne through the humanitarian or family migration program over the past five years. An average of 28 people attended each session. These forums were funded through the Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program.

Chinese Communities

Fifty-six information sessions were held with people from Chinese backgrounds with an average of 34 people attending each session. Topics included Wills and Power of Attorney, Pedestrian Safety, Centrelink services, Fire Safety, a range of health topics and aged care services. Feedback was positive with over 95% of participants stating the information provided would assist them to settle successfully and 97% stating they would share the information with family and/or friends.

Hakha Chin Community

Ten sessions were held with people from the Hakha Chin community in 2017/2018. Topics covered in the sessions included financial literacy, understanding the Family Tax Benefit, Youth Allowance and Centrelink debt, Australian culture, how to compare utility companies and rates and where to seek assistance for family violence. Feedback was positive with 100% of participants stating the information would assist them to settle successfully and 100% stating they would share the information with family and/or friends.



Community Information Session 2018



Karen Community

Ten information sessions were delivered to people from the Karen community. Topics covered included five 'SaverPlus' program sessions – a financial literacy and budgeting program to assist individuals to understand budgeting, banking and finances in Australia, including saving techniques – and five sessions focussed on Australian culture, democracy and multiculturalism.

Feedback indicated that 100% of participants were satisfied with the sessions and 100% stated that they learnt new skills or gained new knowledge as a result of participating in the sessions.

Zomi/Zo Communities

Eleven sessions were held with the Zomi/Zo communities in 2017/2018. Topics covered included financial literacy, Australian democracy, tenancy information, migration and healthy lifestyles. Feedback indicated that 100% of participants were satisfied with the sessions and 95% stated that they learnt new skills or gained new knowledge as a result of participating in the sessions.

Iranian Community

Ten information sessions were held for the Iranian community. The information sessions covered topics to assist the community in their settlement with the majority of those who attended being in Australia for less than 2 years. A total of 192 people attended across the 10 sessions which included 101 females and 91 males. The session topics were also in response to community needs expressed through feedback including Centrelink, accessing health services, employment in Australia and Victoria Police. The sessions not only provided information but a greater sense of social connection for participants within the community and established rapport and trust building with workers. *"It was good, thanks to everyone who strives to give us necessary information!"* – Response from participant.



EXCURSIONS



Excursion to the Royal Botanical Gardens 2018

MIC held 16 excursions for people who were newly arrived to Australia from refugee and migrant backgrounds in 2017/2018. The excursions were designed to encourage people to explore local and wider community attractions that were of low or no cost and/or to have a fun family experience that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to enjoy.

Excursions included visits to the Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks, Lilydale Lake, Royal Botanic Gardens, Puffing Billing, the beach, Bayswater Train Park and Storytime at the library.

An average of 29 people participated in each excursion, with feedback indicating that they enjoyed the excursions and would take their family and friends on the same or similar excursions.

Further, in 2017/2018 MIC held 4 social excursions specifically for people from Iranian backgrounds, as it was identified that people from this community were experiencing social isolation and activities therefore focused on building social connections with MIC and with each other through participating in family friendly recreational activities. A total of 93 people including adults and children attended the excursions which included trips to:



Iranian Community Family Excursion to the Royal Melbourne Show September 2017

Melbourne Museum, the beach, the Royal Melbourne Show and the Royal Melbourne Zoo. The excursions were all organized through the use of public transport to help the families learn how to get around and become more familiar with different places. A need many in the community expressed was the ability to practice conversational English. Therefore, English-speaking volunteers accompanied each day, interacting and building great connections with each other.

Some feedback from participants were:

- *This was a good experience for me to be with the Iranian community*
- *Thanks to MIC that planned this excursion and invited English-speaking volunteers to [assist] the Iranian community to learn English.*



EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Employment Casework

In 2017/2018, MIC assisted 47 adult individuals to apply for jobs or to access education and training. The assistance provided included discussing education and career pathways, assisting with course applications and overseas qualifications recognition, finding volunteer opportunities, showing people how to look for work using job search sites, how to apply for jobs online and to write resumes and cover letters. 69% of those assisted through the program met at least one educational or employment goal. Referrals were also made to Job Active providers, local Skills and Jobs Centres and mentoring programs where appropriate.

Training

In 2017/2018, MIC supported 24 people to access a Certificate III in Individual Support (Aged Care), offered through the North Ringwood Community House in partnership with MIC. MIC assisted by supporting potential students to undertake a language, literacy and numeracy test, providing child care and supporting an English as an Additional Language (EAL) class as a component of the program. There were two groups in 2017/2018 – the first program began in February 2017 and concluded in June 2018 with 13 students successfully completing the course and the second program commenced in February 2018 and will conclude in December 2018 with 11 students enrolled.

DAY IN THE PARK

In 2017/2018, the “Day in the Park” Bush Safety Expo event was held to provide information and practical activities to increase participant’s knowledge of safety in the Australian bush in particular fire safety as well as parks compliance and fishing regulations. Eighty-four people from a range of cultural backgrounds attended the event which included meeting staff from the Melbourne Fire Brigade (MFB), Victoria Police, Maroondah City Council, Manningham City Council, State Emergency Services (SES), Parks Victoria, Victorian Fisheries Services, Emergency Management and Ambulance Victoria to learn about their services and participate in activities which included a walk in the park to learn about Australian flora and fauna and fishing clinics. Feedback from participants was positive with many identifying the walks in the park with rangers talking about Victorian flora and fauna and the fishing clinics which included a junior fishing clinic where fishing rods were given as prizes to 4 lucky young people as the best component of the event.



Day in the Park 2018



PARENTING PROGRAMS

In 2017/2018, parenting programs were held on parenting teenagers, parenting strategies in Australia, parenting children “living in two worlds” and cyber safety. Two sessions were held at Blackburn English Language School, 2 sessions were held with parents from Hakha Chin backgrounds and 6 sessions of “Breaking the Cycle” were held for parents from Karen backgrounds.

The “Breaking the Cycle” program was held in partnership with Anglicare Meridian Youth and Family Counselling Team Box Hill and an average of 13 parents attended each session. The program covered adolescent development, managing challenging behaviours, definitions of family violence, effective communication with teens, balancing love and discipline and managing stress and anger. 100% of participants reported the information provided at the sessions was helpful and that they now had greater confidence in parenting their children. Participants indicated the most important things they learnt from the program included when and how to communicate with children, finding the right time to speak to them and not trying to speak with them when they are angry, as well as how to control their own anger.

Comments about what parents had changed in their household included:

- *The information give me confidence that I can be a good example for my children in future, I will be more control of my anger and build a strong understanding between myself and my children*
- *We learn more about parenting information that give us knowledge and skills how to come good parents*
- *To set a good example for our children and lead them to live a useful life*

SUPPORTING MIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY LEADERS AND ASSOCIATIONS

In 2017/2018, through the Australian Government’s Settlement Grants Program, the MIC provided assistance to migrant and refugee community leaders of community Associations including providing governance training, and assisting associations to plan activities for their members and to write funding applications.

The Migrant Communities Network (MCN), facilitated by MIC, met three times throughout the year, providing an opportunity for leaders to come together to share knowledge and information, engage with service providers, learn about services and programs available for their communities and develop new skills to better run and lead their Associations and help their communities. Feedback from leaders indicated that they would like to meet at least four times per year in 2018/2019. Service providers who attended the meetings in 2017/2018 included: Maroondah City Council and Turning Point. The network meetings provided an important forum for consulting community leaders on the needs of their respective communities and developing appropriate settlement programs and activities through the MIC’s Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategic Partnership Program.

Leadership training was held for the newly established Zomi Youth Association (ZYA). The United Pashtun Association was assisted to plan and hold a community celebration for Eid and five associations were assisted to lodge grant applications from five different funding sources.



SETTLEMENT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The MIC youth program provides settlement services to young people from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds with low English language proficiency aged 12 to 25 years, who have settled in Australia over the past five years. MIC youth workers are based at the MIC (Box Hill) office five days per week and also provide outreach services at local schools including Ringwood Secondary College, Melba College, Yarra Hills Secondary College and Blackburn English Language School (Maroondah Campus).

Given the growing number of MIC youth clients moving to others school in the outer east, MIC began working with Mooroolbark College in 2017/2018 to build a partnership and begin outreach at the school. MIC youth workers also began work with other secondary colleges in the area on a needs basis, supporting newly arrived students in their schools. This work included conducting incidental outreach appointments at the schools based on need.



Youth Beach Safety Program – January 2018

Casework services included assisting young people with employment and education, family and relationships challenges, navigating legal, health and mental health supports, housing, facilitating connections within the local community and linking young people into social and recreational opportunities. In 2017/2018, 293 young people were assisted through 1,183 contacts.

The MIC youth settlement program also offered a range of recreational, educational and personal development programs. A total of 119 sessions were delivered across 20 programs. In 2017/2018 these included:



Youth Swimming Program 2018

Swimming Program

Twenty-five young people participated in an eight-session swimming program. The program was delivered in partnership with Life Saving Victoria and Aquahub in Croydon. All participants reported that they learnt new skills in the program that focused on swimming and water safety. MIC youth workers observed a number of new and existing friendships that grew through the program. Additionally, the majority of participants used public transport to get to and from the program, and showed increased confidence to get to the pool and know how to use the facilities over the course of the program.



Job Readiness Program Programs

Two Youth Job Readiness Programs were held: one with 8 participants from Melba College and one with 8 participants from Swinburne TAFE (Croydon Campus). Both programs included sessions on how to perform a job search, professional communication, writing a resume and a cover letter, goal setting, time and task management and interview skills. The program also included industry visits, including visits to Woolworths Croydon, a local bakery and a local restaurant.

100% of participants stated they increased their knowledge about effective job searching methods, had increased their confidence and learnt new skills through the program.



*Youth Employment Program Industry Visit
November 2017*



Youth Driver Education Program July 2017

Driver Education Program

The Driver Education Program ran across four days and aimed to equip participants with education about Victorian road rules to ensure participants are safe on the road and have the skills and knowledge to sit their Learner Driver Test on the final day of the program.

Ten young people attended the program and seven participants successfully gained their learner's permits.

“Come and Try” Sports Programs

This program delivered a total of 24 sports activity sessions, which were broken into an eight week Hip Hop program with 10 participants, an eight week Young Men's Indoor Soccer Competition with over 50 participants and an eight week Young Women's Indoor Beach Volleyball Program with 33 participants.



Young Women's Indoor Beach Volleyball Program 2017





Young Men's Indoor Soccer Program 2017

The objective of the “Come and Try” Sports program is to connect young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds with a program that: provides an opportunity for young people who are newly arrived in Australia to participate in a new sports activity they might not have tried before or to which they might face financial or other barriers for club participation; increases opportunity for physical activity; encourages new friendships and strengthens existing friendships; and, teaches new skills, builds self-esteem/confidence and fosters positive social interaction with peers.

Providing a fun and friendly environment through sport has proven an important platform for MIC youth workers to connect with young people who might be otherwise disengaged from education, employment and/or other community services. The sports programs offer a safe and non-threatening environment where youth workers can provide information, advice and referrals to participants.

Peer support programs

Four peer support programs were held; two for young men and two for young women. The *Young Men's Programs* were held over eight sessions at Melba College with an average of eleven participants attending each session and over seven sessions at Ringwood Secondary College with an average of nine participants attending each session.

The programs aimed to increase participants' self-reflection skills (participants learnt to take responsibility for their actions and understand consequences of their decisions), resilience against peer pressure (helping participants to have more positive social connections and interactions within the school/wider community), leadership skills and engagement with education and with the wider community.



*Young Men's Program Melba College
November 2017*

Comments from participants included:

- *This was good practice for my confidence*
- *At first, I didn't think it was going to work, but now I feel pretty good about myself*
- *Learned what a real man is, to work hard*



Two *Young Women's Programs* were held over eight sessions each with fifteen and seven participants attending respectively. The first program included a series of activities to better recognise and manage negative thoughts, feelings and emotions, develop confidence and self-esteem, appreciate themselves, learn strategies for stress management and get along better with family, friends and teachers and included speakers from local services.

The second program was a specific creative writing program, aimed to empower young women from refugee backgrounds to harness their creative voices, explore the power of language,



Young Women's Program February 2018

and develop their writing skills. Delivered in partnership with Creative Write-It, the program involved fun and interactive writing, story-telling and group work activities, exploring the areas of character, world building and structure that make a story interesting and unique. Elements of identity, belonging and purpose were also explored through the program. A collection of the stories was published in a book and a book launch will be held in December 2018.

Comments from participants included:

- *I will hang out with my friends when I am sad. I think that I'm not alone.*
- *I will be positive about myself, listen more to people and try to talk to them*
- *I learnt how to manage stress and when I feel stress it really help me*
- *I'm not the only one who worried about homework, SACs, exams*

Realm Hangout Program

Towards the end of 2017 it was identified that a group of young people from refugee backgrounds were gathering in and around Realm (Ringwood Library) during the day and not attending school. In order to connect in with this disengaged group, the Realm Hangout Program was developed where an MIC youth worker who has strong rapport with the young people conducted outreach one afternoon per week at Realm, providing the young people with support to reengage in employment, education or training.





Realm Hangout Program 2018

support services including AMES Reconnect, Centrelink, Head Space and others.

Through fostering a casual and social environment, with food, board games and video games, a safe space was created that enabled the MIC youth worker to initiate discussions on issues of concern for participants. The young people were able to identify numerous barriers preventing them from accessing services and leading to them becoming disengaged from education and employment.

Through the support provided, in 2017/2018 the program supported 4 disengaged young people to find employment and 2 disengaged young people to re-connect with education, including supporting them to go back to school and to stay engaged. The program also provided numerous referrals to

MIC Youth Leadership Commission (MYLC)

This program builds the capacity of refugee and family stream migrant young people to be trained as peer leaders to help other newly arrived young people. Fifteen young people were selected for the program and participated in two, eight-week programs in 2017/2018 during which they became MIC Youth Leadership Commissioners.



MIC Youth Leadership Commissioners – Maroondah Youth Awards 2018

The Youth Personal Development *Program* was the first part of this two-stage program and focused on increasing participants' capacity in personal development and leadership including goal setting, time and task management, self-reflection, self-esteem, effectively and critically gathering information from different sources and services and utilizing electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops.



The Youth Leadership Training program - The second stage of the MYLC program focussed on building leadership skills and preparing to be peer-leaders for other newly arrived young people, including identifying needs in their own communities, implementing and delivering programs to support migrant and refugee young people, measuring impact and analysing outcomes; and being spokespeople representing refugee youth.

Achievements of the MYLC to date include: planning and delivering a youth holiday program activity with the MIC Youth Settlement Team; being awarded a Group Achievement Award by Maroondah City Council - one Youth Commissioner was nominated as the Maroondah Youth Citizen of The Year; being interviewed by 3WBC radio and being interviewed by 'Victorian. And proud of it!' team.

Feedback from the first stage of the project was positive, with 92% of participants indicating the program increased their confidence. Some comments from participants included:

- *I believe this will be very effective to improve the community. I've always been interested in giving something back to the community and this is a great opportunity to build my confidence, leadership and other skills. I'm glad that this program came because this has always been something I would like to do.*
- *I think this program is exactly what young people need the most*

The MYLC will continue to meet and undertake projects and initiatives in 2018/2019.



*A Youth Commissioner at the
'Victorian And Proud Of It.'
Youth Luncheon 2018*

School Holiday Programs



*Youth School Holiday
Program 2017*

Four school holiday programs were held with an average of 24 participants attending each program. The programs included an excursion to the 1,000 steps Kokoda Memorial Track, a picnic at the Royal Botanical Gardens Melbourne, a Beach Safety Program at South Melbourne Beach and a Young Men's Rock Climbing program. The school holiday programs aim to increase confidence in using public transport, encourage new and build on existing friendships and explore and showcase low cost places to visit in Melbourne, so young people can visit on their own in the future.

Eighty-two percent of respondents across the programs reported to have made new friends or strengthened existing friendships and 78% felt more confident to use public transport as a result of the programs.



Cyber Safety Camp

Twenty-four young people from refugee backgrounds (Hakha Chin, Arabic, Tedim Chin, Karen, Burmese, Armenian and Iraqi) went to Phillip Island for 4 days to learn about cyber safety and to take a break from their normal routines at home. Young people participated in a series of 6 workshops across the 4 days, which focused on creating awareness of: security of information online and on personal devices, the addictive nature of social media and time management skills, social media and the impacts on self-esteem and body image and respect in and out of cyberspace

Participants were challenged to consider their use of technology and to go home committing to making some positive changes about their use. 92% of participants stated they had learnt something new from the program with 70% indicating that they will change the way they use social media. 66% also indicated that they would share the information with their family and friends.



Youth Cyber Safety Camp 2018

Public Transport Marathon

Twenty-two young people participated in a friendly competition navigating public transport and visiting local youth services across the Eastern Region of Melbourne. The program was delivered in partnership with Youth Support Advocacy Service (YSAS), EACH Youth Clinic on Warrandyte Road, Foundation House, Victoria Police, Headspace, Whitehorse Connexions and Eastern Community Legal Centre. The feedback comments received from the participants expressed appreciation to meet new people and services. 100% of participants indicated the program increased their knowledge of local services where they could go for assistance and 81% of participants stated that they had increased confidence to use public transport. Comments included:

- *It is fun and we get to learn about places we can find help*
- *I know where to go if something happen to me like if I am feeling sad or stressed*
- *If I have legal issues, I now know where to go and get help*
- *I have to go to the place that I have never been before and I learned to be confident*



Engaging with 18 to 25 year olds



Hip Hop Program May 2018

To increase engagement with young people aged 18 to 25 years, the MIC held consultations at Swinburne TAFE to identify their needs as distinct from their school-aged peers and to develop more appropriate programs to support their settlement. An information session was held with Victoria Police on their role in society. A total of 22 people participated, gaining more knowledge and understanding of law enforcement and building a more positive rapport.

MIC also conducted a 5 week Hip Hop program which was very successful with the confidence, engagement and interaction of young people dramatically improving throughout the program. An average of 11 young people attended weekly. The last session was held at a local dance studio.

MIGRATION

MIC provided migration advice and assistance through two programs – Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program; and, the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs funded Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS).

Settlement Services Migration Program

Through this program, MIC provided migration advice and assistance to people who arrived in Australia under the Humanitarian Program or as family stream migrants with low English language proficiency who had arrived in Australia in the last five years. The MIC assisted 205 clients under this program in 2017/2018. The services provided included one-off migration advice, assisting clients to complete forms to propose family members to come to Australia and/or providing full assistance which included preparing applications and liaising with Australian Government departmental staff. Twenty-five full immigration applications were lodged and 24 visa applications were granted.

Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS) Migration Program

In 2017/2018 under the IAAAS program, MIC provided 174 face-to-face migration advice services, 8 full immigration application assistance services and 4 community information sessions (135 people attended).

The majority of people who accessed this service were seeking advice on sponsoring a spouse or other family members to settle in Australia or immigration assistance to stay in Australia. To access this program, clients must be on a low income or be experiencing financial hardship and have low English language proficiency. This program concluded on 30th June 2018.



FAMILY VIOLENCE AND GENDER EQUITY PROGRAMS

Women from CALD backgrounds

The MIC receives funding through the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services to support women from CALD communities who have experienced, are experiencing or at risk of experiencing, family violence.

In 2017/2018, 18 women received individual counselling through the program and two, eight-week group programs were held for women from Iranian backgrounds. The groups provided a safe environment for women to learn about Australian laws in relation to family violence and the safety of women and children, as well as the impact of family violence in particular how violence impacts upon children. In addition, women learnt how to build better family relationships and how to build their self-esteem. The groups also provided a forum to learn about Australian culture.

100% of participants reported that the group had helped them to settle successfully in Australia, that the topics covered were interesting and presented in a style that was easy to understand and that they would recommend the program to friends and family.

Comments from participants on what they learnt and gained from the program included:

The most important information in the program:

- *The importance of family relationships*
- *Self-confidence*
- *Love languages*
- *I'll use this information in my own life and if a family member or friend needs such information I'll share with them*
- *Have a chat with my husband, and also have a discussion with my kids about self-esteem, self-confidence*
- *I'll use the information in all areas, particularly regarding relationship with partner*

Preventing family violence in CALD communities

In 2016, the Victorian Government's new Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division (MASC) funded MIC to undertake a two-year project under their Capacity Building and Participation Program, Medium Grants Funding Program to provide culturally appropriate responses in the prevention of family violence within CALD communities in the Eastern Region of Melbourne. The program aimed to improve the safety of CALD women and children through targeted community awareness, education and capacity building projects.

In 2017/2018, the work of the program included:

- Two Family Relationships Programs of six sessions each for couples from Karen and Falam Chin backgrounds. The program assisted participants to identify and challenge cultural values and attitudes in regards to the roles of men and women, consider gender equity in relationships and effective communication, enhance self-esteem and teach conflict resolution without using family violence. The programs were facilitated by a trained psychologist with extensive experience in working with couples from refugee backgrounds who are experiencing conflict or family violence.



To encourage attendance and to help build rapport and trust between group facilitators and participants, couples and their children who attended the program were invited to attend a three day family camp. The camps encouraged families to participate in activities together as a family and to learn about low-cost family holiday options by staying at the Warburton Caravan Park.

- The same couples who participated in the Family Relationships Programs were then invited to a further six week program for men and women separately, to allow participants to delve more deeply into issues and ideas raised during the initial six weeks of the program and consider how to practice gender equity and what they had learnt in their lives.
- Three, six-week financial literacy and leadership programs for women were held in partnership with Women's Health East, targeting women from Iranian backgrounds (11 women participated), women from Mizo and Falam Chin backgrounds (6 women participated) and women from Hakha Chin backgrounds (13 women participated). The programs aimed to increase participants' understanding of leadership in an Australian context, build skills in financial literacy and competency and increase the capacity of women to manage their own finances and make informed financial decisions for themselves and their families. Participants were also introduced to the concept of gender equity and explored how to practice this in their own lives.
- Six, eight week programs in secondary schools focussed on respectful relationships. The programs targeted the English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes of schools with high numbers of students from refugee backgrounds including Ringwood Secondary College, Melba College and Yarra Hills Secondary College, and were facilitated by a youth worker in partnership with a facilitator from the Martial Arts Therapy (MAT) program as part of the Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association (TESSA). Each session combined personal development and educational activities with physical activities, storytelling and experiential learning to engage, educate and challenge students around their relationship to themselves and others. The groups learnt about gender equity, power and control and how to express what they want or do not want. Participants ranged in age from 13 to 17 years and were from a range of cultural backgrounds including Karen, Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, Mizo and Zomi/Zo from the communities from Burma as well as Thai, Chinese and one student from Chad. Group sizes ranged from 7 to 18 participants.



Participants at the Family Relationships Camp April 2018



CAPACITY BUILDING AND PARTICIPATION PROGRAM – STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER PROGRAM

In 2016, MIC was successful in attaining four year funding under the Victorian Government's Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division (MASC), Capacity Building and Participation, Strategic Partnerships Refugee and Asylum Seeker Program. This program works in partnership with refugee and asylum seeker communities to achieve sustainable settlement outcomes and to assist community association committees and other community leaders to manage their groups and build their capacity to better meet the needs of their communities.



MIC Volleyball Tournament September 2017

The program includes the facilitation of a steering committee comprising of local service providers to oversee the program, as well as providing brokerage funds to assist people seeking asylum to enhance their access to essential services and/or to fund short term crisis interventions where appropriate.

In 2017/2018, the program supported the Karen, Falam Chin, Mizo, Hakha Chin, Zomi and Zo communities. Agencies represented on the steering committee include: Women's Health East, Eastern Access Community Health, Maroondah City Council, Swinburne, Life Without Barriers, Australian Red Cross and AMES Australia.

Activities undertaken with communities in 2017/2018 included:

- Holding 7 meetings with leaders from the target communities to assist with the governance of their associations. This work included assistance with searching for and applying for grants, discussing leadership and governance challenges and successes, providing information and training on how to comply with Consumer Affairs rules for effective governing of an Incorporated Association.
- Assisting community leaders with 13 community activities and events by working together with the participating communities. This work included assistance to help organise cultural celebrations, excursions, youth activities and community elections.
- Facilitating three, weekly sewing and craft programs for women from Zomi, Hakha Chin and Falam Chin backgrounds with approximately 37 women attending weekly. Feedback indicated that 100% of participants gained sewing skills for making their own clothes and attending the program reduced their social isolation. One woman was employed at Dollar Curtains as a result of the sewing skills she gained from attending the program.



- Holding regular meetings and activities for older people from the Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, Zomi/Zo and Karen communities to help reduce social isolation and to encourage older people to stay active. The meetings included presentations from local service providers, visits to the local swimming pool, tai chi and gentle exercise, social gatherings at local venues, and an excursion to a cherry farm for members of all senior's groups. Feedback indicated that 100% of participants felt the program helped them to maintain and build new friendships, assisted in their settlement in Australia and increased learning on a range of topics such as legal information and how the MIC's Access and Support Program can assist elderly people to access aged care services.



Hakha Chin Senior's Group 2017

- Assisting community associations to facilitate a range of sports activities, including a mixed community volleyball event for men from a range of cultural backgrounds with approximately 100 participants, a soccer tournament - the Sialsawm Cup - with 5 teams and approximately 200 attendees in partnership with Zomi Association Australia and a badminton program with the Hakha Chin youth.
- Holding two youth leadership training programs targeting elected youth leaders from the Hakha Chin and Zomi communities.
- Facilitating a range of youth activities, including traditional dance practice and lessons for the Karen, Hakha Chin, Zomi, Falam Chin, and Mizo youth communities, and two social events for young people - one with the Mizo community and the other with the Falam Chin community. 100% of participants at cultural dance practice indicated they enjoyed learning cultural dance and understanding the importance of maintaining their culture by performing at festivals and events. 100% of youth leaders who assisted in developing and facilitating these activities indicated that they gained more skills and confidence to organise events in the future.
- Holding swimming and water safety programs for the Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, and Karen communities, including adults and children. Seventy-two people participated in the programs, which were run at Aquahub in Croydon and Aquanation in Ringwood. For many participants, it was their first time learning how to swim.



Swimming Program 2017



- Holding a Zumba program for women with 20 people participating. 80% of participants indicated that they gained more confidence in continuing to participate in healthy exercise programs and the program helped them to make friends and keep physically active.
- Holding two job readiness training programs which included creating resumes and cover letters and performing job searches. 100% of participants indicated that the program increased their skills to search online and improved their resume writing.
- In partnership with the MIC funded Australian Government's Settlement Grants Program and North Ringwood Neighbourhood House, facilitating a Certificate III in Individual Support (Aged Care) for 13 participants.
- In partnership with MIC's Road Safety for New Arrivals Driving Education Program funded by VicRoads, providing 55 people from refugee backgrounds with 10 subsidised driving lessons.
- Facilitating 24 information sessions covering a range of topics including water safety skills, Access and Support Program, aged care services, eligibility for the NDIS, study options and education and employment pathways, financial literacy, pedestrian safety, migration laws, buying a home and public safety. Over 200 people from each of the five communities attended the sessions in total. Feedback received at information sessions indicated that 100% of participants gained increased knowledge of services and how to access them.

As part of the program, MIC also provided critical support funds to asylum seekers living in the community on Bridging Visas, as well as people on Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV). In 2017/2018 MIC provided critical support to 19 individuals and families. The funds assisted with paying utility bills, providing supermarket vouchers, purchasing Myki and gym memberships to support physical and mental health.

In addition, two sessions were held with people seeking asylum and those on TPV and SHEVs in May and June 2018, for MIC to consult on the needs of individuals and families and how MIC can assist them. During the sessions, MIC also provided information about support services available to assist people seeking asylum and those on TPV and SHEVs, including health, employment, material aid and other services. Eleven people participated.

Strategic Engagement Coordinator

The Strategic Engagement Coordinator (SEC) commenced in January 2017 as part of the Strategic Engagement Coordinators Initiative lead by the Victorian Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division. A Strategic Engagement Coordinator was employed in 11 different regions across Victoria and a SEC position was offered to MIC, recognising MIC's lead role in the delivery of multicultural services in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

The SEC aims to strengthen community engagement, social inclusion, economic participation and settlement outcomes for people from refugee, migrant and/or asylum seeker backgrounds living in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne. The SEC role involves developing appropriate responses to redress emerging needs and challenges through creating partnerships, new initiatives and collaborations.

The first phase of the SEC Initiative involved researching the needs of refugee, migrant and asylum seeker communities across the seven Local Government Areas in the EMR and identifying specific gaps, challenges and service discrepancies.



The SEC established relationships with various stakeholders across the region including local councils, Victoria Police, employment services, AMEP providers, community legal centres, health service providers, Centrelink, Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) providers, Learn Locals, council libraries, Department of Health and Human Services, family violence services, health and housing services.

The SEC participated in over 20 network meetings, workshops, community consultations and events as a representative of MIC. Networks included the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee, Monash Multicultural Advisory Committee, Migrant Settlement Committee, Network of Asylum Seeker Agencies Victoria (NASAVIC), Monash Multicultural Settlement Services Network and Refugee Health Network.

Two consultation evenings were held with asylum seekers, TPV and SHEV holders to identify specific areas of need and provide localised service and eligibility information. Eleven people attended the sessions.

A sector response to SRSS changes was developed and coordinated in collaboration with EACH, Foundation House, Centrelink, East @ Work and local community organisations to identify the EMR's capacity to support asylum seekers with no income.

Processes for asylum seeker, TPV/SHEV holders to access Critical Support Funding through the MIC's Capacity Building and Participation program were established with Deakin University, Swinburne University, Foundation House and other local service providers. This has provided an ease of access to individuals and families seeking to access the critical support funds available.

Based on needs identified, the areas of focus for the SEC in 2018/2019 and beyond will include: enhancing access to English, Education and Employment opportunities by establishing a network of service providers in the EMR in partnership with settlement services; support for asylum seekers, TPV and SHEV holders through developing programs and services to better meet their needs; support for people from refugee backgrounds who have been in Australia or held their permanent visa for more than five years and are therefore no longer eligible for Australian Government funded settlement services; capacity building with service providers and local organisations to respond to the needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; and creating linkages between communities from Burma and employers in the Yarra Valley.

ROAD SAFETY FOR NEW ARRIVALS PROGRAMS

The road safety and driving programs increased participants' awareness of road safety and enabled the MIC to deliver key road safety messages to newly arrived refugees.

In 2017/2018, as part of the VicRoads Community Road Safety Partnership program, MIC delivered four programs of the Road Safety Driver Education Program, five sessions of the drink and drug driving prevention program "Looking After Our Mates" (LAOM), one, three day Bike Education program for children on riding bikes safely, five Child Car Restraints checking clinics and six presentations for newly arrived parents of preschool aged children on "Walking Safely with Children".

The Road Safety Driver Education Programs consisted of six, two-hour sessions delivered in partnership with Victoria Police utilising "Community Car Connections" and "Getting on the Road – a guide for new migrants" resources. Ninety-four people completed the program from Iranian, Arabic speaking, Hakha Chin, Mizo, Karen and Zomi/Zo backgrounds. All feedback from the programs was positive with 100% of participants indicating that the information they learnt would assist them to pass their driving test and drive safely on the roads.



Eighty participants who completed the Driver Education Program then received 10 subsidised driving lessons with a registered driving instructor of their choice – 25 were funded as part of the Community Safety Driving Program for Refugees and 55 were funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Capacity Building and Participation Program, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Program.

A total of five LAOM sessions were presented to eighty people from Arabic speaking, Hakha Chin, Iranian, Karen and Zomi/Zo backgrounds. Five bilingual presenters were trained in presenting the new version of LAOM developed by VicRoads. Feedback from participants who attended the sessions indicated a high level of satisfaction with the program overall as a way of learning about the dangers of drink and drug driving.

In 2017/2018, MIC held a three day bike education program for children to increase their riding skills, learn road rules and practice driving on a public cycling path. Fourteen children aged 8 to 14 years attended the three day Bike Education program during the school holidays. The sessions were held at METEC Driver Training Centre and included a BBQ lunch. The children were enthusiastic and enjoyed the activities. They learnt road rules and increased their cycling skills at METEC on the first day, walked to a cycling path to become familiar with the road conditions and considered what they should do if they were cycling on the road on Day 2 and cycled the cycling path on Day 3 in a safe manner so that they could gain some practical skills. The MIC then supplied each child with a bike and helmet which was donated to the MIC by two charities.



Participant receiving a new bicycle donated to MIC as part of the bike education program 2017

Five child car restraints checking days were held in 2017/2018 – three were organised for participants of the MIC's multicultural playgroups in Croydon, Ringwood and Mooroolbark and two with the Chinese grandparent's playgroup in Mitcham and Mount Waverley. One hundred and eleven (111) child restraints were checked and although improvements were reported from previous years, restraints were found to have twisted harnesses, straps fitted at incorrect shoulder height or incorrect seat paths, some missing the top tether strap and some used restraints that were over 10 years old or in a very poor condition. Adjustments were made as required and participants were advised of recommendations to replace restraints where necessary.

Six presentations were held of the "Walking Safely with Children" program for 56 participants including parents from refugee backgrounds with preschool aged children and grandparents from Chinese backgrounds who care for their preschool aged grandchildren. 100% of participants rated the program as excellent or very good in teaching them about how to walk safely with their children. Participants found it most useful and one participant stated in response to the question on how the program influenced her behaviour, that she would *"hold hands with my child, teach her to look in all directions and listen."*



MIC Community Safety Driving Program for Refugees

The MIC provides driving practice to adults over 21 years of age who completed the MIC Driving Education program and who have no relatives or friends on full Victorian Driving Licences that can help them gain on road practical driving time.

In 2017/2018, five people received driving practice sessions with a driving mentor and a total of more than 65 sessions were provided by four volunteers.



Community Safety Driving Program participant with Volunteer Driving Instructor

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

The Improving Mental Health Project aims to build the knowledge and skills of Pastors and community leaders from the Zomi and Hakha Chin communities to better understand and support members of their respective communities who are experiencing mental illness. Working in partnership with NEAMI, MIC held two consultations with Pastors and community leaders from each community to identify the level of knowledge about mental illness amongst each group and issues that they wanted more information about.

Following the consultations, two training programs were developed and delivered for Pastors and community leaders from each of the two community groups. The training covered information on how to identify when someone is experiencing a mental illness and how to distinguish between a mental illness and a shorter term problem (e.g. feeling sad), how to approach someone experiencing a mental illness and mental health services and when and how to access them. Five sessions were held with an average of nine Pastors and community leaders attending each session.

The project has identified some key areas for further work in this area, including a lack of understanding of mental health services and reducing the stigma that are barriers to successful referrals within these communities.

In 2018/2019 Victorian Transcultural Mental Health (VTMH) will commence an external evaluation of the project and the project coordinator will give a presentation and report about the project at two mental health forums.



ARABIC SPEAKING WOMEN'S GROUP

In 2017/2018, the Arabic Speaking Women's Social Group, funded by Manningham City Council's Community Grants was delivered to Arabic speaking women in the region. The program provided Arabic speaking women with social, recreational and information sharing opportunities.

A total of 25 women participated in the program. Ethnicities of the women attending included Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian, representing diverse religions from the Christian Catholic Maronite, Muslim Sunni and Shiite faiths.

Twenty-one, two hour sessions were held. Activities included tai chi, yoga, strength building, and gentle aerobic exercise. Guest speakers included a dietician, physiotherapist, podiatrist, and a lawyer from Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) talking about powers of attorney, wills, and how to access the services of ECLC. Outings included a try-out session at a local women's-only gym, and a picnic in a local park.

A reduction in the loneliness and isolation of participants was an outcome of the program. All of the participants reported greater sense of well-being, and increased knowledge of local services, health and legal issues as a result of attending the group. Participants reported 100% satisfaction with the program, and an interest in being involved in similar future programs.

PROGRAMS FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Community Visitors Scheme (CVS)

Funded by the Department of Health, the Community Visitors Scheme Expansion Program provides regular one-to-one visits matching culture/language appropriate Volunteer Community Visitors to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) recipients of Home Care Packages living in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne and who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing social isolation or loneliness and groups of two or more CALD residents in an Australian Government subsidised aged care facility who have been identified by their aged care provider as needing companionship.

In 2017/2018, 37 CALD Home Care Package recipients received MIC community volunteer visits under the program and 26 CALD residents living in Australian Government subsidised aged care homes.

MIC currently has 84 volunteers comprising 31 languages including Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Hakha Chin, Hindi, Hokkien, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Khmer, Malay, Mandarin, Mizo, Nuer, Serbian, Singhalese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Urdu, Vietnamese and Zomi.



Access and Support Program (A&S)

In 2017/2018 MIC received funding from the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and from the Victorian Government under the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) to deliver the Access & Support (A&S) Program.

The A&S Program provides short term, individual support for people who need help to access services so they can stay living at home. A&S works with older people, younger people with disabilities and their carers who have difficulties accessing Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP), Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and other services due to their diverse needs. Diverse needs relate to language, culture, religious background, dementia, financial disadvantage, LGBTIQ identification, homeless or at risk of homelessness, Veterans, care leavers and parents separated from children by forced adoption or removal.

The MIC's A&S Program is one of approximately 50 similar programs in Victoria and one of the 7 in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR).

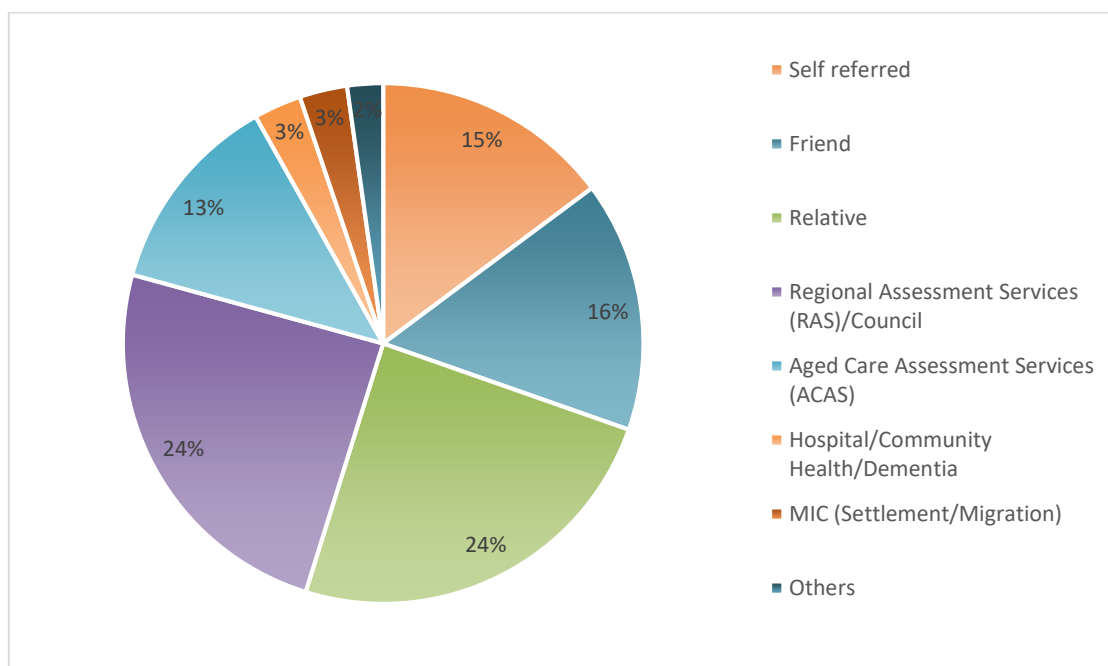
Direct Client Services

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) referrals and services:

In 2017/18, 220 clients were assisted under the A&S CHSP.

One hundred and thirty-five (135) new referrals were received under CHSP. Twenty (15%) referrals were self-referrals through promotion of the program to groups and assertive outreach, 54 (40%) from family members and relatives, and 61 (45%) from other agencies such as Regional Assessment Services, Aged Care Assessment Services and other community services.

Figure 7: Access and Support Program CHSP new referral sources 2017/2018

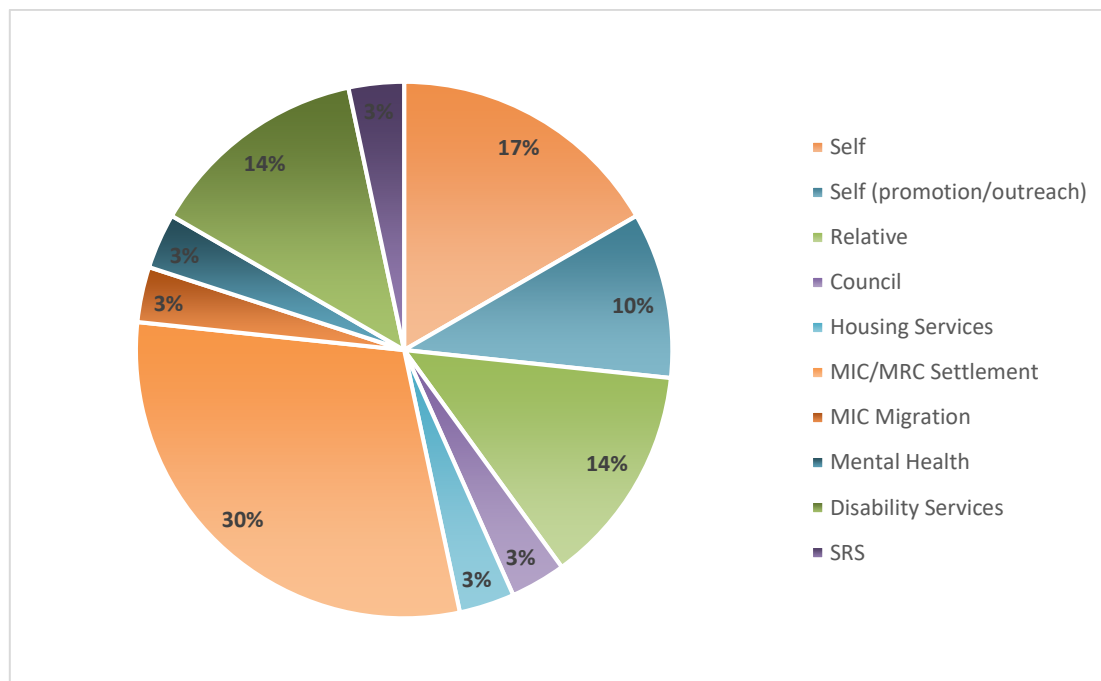


Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) referral source:

In 2017/2018, 37 clients were assisted under the HACC PYP program.

Thirty (30) new referrals were received under HACC PYP program. Twelve (41%) referrals were self-referrals by clients themselves or by their relatives, 12 (41%) from MIC's settlement/migration programs and 6 (18%) from organisations such as mental health services and disability support services.

Figure 8: Access and Support Program HACC PYP new referral sources 2017/2018



Diversity Issues

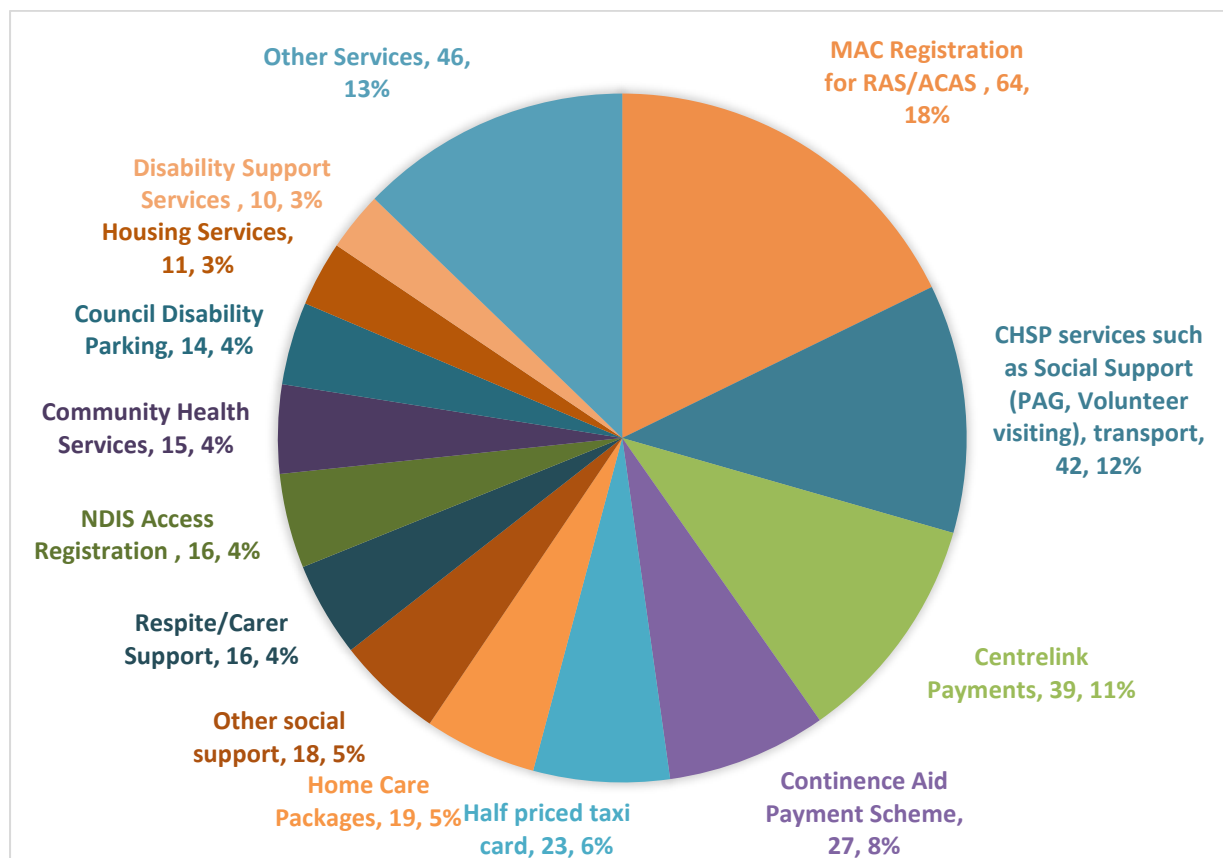
The A&S program assisted clients experiencing difficulties to access CHSP and HACC/NDIS services due to their diversities e.g. CALD and dementia, CALD financial hardship, CALD at risk or experiencing homelessness, disability, CALD and disability. Many of these clients had complex needs and multiple diversities.

Outgoing referrals and services accessed by clients:

A total of 360 referrals were made to external services for clients under both CHSP and HACC PYP programs. These included 64 (18%) to My Aged Care (MAC) for registration and assessment, 42 (12%) to CHSP services such as domestic assistance, social support and allied health services, 39 (11%) to Centrelink, 26 (7%) to disability support services and registration to access National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), 19 (5%) to home care package providers, 11 (3%) to housing support services and 46 (13%) to other services such as other social support groups, applications for the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program, disability parking permits or the Continence Aids Payment Scheme.



Figure 9: Access and Support Program Outgoing referrals CHSP and HACC PYP



Achievements of the A&S Program in 2017/2018:

The following services are accessed through the help of MIC's Access & Support Program in 2017/2018:

- 39 clients were registered with My Aged Care (MAC)
- 74 clients were assessed by the Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS).
- 22 clients were assessed by the Regional Assessment Services (RAS)
- 28 clients received Commonwealth Home Care Packages
- 4 clients were helped to register and access NDIS
- 12 clients were helped through the NDIS planning process
- 36 clients received allied health services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy etc.
- 28 clients accessed other non-council CHSP/HACC social support services such as Planning Activity Groups (PAG), Volunteer Visiting and Pet Pal programs and Volunteer Transport programs
- 27 clients received Centrelink Payments such as the Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment and Allowances



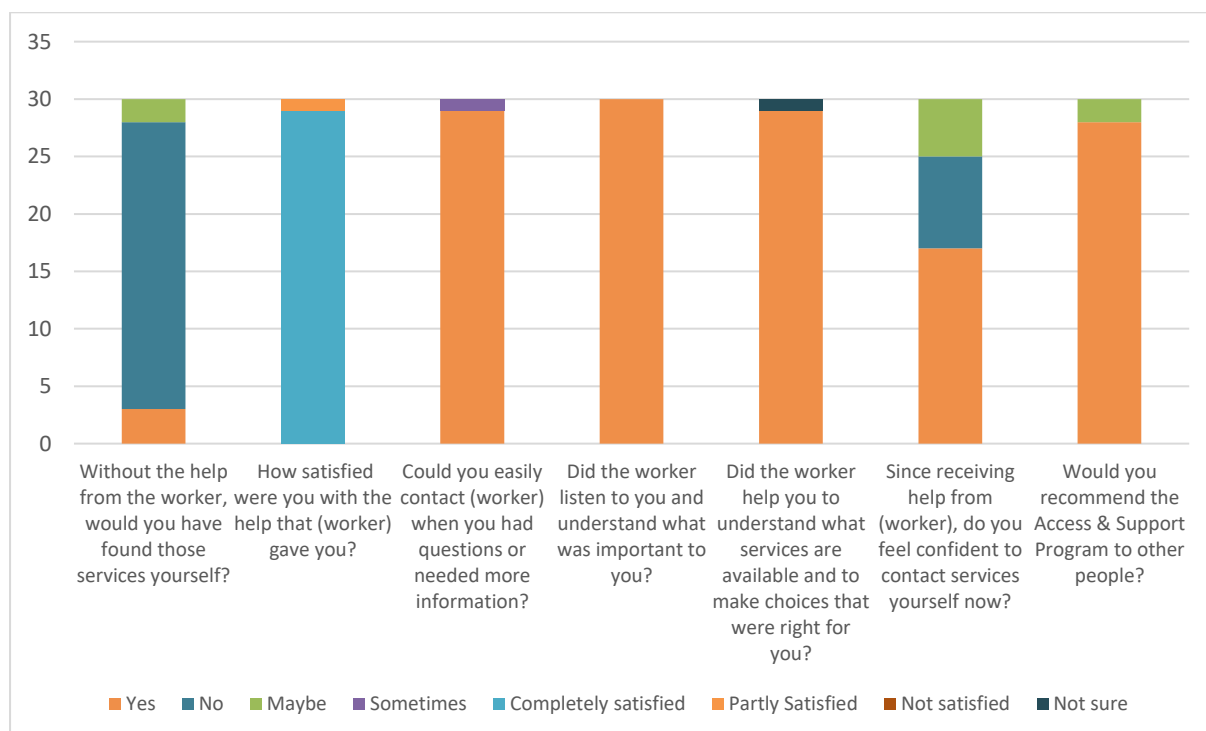
- 19 clients accessed Council CHSP services such as home care, personal care, respite, meals on wheels, transport services, shopping assistance and home maintenance
- 12 clients were assisted to link in with appropriate housing support services
- 10 clients were approved for the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP)
- 10 clients received assistance from disability support services
- 13 clients received respite and carer support services
- 20 clients received Continence Aids Payments
- 10 clients obtained a Council Disability Parking Permit
- 5 clients received dementia support services
- 72 clients received other services such as counselling, power of attorney, English language programs, exercise programs, church volunteer gardening services, senior citizen's clubs, and other social support programs.

Client Feedback

The A&S Program surveys clients who have exited the program by telephone or emails/post (if requested). Telephone interpreters were used to receive feedback from non-English speaking clients. In 2017/2018, 30 clients completed the survey.

Feedback indicated that 98% of clients were completely satisfied with the help they received from A&S and would recommend the service to other people.

Figure 10: Access and Support Program Client Feedback Summary 2017/2018



Some of the comments received from clients included:

- *The MIC should reach out to the Chinese community more as not many are aware of such services*
- *I am extremely satisfied with the current services*
- *The service is excellent. I have no other suggestions.*
- *The only thing is to be more "visual" - let more people know about the services. Maybe put information up in the community centres, etc. Migrants don't know about the services.*
- *MIC is providing a great service*
- *Keep on the good work. I also like to have the option of calling back and ask for advice about our case to the same advisor who knows our case.*
- *MIC should advertise in the Chinese Newspaper as many Chinese migrants rely on these papers for information*
- *More help needed to fill out forms. Although I know English quite well but a lot of people don't and they need more help filling paper work.*
- *The worker did a very good job so I cannot think of anything else to improve*
- *My quality of life has improved. I'm able to exercise and access services that I require.*
- *The worker has helped contact the relevant organisations for me*
- *The services enabled my mother to travel via taxi vouchers, paid my mother's herbal treatments through the homecare packages*
- *My quality of life improved since receiving help from the worker. She has provided much encouragement for me to continue caring for my husband*
- *I am very thankful that the worker was there when I needed help. Before I had to take my mother in-law around to hospital appointments and sometimes no interpreters were available and wouldn't let me interpret. Back and forth a few times. The worker called the hospital and made things so much easier. I was stressed and she made my life easier. It was good to have someone who listens and say you're doing a great job.*
- *The services have helped us to access various services and made our lives easier*
- *Without the services my parents will not be able to access residential care services. Thanks for your excellent services.*
- *The worker has helped me with Centrelink matters and she was very helpful referring me to social groups as I have friends to talk to there, unlike at home*
- *The worker has introduced me to someone to help me find housing, provided information on legal aid, referrals to the Migrant Resource Centre and Vision Australia*
- *Life at home is a little easier now with some home help support*
- *There were information and services that I wasn't aware of but because of the worker's help I was able to get the help I needed. The situation has improved for my child.*



Non Direct Client Work

Promotion

In 2017/2018, the A&S Program continued to be promoted to both community members and service providers in the EMR. Promotional activities undertaken included formal and informal presentations about My Aged Care, CHSP, HACC PYP and A&S to seniors groups, participation at Expos, and outreach to older people at community events.

Secondary consultations and working with the services system

Part of the A&S Program role is to assist other service providers with information and advice about working with a particular community group or individual to provide the best possible service; and to assist other services to improve their services to meet the needs of people with diversity needs. In 2017/2018 this work included:

- Information and secondary consultations to agencies including community health services, Aged Care Assessment Services, Regional Assessment Services, councils, Home Care Package providers, CHSP service providers, disability support services, carer support services, public and community housing support services, neighbourhood houses, hospital social workers, aged care homes, NDIS providers, and mental health services such as Partners in Recovery (PIR)
- Participating in the Resident Opportunities After Reform project aimed to assist SRS residents to access HACC PYP, CHSP, mental health, allied health, ACAS, home care packages and other aged care services. The project ended in June 2018.
- Working with CHSP service providers to establish multicultural social support groups.

Fundraising and Donations

Settlement Support Fund

In 2003/2004 the MIC established a Trust Fund, the Settlement Support Fund, for our work in supporting migrants and refugees in the region and in particular recently arrived refugee families. Donations to the fund are tax deductible. In 2017/2018 \$2,872 was raised through fundraising for the Settlement Support Fund. Fundraising activities included a Walk-A-Thon event at Yarra Bend and a fundraising BBQ at Bunnings. 100% of all funds raised went directly into supporting individuals, families and young people from refugee backgrounds who are new to Australia and living in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Support was provided to families in the form of food vouchers and assistance to meet unexpected costs.

Thank you to all who joined us for the MIC Walk-A-Thon event as well as who donated to help needy individuals and families. Keep posted for more fundraising events in the future, or donate at <http://miceastmelb.com.au/get-involved/donate/>.



*Participants at the MIC Walk-a-Thon
Fundraising Event April 2018*



Hannah Kinross Fund – Sports Sponsorship

In August 2009 Hannah Kinross, a MIC staff member was tragically killed in a plane crash whilst preparing to walk the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. In Hannah's memory the MIC and her family established the 'Hannah Kinross Fund' that is used to assist young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to participate in sports and other healthy activities. In 2017/2018, \$12,348 was raised for the Hannah Kinross Fund. A large portion of this was made up of a donation received in the form of a Centenary Grant from the Commonwealth Bank in North Ringwood.

In 2017/2018 the Hannah Kinross Fund assisted 8 young people to join local sports clubs, enhancing their settlement through providing an opportunity for them to participate in social and recreational activities with other young people in their local area. In most cases, without the help of the Hannah Kinross Fund, these young people would not be able to participate in sporting activities due to the high cost of fees and lack of understanding about navigating the sporting system.

For more information on the Hannah Kinross Fund or to learn more about donations, please visit <http://miceastmelb.com.au/get-involved/donate/>.



MIC Manager Jessica Bishop with MIC Youth Workers Randika Wijekoon and Jessica Thompson accept a donation from the Commonwealth Bank for the Hannah Kinross Fund March 2018

Representation on Advisory Groups

The MIC provided information and advice on the needs of the client group through attending meetings, making presentations and participating on networks. These included, Migrant Settlement Committee, Knox City Council Multicultural Advisory Committee, Monash Council Multicultural Advisory Committee, Communities Council On Ethnic Issues (Eastern Region) Refugee Health Forum Working Group, Yarra Valley Community Advisory Group, Together for Equality and Respect Leadership Group, Eastern Metropolitan Region Alliance, Outer Eastern Refugee Health Network, Cultural Partnerships Reference Group, Pre-school Participation Working Group, Best Start Executive, Whitehorse Youth Issues Network, Eastern Homelessness Network and Roadsafes Eastern Metro.

Assistance to Agencies

In 2017/2018, MIC staff delivered 17 workshops to local agencies to promote the service needs of recently arrived client groups and to discuss best practice service delivery for this demographic. Over 520 staff from local services attended the workshops.

MIC organised and delivered 3 forums for local service providers, including a Gender Equity Forum in partnership with the Communities Council on Ethnic Issues (Eastern Region), a forum on Communities from Burma settling in the Eastern Region and a forum on supporting refugee families experiencing family violence, in partnership with the Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC). Over 134 staff from local services attended the forums.



Assistance was also provided to support services work with individual clients. Work in this area included providing information on social and support groups for different communities and where to access bilingual professionals.

MIC distributes a bi-monthly newsletter titled “Eastern Multicultural News” to over 400 email addresses. The newsletter provides information on upcoming MIC programs as well as on new initiatives for CALD communities in the Eastern Region.

Volunteers

Funded by the Australian Government, Department of Social Services Settlement Grants Program, the MIC's Volunteer Program provides opportunities to assist eligible migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants to successfully settle in the Eastern Region of Melbourne. The MIC volunteers support newly arrived people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to become more self-reliant and help them gain life skills to participate more fully in Australian life. Such interaction offers MIC clients opportunities for cross cultural interchange on a personal level, whilst providing much needed practical support and skill development.



Volunteer Social Event 2017

In 2017/2018, 84 volunteers supported the work of MIC. This assistance included helping clients to access local recreational programs and services, public transport orientation, attending medical and other appointments, one to one tutoring, driving mentoring, as well as a wide range of group focussed MIC activities such as primary and secondary school homework support programs, playgroups, holiday programs, swimming programs, “Cool Kids and Rainbows” therapeutic children’s programs, sporting events, group information sessions and administrative roles.

In addition, two training sessions were provided to support volunteers in undertaking their roles at MIC. The first training focussed specifically on MIC Homework Support Programs and the second training focussed on cultural awareness and included a presentation about Hakha Chin culture.

On Saturday 25th November 2017, MIC’s annual Volunteer Social Event, in conjunction with Maroondah City Council and Eastland, was held at Realm in Ringwood Town Square. This public event included a celebration of cultures from Burma through interactive, art and cultural displays, as well as community performances. Twenty MIC volunteers were officially acknowledged for their support of MIC’s programs with a Certificate of Appreciation awards ceremony presented by the Mayor of Maroondah Council, Mayor Nora Lamont. MIC staff, volunteers and their families, council staff, as well as members of the general public were present to witness the awards ceremony, and to enjoy the cultural displays and performances.



Students

In 2017/2018 MIC supported 23 students to undertake a placement as part of their University or TAFE course. This included 18 students who completed a placement as part of their Diploma of Community Services, 1 student who was studying a Certificate IV in Youth Work, 1 Bachelor of Social Work student and 2 Masters Degree research students who each undertook evaluations of MIC programs as part of their research placement.

In addition, MIC also supported 6 Secondary School students to undertake a one-week placement as part of their Year 10 Work Experience. MIC thank all students for their contribution to the organisation

The Year Ahead

Direct Client Services

In 2018/2019 MIC will continue to provide services to individuals, families and communities from CALD backgrounds residing in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. Our work will include services to assist recently arrived humanitarian entrants and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to successfully settle in the region.

We will provide assistance to people who face barriers to accessing the Commonwealth funded Community Home Support Programme and State Government funded disability services.

We will continue to provide migration advice, and an outreach service at four local Secondary Colleges as well as at Swinburne TAFE, Croydon Campus.

We will offer employment focussed casework services for adults and young people to assist clients to secure employment or access education and training.

We will continue to provide support to women from CALD communities who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing family violence.

We will recruit volunteers to assist families and individuals to successfully settle in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

We will recruit volunteers to visit socially isolated older people from CALD communities who are in receipt of Commonwealth funded aged care packages or who are living in residential care.

Services for Migrant and Refugee Communities

MIC will continue to work with newly arrived communities including people from the Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, Karen, Mizo, Zo and Zomi communities of Burma, as well as communities from Iran, Syria, Pakistan and China, amongst others. Information sessions on a number of topics will be held, including financial literacy, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, parenting, the education system in Victoria and employment related topics.

We will offer driving programs and subsidised driving lessons to recently arrived refugees with low English proficiency.

We will continue to offer specific life skills programs including healthy lifestyles programs, financial literacy programs, excursions and activities to increase civic participation and increase access to and confidence with transport.



We will facilitate two women's group to support women who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing family violence.

We will facilitate three playgroups for parents from multicultural backgrounds and their children and four playgroups for grandparents from Chinese backgrounds and their pre-school aged grandchildren.

We will hold family relationships programs for couples and/or men and women to strengthen their relationships and increase their understanding of gender equity in the prevention of violence against women and children.

We will facilitate Respectful Relationships Programs in secondary schools, targeting young people aged 12 to 18 years from refugee backgrounds to increase their knowledge of respectful relationships within an Australian cultural and legal context and challenge their traditional beliefs about the roles of men and women that reinforce gender inequality, male domination and violence against women.

We will hold a number of programs specifically for young people and children to assist in their settlement in Australia, including six weekly homework support programs, two Cool Kids and Rainbows programs, peer support programs for young people and a range of other programs and services.

We will continue to hold the Migrant Communities Network to assist us to identify the service needs of people from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds with low English language proficiency and to develop and implement strategies to meet identified needs.

We will assist refugee communities to strengthen their ability to support their community members through a range of activities including governance support and leadership training.

We will introduce members of the Hakha Chin community in Yarra Ranges to new sporting and healthy activities to promote health and wellbeing.

Services to Agencies

In 2018/2019, the MIC will continue to support local agencies to assist them to provide services that better meet the needs of CALD individuals, families and communities. Our work in this area will include delivering training sessions on different cultures, MIC services and general cultural awareness training. We will also hold forums on the needs of our clients and strategies to meet these needs.

We will continue to provide advice to agencies to assist them to provide services to CALD communities as well as to update our webpage with information and resources to support agencies to plan and deliver culturally sensitive services.



Directors' Report

Your Directors present this report on the entity for the financial year ended 30th June 2018.

Directors

The names of each person who has been a Director during the year and to date of this report are:

Mr Peter McPhee (Chairperson)

Mr Akbar Akbarzadeh

Ms Viviane Chemali (Resigned May 2018)

Mr Gaetano (Tony) Daquino (Resigned April 2018)

Mr Sudharma Hiremath

Mr Kai Leung

Mr Mark Melican

Mr Tony Robinson

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Principal Activities

The principal activity of the Company during the financial year was to provide services for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to support their settlement and strengthen their equity of access to the services and opportunities that Australia has to offer.

Short term objectives

The entity's short term objectives are to:

- Deliver post-arrival services relevant to new migrants and refugees in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, to ensure effective local settlement and orientation.
- Provide poverty support and emergency relief programs to migrant families and individuals suffering financial crisis, destitution, misfortune, helplessness and sickness.

Long term objectives

The entity's long term objectives are to:

- Enhance direct provision of settlement services to migrants in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.
- Enhance existing links with and between a range of service providing agencies in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.
- Identify service gaps and/or shortfalls in relation to migrants by mainstream agencies within the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne and to provide advice and assistance related to appropriate service delivery in the development of new, alternative or additional services for migrants to bridge gaps and shortfalls.



- Assess duplication of service within all areas of migrant settlement and to facilitate an effective network grid for the minimisation of duplicate services.
- Investigate technology-based solutions for the provision of information on services available within the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne to the wider community.

Strategies

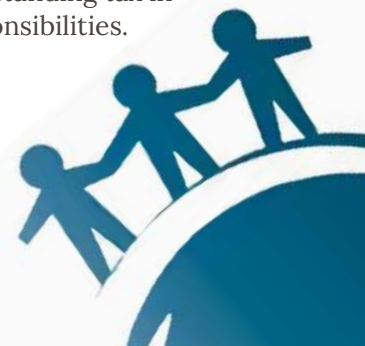
To achieve these objectives, the entity has adopted the following strategies:

- The entity strives to attract and retain grant funding from all levels of government and philanthropic trusts and foundations in order to resource services for client groups.
- The entity has established reporting arrangements to ensure that the governance structure is well informed for monitoring, planning and decision-making.
- The entity strives to attract and retain quality staff and volunteers who are committed to working with people from diverse backgrounds, and this is evidenced by low staff turnover. The entity believes that attracting and retaining quality staff and volunteers will assist with the success of the entity in both the short and long term.
- Staff and volunteers are committed to providing the best possible outcomes on behalf of people from diverse backgrounds with whom the organisation is involved. This is evidenced by the success of new and existing programs in support of people from refugee, migrant and other diverse backgrounds who have accessed the service. Committed staff and volunteers allow the entity the ability to engage in continuous improvement.
- The entity's staff and volunteers strive to meet consistent standards of best practice and provide clear expectations of professional accountabilities and responsibilities to all stakeholders. This is evidenced by the performance of staff and volunteers against these accountabilities, and ensures staff are operating in the best interests of people from diverse backgrounds and the entity.
- The entity builds partnerships with a range of community stakeholders, and this is evidenced by ongoing support of the entity's projects and initiatives. The entity ensures community stakeholders understand and are supportive of the objectives of the entity through ongoing communication and education.

How the entity's principal activities during the year assisted in achieving the entity's objectives

Examples of activities that assisted in achieving the entity's objectives included:

- Settlement services were provided to individuals on over 5630 occasions to over 1281 individuals. People accessing these services were born in over 30 different countries. The largest numbers of people contacting the service were from Burma, Iran and China.
- Access and Support services were provided to 250 people aged over 65 years to assist them to access aged care services and 37 people aged under 65 years who had a disability to help them to access disability services, including accessing the NDIS.
- Private rental housing was secured for 54 families.
- One hundred information sessions were presented to newly arrived community groups from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds. Topics covered in the presentations included nutrition and diet, pedestrian safety, financial management, budgeting and saving, Australian democracy, levels of government and voting, wills and power of attorney, understanding tax in Australia, Police and policing, Centrelink payments and tenancy rights and responsibilities.



- Six homework support programs were offered on a weekly basis during the school terms to assist students with their homework and to help them develop positive study skills. Programs were held at the Croydon, Ringwood (Realm) and Mooroolbark libraries for secondary school students and at three primary schools in Croydon, Ringwood and Mooroolbark. An average of 120 students attended the programs on a weekly basis. The groups were supported by over 20 volunteers.
- Three weekly playgroups were held for parents and their preschool aged children with an average of 73 parents and children attending each week.
- Two fortnightly playgroups for grandparents from Chinese backgrounds and their pre-school aged grandchildren with an average of 27 grandparents and children attending fortnightly.
- Holding a range of programs and activities specifically targeting young people from newly arrived refugee and migrant backgrounds aged 12 to 25 years including young men's and young women's groups, a youth employment program, youth driving program, young leaders programs, a cyber safety camp, "come and try" sports programs, a "hangout" program targeting young people who were disengaged from education and/or employment and holiday programs.
- Visiting over 35 socially isolated older people living in residential care or at home with the support of Commonwealth funded aged care packages.
- Two eight-week programs were delivered for women from Iranian backgrounds who were experiencing or at risk of experiencing family violence – an average of six women attended each session.
- Working with six refugee and migrant community associations to assist them to build their capacity to support members of their communities. This work involved providing leadership training, support to complete funding submissions, support to hold their Annual General Meetings and community consultations, support to plan and deliver community and cultural celebrations and events such as sports tournaments, as well as developing and delivering programs and information sessions in partnership with each community group.
- Holding two family relationships programs for couples, then for the men and women separately with an average of nine couples attending each session.
- Holding three respectful relationships programs in schools for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- Eighty-four volunteers assisted MIC clients during the year.

Performance measures

The entity measures its performance both qualitatively and quantitatively. Examples of measures used include:

- Number of individual clients who receive services
- Number of contacts between clients and the entity's staff
- Number of individuals attending information sessions held by the entity
- Feedback from clients on their satisfaction with the services provided by the entity



MIC Directors

Mr Aliakbar Akbarzadeh

Appointed: 01/04/02, reappointed on 01/04/05, 01/04/2008, 01/04/2011, 01/04/2014 and 01/04/2017

Aliakbar is Professor and Leader of the Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Group in the School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, RMIT University. Aliakbar has been actively involved in community activities for over 30 years. Aliakbar was a founding member (1982) of the Iranian Cultural School in East Doncaster where he was also a volunteer teacher for 15 years. He has served two years as the Vice President of the Iranian Society of Victoria and presently is the Vice President of the House of Persia Community and Cultural Centre. For the last 18 years Aliakbar has been a volunteer with Do Care (Wesley Mission) looking after isolated elderly people.

Ms Viviane Chemali

Appointed: 01/04/2017, Resigned: 03/05/2018

Experienced in policy, community development and stakeholder management, Viviane has worked for the Department of Education and Early Childhood as Senior Policy Officer, providing policy advice and managing programs to improve students' career transition to further education, training and employment. She also worked as Career and Assessment Advisor for newly arrived skilled migrants and on the design, management and implementation of career related development programs for the tertiary sector. Viviane has also lectured and tutored in political sciences and languages in the tertiary sector.

Mr Gaetano (Tony) Daquino

Appointed: 01/04/2017, Resigned: 17/04/2018

Tony has worked in the Eastern Region for over 20 years. He is currently the Managing Lawyer of the Outer Eastern Regional Office of Legal Aid. Tony has extensive experience in working with people who are disadvantaged. He has served on a number of Boards including Connections and Eastern Community Legal Service. Tony's academic qualifications include a Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Diploma in Innovation and Service Management.

Mr Sudharma Hiremath

Appointed: 01/04/2017

Sudharma has extensive experience in managing corporate and operational services in both the commercial and not for profit sectors, and has worked across three continents and has key interests in the areas of housing/homelessness, domestic violence and the settlement of new migrants. Sudharma's strengths include strategy, corporate governance, risk & compliance, and operations. Sudharma's academic qualifications include an Executive Master of Business Administration, a Post Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance and a Bachelor's Degree in Alternative Medicine. Currently Sudharma is the Corporate Services Manager at Launch Housing and is an Associate Member of the Governance Institute of Australia (AGIA) and Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA).



Mr Kai Leung, Deputy Chairperson

Appointed: 01/04/2014, reappointed 01/04/2017

Kai currently practises law as a partner in a Melbourne-based law firm. Before becoming a lawyer, he spent more than 10 years managing corporate services as CFO of public-listed and private companies. He has a strong interest in the successful settlement of migrants and refugees. Kai read law at Monash University, holds an MBA and a BBus, and is a Fellow of CPA Australia.

Mr Mark Melican

Appointed: 01/03/2015, reappointed 01/04/2017

Mark is the Principal of Blackburn English Language School which has 3 campuses one in Blackburn, a second in Croydon North and a third in Wodonga. Mark has over 25 years' experience in teaching with a focus on teaching English as a second language.

Mr Peter McPhee, Chairperson

Appointed: 01/04/2005 and reappointed 01/04/2008, 01/04/2011, 01/04/2014 and 01/04/2017

Peter has extensive experience in managing community based organisations. Peter was a director of the MIC's first board; he was a director of Vasey RSL Care and RSL Veterans and Widows Trust. Peter is a former Chairman of the Australia Day Council (Vic) Inc. and an active member of Rotary.

Mr Tony Robinson, Secretary

Appointed: 01/04/2016, reappointed 01/04/2017

Prior to joining the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Tony worked in politics for 20 years. Starting as an electorate officer, he served as private secretary to the then opposition leader John Brumby before entering the Victorian Parliament as the member for Mitcham in 1997. Over 13 years he served as Parliamentary Secretary, Parliamentary Committee Chair, Cabinet Secretary and between 2007 and 2010 Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Assisting with Veterans. As a Minister Tony was involved in major reforms to the state's liquor and gaming industries as well as assisting with the establishment of the new Australian Consumer Law and the transfer of credit responsibility to the Commonwealth.

Company Secretary

Mr Tony Robinson was appointed Company Secretary on 19th April 2017.



Meetings of Directors

During the financial year, 11 meetings of Directors were held. Attendances by each Director were as follows:

	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Mr Akbar Akbarzadeh	11	9
Ms Viviane Chemali	9	4
Mr Kai Leung	11	11
Mr Tony Daquino	8	3
Mr Sudharma Hiremath	11	10
Mr Mark Melican	11	11
Mr Peter McPhee	11	11
Mr Tony Robinson	11	8

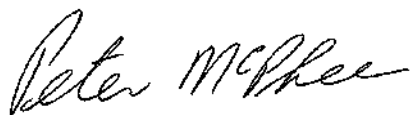
Member's Guarantee

The company is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the company. At 30th June 2018 the number of members was 31. The total members' guarantee amounted to \$310 (2017: \$340).

Auditor's Independence Declaration

The lead auditor's independence declaration for the year 30th June 2018 has been received and can be found at the end of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Mr. Peter McPhee, Chairperson

Dated this 26th day of September 2018



Statement of Comprehensive Income for the Year Ended 30 June 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
REVENUE FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES		
Department of Social Services	1,622,853	1,646,794
DIBP - IAAAS	15,070	-4,411
DHHS	396,385	346,881
City of Boroondara	-	2,500
City of Monash	2,314	1,801
City of Whitehorse	646	804
City of Manningham	6,824	11,801
Maroondah City Council	7,500	2,604
VMC - OMAC	292,395	176,535
Settlement Support Fund	5,922	7,176
Vic Roads	18,124	26,707
Yarra Ranges Council	3,296	8,065
Interest	7,652	12,352
Other income	77,218	15,953
TOTAL REVENUE	2,456,199	2,255,562



**Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the Year Ended 30 June 2018**

EXPENSES	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Employee Benefits Expenses		
Professional Development	8,319	8,158
Recruitment Staff	870	194
Superannuation	169,173	151,884
Wages & Salaries	1,678,989	1,485,997
Holiday Pay	135,518	122,689
Work Cover	24,507	21,562
Long Service Leave	14,049	64,161
Total Employee Benefits Expenses	2,031,424	1,854,647
 Depreciation Expenses	 13,297	 12,273
 Other Expenses from Ordinary Activities		
Audit	11,400	4,379
Board Expenses	1,256	429
Bank Charges	745	713
Computer System (excl capital expenses)	8,711	10,823
Dues & Subscriptions	2,291	2,743
Office Equipment	7,624	12,408
Insurances	5,917	6,384
Motor Vehicle Expenses	21,758	20,402
Photocopier	3,914	2,641
Postage	2,388	2,043
Rent & Utilities – Office	66,849	70,537
Stationery	16,510	12,081



Telephone	22,143	19,598
Service Delivery - Interpreting & Translating	14,541	12,983
Service Delivery - Printing	3,170	1,877
Service Delivery - Volunteer Expenses	4,416	3,251
Venue Hire	19,173	32,719
Facilitators/Speakers Payment	45,633	28,191
Catering/Refreshments	24,733	28,579
Transport Subsidies/Expenses	2,721	11,851
Other Expenses	48,349	59,392
Total Other Expenses	359,273	388,207
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,403,994	2,255,127
Current Year Surplus	52,205	435
Other Comprehensive Income	0	0
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	52,205	435

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



**Statement of Financial Position
for the Year Ended 30 June 2018**

ASSETS	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Current Assets		
Cash On Hand		
Cheque Account NAB 56-094-8094	1,199,048	329,387
Settlement Support Fund 6511	6,732	5,413
Business Maximiser Acc 4893	15,933	445,598
Investment Cheque Acc 82-335-9479	-	178,729
Petty Cash	718	428
Total Cash on Hand	1,222,431	959,555
Investments		
Term Deposit NAB 57-014-1323	100,000	100,000
Term Deposit NAB 13-613-4593	200,000	200,000
Term Deposit NAB 82-632-8838	20,000	20,000
Receivables	4,308	9,817
Total Current Assets	1,546,739	1,289,372
Fixed Assets		
Computer Equipment		
Computer Equipment at Cost	62,142	62,142
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(62,142)	(62,142)
Total Computer Equipment	-	-



Furniture & Fixtures

Furniture & Fixtures at Cost	24,259	24,259
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(19,647)	(18,783)
Total Furniture and Fixtures	4,612	5,477

Fax & Photocopier Equipment

Fax/Photocopier Equipment at Cost	9,000	9,000
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(4,500)	(2,250)
Total Fax & Photocopier	4,500	6,750

Office equipment

Office Equipment at Cost	-	672
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-	(672)
Total Office equipment	-	-

Motor Vehicle

Motor Vehicle at Cost	62,788	55,788
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(25,872)	(15,690)
Total Motor Vehicle	36,916	40,098
Total Fixed Assets	46,028	52,325

TOTAL ASSETS	1,592,767	1,341,697
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**Statement of Financial Position
for the Year Ended 30 June 2018**

LIABILITIES	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Current Liabilities		
Trade Creditors	45,821	67,284
Grants in Advance	592,212	482,565
FBT Salary Sacrifice	2,348	7,404
GST Liabilities	80,428	2,051
Holiday Pay Accrual	91,546	71,157
Superannuation	49,473	41,971
Long Service Leave	326,885	327,457
PAYG Withholding	22,098	17,035
Provision – Auditor	6,700	-
Provision – Recruitment	1,586	1,586
Total Current Liabilities	1,219,097	1,018,510
Non-Current Liabilities		
Long Service Leave	31,381	33,103
Total Non-Current Liabilities	31,381	33,103
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,250,478	1,051,613
NET ASSETS	342,289	290,084



EQUITY		
	290,084	289,649
Retained Earnings		
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	52,205	435
TOTAL EQUITY	342,289	290,084

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**Statement of Changes in Equity
for the Year Ended 30 June 2018**

	\$ Retained Earnings	\$ Total
Balance 1 July 2016	289,649	289,649
Surplus for the year	435	435
Balance 30 June 2017	290,084	290,084
Balance 1 July 2017	290,084	290,084
Surplus for the year	52,205	52,205
Balance 30 June 2018	342,289	342,289

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements



**Statement of Cash flow
for the Year Ended 30 June 2018**

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Cash Flow from Operating Activities			
Receipts from Government Grants		2,333,465	2,192,037
Miscellaneous Income		120,591	87,713
Interest Received		7,652	12,352
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(2,191,832)	(1,990,813)
Net cash (used in)/generated from operating activities	6	269,876	301,289
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Proceeds from sale of Property, Plant & Equipment		-	10,955
Purchases of Property, Plant & Equipment		(7,000)	(9,000)
Net cash used in investing activities		(7,000)	1,955
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		262,876	303,244
Cash at beginning of period		959,555	656,311
Cash at end of Financial Year		1,222,431	959,555

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

General information

The financial statements cover Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited as an individual entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited's functional and presentation currency.

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited is a not-for-profit unlisted public company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Its registered office and principal place of business is:

Suite 2, 27 Bank Street

Box Hill VIC 3128

A description of the nature of the company's operations and its principal activities are included in the directors' report, which is not part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were authorised for issue, in accordance with a resolution of directors, on 21st November 2018. The directors have the power to amend and reissue the financial statements.

Note 1. Significant accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

In the directors' opinion, the company is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements.

These are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 requirements to prepare financial statements to the members of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited. The directors have determined that the accounting policies adopted are appropriate to meet the needs of the members of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements specified by the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 'Presentation of Financial Statements', AASB 107 'Statement of Cash Flows', AASB 108 'Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors', AASB 1031 'Materiality', AASB 1048 'Interpretation of Standards' and AASB 1054 'Australian Additional Disclosures', as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities that qualify for and apply differential reporting concessions.



Historical cost convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for, where applicable, the revaluation of available-for-sale financial assets, financial assets and liabilities at fair value through profit or loss, investment properties, certain classes of property, plant and equipment and derivative financial instruments.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the company's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed in note 2.

a) Revenue

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when the entity obtains control of the grant and it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before it is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

At financial year end, all grant receipts unspent are recognised as grants in advance.

Donations and bequests are recognised as revenue when received.

Interest revenue is recognised when received.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST)

b) Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal.

Plant and equipment that have been contributed at no cost, or for nominal cost, are valued and recognised at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired.

c) Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the entity commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.



The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Class of Fixed Asset	Depreciation Rate
Computer	20 - 50%
Furniture & Fixtures	10 - 50%
Office Equipment	10 - 50%
Motor Vehicle	12.5% - 25%

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the statement of comprehensive income. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation reserve relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

d) Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the entity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair amount less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss.

e) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases.

Contributions are made by the entity to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

f) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short-term borrowings in current liabilities on the statement of financial position.



g) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

h) Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised, as the entity is exempt from income tax under Div 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

i) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the entity has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

j) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

When the company applies an accounting policy retrospectively, makes a retrospective restatement or reclassifies items in its financial statements, a statement of financial position as at the beginning of the earliest comparative period must be disclosed.

k) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the company during the reporting period which remains unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amount being normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

l) New, revised or amending Accounting Standard and Interpretations adopted

The Company has adopted all of the new, revised or amending Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Any new, revised or amending Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.



Note 2. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The resulting accounting judgements and estimates will seldom equal the related actual results. The judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities (refer to the respective notes) within the next financial year are discussed below.

Estimation of useful lives of assets

The company determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

Employee benefits provision

As discussed in note 1, the liability for employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases.

Note 3: Events Subsequent To Reporting Dates

Since the end of the financial period there have been no events, which could materially affect the results of the company for the financial period, or its state of affairs at balance date.



Note 4: Remuneration of Auditors

During the financial year the following fees were paid or payable for services provided by RDL Accountants, the auditors of the company:

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Audit of the financial statement	4,700	4,610
Grant Audits	-	1,700
	4,700	6,310

Note 5: Correction of Prior Year Error

The entity undertook a review of its deferred grant income and found that grants without conditions to satisfy were incorrectly accounted for as grants in advance rather than as income. This error has been rectified by restating the 2017 comparative figures as follows:

	2017 Previous	Adjustment	2017 Restated
	\$	\$	\$
Grants in Advance	683,331	(200,766)	482,565
Retained Earnings	89,050	200,599	289,649
Other Income	268	167	435



Note 6: Cash Flow Information**Reconciliation of cash flows from operations with operating surplus:**

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Operating Surplus	52,205	435
Non-cash flows in operating surplus:		
– Depreciation	13,297	12,273
– (Profit)/Loss on Disposal of Non-Current Assets	-	(7,616)
– Increase/(Decrease) in Auditor Provision	6,700	(1,981)
Changes in Assets and Liabilities:		
– Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	5,509	30,532
– Decrease/(Increase) in Payment in Advance	-	6,008
– Increase/(Decrease) in Trade Creditor	(21,463)	67,284
– Increase/(Decrease) in Grant in Advance	109,647	149,097
– Increase/(Decrease) in Payroll Liabilities	25,604	43,729
– Increase/(Decrease) in GST	78,377	1,528
– Cash flows (used in)/provided by operating activities	269,876	301,289

Note 7: Entity Details

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

Suite 2, 27 Bank Street

Box Hill VIC 3128




In the directors' opinion:

- the company is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. Accordingly, as described in note 1 to the financial statements, the attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 requirements to prepare financial statements to the members of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited;
- the attached financial statements and notes thereto comply with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, the Accounting Standards as described in Note 1 to the financial statements, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013 and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes thereto give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2018 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of directors made pursuant to section 295(5)(a) of Corporations Act 2001.

On behalf of the directors



Mr Peter McPhee
Chairperson

17th October 2018



Mr Tony Robinson
Secretary



AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER DIVISION 60 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE DIRECTORS OF MIGRANT INFORMATION CENTRE (EASTERN MELBOURNE) LIMITED

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2018 there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Matthew Hung, CA
rdl.accountants

25 October 2018
Blackburn, Victoria

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MIGRANT INFORMATION CENTRE (EASTERN MELBOURNE) LIMITED Report on the Financial Report**Opinion**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Migrant Information Centre Limited (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018, the statement of profit or loss and comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Migrant Information Centre Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2018 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and complying with Division 60 of the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We have conducted our audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements of the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the directors of the company, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the directors' financial reporting responsibilities under the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Australian and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable

the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Matthew Hung, CA

rdl.accountants

25 October 2018

Blackburn, Victoria