



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
BEC CODY MLA (CHAIR), VICKI DUNNE MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), CAROLINE LE COUTEUR MLA

### Inquiry into referred 2017–18 Annual and Financial Reports ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Elizabeth Kikkert

Ref: CSD Annual Report, Multicultural Affairs, outputs 2.3 and 2.5

In relation to: key recommendations made by the Canberra Multicultural Women's Forum Consultation Initiative for Family and Domestic Violence

1. What plans does the ACT Government have for developing a culturally appropriate engagement strategy for ACT Government services that is co-designed with CALD communities?
2. Is there a plan to co-develop a culturally appropriate engagement strategy with youth from CALD communities to ensure the ACT Government can support their diverse interests and needs?
3. Will ACT Government consider an increase in funding for the 2019-2020 for:
  - a. More interpreters with specialist knowledge across health, legal and education sectors?
  - b. More interpreters with knowledge of the cultural, religious and geographic diversity within different language communities?
4. In what ways will the ACT Government ensure that interpreters receive trauma-informed training to better support specifically CALD communities?
5. What plans does the ACT Government have in the year 2018-19 to deliver face-to-face cultural awareness training across all ACT Government departments and services to increase knowledge of the diversity of experiences and identities in CALD communities and to address personal and institutional racism?
  - a. What kind of training of this nature has been provided for each year in the years 2017-18 and 2016-17?
6. What multilingual information is currently available on the Access Canberra website?
  - a. What recommendations have been made to improve the availability of multilingual information?
  - b. What improvements does the ACT Government have in plan for the Access Canberra website to improve availability of multilingual information?
7. Are there plans to make available after-hours services for Access Canberra? If so, when will the ACT community see its implementation; if not, why not?
8. Are there plans to appoint multicultural liaison officers within Access Canberra? If so, how many, and what are their roles and responsibilities; if not, why not?
  - a. Are there plans to mandate the appointment of multicultural liaison officers in all ACT Government services? If so, when will this occur, and what will be their roles and responsibilities; if not, why not?
9. What measures will the ACT Government take to increase representation of women from CALD backgrounds in ACT Government Advisory Councils?
10. Which ACT Government service locations provide a multi-faith prayer room?
  - a. Which service locations do not provide a multi-faith prayer room?
  - b. Which service locations will the ACT Government consider establishing a multi-faith prayer room?

Minister Steel: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. What plans does the ACT Government have for developing a culturally appropriate engagement strategy for ACT Government services that is co-designed with CALD communities?

All ACT Government engagements are underpinned by the principals outlined in *Engaging Canberrans, a guide to community engagement*, which includes advice for engaging and working with special interest groups and communities.

The Office for Multicultural Affairs, in partnership with the Multicultural Advisory Council hosted the 2018 ACT Multicultural Summit on 23 November 2018. The Summit identified priority outcomes to inform the development of the *Second Action Plan (2018 – 2020)* to deliver on the *ACT Multicultural Framework (2015 – 2020)*. The *ACT Multicultural Framework* is the ACT Government's strategy for engaging with and meeting the needs of Canberra's multicultural community and the Summit was an opportunity for Canberra's CALD community to contribute to the co-design of the *Second Action Plan*.

The establishment of the Family Safety Hub was one of the commitments that came out of the *ACT Government response to Family Violence, 2016*. The Hub was originally conceived as a central access point for the integration of services relating to domestic and family violence (DFV) across government. However it became apparent that setting up service delivery in this manner will not effectively support the vulnerable groups who face existing barriers to accessing these services. The Hub needed to be more than a service, it needed to be a proponent for lasting change through effective innovation and collaboration to help high risk groups who are least likely to access services.

The Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety (OCGFS) noted that there was a need to co-design service delivery with the community and women who have a lived experience of DFV so that the needs of vulnerable groups are put at the forefront of service delivery. A series of consultations took place with relevant services across government in which a variety of insights were developed. This included speaking to service providers who work directly with CALD women and families. The insights developed in relation to this group noted additional barriers faced including *lack of capacity in the system, isolation and lack of awareness of violence and the alienation that resolves from unresolved visa status*.

The Hub insights noted that particular vulnerable and high risk groups in the ACT include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families, CALD women and families, women with disabilities and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer community.

The Hub used the insights developed through this consultation to develop challenges to be workshopped with the community sector. The vulnerable groups identified through the consultation phase will be the primary focus when developing solutions to existing challenges faced by victims of DFV. The first challenge 'How we can prevent and intervene early in domestic violence for pregnant women and new parents' was workshopped and over sixty ideas were developed by the Community Sector. These have been further refined and the first solution 'providing free legal information service for pregnant women and new parents' has been launched.

2. Is there a plan to co-develop a culturally appropriate engagement strategy with youth from CALD communities to ensure the ACT Government can support their diverse interests and needs?

One of the four themes that was explored and discussed at the 2018 ACT Multicultural Summit focussed on Canberra's future and engaging with and supporting Canberra's youth.

The Family Safety Hub, 'third hub challenge' refers to 'Children and Young People.' This challenge is in very early stages of planning but will work with youth from vulnerable at risk groups (including CALD Families) to understand the challenges facing these groups as well as solutions to these challenges. The specific focus of the Hub on a co-design process based on building the capacity of at risk and vulnerable groups will ensure that any engagement strategy is inclusive of CALD diverse interests and needs.

Working in conjunction with this the OCGFS is seeking to undertake a series of consultations with children and young people from all communities/groups in the ACT. This piece of work came out of the Domestic Violence Prevention Council final report on the *Extraordinary Meeting regarding Children and Young People*. (Recommendation 1: Consulting children and young people to understand their needs and service preferences and design response).

These consultations will include research/insights on young people's experiences of family and domestic violence, the effects on their lives, the support and services they receive and supports and services that best empower them to report and recover from domestic violence. Ultimately it will bring together the voice of children and young people who are victims and victim witnesses of DFV directly into policy and service design.

This work is being facilitated in partnership with the Children and Young People Commissioner. These research/insights are planned to occur in the first half of 2019.

3. Will ACT Government consider an increase in funding for the 2019-2020 for:
  - a. More interpreters with specialist knowledge across health, legal and education sectors?
  - b. More interpreters with knowledge of the cultural, religious and geographic diversity within different language communities?

The Community Services Directorate (CSD) provides annual funding to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) to implement and maintain a registration and certification system for interpreters and translators to build a pool of specialist knowledge. NAATI maintains a register of certified translators and interpreters in each State and Territory for over 100 community languages, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Auslan. Currently there are 279 certified translators and interpreters in the ACT covering 44 languages including Auslan. CSD is working to build the capacity of translators and interpreters.

4. In what ways will the ACT Government ensure that interpreters receive trauma-informed training to better support specifically CALD communities?

For clients seeking assistance with domestic and family violence related matters, the ACT Government committed \$1.223 million over four years for translating and interpreting services (TIS) for the ACT Courts and Tribunal and specialist domestic and family violence services.

*Safer Families-Enhancing access to justice for non-English speakers* supports people of non-English speaking backgrounds experiencing domestic and family violence by providing increased access to TIS.

This funding will address gaps identified in the ACT's justice and service system for domestic and family violence matters and the initiative is administered by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS).

Expenditure under this initiative steadily increased during 2017-18 as eligible organisations became more familiar with the program and how to access the funding.

An officer from JACS meets with eligible organisations regularly to provide promotional materials and to identify barriers to accessing the program. The OCGFS also continues to promote the initiative.

Due to the nature of the agreements in place, the TIS provider is responsible for ensuring that their interpreters are provided with direct support from a team of dedicated Interpreter liaison officers to assist interpreters with enquiries relating to interpreting assignments, as well as access to an Employee Assistance Program.

The provider also offers assistance with clarifying ethical issues and debriefing if required after challenging or difficult assignments.

In addition, the provider gives interpreters access to materials relating directly to interpreting in domestic violence situations on its website, and through monthly newsletters when new materials become available. The provider also offers access to training courses when they arise.

5. What plans does the ACT Government have in the year 2018-19 to deliver face-to-face cultural awareness training across all ACT Government departments and services to increase knowledge of the diversity of experiences and identities in CALD communities and to address personal and institutional racism?
  - a. What kind of training of this nature has been provided for each year in the years 2017-18 and 2016-17?

CSD offers cultural awareness training via e-learning training and face to face training. CSD implemented the CORE Cultural e-Learning program in January 2018. This ten module e-Learning course falls under the CSD Highly Recommended Core Learning Framework and staff are encouraged to work through the modules in team meetings over a period of 6 to 12 months.

In April 2018, CSD implemented a nine module Cultural Competence e-Learning program, developed by the Special Broadcasting Service. This course has already shown a strong take up by CSD staff in the short time it has been available. The program incorporates a range of on-line multi-media training courses and resources designed to help the directorate maximise the benefits of cultural competence, diversity and inclusion.

The Core Cultural Learning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia Foundation Course provides a detailed exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and issues, as a means of assisting staff to enhance their cultural understanding; gain a deeper sense of self-awareness and critical reflection; and enhance their personal and professional capacity to engage respectfully and effectively in an intercultural context. The program is designed to encourage staff to understand their own cultural perspectives as the basis for effective interactions with people of (other) diverse backgrounds.

ACT Government Directorates also offer a range of face to face training, including:

- Companion House on Working with Refugee Families with material covered ranging from who is a refugee, Canberra's refugees, the refugee experience, effects of family fragmentation, trauma including vicarious trauma and working with interpreters.
- Companion House also provide the Fundamentals of Working Cross Culturally training which covers practical examples of culturally sensitive service delivery and national and ACT information on cultural and language diversity and case studies.
- The Cultural Safety Masterclass delivered by KOOREEN covers cultural identity and meaning and cultural safety.

- The Respect, Equity and Diversity (RED) Framework focusses on a workplace that is respectful, courteous, and fair and that values individual differences is a core aspect of building a positive workplace culture and clarifies the roles and responsibilities for employees in regard to Respect, Equity and Diversity. The RED Framework is in place across Government.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Workshop.

6. What multilingual information is currently available on the Access Canberra website?

The following information is available on the Access Canberra website to assist non-English speaking customers with an enquiry. The link to this information can be found here:

[https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/1777/kw/languages](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1777/kw/languages)

- a. What recommendations have been made to improve the availability of multilingual information?

Noting feedback from the Multicultural Community Forum, Access Canberra is now displaying key information on the internal TV message screens within Service Centres is now being displayed in Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Hindi.

The Access Canberra website is being continuously developed to meet the ACT Government's web accessibility requirements, including meeting the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Web content is published in a way that information is accessible however, where users experience any issues accessing web content, they can contact Access Canberra via phone, a web form or web chat.

Improvements to the ease of access to information on the website have been suggested. Simplification of information on the website as well as looking for improved ways to present information to support our community is an ongoing activity by Access Canberra.

- b. What improvements does the ACT Government have in plan for the Access Canberra website to improve availability of multilingual information?

Simplification of information on the website as well as looking for improved ways to present information to support our community is an ongoing activity undertaken by Access Canberra.

7. Are there plans to make available after-hours services for Access Canberra? If so, when will the ACT community see its implementation; if not, why not?

Access Canberra is committed to ensuring Canberrans can access services in a way which meets their needs when they are doing business with government. Currently Service Centres at Tuggeranong and Gungahlin have opening hours outside of standard hours.

I refer to the response to assembly resolution of 1 November 2017 in relation to the review of shopfront services – Access Canberra tabled by Gordon Ramsay MLA on 7 June 2018:

[https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/1211200/Access-Canberra-Review-of-shopfront-services,-pursuant-to-the-resolution-of-the-Assembly-of-1-November-2017.pdf](https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1211200/Access-Canberra-Review-of-shopfront-services,-pursuant-to-the-resolution-of-the-Assembly-of-1-November-2017.pdf).

Data from the monitoring showed that a very low proportion of customers are visiting service centres which offer extended hours (Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and the Civic Driver Licence Service), outside standard office hours.

8. Are there plans to appoint multicultural liaison officers within Access Canberra? If so, how many, and what are their roles and responsibilities; if not, why not?

Access Canberra provides services for all Canberrans including people from diverse backgrounds. There are no plans to appoint multicultural liaison officers at this time as a high level of support is already provided to assist members of the community transacting with Access Canberra who may speak a language other than English.

Staff working in Access Canberra's Service Centres have fluency in languages such as Arabic, Russian, Maltese, Greek, Croatian, Pidgin English, Krio, Hebrew and French. Other staff also understand Spanish, German and Gaelic. In addition, Service Centre staff are aware of staff in other areas of Access Canberra who are fluent in additional languages and call on them for assistance as required.

If a customer requires translation and/or interpretation support there are translation and interpreter services available to assist.

The design of Service Centres themselves also supports cultural diversity, for example placement of the licence camera in a place that allows for privacy of the individual.

- a. Are there plans to mandate the appointment of multicultural liaison officers in all ACT Government services? If so, when will this occur, and what will be their roles and responsibilities; if not, why not?

See response to question 8.

9. What measures will the ACT Government take to increase representation of women from CALD backgrounds in ACT Government Advisory Councils?

The ACT Government launched the Diversity Register on 1 June 2018, in recognition of the value of our diverse community. It is important that this diversity is reflected in appointments to boards and committees and in leadership roles.

The Diversity Register has been developed to encourage and promote the participation of women and people with diverse experiences on boards and committees. Diversity of experience leads to greater innovation and in turn better outcomes for everyone. It is an action under the *ACT Multicultural Framework 2015-20* as well as being part of the *ACT Government's Digital Strategy 2016-2019*.

The Register is an important resource supporting people from a range of ages and diverse backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, CALD people, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer, and Veterans.

The Register provides a platform for individuals to apply for government and non-government vacant board and committee positions, including Ministerial Advisory Councils, and to seek information about networking and training opportunities.

10. Which ACT Government service locations provide a multi-faith prayer room?  
a. Which service locations do not provide a multi-faith prayer room?

- b. Which service locations will the ACT Government consider establishing a multi-faith prayer room?

The plans for the two new ACT Government Buildings in Civic and Dickson will include a reflection room, available for staff in the building, which is envisaged to be promoted and used for a variety of purposes, including a multi-faith prayer room.

In relation to ACT Property Group's properties, multi-faith prayer rooms are a fitout item which are provided by the tenant of the service location and this information is currently not available.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Signature:



Date:

4/12/18

By the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Mr Chris Steel