

Ethnic Engagement Darebin, Australia

**ICMA International Best Practices 2004
21-22 May 2004, Melbourne, Australia**

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Local Government Data

Form of Government	Elected councillors select a CEO for a 5 years contract.
Legislative Body	9 Councillors
Population	128,000
Area	53 sq. km.
Budget (in Australian dollars)	\$99,575,000
Major types of revenue sources in FY04	Rates 52% Grants 26% Fess and charges 12%
Number of employees	482 full time 364 part time 315 casuals
Ethnic demographics	* 33.3% of Darebin population is born overseas. (41,201) * 88% of overseas born are from NESC. (36,275) * 41.3% speak a language other than English at home. (51,103) * 49% of people aged 60 years and over are born in NESC. * 5,374 overseas born from NESC have settled in Darebin since 1996. * 11,649 do not speak English well or at all
Other Distinguishing Characteristics	Has the highest number of Indigenous communities in Metropolitan Melbourne

Currency Exchange Rates

	1,000 Australian dollars =	1,000 Indian rupees =	1,000 New Zealand dollars =	1,000 South African rand =	1,000 US dollars =
Australian dollars	1,000	31	871	204	1,353
Indian rupees	32,237	1,000	28,064	6,562	43,611
New Zealand dollars	1,149	36	1,000	234	1,554
South African rand	4,912	152	4,276	1,000	6,646
US dollars	739	23	643	150	1,000
Other currencies (per 1,000 Australian dollars)					
	410	British pounds			
	996	Canadian dollars			
	620	European euro			
	6,361,510	Indonesian rupiahs			
	80,507	Japanese yen			
	54,365	Nepalese rupees			
	39,843	Philippine pesos			
	29,132	Thai baht			
	11,642,896	Vietnamese dong			

Rates as of April 20, 2004, quoted by Expedia.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Good, effective public governance helps to strengthen democracy and human rights, promote economic prosperity and social cohesion, reduce poverty, enhance environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, and deepen confidence in government and public administration.” OECD

The last twenty years have seen major public sector reforms especially in countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The reforms have introduced concepts of New Public Management aimed at making the public sector more efficient, flexible, responsive and accountable to its publics. Alongside these reforms the impact of globalisation has meant that organisations around the world faced new challenges of communicating, engaging with, developing and delivering services to, culturally and linguistically diverse markets, communities, citizens and clients.

The City of Darebin has embraced this challenge by adopting a management framework which aims to create an organisation that is competent in managing cultural diversity across the whole of council and not only within selected services.

This management approach is a major shift from a model of access and equity which saw diverse groups as “disadvantaged” needing equitable access and share of public resources, to expanding into a new paradigm whereby diversity is also seen to be a resource that can be harnessed and nurtured in an environment whereby its benefits can be maximised.

Building an organisational competency in diversity management has far reaching benefits in contributing to the community and the organisation's capacity to engender cohesiveness. Whilst the dollar bottom line is implicit, attention to diversity can enhance a new, cultural bottom line for organisations based on service excellence, human productivity, competitive advantage and meaningful intercultural community relations.

Successful managers in the twenty-first century, whether in the public or the corporate sector, stand out as having the experience and tools to deal with the demands of locally diverse communities in a globalised world. The new leaders position themselves at the forefront of organisational management and recognise the shift away from the outdated service delivery model of 'one size fits all' towards a broader and inclusive approach.

Darebin City Council took on board the challenge of achieving best practice and being leader in the field of cultural diversity management. This was done by signing a memorandum of understanding with Darebin Ethnic Communities Council, which locked council and its ethnic communities' leaders into an on-going relationship characterised by regular consultation sessions, testing new ideas, implementing projects and regular reporting on progress made.

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

The City of Darebin is an inner suburb located north of the Melbourne Central Business District. It has a long history as a place of settlement for many newly arrived migrants. The City was established in 1994 as a result of the amalgamation of two councils: Preston and Northcote. Northcote council was renowned for its progressive ideas and practices in the field of multicultural policies and services. In the late eighties the council employed its first ethnic services development officer to specifically work on assisting ethnic groups in Darebin to access council services.

Council then established the Northcote Ethnic Communities Council in 1986 which is now the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council (DECC).

Darebin's community is made up of 51% being first or second generation from non-English speaking backgrounds. People in Darebin come from 148 different countries and speak 105 different languages.

Darebin At a Glance

- 33% of Darebin population is born overseas (41,201).
- 88% of overseas born are from Non-English Speaking Countries (NESC), (36,275).
- 49% of people aged 60 years and over are born in NESC.
- 5,374 overseas born from NESC have settled in Darebin since 1996.
- 41% speak a language other than English at home (51,103).
- 10% do not speak English well or at all (11,649).
- 4.3 % of the population are Muslims (5,263).
- 3.2 % are Buddhists (3,903).

Darebin's culturally diverse community constitutes the majority of the population. This sizeable community cannot be ignored, marginalised or sidelined. Good local governance is about being attuned to what the local community is all about, how it operates, what kind of aspirations and needs exist, and addressing any barriers that might be preventing people from having full participation and access to council-provided services and decision-making processes.

In 1999, the council decided to conduct an audit on its performance in meeting the needs of its culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse communities. The audit involved a number of community consultations and internal interviews with key directors, managers and council officers. An extensive audit report was compiled with a list of recommendations.

The audit pointed out that some areas of council performed reasonably well while others required a lot of improvements. The challenge became one of creating systems and approaches which assist council in achieving a level of consistency across the organisation in its response to cultural diversity. It became evident that in order for consideration of cultural diversity to become ingrained in the way Darebin goes about its business, leadership from the top was essential.

In August 2000 the Darebin's Executive Management Team,(EMT) which included the CEO and seven general managers signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Executive of the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council (DECC). The MOU articulated the commitment undertaken by council's management to drive change across the whole organisation in order to achieve a council that is responsive, relevant and accessible to Darebin's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

This MOU was signed for 3 years and expired in August 2003. A renewed MOU was signed on 27th of August 2003 and endorsed by council in September 2003.

Diversity and the policy context

In its pure sense, diversity can be defined as "the quality of being different and unique at an individual or group level." Diversity encompasses internal dimensions that for the most part are not within a person's control, but shape expectations, assumptions and opportunities, such as: age, gender, ethnicity, race, physical ability and sexual orientation. Other facets of diversity are external social factors and life experiences that are more under a person's control and also exert a significant impact on behaviour and attitude. Examples of these include: religion, marital status, parental status, educational background, income, appearance, geographic location, and work experience.

For such a definition to make sense and be relevant to an organisation such as local government, it needs to be placed in the context of governance, participation and service provision. What concerns local government are the practices, policies, constraints and structures which create barriers to people accessing the services they need, or participating in the decisions that affect their lives in their local community. Diversity in the context of access becomes the concern of local government as policy maker, service provider, and a tier of government.

Australian institutions are modelled, shaped and based on cultural norms which respond to a dominant Anglo-Christian culture. Some would argue that in general certain diversities are catered to more than others. This creates social inequalities, whereby society starts to develop categories of disadvantage as in male over female, able bodied over disabled, English speaking over non-English speaking, Christian over non-Christian, young over old, heterosexual over homosexual, etc.

Policies, practices, open space design, type of services provided, and delivery of services take on the culture of the dominant group in Australian society which is referred to in general as the 'mainstream'. However over time, Australia's mainstream increased its diversity with the flow of immigration and the abolition of the White Australia Policy, the replacement of assimilation and integration policies by the policy of multiculturalism, and the introduction of federal and state equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory laws.

Federal and state policies and legislation clearly indicate that it is unlawful to discriminate against residents on the basis of a number of characteristics including ethnicity and language; meaning that it is council's responsibility to meet the communication needs of its citizens through the provision of information in languages other than English as well as through culturally appropriate services.

These new laws and policies slowly impacted on the way the public service responded to diverse communities. However, changing structures and shifting mindsets is a slow process that seeks to redistribute power and resources equitably across the whole community

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

In June 1999, council adopted the recommendations of its access and equity audit conducted across the council and through which the federal government Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society was adopted as the framework for responding to the needs of Darebin's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) population.

The Charter was signed and adopted by federal, state and local governments and involved the following principles;

Principle:	Government services should be...
1. Access	...available to everyone who is entitled to them, regardless of where they live, and should be free of any form of discrimination on the basis of birthplace, language, culture, race or religion.
2. Equity	...delivered on the basis of fair treatment of clients eligible to receive them.
3. Communication	...provided via strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. Providers should also consult with the community regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of government services.
4. Responsiveness	...sensitive to the needs and requirements of different communities, and responsive to the particular circumstances of individuals.
5. Effectiveness	...'results oriented', focused on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds.
6. Efficiency	...optimized in the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to meets the needs of clients.
7. Accountability	...using reporting mechanisms to ensure they are accountable for implementing Charter objectives for clients.

Best Value Legislation

In December of 1999, the Victorian state government introduced the Best Value legislation which replaced the previous policy of Compulsory Competitive Tendering. Darebin's Best Value policy put in motion a process whereby each council service underwent a review of its operations with the aim of improving the service and rendering it more responsive to the needs of the community.

Darebin EMT saw the Best Value process as an effective vehicle to systematise cultural diversity considerations into service planning, evaluation and monitoring. This was done by building a Best Value framework which guided each service review step by step. Each of the 56 service units undertaking a review was guided by a set of questions aimed at ensuring that the service became aware of and considered the needs of the culturally diverse Darebin community and developed appropriate services aligned with those needs. Each service undertaking a review needed to report back to EMT on their responses to the following questions under each of the charter principles:

Access

1. What are the key service-provision objectives of the service?
2. What are the criteria of eligibility/access?
3. Does the service unit expect/predict some groups will have less than would be expected given their eligibility? Which groups? Why?

Equity

1. Is ethnicity data collected and analysed relating to a) eligible population? b) recipient population?
2. What management systems are in place to align access and diversity strategies with measurable equity outcomes? For example:
 - strategic planning
 - cross cultural training
 - performance and outcomes reporting
3. How are these management systems evaluated? What are the results?

Communication

1. What public information systems does the unit have in place to service a diverse community? For example:
 - a. use of interpreters/ language aides?
 - b. use of translated written materials?
 - c. use of plain English in documentation? a language/communications management strategy, budget, staff training?

Responsiveness

1. What are the customer/citizen service values of the unit? To what extent is diversity a part of these values?
2. What ethno-specific services does the unit offer?
3. How are mainstream services customised or tailored to meet the needs of a culturally and linguistically diverse society?
4. Are grants provided a) for ethno-specific services, and b) for the whole community?
5. Are there mechanisms that ensure equity for different cultural groups?

Effectiveness

1. How is service effectiveness measured?
2. Are there processes or systems to measure equivalence of outcomes for different target groups? For example, benchmarking for comparability of different groups in terms of:
 - a. access/service take-up?
 - b. benefits/results/outcomes?

Efficiency

1. How are resources managed to ensure optimal impact? What part does cultural and linguistic appropriateness play in resource management and accountability processes?
2. To what extent/how are the benefits of diversity maximised? For example:
 - a. staff cultural and language skills audits?
 - b. productive diversity management/strategic planning strategies?
 - c. effective use of community networks, contacts, resources?
3. To what extent/how does the service use flexible external collaborations, alliances, joint ventures and community outsourcing to optimise government resource inputs?

Accountability

1. To what extent and how are culturally diverse communities consulted and encouraged to participate in the service design/evaluation/redesign process?
2. How does the unit project an image of fairness and equity for all cultural groups to the whole community as a whole?

The above questions were used by service units to guide their reviews. Not all questions were relevant to all services but they helped to prompt the service undertaking the review to consider cultural diversity needs

Memorandum of Understanding

In August 2003, council and DECC signed a new memorandum of understanding which emerged out of the lessons learned in the previous 3 years. This cemented the work being done into more of a management plan and was based on a managing diversity framework.

Following the development and signing of the memorandum of understanding, discussion and monitoring of its implementation occurred through a series of regular meetings between council's

EMT and DECC. The dialogue created a rapport between the two organisations. A relationship of trust and understanding began to develop as each GM began to reflect on the way council goes about its business, and what values drive service development and delivery, resource allocation and policy decisions. This journey of discovery brought its own difficult and confronting moments as the parties challenged each other's views and interpretation of realities while they continued to meet, driven by a genuine desire to overcome the barriers and remove blindfolds which hindered their way towards mutual understanding.

The bi-monthly meetings were a mixture of discussions and debates as well as practical tasks which were undertaken to assist the learning, and produce beneficial outcomes for Darebin's culturally diverse communities.

The MOU was driven by the following vision:

“The Darebin City Council and the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council will cooperate to position Darebin City Council as a leading and innovative local government authority, that is locally and nationally recognised for its responsiveness to and engagement with its culturally and linguistically diverse communities”

For Darebin to be particularly competent at managing diversity on a sustainable and consistent basis, it needs to bring about circumstances where diversity management becomes an intuitive, second nature activity. For a concept to become an integral part of "how we work and manage", Darebin needs to create and build support systems for such a concept. It needs technical assistance and positive reinforcement to support efforts to be better at diversity management.

There are five important components to this activity of building a diversity management capacity at the City of Darebin.

1. Communication and Information Awareness

To improve access to the City's services and seek full participation by all citizens in the life of the City, the EMT will –

- Promote and expand the Multilingual Communication Service and the multilingual Web site to achieve 50 % increases on their 2002 usage by end of 2006.
- Increase Council's staff awareness about the characteristics and aspirations of the City's CALD communities.
- Continue to successfully undertake projects, like “Living in Harmony,” which seek to eliminate racism and build community trust, understanding and respect.
- Review the City's languages policy in 2006 (based on the City's Household Survey 2005), to ensure it meets the communication needs of the City's emerging CALD communities.
- Ensure that community surveys and consultations and, in particular, the City's customer satisfaction survey and the City's household survey include appropriate representative sampling of the City's CALD communities and seek annual community views about Council's performance in managing diversity and the community's attitude about living in a diverse community.

- Ensure all Council written information and publications be accessible to the City's major CALD communities by 30 June 2006 through the effective promotion and use of Council's Multilingual Communication Service and significant annual progress be demonstrated each year of this memorandum.
- Conduct regular events, seminars, forums and other occasions (like the City's breakfast seminars), which aim to educate, inform and expand the awareness, knowledge and understanding of the City's staff and community on issues pertinent to multicultural affairs.

2. Committed People

To build an organisational culture, structure and workforce, capable of fulfilling the Council's diversity vision; The City will -

- Develop an improved integrated Diversity function with appropriate structural arrangements within the organisation in line with Council's adopted Diversity Policy to reflect the City's valuing of diversity management and to enhance its competencies and capacities in fulfilling its vision and meeting its access and equity commitments.
- Review its human resource processes, practices and policies, in order to attract and select applicants who value cultural diversity.
- Develop annual diversity management training programs for all employees at levels commensurate with their roles and responsibilities.
- Progressively recruit employees with skills and profiles that are relevant and beneficial to the demographic profile of the Darebin community, paying special attention to those language and ethnic groups significantly under-represented in the workforce, and providing an appropriate mix of community languages across customer service staff.
- Include diversity management as a key performance indicator of management competency as part of the City's performance appraisal system for members of the EMT and other appropriate managers, and provide a summary snapshot of the annual diversity management performance of the management group to the EMT/DECC Forum.
- Select consultants and contractors for city projects where diversity management capabilities could make a difference.

3. Accountability, Performance Measurement and Reporting

To fulfil its responsibilities as a local government authority which exists to serve the needs of its constituency, the City will develop strategies, and reporting mechanisms that enhance its accountability to its CALD communities through rigorous measurement of inputs and outcomes. For this purpose the City will:

- Report annually to the community the results of its efforts to achieve its diversity vision. The "diversity report" will be progressively expanded to include service usage data across the whole range of Council services which captures cultural diversity profile of users.
- Conduct a triennial Diversity Conference commencing in October 2003, through which it will demonstrate the progress being achieved towards its diversity management vision in line with Council's adopted Diversity Policy.

- Prepare a Council Plan that is informed by the City’s diversity report and incorporates the key elements of the City’s diversity strategies and diversity policy.

Furthermore, the EMT/DECC forum will play an important strategic role through its annual calendar of meetings, to ensure its input into:

- Corporate Plan - annually in March
- Budget – annually in April
- Best Value Review - annually in August
- Annual Report – annually in September
- Annual diversity management performance of the management group – annually in October

4. Best Value Service Reviews

- The City will use best value service reviews to systematically embed access and equity considerations into the organisation’s planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. This will be done by:
 - Providing an access and equity analysis arising from each best value service review to the EMT/DECC forum, prior to the completion of the review.
 - Reporting on access and equity outcomes from the best value service reviews in the City’s annual report.

5. Innovation, Leadership and Special Projects

The City will undertake special and innovative projects on an annual basis to position Darebin City Council as a leader in managing diversity. These special projects will –

- Test new approaches to diversity management.
- Inject excitement derived from short- to medium-term successes.
- Enhance the City’s diversity management capability.
- Drive long term systemic changes to council practice
- Provide momentum and encouragement for the city’s employees as they pursue diversity management challenges.
- Involve Darebin citizens and address important issues directly affecting their quality of life.
- Arise from the interaction of participants at the EMT/DECC forums.

COMMUNICATION IMPROVEMENTS

Under the communication component, the council achieved the following:

- The development and implementation of an in-house multilingual communication service (MCS).
- A comprehensive website in 12 languages, other than English, which are spoken in Darebin.(see Darebin’s Website: www.darebin.vic.gov.au)
- A corporate letterhead with translated messages on the back in 12 languages.
- A comprehensive multilingual communication policy and guidelines communicated to all staff.

The City of Darebin launched in March 2000, a Multilingual Communication Service (MCS). The MCS is a centralized in-house communication service which consists of a Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL) operated via a pool of Language Aides (LAs), on-line multilingual information, and a

centralized translation service. The LAs provide basic interpreting services to council staff in their interaction with citizens who have difficulty communicating in English or who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

The LAs are trained bilingual council staff paid an annual language aide allowance in addition to their normal salary. The allowance is \$780 per annum paid to all language aides equally and regardless of how often they are used. An arbitrary figure of 52 units of communication is used as a break even figure for cost of service provided versus cost of language allowance.

Rationale for Targeted Languages in Darebin.

According to the 2001 Census, The City of Darebin’s total resident population is 127,882 people. Of those, 12,000 people have a low proficiency level in English. This figure places Darebin as one of the top 5 councils in the state of Victoria in the percentage of residents who need language assistance in their communication with council.

Darebin introduced multicultural communication guidelines which required that all council documents incorporate as a minimum standard a message in the top six languages (other than English) spoken in Darebin, directing readers to call the multilingual telephone line for explanation in their own language. The selection of the languages is based on the following criteria:

- Number of residents in the municipality who speak a Language Other Than English
- English proficiency level within each language group
- Data supplied by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) outlining the number of new arrivals to the city.
- Number of residents in the municipality who speak a Language Other Than English
- The top 10 Languages Other than English spoken in Darebin (2001 Census + DIMIA settlement data for the period from the 1st of Sept 2001 till the 19th of June 2003):

Number of Residents who Speak a Language Other than English		Number of Residents with a Low Proficiency in English (and primary language spoken)	
Italian	14,716	Italian	3,721
Greek	11,447	Greek	2,702
Arabic*	4,674	Macedonian	866
Macedonian*	3,156	Arabic	794
Mandarin*	2,337	Mandarin	671
Cantonese	1,544	Vietnamese	652
Vietnamese*	2,400	Cantonese	493
Croatian	706	Other Chinese	214
Spanish	647	Croatian	150
Serbian	588	Spanish	107
Hindi	495	Other Languages	1,388
Maltese	472		
Somali	364		
Total:	43,546		11,758

*NOTE: Totals were adjusted per DIMIA data for these language groups by 26-100 additional speakers.

As can be seen in this table the main language groups targeted by Council also represent the groups with the highest need for language services due to the high proportion of members in those communities with a low English proficiency level. The six main language groups continue to be Italian, Greek, Mandarin/Cantonese, Arabic, Macedonian, and Vietnamese.

The selection of targeted languages depends in part on the type of service provided and its target audience. For example when the Multicultural Affairs Unit is advising youth services on multicultural communication, it finds that the target audience includes second generation Italian, Greek and Macedonian residents who are proficient in English, therefore youth services would choose to use a different language mix focusing on new settler communities. In selecting languages for its website, Darebin Council included Somali amongst its mix of languages due to the fact that Somali community was a new emerging and growing community in Darebin with low English language proficiency. In addition, according to research by State Government, the Somali community is high user of on-line information.

Even though Hindi and Maltese languages featured in the top 13 languages other than English spoken in Darebin, it is found that both groups have high English language proficiency and therefore are not reliant as information in their own language.

How does the Language Aide Scheme operate?

The Language Aide Scheme operates in the following manner:

Selection and training:

Thirty bilingual staff were selected following their lodgement of an expression of interest to enlist as Language Aides (LAs).

The bilingual staff were selected according to the languages they spoke and the need for those languages by Darebin council, the type of work performed by the staff, their availability to assist with communication, and their degree of fluency in the Language Other Than English (LOTE).

Recruitment of staff in Customer Service area takes into consideration any existing gaps in language services needed by council. Information on the Language Aide scheme is also given to all new staff at the induction sessions.

Following their successful selection, the bilingual staff underwent training and assessment before they formally became LAs.

The training covers

- Clear guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of LAs.
- Overview of the council's functions and operations;
- Rationale for the selection of languages.
- Guidelines for providing language assistance and matters for which interpreters should be engaged;
- Responsibilities for monitoring usage;
- Reporting arrangements for difficulties which might occur and which fall outside the scope of the individual work unit.
- Interpreting techniques.
- Code of Ethics.
- Utilisation of the City of Darebin's Glossary of Terms in a Language Other Than English.

Duties and Responsibilities of Language Aides

1. Provide basic assistance with communication between a council staff member and Darebin's non-English speaking citizens during either a face-to-face or telephone inquiry, regarding simple and general council matters.
2. Ensure use of proper telephone techniques for the purpose of communication with a non-English speaking citizen.
3. Notify Customer Service of his/her unavailability to assist: (Sick leave, annual leave, etc...)
4. Assist council staff and residents, on occasion, with completing council forms, and provide an oral version of simple documents in either English or relevant community language as required.
5. Explain to the person requiring language assistance that he/she is conveying information to the best of his/her ability and that he/she is not in a position to influence any decision.
6. Depending on his/her written skills, perform a very basic, short and simple translation, or proofread, review, and comment on translated information that council wishes to distribute.
7. In the event that the matter he/she is assisting with becomes complicated or involves technical or legal matters, inform the council staff member he/she is assisting that a professional interpreter is required.
8. Adopt a sensitive and positive attitude towards Darebin's citizens, recognising their language difficulties and respecting their cultural background.
9. Participate in appropriate training for Language Aides as organised by council.
10. Attend meetings organised for Language Aides.
11. Ensure accurate recording of statistics of language assistance is done on monthly basis.
12. Respect the confidentiality of all matters of communication he/she has assisted with:

Multilingual Telephone Line – usage and promotion

Council has put in place a number of strategies to promote the utilization of the Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL).

As a minimum requirement, all council correspondence and publications carry a translated message in the top six LOTE spoken in Darebin. The message refers the reader to call council's Multilingual Telephone Line to get information in his/her language.

Posters promoting the MTL are displayed in all council's venues. Brochures promoting the MTL and translated in the six languages are distributed to citizens via Customer Service Centres and other local agencies such as the Migrant Resource Centre and the Adult and Multicultural Education Services. In addition, a large external signboard in front of the council building promotes the MTL in six languages.

A non-English speaking citizen can utilise the MTL to call the council by telephone, mention the language he/she speaks, and have his/her call managed by one of council's customer service officer who will proceed to access an internal Language Aide or an external interpreter. As an alternative, that person can call in to council customer service centre and get assistance over the counter.

Council customer service officers (CSO) are trained in communicating with citizens who have difficulty with English. There are 10 bilingual customer service officers who have been trained as Language Aides and cover the main LOTE spoken in Darebin. In the case that none of the bilingual CSOs are available to assist, the CSO will then proceed to call another Language Aide who works in the council but in another department. In case that LA is not available to assist, the CSO will then resort to the last option which is to call an external interpreter.

Reviewing and Monitoring of the MTL:

Monitoring of the MTL is done through information entered into a database by language aides. Darebin council developed a computer application specially designed to store, retrieve and analyse the data recorded. This program captures the number of calls, the type of calls, the topic, the time it took to complete the call, the department to which the inquiry relates, the language used, and the outcome of the call (e.g., whether it was successfully completed or had to be referred to a professional interpreter).

The MTL is monitored on regular basis and reviewed annually. This helps to:

- Monitor languages used
- Monitor the level of demand per language
- Identify issues of concern.
- Identify improvements to the service.

The monitoring helps in reviewing the service and making decisions in relation to changes in the languages covered by LAs, amount of allowance paid and training needs of LAs.

Glossary of Terms

The City of Darebin developed a glossary of terms which captures the terminology used in council's diverse departments. The glossary has been translated into six languages and Language Aides use the glossary as their communication tool.

In addition to the glossary, the Language Aides have access to dictionaries in their languages which have been purchased by council.

The City of Darebin believes that the development and implementation of its Multilingual Communication Service has brought many benefits to the organisation and the citizens of Darebin.

Darebin citizens who have difficulty communicating in English can feel a sense of security that they can either call the council over the phone or come into any of the four customer service centres and they will be assisted in their preferred language. Council staff who have been trained to provide language assistance know and understand the council environment, the terminology used and the organisational culture, context and structure, all of which contribute to a more effective communication outcome.

The availability of the MCS has meant:

- Speedier communication for non-English speaking citizens through the availability of in-house Language Aides.
- Rewarding and recognition of the bilingual-bicultural skills of internal staff through the language aides allowance and professional development program,
- Standardization of a previous ad-hoc informal system which used to operate prior the implementation of the MCS.

It has been noted that some Darebin citizens – even though they were able to speak English – still communicated more effectively through a Language Aide who shared the same cultural background

The MCS has increased the accessibility of council services to non-English speaking citizens, and has put Darebin at the leading edge of innovative programs in multicultural affairs.

The MCS has proven to be an effective communication tool which has increased council contact with its citizens who have previously experienced barriers to communication. In 2001-2002 the number of contacts was 990 and in 2002-2003, it increased to 2208. The Multilingual Web site in 12 languages has general information on council services and promotes the MTL as a tool for communication. It recorded 20,000 hits in its first year (2002-2003) and council expects this number to rise as more people get to know about it.

中文 عربي Hrvatski Bosanski Italiano Македонски
Ελληνικά Српски Soomaali Español Português Việt-ngữ

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Darebin City Council website in Vietnamese. The page title is "Chào mừng Quý vị đến thăm trang lưới của Hội đồng Thành phố Darebin". The main content includes a list of council wards and their populations, and information about the Darebin City Council and its services.

Ward	Population
Macleod (một phần)	3085
Alphington (một phần)	3078
Bundoora	3083
Fairfield	3078
Kingsbury	3083
Northcote	3070
Preston	3072
Reservoir	3073
Thornbury	3071

The page also includes a sidebar with navigation links such as Home, About Darebin, Your Council, Council Services, Community Directory, Documents and Projects, Permits and Forms, Jobs and Tenders, Maps Online, Events, Search, News and Issues, and Subscribe. The main content area contains a welcome message, a list of services, and information about the Darebin City Council and its services.

RESULTS ACHIEVED/FISCAL IMPACT:

A holistic approach in the delivery of communication services to Darebin's CALD communities has brought about significant organizational, social and economic benefits to the City:

Organizational benefits

- Increasing effectiveness in the design and implementation of communication strategies with CALD communities.
- Increasing quality in service delivery.
- Language skills of council staff recognized and professionally utilized.
- Communication delivered by well-informed council staff.
- Control, maintenance and customization of data collection and reporting on system performance.
- Training to council staff on communicating with people from non-English speaking backgrounds, working with interpreters and how to prepare content for translation has increased the quality and professionalism of service.
- Increasing communication access and demand for information on council services.
- Promotion of diversity issues across the organization through training and advice on cross-cultural communication issues.
- Facilitation of a cultural shift in the way council integrates multicultural values.

Social benefits

- Responsiveness to community needs
- Increasing utilization of council services
- Enhancement of social integration through community participation in council activities and community life.

Economic benefits

- Cost savings in the provision of communication services.
- Maximization of resources.
- Avoidance of duplication of functions and associated costs across the organization.
- Increasing departmental affordability with the centralized introduction of technical improvements in the provision of multilingual communication services.

A thorough cost analysis (see attachment) was undertaken in comparing the cost associated with the delivery of an internal service to outsourced translation services, based on the following cost parameters:

- 2002 data on interpreting and translation services
- Minimum Translation Requirement
- Minimum Interpreting Requirement
- Conversion of files
- Consultancy services
- Desktop Publishing
- Proofreading and checking
- Web site development maintenance

The total saving to council for 2002-2003 was worked out at: \$40,476 (see attachment) without adding the initial set up cost of \$25,000 required for a similar external service. The other benefit with the current internal model is that the higher the number of communication units performed by internal staff, the higher the savings to council. With the external model, a higher demand on the service means higher expenditure.

Increased community access

There has been a general increase of accessibility to council's services by CALD communities.

- Increased funding has been available to CALD groups accessing the council's total community grants pool (from \$65,000 or 15.4% of total grants in 00-01 to \$91,000 or 19.2% of total grants in 01-02). The grants cover categories of community support, art and culture and sports and leisure
- Library loans of LOTE material rose from 100,000 loans in 00-01 to 148,000 in 02-03.
- Access to respite care services for people from CALD communities rose from 39% of the total number of users in 2002, to 49% in 2003
- Access to home care services rose from 30% in 2002 to 38% in 2003.
- Participation by CALD communities also increased in Council's feedback, consultation and decision-making processes. For example in 2001 only 11% of people participating in the Council's household survey were from CALD background in comparison to 37% in 2002.

The benefits are also reflected in the creation of an internal organisation that is reflective of the community it serves. Through the recruitment for diversity program the number of staff employed by council and who are born in non-English speaking countries rose from 14% in 2001 to 18% in 2003, the number of trained language aides rose from 14 in 2001 to 28 in 2003 and 30 in 2004.

Best value reviews

Darebin's approach to Best Value is fully articulated in the Darebin Best Value Policy and recognises the need for services to be accessible to all members of the community for whom they are intended.

Now that we are well into the transition to Darebin Best Value, and many of our services have completed their service reviews, it is an opportune time to look back at our service reviews and assess how well they have responded to the needs of CALD communities.

Baseline Reports

Most of our services identified issues relating to CALD communities in their Baseline Reports. Sometimes this resulted from a simple demographic analysis of the exiting client/customer base, but more often it was the result of identifying groups with specific needs relating to the service. For example:

Service	Action
Family Health and Youth group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most services had a section discussing demographic profile of service users and community.
Maternal and Child Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A section on service activities discusses at length the linking in of the CALD population and client base with the service and the development of culturally appropriate programs.
Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A key issue was identified to ensure that local needs are reflected in services on offer and that demographic targets are consistent with service priorities.• The Baseline Report discusses the service-specific programs that are currently aimed at multicultural community/CALD population

Consultation Plans

Services took CALD communities into consideration when developing their consultation plans, and in many cases took additional steps to ensure that members of these communities had an opportunity to participate. For example:

Service	Action
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and equity issues were explored in the service user survey • Use of interpreters was arranged for interviews
Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The language background of respondents was explored in the survey to ensure representation.
Maternal and Child Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus group with CALD users was held to explore issues from the survey.
Preschool Dental Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The survey included section on ethnic background, proficiency in English, etc.
Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Focus groups with CALD groups were held.

Business Case

With such care taken to include CALD communities in the preliminary stages of the service review, it was inevitable that this would result in the identification of some areas for improvement. Of the relatively small number of services that have completed their service review, a number of actions have been identified in the completed Business cases. For example:

Service	Action
Family Day Care	A key issue identified in the Baseline Report was the need for recruitment of culturally appropriate carers. The Business Case addresses this issue.
Children's Services Support program	A key issue identified in Baseline Report was the need to develop strategies to improve the inclusion of CALD children in Childcare services. The Business Case addresses this issue. The key recommendation and the broader changes to service (e.g., the co-location of the teams) will facilitate the implementation of new directions, roles and responsibilities. It will also provide a united support to all services in Darebin
Pre-school Enrolment Program	Key issue identified in the Baseline Report was to continue to ensure equitable access for all eligible children in the municipality. The Business Case addresses this issue through refinements to enrollment policy and process.
Statutory Planning	Consultation identified that the unit has to improve on communication with CALD communities and the translations of materials. The Business case addresses this issue.

Service design

In reviewing the Reservoir Leisure Services, a new master plan was designed which incorporated the diverse cultural needs of the client groups. An example of this is the feature of swimming facilities which cater for the needs of cultural/religious groups needing to access the pool for gender-specific activities. Currently the Centre is able to meet their needs in a limited fashion by making the pool available outside the normal opening hours. With the new design these groups will be able to access the centre at any time in a culturally appropriate manner.

Meals on Wheels service introduced Halal foods as a result of identifying the growing population of elderly within the Muslim community.

The family day care (home-based child care) concept of child care proved to be a popular and appropriate model within ethnic communities. Council proceeded to pro-actively recruit and train family day care workers from emerging ethnic groups such as the Somali community.

Diversity management considerations introduced as part of the generic template for engaging contractors, meant that selecting contractors to undertake the planning of the annual Darebin Festival ensured that the contractors had the skills and experience required in staging a festival that engaged and reflected the diversity of the Darebin population.

Impact on annual surveys

The Annual Community survey is conducted by the City of Darebin each year to measure community perceptions of council's performance across a range of policy and service delivery areas. After three years of conducting random telephone surveys, the percentage of respondents from households where a language other than English is spoken never exceeded 13% (the actual percentage of such households in Darebin according to the 1991 Census is 46%).

In 2002, after a review of the survey methodology, a concerted effort was made to ensure the inclusion of non-English speaking households and a number of changes were made to the way the research was conducted. The major change as a result of this review was the abandonment of telephone interviews, in favour of door-to-door surveyors. Experience has shown that respondents who do not speak English as a first language are more comfortable responding in English in person than over the telephone.

In addition to this significant change, a number of procedures were put in place to allow respondents to complete the survey in their own language if they preferred:

- Surveyors used multilingual information to communicate with non-English speakers.
- Surveyors had access to Darebin's Multicultural Communication Service and the Telephone Interpreter Service.
- Surveyors were instructed to make an appointment with poor English speakers so that the survey could be conducted in their own language at a later stage.

The effect of these changes, together with the face-to-face methodology increased the participation from households where languages other than English are spoken to 37% in 2002 and further to 44% in 2003.

A separate fact sheet is published each year which examines the survey results for English only and non-English speaking households, and has so far shown similar levels of satisfaction for both sectors of the Darebin community. Interestingly, many of Darebin's language-based services (Darebin News, council information in local newspapers, council's Internet site, local libraries and information about services and facilities) rated more highly with the non-English speaking community than the rest of Darebin, indicating that the effort made by the organisation to consider the special needs of non-English speakers has been effective.

Human Resources

A recruitment for diversity program was established which documented the diversity profile of existing staff, and examined the A-Z of staff recruitment, including what is written in positions

descriptions, to where, how and what is advertised, job interview techniques, induction/orientation, training and performance appraisal. A comprehensive Human Resources approach ensured that staff employed at Darebin council appreciate, understand and value diversity as well as being competent in working for a culturally diverse community and within a diverse workplace.

What was achieved since 2001:

- Diversity related information included in all position descriptions
- Introduction to EEO and Diversity training provided to all new permanent and temporary full time and part time staff
- EEO and diversity refresher training provided to all managers and co-ordinators annually
- Interview questions developed relating to diversity issues for a range of position classifications
- Positions advertised through a variety of media, (e.g., press, internet, culture specific press)
- A staffing framework and strategy for recruitment of customer service officers has been developed. A targeted recruitment process has resulted in employment of staff with language skills required within the customer service pool.
- Diversity management related behaviours are included in the global accountabilities component of the performance management system
- Diversity statistics of the organisation reported to EMT annually
- The council's procurement and tendering policies will be reviewed to include diversity management capabilities.
- All expressions of interest for consulting and training provision developed by the OD branch have reference to the diversity of the organisation

Special projects

The aim of the special projects was to inject excitement by undertaking short term projects and using them as learning opportunities. Some of the projects undertaken included:

- A multicultural program of events implemented at Darebin Libraries which led to greater participation of CALD communities in library activities.
- A forum on designing open space for a multicultural society was organized in 2001 and committed council to put the devised strategies into action by designating a park area in the municipality as a pilot project where the principles will be applied and will become the way council designs all open space in the future. The project is still at the design concept stage. A new approach was used in gauging the views of the residents who live near the park. Door to door surveys were used as well as bilingual surveyors. This approach was used as a result of identifying that the neighbourhood had a high concentration of older Italian residents, who had low English literacy skills and the face-to-face communication approach to gauging their views proved to be more effective. The consultation determined that the residents wanted the usual basic elements to be incorporated into the park to render it practical and user friendly but what emerged is the artistic element of mosaic pathways incorporating tools of trade which depict the working lives of the Italian senior citizens, as well as sheltered areas and seating that symbolise culturally relevant items that had been brought by them to Australia when they first migrated.
- A National Managing Diversity conference hosted by Darebin council on 1-3 October 2003 which was attended by over 330 delegates and which showcased best practice examples in diversity management and placed Darebin City Council at the fore front of cultural diversity management issues.

- A community relations project which focused at a particular neighbourhood and which aimed at improving relations between the residents of culturally diverse backgrounds in order to improve perceptions and attitudes towards the mosque in the neighbourhood.
- A feasibility study into the establishment of an Inter-Cultural centre which has resulted into an approved plan by council for a future centre to be built following the raising of sufficient funds.

Effect of MOU on community

The Memorandum of Understanding has led to a number of positive outcomes in terms of informing and guiding the organisation in developing services that met the needs of Darebin's culturally diverse communities. The MOU has also been recognised and used as best practice example representing a model for responsible governance, transparency and community partnership. DECC's role in the partnership is clearly articulated in the MOU. DECC undertook to:

- Fulfil its responsibilities as an elected peak body representative of ethnic groups in Darebin.
- Participate in achieving the objectives of the MOU in collaboration with the council's EMT.
- Provide input, advice, and feedback to council as requested by various departments.
- Critique the progress of this MOU by raising issues of concern to EMT.
- Participate in evaluating the outcomes of this MOU in collaboration with the EMT.

In the last 3 years DECC has ensured that at least 4 DECC executive members attend the bi-monthly EMT-DECC forums, that a DECC representative is actively involved in the various councils' committees and working groups such as: Festival planning committee, domestic violence working party, arts and culture reference group. DECC has also been involved in critical Best Value reviews undertaken by various service units.

The MOU has strengthened the community's confidence and trust in council as an organisation genuinely willing to listen to the community and work in partnership in finding solutions within existing resources. By bringing DECC on board as equal partners, DECC developed a good understanding of how council operates, the political environment, the constraints and pressures which impact on its operations and with such a level of knowledge DECC became an active participant in addressing the occasional dilemmas associated with resource distribution. Such situations have been managed and overcome with creativity and innovative ways of looking at problems as opportunities.

LESSONS LEARNED

The barriers encountered in achieving the set out goals of the overall Darebin project were mainly concerned with resistance to cultural change. It meant that each General Manager needed to work through pockets of resistance within their respective departments to iron out the barriers, some of which were attitudinal, or based on anxiety and fear of the unknown. Successful organizational culture change requires time and the ability to allow people the necessary space to embrace and own such a change in order for it to become entrenched into the organization.

Among the lessons learned was the issue of ensuring that the commitment and values of the organisation on managing and celebrating cultural diversity do filter down to all levels of the organisation beyond the leadership/management levels. This was done through a program of information/communication across management levels and through the induction process of new staff.

One of the most difficult experiences within a Managing Diversity Program is created when we build and celebrate a Managing Diversity competency in an organisation whilst at the same time are aware of and deal with racism. The incongruence of that circumstance means management must be patient, management must be optimistic but at the same time management needs to be firm and vigilant and be very value-driven when it deals with overt organisational racism. We've learned that optimum results will only be achieved when access and equity objectives are both a political imperative and a management competency. There are probably still many communities in Australia, and across the world, where cultural diversity is widespread, where the political imperative has not been married with the management competency and those diverse communities do not fully participate in community life.

We've learned that our managing diversity activities need to be underpinned by a view of the future. A view of the future must be the guiding vision, not a set of lessons from the past or the outdated and stereotyped views of multiculturalism from the 1980s. Darebin's work is underpinned by the notion of a pluralist democracy; a community where people from diverse cultures retain and build on their cultural identity whilst contributing to a community. There will be less emphasis in the future on a dominant or overriding cultural norm. There will be less emphasis on conformity. Being an overseas born Australian of the future will mean giving up less cultural identity and cultural heritage.

One of the most important lessons Darebin has learned is that acquiring the competencies Darebin needs to effectively meet the expectations of a culturally diverse community is a journey with a destination that is never reached. It is very challenging and stretches most public sector managers' skills. As such, when we come to evaluate our progress it's vitally important that we distinguish between failures arising from a lack of competency and the failures that inevitably occur for a whole variety of attitudinal, behavioural and workplace sub-culture reasons.

In addition to the lessons acquired from the process of rolling out a "cultural change across the organisation" were the lessons associated with resource allocation and budgets. This is a challenge that most organisations find difficult to overcome, as entrenched resource allocations become difficult to redistribute and managers argue for additional resources in order to meet access and equity obligations. In some cases, allocation of additional resources may be unavoidable, but overall it is an exercise of using equitably the existing resources council is able to muster. Using the economic argument can often mask forms of institutional racism, which is the hardest form to address and eliminate.

Ethnic Engagement Darebin, Australia

**ICMA International Best Practices 2004
21-22 May 2004, Melbourne, Australia**

WORKSHOP INSTRUCTIONS

1: Introduction and Setting the scene 5 Minutes

Diversity Management Framework

For an organization to be particularly competent at managing diversity on a sustainable and consistent basis, it needs to bring about circumstances where diversity management becomes an intuitive, second nature activity.

For a concept to become an integral part of how an organization works, it needs to create and build support systems for such a concept. It needs technical assistance and positive reinforcement to support efforts to be better at diversity management.

2: Exercise 30 minutes

In your groups you are to consider the Diversity Management Framework and brainstorm what strategies you would devise for your organizations under each of the key components.

We propose that there are four important components to this activity of building a diversity management capacity in any organization. These are:

- 1: Information, Awareness and Communication
- 2: Committed People
- 3: Accountability, Performance Measurement and Reporting
- 4: Service Reviews

3: Pitfalls 10 minutes

In your groups you are to consider the pitfalls you are likely to encounter as you move toward implementation of the strategies you have listed

4: Reporting to the group 30 minutes

5: Group discussion on addressing pitfalls 10 minutes

6: Conclusion 5 minutes

memorandum of understanding

BETWEEN THE DAREBIN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL (DECC)
AND THE DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM (EMT)

[PREAMBLE]

*On the 10th August 2000
the Darebin Ethnic
Communities Council
(DECC) and the Executive
Management Team (EMT)
signed a Memorandum of
Understanding which
committed the parties to
work together to achieve,
responsive, effective and
tangible outcomes that
benefit Darebin's culturally
and linguistically diverse
citizens (CALD).*

*It is now the parties'
intention to commit to
further achieving that goal
with the signing of a
renewed Memorandum of
Understanding.*

[DAREBIN]

The City of Darebin contains a population of 127,000, fifty percent of whom are first and second generation migrants from non English speaking backgrounds. Darebin residents come from 148 countries of origin and speak 105 different languages. Darebin is home to a mixture of long established migrants and newly arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants as well as significant numbers of emerging migrant groups under the Skilled and Family streams which make up the major components of Australia's permanent entry program.

[THE PARTIES]

The Darebin Ethnic Communities Council is a peak body which seeks to represent the views and interests of Darebin's culturally and linguistically diverse communities. DECC represents over 80 ethnic groups and associations within the City of Darebin and seeks to:

- Understand and represent the interest of Darebin's CALD communities.
- Promote multicultural values and practices in the City of Darebin.
- Act as an advocate on multicultural values and practices.
- Lobby for the provision of culturally appropriate services in the City of Darebin.
- Stimulate a multicultural perspective on public policies and community programs.
- Listen to local ethnic groups and be familiar with current and past needs.
- Advise Darebin City Council and other relevant organisations on the needs of local ethnic groups.
- Provide effective channels of communication between local ethnic groups, Council and key community organisations
- Assist local ethnic groups and organisations to support their own communities.

[THE PARTIES]

Darebin City Council's Executive Management Team is the group comprising the City's Chief Executive Officer and seven General Managers who are responsible for the overall management of the City and for ensuring that Darebin City Council achieves its purpose and corporate commitments.

The City of Darebin is committed to addressing the needs of its diverse community and in July 2003 adopted a Diversity Policy that stated:

Diversity - It is no longer acceptable to communities in Australia for government to treat them as one undifferentiated group of people. The community is diverse. It is also not acceptable for government to treat sectors of the community (eg those with disabilities, indigenous peoples, peoples from culturally diverse backgrounds) as marginalised groups requiring specialised services. Recognition of disadvantage cannot be placed outside the mainstream of the community and outside of government's key or core responsibilities. It must be integrally part of the mainstream of service delivery and community engagement.

Diversity and Equity - Government needs to address matters of diversity with a focus on ensuring that access to Council services is equitable. This is the major focus for the Darebin City Council Diversity Policy. Community members should not experience barriers to accessing a service because of difficulties accessing information on the service (ie through language barriers) or because the service does not address diversity needs. Information regarding a service (or even the service itself) must be offered in a manner that all with need can access. Also Council must be ready to include adequate levels of resources to ensure that the information is appropriate to guide how services may be best delivered.

Valuing Diversity - How then does government respond to diversity, to the diversity of its populations? As Darebin City Council has already shown, it does so by actively valuing diversity. It does so by recognising that everyone in the community has their own special needs and wants. It does so by recognising that we are all different, not that others are different. While Darebin "manages" diversity, it does so valuing the strengths of the community's diversity, rather than managing in order to avoid or placate them.

Diversity Policy - Darebin City Council's Diversity Policy seeks to establish a framework that can engage all of Council's activities. **The Council Vision:** "A diverse and democratic city where citizens work together to advance community life", places diversity at the core of the Council Plan. The aim of this policy is to strengthen and cascade Council's response to the community's diversity through all of Council's planning and operations.

[THE VISION]

"The Darebin City Council and the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council will cooperate to position Darebin City Council as a leading and innovative local government authority, that is locally and nationally recognised for its responsiveness to and engagement with its culturally and linguistically diverse communities."

[THE STRATEGY]

The strategy agreed to between the DECC and the EMT contains five broad components.

- 1 Information, Awareness and Communication
- 2 Committed People
- 3 Accountability, Performance Measurement and Reporting
- 4 Best Value Service Reviews
- 5 Innovation, Leadership and Special Projects

Within each of these broad component headings the parties have agreed on a range of outcomes to be achieved as follows:-

1 INFORMATION, AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION

To improve access to the City's services and seek full participation by all citizens in the life of the City, the EMT will:

- Promote and expand the Multilingual Communication Service to achieve a 50% increase on its 2002 usage by end of 2006.
- Increase Council's staff awareness about the characteristics and aspirations of the City's CALD communities.
- Continue to successfully undertake projects, like the "living in harmony", which seek to eliminate racism and build community trust, understanding and respect.
- Promote the City's multilingual website to achieve 50% increase on its 2002 usage by end of 2006.
- Review the City's languages policy in 2006 (based on the City's Household Survey 2005), to ensure it meets the communication needs of the City's emerging CALD communities.
- Ensure that community surveys and consultations and, in particular, the City's customer satisfaction survey and the City's household survey include appropriate representative sampling of the City's CALD communities and seek annual community views about Council's performance in managing diversity and the community's attitude about living in a diverse community.
- Ensure all Council written information and publications be accessible to the City's major CALD communities by 30 June 2006 through the effective promotion and use of Council's Multilingual Communication Service and significant annual progress be demonstrated each year of this memorandum.

- Conduct regular events, seminars, forums and other occasions (like the City's breakfast seminars), which aim to educate, inform and expand the awareness, knowledge and understanding of the City's staff and community on issues pertinent to multicultural affairs.

2 COMMITTED PEOPLE

To build an organisational culture, structure and workforce, capable of fulfilling the Council's diversity vision; The City will:

- Develop an improved integrated Diversity function with appropriate structural arrangements within the organisation in line with Council's adopted Diversity Policy to reflect the City's valuing of diversity management and to enhance its competencies and capacities in fulfilling its vision and meeting its access and equity commitments.
- Review its human resource processes, practices and policies, in order to attract and select applicants who value cultural diversity.
- Develop annual diversity management training programs for all employees at levels commensurate with their role and responsibilities.
- Progressively recruit employees with skills and profile that are relevant and beneficial to the demographic profile of the Darebin community, paying special attention to those language and ethnic groups significantly under-represented in the workforce, and providing an appropriate mix of community languages across customer service staff.
- Include diversity management as a key performance indicator of management competency as part of the City's performance appraisal system for members of the EMT and other appropriate managers, and provide a summary snapshot of the annual diversity management performance of the management group to the EMT/DECC Forum.
- Select consultants and contractors for city projects where diversity management capabilities could make a difference.

3 ACCOUNTABILITY, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

To fulfil its responsibilities as local government authority which exists to serve the needs of its constituency, the City will develop strategies, and reporting mechanisms that enhance its accountability to its CALD communities through rigorous measures of inputs and outcomes. For this purpose the City will:

- Report annually to the community the results of its efforts to achieve its diversity vision. The “diversity report” will be progressively expanded to include service usage data across the whole range of Council services which captures cultural diversity profile of users.
- The City will conduct a triennial Diversity Conference commencing in October 2003, where it will demonstrate the progress being achieved towards its diversity management vision in line with Council’s adopted Diversity Policy.
- The City’s preparation of the Council Plan will be informed by the City’s diversity report and will incorporate the key elements of the City’s diversity strategies and diversity policy.
- The EMT/DECC forum will play an important strategic role through its annual calendar of meetings, to ensure its input into:

A. Corporate Plan – annually in March

B. Budget – annually in April

C. Best Value Review – annually in August

D. Annual Report – annually in September

E. Annual diversity management performance of the management group – annually in October

4 BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS

The City will use best value service reviews to systematically embed access and equity considerations into the organisation’s planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. This will be done by:

- Providing an access and equity analysis arising from each best value service review to the EMT/DECC forum, prior to the completion of the review.
- Reporting on access and equity outcomes from the best value service reviews in the City’s annual report.

5 INNOVATION, LEADERSHIP AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

The City will undertake special and innovative projects on an annual basis to position Darebin City Council as a leader in managing diversity, These special projects will:

- Test new approaches to diversity management.
- Inject excitement derived from short to medium term successes.
- Enhance the City’s diversity management capability.
- Drive long term systemic changes to council practice
- Provide momentum and encouragement for the city’s employees as they pursue diversity management challenges.
- Involve Darebin citizens and address important issues directly affecting their quality of life.
- Arise from the interaction of participants at the EMT/DECC forums.

[DECC UNDERTAKING]

DECC commits to this MOU and undertakes to:

- *Fulfil* its responsibilities as an elected peak body representative of ethnic groups in Darebin.
- *Participate* in achieving the objectives of this MOU in collaboration with the City’s EMT.
- *Provide* input, advice and feedback to the City’s as requested by various departments.
- *Critique* the progress of this MOU by raising issues of concern with EMT.
- *Participate* in evaluating the outcomes of this MOU in collaboration with the EMT.

about MAU

Council's Vision: A diverse and democratic city where citizens work together to advance community life.

There are two major directions required from Council to deliver democratic government to a diverse community:

- 1 Council's workforce must be representative of its community
- 2 Council's activities must be appropriate to its community
 - > They must cater to the community's needs
 - > They must be accessible to those who need them
 - > They must respond to the community's needs equitably

Darebin City Council's Multicultural Affairs Unit advises and assists Council services to achieve access and equity outcomes. It fulfils this role in two ways:

Internal:

- The Unit assists the Council as an organisation to respond effectively to Darebin's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community.

External:

- The Unit acts as a communicating and advocating link between Council and Darebin's CALD communities.
- The Unit promotes the benefits of diversity to the broader Darebin community to enhance social cohesion.

Background

Introduction

The City of Darebin is a very culturally and linguistically diverse community. The people living in Darebin come from 148 countries and speak 105 different languages. More than 50% of Darebin residents are either first or second generation migrants from non-English speaking countries.

The Challenge

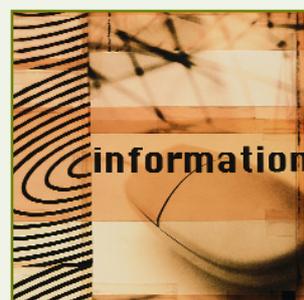
Darebin community's diversity of cultures, languages and faiths presents Darebin City Council with a number of challenges as it seeks to represent its constituents:

CONSULTATION

- On an ongoing basis, Council needs to think about the way it consults and engages with its community:
 - > Are the current methods of consultation appropriate?
 - > Is there sufficient time and resources devoted to consultation?
 - > Can Council demonstrate it is being inclusive?

INCLUSION

- To be inclusive, there must be a recognition that the one size does not fit all:
 - > We may need to expand the way we go about doing our business.
 - > We may need to schedule more time, and plan better the way we consult, design and deliver services.
 - > We must be systematic about collecting data, analysing this data to determine which groups in Darebin are missing out on accessing our services and then seeking out these groups to find out the reasons for that lack of access.



MANAGING DIVERSITY

- Darebin City Council in its capacity as Local Government has a significant role in managing diversity; internally and externally:
 - > How do we foster social cohesion and generate better understanding amongst diverse religious and cultural groups in our community?
 - > What is our role in managing our internal diversity as an organisation and extracting the benefits of that diversity to better serve the community we work for?

Darebin City Council is already a leader in local government in its responsiveness to and engagement with its culturally and linguistically diverse community. However with a population as diverse as the City of Darebin, Council must remain vigilant as to whether that is enough.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Darebin City Council's aspirations for access and equity are enshrined in the Memorandum of Understanding between Council's Executive Management Team (EMT) and Darebin Ethnic Communities Council (DECC) which says:

"The Darebin City Council & Darebin Ethnic Communities Council will cooperate to position Darebin City Council as a leading and innovative local government authority, that is locally & nationally recognised for its responsiveness to and engagement with its culturally & linguistically diverse communities." August 2003

These aspirations have their foundations in:

- Community expectations.
- Council obligation under various legislative requirements to be relevant and accessible to everyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, language and religion.
- Council's proven record and reputation at the leading edge of multicultural affairs.
- State and Federal Government policies which set directions for a whole-of-government approach to addressing the diverse needs of the community as "mainstream issues" rather than specialist services.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is integral to all services and activities undertaken by the Darebin City Council. In multicultural Australia, diversity cannot be viewed as an add-on, nor is it confined to access and equity. The services we provide must not only consider but also respond to the diverse needs of our community. The role of the Multicultural Affairs Unit is to assist Darebin City Council to achieve the equitable delivery of a wide range of internal and external services.

The goal of the Unit is to create an organisational practice that factors diversity into everything we do. This must become "the natural way" we go about our business. It is not an additional consideration we are required to think about if we have time, space, or if our budget allows. The Unit is dedicated to assisting Council to systematically place diversity at the heart of our business, thus ensuring the inclusion of more than half of our community.

Thinking Diversity

Thinking of the diversity of the community we serve should impact on everything we do, for example:

- how we communicate?
- the design of open space
- delivery of recreational programs
- how, when and with whom we consult?
- what size rubbish bins we decide is appropriate?
- what parking restrictions we impose and where?
- the considerations we should think about in our planning schemes
- the new services we should plan to deliver in the next five, ten, fifteen years
- who lives in our community and whose voices we hear or not, and why?
- what are the cultural values that impact on the way as individual employees we make decisions that affect the community we are employed to serve?
- the trees we choose to plant in our streets and why?
- are our current practices value-free, as many might assume?
- is it equitable to treat everyone the same?



about MAU

We cannot afford to marginalise diversity as optional, a “nice thing to do”, a luxury item, or consider it as the icing on the cake. Diversity is one of the essential ingredients in baking the cake in the first place.

The Multicultural Affairs Unit is an important internal resource to advise and assist Council departments in:

- How to develop and deliver services that are relevant and accessible.
- How to adapt to the demographic cultural changes of the community.
- How to ensure Darebin City Council is culturally and linguistically competent in responding to the needs of its diverse community.

The Roles of Multicultural Affairs:

Policy:

Darebin City Council adopted the Principles of the Charter of Public Service in A Culturally Diverse Community in 1999.

The Policy role of the Multicultural Affairs Unit involves the development of policies associated with access and equity and multicultural-multilingual communication. It also involves the input into policy development and implementation across Council to ensure the integration of the principles of the Charter in the development and planning processes. Examples of this include the development of methods that assist Council departments in their implementation of Best Value reviews to ensure that the Charter principles influence the process and the outcomes.

Memorandum of Understanding:

In August 2000, the Executive Management Team (CEO and 7 General Managers) signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Darebin Ethnic Communities Council (DECC) which committed the EMT to deliver a set of annual goals. The role of the MAU is to assist the implementation of the action plan and play an advisory role to GMs on implementing the projects that emanated from the MOU. A second MOU was signed in August 2003.



Communication:

This involves:

- Multilingual Communication Service (MCS) and Marketing:
- Responding to requests for interpreting, translating services, either through the “in-house” Multilingual Communication Service or external language service providers.
- Providing advice and assistance to Council staff on how to reach ethnic communities. This could be through direct mail-outs, presentations to ethnic groups, advertising in ethnic newspapers, and other methods.
- Co-ordination of the Multilingual Communication Service which requires the on-going support of the Language Aides programme, the monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement of the MCS, and the maintenance of the Multilingual Communication Register database.
- The development, maintenance and updating of a multilingual Website.
- The development, maintenance and updating of an internal Intranet Multicultural site for internal consumption.
- Liaising with Ethnic Media.



Training and Information:

This involves:

- **Cross-cultural training**

Conducting training needs analysis.

Development and coordination of specialists cross-cultural training for Council staff.

- **Support and advice to Council departments**

Responding to requests from council staff needing information on ethnic groups, data, contacts, protocols, cultural and religious issues.

- **Civic Education:**

The MAU plays a role in informing and educating Darebin's citizens on how to become active participants in their local community and how to influence decisions made at the local level.

Community Relations:

- **Events:**

Refugee week

Cultural Diversity week

Harmony day

Festivals and other occasional events.

- **Information:**

Information dissemination on Council services and programs

Assisting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups in accessing Council services and resources such as community grants.

The updating of the Multicultural Resources Directory.

- **Networking:**

Representation on external agencies committees, networks, and boards such as the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network, the North East Region Settlement Issues Network, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council.

Advocating on behalf of CALD Communities on a number of levels: Federal, State, and Local.

- **Social Cohesion:**

Involves planning and working on the following aspects

> Inter-ethnic relations.

> Inter-faith relations.

> Managing DECC- Council relationship

> Coordination of the UN Room at Reservoir Civic Centre.

> Anti-Racism Programs



Multilingual Communication Guidelines

6 Interpreting Services (verbal communication):

In order to communicate effectively with a non-English speaking individual or groups, Council staff are required to engage either a Council's Language Aide (LA) or professional interpreter accredited by NAATI at level 3. Friends or family members should not be used as interpreters. This could lead to Council being liable for miscommunication. Friends and family members while well intentioned, are not trained to accurately interpret a message in its entirety without adding or deleting information.

LAs can be asked to assist with communication between Council staff and a Non-English speaking individual in cases where the communication is considered to be basic.

Only professional interpreters can be engaged to interpret for lengthy interviews or in situations that involve statutory requirements as in signing legally binding documents or in giving warning about a breach of a Council by-law.

Professional interpreters can be either accessed by telephone or can be booked to attend on-site. In either cases Council utilises two main Language Service providers:

VITS LanguageLink and the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

The responsibility of organising and accessing interpreters lies with Council and not the non-English speaking citizen.

6.1 VITS LanguageLink:

VITS Language Link is a State based language service provider which has established a telephone service referred to as: "Language Link". A service that is accessible to all Victorian Councils.

Language Link is based on accessing phone interpreters by dialing a specific telephone number that corresponds to the language required. In order for Council staff to access the VITS Language Link, they must use the Darebin City Council Pin Number obtainable from the Multicultural Affairs Unit.

For contact details for VITS, or access to free language services check the City of Darebin: "Guide to Staff on Communication with Non-English speakers", available on the intranet.

Telephone Interpreting is paid for through VITS invoices received by the Multicultural Affairs Coordinator. However for all other language services such as face to face interpreting or translation, each department will be invoiced separately.



Some Council services, such as those funded directly by the State Government can access a sum of money for language services:

Credit Lines available through VITS are:

- **Department of Human Services Aged Care Credit Line.**

It is a sum of money allocated to all DHS funded aged care services. The money is given to VITS and a monthly quota is applied. The fund is used on a basis of “first in, first served” and once the monthly quota is used, funds for the language service required will have to be sought from elsewhere. (A Pin Number is issued to Aged Care Services with access to this credit line. This credit line can be used for telephone, on site interpreting and for translations).

- **Department of Human Services Office of the Family Credit Line.**

It is a sum of money allocated to some DHS funded family services. The money is given to VITS and a monthly quota is applied. The fund is used on a basis of “first in, first served” and once the monthly quota is used, the language service required will have to be sought from elsewhere. (A Pin Number to each of the Maternal and Child Health Centres and Darebin Family Services are issued to access this credit line. This credit line can be used for on site interpreting and translating services).

6.2 The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS):

TIS is a Federally funded language service provider. TIS provides free language services to Council except for the Maternal and Child Health Centres which access the DHS Office of the Family Credit Line.

TIS can be contacted for telephone interpreting and for on-site interpreting. In order to access TIS Services for free, eligible departments must fax their job request on the TIS Booking Form two weeks prior to the job date. The job required must be within business hours. City of Darebin’s code number must be quoted at all times. This code can be obtained from the Multicultural Affairs Unit.

6.3 Working with Interpreters:

It is important to note the following points when accessing the services of an Interpreter:

- Determine the appropriate language to be used; (e.g; person might be born in Turkey but speaks Kurdish)
- Check if gender of an interpreter is an issue; (e.g. in some instances a female client might prefer to have a female interpreter).
- Book sufficient time with Interpreter and your client as you will require longer time than usual when using an interpreter.
- If booking through TIS, remember to book 2 weeks in advance and use the appropriate TIS booking form.
- Details you need to provide to TIS and VITS include: language required, gender of interpreter if relevant, location of meeting, time of meeting, length of time you require the interpreter for, nature of meeting, name of your client or group, topic to be discussed, person to report to at the meeting location and contact number.
- It is advisable to book the interpreter to arrive 15 minutes ahead of time to be briefed on the interview.
- Keep sentences short and manageable for interpreter to remember everything you said.
- Talk and address your audience or client directly.
- If you have any complaints or compliments about the performance of the Interpreter please pass them on to the agency concerned.

Regular training on working with Interpreters is provided through the Multicultural Affairs Unit. Information on training sessions can be found by contacting the MAU on 9230 4411.



Multilingual Communication Guidelines

7 Translating Services (written communication):

All Council departments are required to allocate money in their budgets to meet the cost of translations.

All outgoing correspondence, publications, brochures, fliers etc... must take into consideration the communication needs of non-English speaking citizens. This can either be done through translating the entire message or a summary depending on the nature and degree of importance of each document. A summarised message can refer the reader to call the Council's Multilingual Telephone Line and access further information in his/her preferred language.

If using a summarised translated message it is important to ensure that the summary includes information on the topic of the correspondence, and who or which department to contact should the person require further information. Below is a sample sentence to be translated into the standard six languages other than English and used on all outgoing generic correspondence:

This information is from the City of Darebin and relates to (Insert Topic). If you would like to have more information on this issue, please call the City of Darebin's Multilingual Telephone Line on: 9230 4353, tell us the language you speak to be connected to either a bilingual Council employee or an interpreter. Once connected ask to speak to (insert Council Officer's name or Department).

When deciding to translate information, it is important to consider the following:

- Your target audience.
- The appropriate languages to choose.
- Translating the whole document or a summary.
- Is the English version suitable for translation or should it be rewritten in plain English to ensure more accurate rendering in another language?

It is Council Policy that all printed material needs to be checked out and signed off by the Communications and Public Affairs Department for proper usage of logo and corporate style. The same document needs to be checked and signed off by the Multicultural Affairs Coordinator for its translated content.

In order to access translating services, Council staff need to complete a Translation Request Form available from the Multicultural Affairs Unit, and electronically via the intranet.

Requests for translation need to include:

- Name of Department.
- Contact person and number.
- Language/s required.
- Time required by.
- Format of translated text.
- Allocation number

Usually for a document that targets the general community, Council requires translations to be in the top six languages other than English spoken in Darebin which are: Italian, Greek, Macedonian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic (2001 ABS census). However in some instances the target audience might differ such as when targeting young people or second generation families from NESB backgrounds.

The Multicultural Affairs Unit advises Council officers to plan their communication strategy to incorporate the communication needs of diverse communities into their overall planning.

8 Council's Language Aides (LAs):

In March 2000, the first group of bilingual staff completed a training course as Language Aides. The Language Aides role is to assist communication with non-English speaking citizens.

At the start of each year new Language Aides are recruited to replace the ones who have left. The new recruits do their training and join the pool of Language Aides. A list of Language Aides is available on the internal electronic phone directory, on the intranet or you can obtain a printout of the list directly from the Multicultural Affairs Unit.

LAs are a combination of Customer Service Officers and other bilingual Council staff.

8.1 Duties and Responsibilities of Language Aides

- To be available to use language skills to answer inquiries of people who have difficulty speaking in English.
- To provide basic assistance with communication in a community language and English between a council staff member and resident during either a face-to-face or telephone inquiry (Multilingual Telephone Line), regarding simple and general Council matters.
- To ensure the proper use of telephone techniques for the purpose of communicating with a non-English speaking client.
- To occasionally assist Council staff and residents with completing Council forms, and providing an oral version of simple documents in either English or a relevant community language as required.
- Language Aides may occasionally be asked to look over and comment on any translated information that Council wishes to distribute.
- In the event that the matter a LA is assisting with becomes complicated or involves technical or legal matters, the LA will inform the Council staff member that an interpreter is required.
- A LA is trained to have a sensitive and positive attitude towards residents, recognising their language difficulties and respecting their cultural background.
- A LA participates in on-going training organised by Council.
- A LA respects the confidentiality of all matters of communication he/she have assisted with.

9 Multilingual Communication Service (MCS):

The Darebin City Council Multilingual Communication Service refers to communication in Languages Other Than English (LOTE) either by phone or face to face. Council established the MCS in March 2000. The MCS incorporates a Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL). The MTL is operated by Customer Service Officers who have been trained to manage incoming calls from citizens requesting to communicate in LOTE. The MCS also refers to face to face communication with NES citizens. The MCS is monitored on a monthly basis and data is collected from Customer Service Officers and LAs to keep track of the number of communication instances in LOTE.

All Council outgoing correspondence and publications should refer to the MTL for inquiries in LOTE.



Non-English Speaking citizens may call the City of Darebin Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL) on 9230 4353

1	The call is answered by a Customer Service Officer who identifies the language of the caller.	
2	Non-English Speaking caller indicates the language he/she speaks.	
3	The caller is asked to wait and is put on hold.	
4	CSO either calls one of Council's Language Aides (LAs) or an external interpreter.	
5	CSO conferences the call.	
6	If the inquiry involves another council officer, the CSO will hang up. The LA will contact the relevant council officer and will conference the call with the NES caller.	



14 Ideas and tools for communication with Darebin's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities.

A number of ideas are suggested below as tools to be used for communication with CALD communities. These include:

- > Advertising in ethnic media (radio, newspapers)
- > Advertising in LOTE in local paper
- > Darebin News
- > Media conference involving ethnic press
- > Visiting ethnic groups directly
- > Using peak ethnic groups such as Darebin Ethnic Communities Council as networks to get information out.
- > Direct mail-out in LOTE.
- > Direct information sessions to non-English speaking citizens.
- > Using Ethnic Community Advocates
- > Multilingual Website
- > Establishing community partnership with local groups
- > Involving key stakeholders in planning and implementing stages
- > Distribution of promotional material to key outlets such as:
 - Migrant Resource Centre (MRC)
 - Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA)
 - Neighbourhood Houses
 - Ethno-specific agencies
 - Places of worship
 - Community Health Centres
 - Doctors surgeries
 - Community Information Centres
 - Centrelink
 - Train stations
 - Police stations
 - Darebin Libraries
- > Distribution of promotional material such as fliers, posters and brochures to;
 - Local shops
 - Specialty ethnic shops
 - Shopping centres
 - Market
- > Distribution of promotional material to educational institutions:
 - TAFE
 - University
 - Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES)
 - Schools (Newsletters)
- > Use the on-hold message
- > Use the Council's signboard
- > General brochures, publications, outgoing correspondence including forms used by Council need to incorporate a translated summary message in the top six LOTE spoken in Darebin.
- > Provision of Interpreters or LAs to communicate verbally with non-English Speaking citizens.
- > Translation of entire message.

15. Further Advice

The Multicultural Affairs Unit exists to assist Council departments with advice on multicultural affairs, access and equity and liaising with ethnic groups.

**The MAU is
contactable on:
9230 4411 or
9230 4589**



policy

Introduction:

The City of Darebin's Multilingual Communication Service (MCS) uses the bilingual skills of internal Council staff to provide basic interpreting services to citizens who have difficulty communicating in English or prefer to communicate in a language other than English. It was launched in March 2000.

Council staff have been selected and trained as Language Aides (LAs) as part of the MCS program. They assist other Council staff in their communication with the community.

This Language Aide Policy Guidelines & Procedures (LAPG&P) document provides information on the rationale that underpins the service and information on how it operates.

Policy Objective:

The LAPG&P aims to provide a rationale and guidelines on how Darebin City Council uses the cultural and linguistic skills of its staff to benefit the community.

It sets out the eligibility criteria for Council employees who wish to register as LAs, as well as the steps and circumstances under which they will be called upon to provide communication services.

The LAPG&P regulates and standardises the activities of LAs and institutes a reward system which recognises the LAs skills and services.

Policy Context:

Introduction

Australian society is multicultural and multilingual. Language, culture and identity are inter-linked. Australian society has always been a culturally diverse society. Australian Indigenous people have always had a rich variety of cultures, languages and customs. (Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century, 1999).

Over the years Australia adopted policies which aimed to manage its immigration program. These ranged from the White Australia Policy which was adopted in 1901 and abandoned in early 1970s, to policies of assimilation, integration and finally multiculturalism which recognizes and positively accepts that Australia is and will remain a culturally diverse country (Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century, 1999).

Origins

The development of the LAPG&P for the City of Darebin stems from a number of sources and influences:

- > Federal and State policies on multiculturalism.
- > Federal and State policies on racial discrimination and equal opportunity.
- > The adoption of policies of access and equity at the local level.
- > The National Policy on Languages.
- > The response of Darebin City Council to its citizens whose communication needs are better served through languages other than English.
- > Productive Diversity principles which are based on harnessing the economic benefits of multiculturalism, through the utilisation of the cultural and linguistic resources of an organisation.



The Australian Federal Government

The Australian Federal Government adopted the Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society. This is a national policy that provides a framework for delivering culturally responsive government services. The Charter has seven principles: Access, Equity, Communication, Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Accountability.

Under its Communication Principle the Charter states:

Government service providers should use strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements and how they can obtain them.

Under the principle of Effectiveness the Charter states as a practical strategy for achieving effectiveness:

Agencies recognise, utilise and remunerate the linguistic skills, cultural knowledge and community contacts of their staff, as appropriate.

Australia's National Policy on Languages (1987) states that:

The Language pluralism of Australia is regarded as a valuable national resource enhancing and enriching cultural and intellectual life and as valuable economic resource in its potential for use in international trade.

The Victorian Government

The Victorian Government produced guidelines for language services in 1995 in a booklet entitled; "Speaking of Diversity". It states that :

The provision of adequate language services is a vital component of accessible and equitable public services provision. And that appropriate language services:

- > **Contribute to the achievement of excellence and responsiveness in public administration.**
- > **Promote efficiency in interactions with non-English speakers; and**
- > **Enhance the effectiveness of service delivery.**

City of Darebin

In the City of Darebin approximately 12,000 people do not speak English well or at all. Over 100 languages are spoken in Darebin. It is important to acknowledge that effective communication relies not only on having the ability to communicate in a common language but also on the ability to understand the cultural codes that impact on the language used.

A survey of staff at Darebin indicated that over 35% of the staff spoke a language other than English. This presented Darebin City Council with the challenge of putting these untapped cultural and linguistic resources into use as advocated by the Productive Diversity principles.

As a local government it is incumbent upon the Darebin City Council to be equipped and competent in responding to the needs of its culturally and linguistically diverse community. Federal and State Policies and legislations clearly indicate that it is unlawful to discriminate against residents on the basis of a number of characteristics including ethnicity and language. In other words, it is Council's responsibility to meet the communication needs of its citizens through the provision of information in languages other than English as well as through culturally appropriate services.

Darebin City Council Plan

The Council Plan highlights communication and consultation as part of our challenges as an organisation; Darebin's significant proportion of residents from non-English speaking backgrounds require special consideration in our communication strategies.

The Multilingual Communication Service which operates through the Language Aides services, contributes significantly in meeting the communication challenge as identified in the Council Plan.



guidelines

Definition and Role of LAs:

LAs are Darebin City Council employees who are selected to use their second language to assist in the communication between English speaking employees and clients who do not speak English well or at all.

LAs are available to provide basic assistance with communication in a community language and English between a Council staff member and a resident, during a face-to-face or telephone enquiry. LAs may, depending on their written skills, be asked to do very basic and short translations of simple messages. LAs should only help with inquiries of a general or simple nature. Some examples include answering counter inquiries, providing directions to another office, or making appointments for a further visit.

The LAs are part of the MCS which is designed to provide Council with 'in house' language service, and it should be the first point of contact.

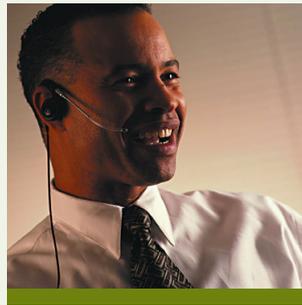
When provision of language services is required regarding legal, technical and other complex matters (and for matters that will take a longer time or require an in-depth or formal interview) Translating and Interpreting Services should be contacted and professional interpreting and translating should be provided. This is necessary for two reasons:

1. LAs may not have professional qualifications in interpreting and/or translating which are highly desirable for more complex work.

2. In addition, as LA's language service duties are additional to a normal, full or part-time working load, it is expected that work through the MCS will not impact significantly on their other working commitments.

Language Aide Allowance:

A language aide allowance is paid to LAs in recognition for their language services provided to the Council. The rate of allowance is \$780 per annum. LAs can choose to have the allowance paid in two installments either as additional payment to employee salary (in June and December) or added to the employee's superannuation scheme.



Enlisting as a Language Aide:

Bilingual staff interested in enlisting as LAs need to lodge an Expression of Interest form obtainable from the Multicultural Affairs Unit, or in this manual (see forms), fill in the form and return to the MAU. Decision for application approval is based on the:

- > Degree of LAs' skill and fluency in English and LOTE.
- > Current number of bilingual staff registered as LAs.
- > Demand for the language spoken by the bilingual staff.
- > Type of work performed by applicant, which determines their level of availability to assist with communication needs.
- > Completion of Language Aides training provided by Council.

Bilingual staff in Council's Customer Service areas are expected to enlist as LAs.

Reviewing and Monitoring the MCS:

- > The MCS is monitored on a regular basis and will be reviewed annually. This will help to :
 - Monitor Languages used
 - Assess the level of demand
 - Record types of matters dealt with by LAs.
 - Identify issues of concern.
 - Identify improvements to the service.
 - Implement changes and improvements

Periodic meetings of LAs are held to discuss issues and address training needs.

The outcomes of monitoring will lead to reviewing the scheme. Changes may be made in relation to the languages covered by LAs and the amount of allowance paid.

There may be instances of cessation of allowance paid to LAs where the circumstances are no longer justified. Council will ensure that there has been prior consultation with the staff member concerned so that sufficient time is given to enable the staff member to adjust their personal circumstances prior to the payment ceasing.

The Multilingual Communication Register:

The Multilingual Communication Register is a database application that enables Language Aides in Council to log in their communication activities directly to a central database from their computers. The kind of information collected includes the type of communication completed: e.g telephone, face to face contacts as well as translations and proof reading activities performed throughout a given period of time. An important aspect to this system is the generation of electronic reports that are useful to other Council departments to obtain community responses to services and programs and to incorporate those responses into their planning processes.

The kinds of reports the system generates and updates automatically include:

- Number of calls per language
- Number of calls per Language Aide
- Types of issues per language per department.
- Number of issues per department.
- Total number of communication contacts per language per contact type, etc.
- Average duration time of communication contacts.
- Number of calls referred to interpreter
- Monitoring how the caller found out about the Multilingual Communication Service.

In-house Translation

This is done for very basic simple messages which are used as summary, standard messages on outgoing correspondence.

The services offered in this regard include:

- Editing of text into plain English to facilitate a more effective translated version.
- Translation into six languages.
- Proof reading of translations.
- Desktop publishing of translated text when required.

Translations of longer and more complex messages have to be referred to professional translators.

procedures

Responsibilities of LAs:

LAs are responsible for the following:

- Providing timely and accurate language assistance when called upon to do so.
- Notifying the Multicultural Affairs Unit , if the LAs workload is excessive, that is, if the demand for language assistance is impacting negatively on the employee's normal workload;
- Attending regular Language Aides meetings.
- Attending Council organized training and information sessions specially designed for LAs.
- Ensuring notification of Multicultural Affairs Unit of any leave absence and subsequent unavailability to take calls.
- To abide by the parameters of their role as LAs.
- Keeping accurate record of language assistance performed and entering such data onto the Multilingual Communication Register.



procedures

Measuring the MCS performance:

In order to sustain the Language Aides Allowance, each Language Aide (LA) is encouraged to fulfill a minimum of 52 units per year.

Each unit is calculated in the following way:

15 Minutes or less of verbal interpreting is equivalent to 1 unit.

100 words or less of translation and/or proof reading is equivalent to 2 units.

An annual review of the MCS will look into the number of units performed by each LA as a factor to consider in deciding which languages Council continues to offer as part of the in-house Multilingual Communication Service.

Managers' and supervisors' responsibilities:

The MCS is an organisation's resource and its success depends on the support and commitment from all Council departments. In order to ensure that LAs operate effectively, Managers and Supervisors need to be aware of the following aspects:

- It is important that LAs receive full support from their Supervisors and Managers in fulfilling their role of providing language assistance to Council staff .
- Interpreters, rather than the service of an LA, are to be used for matters that fall outside the provision of a simple language assistance;
- That LAs attend training and/or monitoring sessions organised by the MAU.
- That LAs are remunerated (Time in lieu or overtime) from their department's budget, for attending meetings and training sessions that fall outside normal working hours.

Training:

Training is provided to Language Aides and includes the following:

- Clear guidelines of role of LAs and responsibilities;
- Overview of the Council's functions and operations;
- Rationale for the selection of languages.
- Guidelines for providing language assistance and matters for which interpreters should be engaged;
- Arrangements and responsibilities for monitoring usage;
- Reporting arrangements for difficulties which might occur and which fall outside the scope of the individual work unit.
- Interpreting Techniques.
- Code of Ethics.
- Utilisation of the Darebin City Council's Glossary of Terms in a Language Other Than English.

Council responsibilities:

Council is responsible for the following matters:

- Ensuring the utilisation of LAs is integrated into the Council's multilingual communication practices.
- Promoting the availability of LAs to Darebin citizens.
- Ensuring that appropriate language assistance is provided to Darebin citizens.
- Monitoring the MCS and implementing improvements.
- Providing and coordinating on-going professional development for LAs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Contact the
Multicultural Affairs
Unit on: 9230 4411
or 9230 4589.

translation booking form

Forward to Multicultural Affairs Unit
Fax: 9471 2104 or internal mail

Please photocopy then fill in and sign a hard copy of this form and attach it to the text to be translated.
Email an electronic copy of the text to be translated to David Diaz.

Name of person requesting translation: _____

Extension number: _____

Unit / Area: _____

Date this form is submitted to Multicultural Affairs: _____

Please indicate when you would like your translation back?

(Please allow at least one week leading time) : _____

How many words is the text? _____

What language is the text in? _____

What format do you require the translation ?

Layout: As original A4 size other

Format: Laser print-out Word PDF EPS JPEG TIFF

Delivery: Pick up Email Fax Internal mail

Other requirements: _____

Allocation Number: _____

Which Languages are you requesting? Please list them

1. _____ 4. _____ 7. _____

2. _____ 5. _____ 8. _____

3. _____ 6. _____ 9. _____

Signed: _____

If you have any inquiries please contact The Multicultural Affairs Unit on: 9230 4411 or 9230 4589

expression of interest form

Language Aide Scheme part 1

A: Name and Contact Details:

Full Name: _____

Position: _____

Extension Number: _____

Mobile Number: _____

Department: _____

Reports to: _____

B: Bilingual/Multilingual Profile:

Country of Birth: _____

Ethnic Background: _____

Year of arrival to Australia: _____

Please list the Languages Other than English that you speak:

1 Language One:

Please tick one or more appropriate answers:

I have acquired the above listed language by:

- Language spoken at home
- Studied at primary school
- Studied at secondary school
- Studied at tertiary level

How do you rate your fluency in the above listed language other than English, Please tick:

My verbal skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic

My written skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic

2 Language Two:

Please tick one or more appropriate answers:

I have acquired the above listed language by:

- Language spoken at home
- Studied at primary school
- Studied at secondary school
- Studied at tertiary level

How do you rate your fluency in the above listed language other than English, Please tick:

My verbal skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic

My written skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic

3 Language Three:

Please tick one or more appropriate answers:

I have acquired the above listed language by:

- Language spoken at home
- Studied at primary school
- Studied at secondary school
- Studied at tertiary level

How do you rate your fluency in the above listed language other than English, Please tick:

My verbal skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic

My written skills are:

- Very fluent
- Fluent
- Basic



MULTILINGUAL COMMUNICATION SERVICES

<u>Internal Analysis</u>	Actuals	<u>External Analysis</u>	Estimate
	\$		\$
Interpreting		Interpreting	
Expenditure		Expenditure	
Salaries	13,880 ¹	Yearly Rental	10,000 ³
Training	5,000 ²	Cost per call	33,060 ⁴
Meetings	3,424		
Allowances Other	16,595	Total - INTERPRETING	<u><u>43,060</u></u>
Promotions	6,489	* Set-up cost	25,000 ⁵
Total - INTERPRETING	<u><u>45,387</u></u>		
Translations		Translations	
Expenditure		Expenditure	
Salaries	15,250 ⁶	Consulting	20,385 ⁸
Contractors	39,290	Translations	47,552 ⁹
	⁷	Desktop Publishing	9,966 ¹⁰
Total Expenditure	<u><u>54,540</u></u>	Total - TRANSLATIONS	<u><u>77,903</u></u>
Income			
Government Grants	-15,468		
Total Income	<u><u>-15,468</u></u>		
Total - TRANSLATIONS	<u><u>39,072</u></u>		
Website Maintenance		Website Maintenance	
Expenditure		Expenditure	
Salaries	4,308 ¹¹	Site Maintenance	8,280 ¹²
Total - WEBSITE	<u><u>4,308</u></u>	Total - WEBSITE	<u><u>8,280</u></u>
Total - MULTILINGUAL COMMUNICATION	<u><u>88,767</u></u>	Total - MULTILINGUAL COMMUNICATION	<u><u>129,243</u></u>

Assumptions

Interpreting

Internal Analysis

1 Salaries:

Officer - Multilingual Communication Program:

Bi-monthly meetings with language aides x 2 hours per meeting x 2 hours preparation time

4 hours per week contact with language aids

1 hour per day is spent on reporting and analysis of the interpreting service

2 Training:

Training the language aides - \$5,000

External Analysis

3 Yearly Rental:

Rental cost of the 10 multilingual telephone lines (10 lines is a minimum requirement)

4 Cost per call:

Based on 2204 internal communication units for 2002/03 (551 hrs)

5 Set-up Costs:

A once off cost of \$25,000 will be charged to set-up recorded multilingual telephone lines in 10 languages (10 lines is a minimum requirement)

Translations

Internal Analysis

6 Salaries:

Officer - Multilingual Communication Program:

Internal jobs - Consulting & follow-up - 0.5 hour consulting per translation x 51 jobs + 2 hours follow-up per translation x 51 jobs

Internal jobs - Desktop Publishing - 0.5 hour per job x 51 jobs

External jobs - Consulting & follow-up - 0.5 hour consulting per translation x 100 jobs + 2 hours follow-up per translation x 100 jobs

External jobs - Desktop Publishing - 0.5 hour per job x 100 jobs

Co-ordinator - Multicultural Affairs:

Co-ordinator overhead - 5% of salary on supervising and meetings

External Analysis

8 Consulting:

Based on \$90 per hour - 1.5 hours of consultancy work per transaction * 15 transactions for 2002/03

9 Translations:

Based on 100 jobs already costed externally + \$162 for translating 6 languages * 51 transactions done internally for 2002/03

10 Desktop Publishing:

Based on a contractor charging \$66 per hour x 1 hour per enquiry x 151 enquiries for 2002/03

Website Maintenance

Internal Analysis

11 Salaries:

Based on 25% of website being updated - taking approximately 1 month to update

External Analysis

12 Site Maintenance:

Based on 25% of website content being updated.

General

Only the attributable salary of the Multilingual Communication Officer has been costed in this analysis

General overheads such as utilities have not been included in this analysis

DAREBIN COUNCIL GLOSSARY

(Excerpts: The following terms are among those pre-translated into each of the 6 targeted languages)

HEALTH SERVICES

Advice
Ants
Bees
Beauty parlours
Body piercing
Cause danger to health
Communicable infectious disease control
Commercial premises
Consumer complaints
Contaminated food
Correct hygiene
Council's Health Department
Dirty / Unclean
Domestic premises
European wasps
Excessive noise
Food surveillance
Habitat issues
Hairdressers
Head lice (pediculosis)
Health officers
Health Registrations
Housing
Immunisation Records
Inspected
Investigate
Noise
Nuisance complaints
Odours
Obnoxious smells
Pest control
Petrol pumps
Premises
Private housing
Public housing
Public health
Public health related issues
Reports of nuisances
Retail shop scales
Rodents
Services
Spas
Sterilisation techniques
Swimming pools
Tattooists
Trade Measurements Victoria
Treatment solution (for head lice)
Unfair business practices

Unsatisfactory food handling practices
Unsatisfactory hygiene practices

LOCAL LAWS

Abandoned vehicles
Advertising signs
Auctions
Building works
Burning off
Buskers
Constitute a danger
Constitute a fire hazard
Dangerous premises
Derelict vehicles
Dilapidated buildings
Display goods or trade on the footpath
Dumped Rubbish
Ensure safe passage of vehicles and pedestrian traffic
Goods on Footpath
Impound
Incinerators
Issues of safety and amenity
Keep any growth cut back to the property line
Litter Report Hotline
Lighting of incinerators
Local Laws Officers
Merchandise
Municipal amenity
On the spot fine
Outbreak of fire
Overhanging branches
Pedestrians
Permit
Persons dealing in goods
Private Land
Prohibited
Public land
Raffle tickets
Recreation vehicles
Shopping Trolleys
Spoil from land abutting the street
State and Local Government Regulations
Storage of heavy motor vehicles
Street traders and collectors
Towed
Traders
Trail bikes
Unregistered vehicles
Unightly premises

PETS

Adequate water and food
Administration fee
Animal management
Barking dogs
Council Rangers
Desexing
Dog and cat registration
Dogs in parks
Dogs on leads
Domestic Animals Strategy
Domestic (Feral & Nuisance) Animal Act
Fowl
Lost Dogs' Home
Microchipping
Pet ownership
Permit for more than Pigs
Proof of desexing
Reptiles
Rodents
Ranger
Registered pet
Registration fee
Registration form
Registrations
Responsible pet ownership
Sheep
Sterilised cat/dog
Unsterilised cat/dog

RATES, PROPERTY AND BUILDING

Bpay
Building
Building Department
Building permits
Concession card
Darebin City Council
Due date
Easy Way
Factor determining rates
Instalments
Interest/charge interest
Late payments
Local Government Act
Lump sum
Mandatory building inspections
Maxi Pay
Occupiers
Owners
Ownership Details
Payment of rates
Pensioner rate assistance scheme
Property Enquiry
Property owners
Property valuations
Rate Notice
Rates
Rates Office
Rebate
Re-valuation

Sales Register
Valuations of Land Act
Voters rolls

URBAN PLANNING

Administration
Assessment
Creek corridor development
Consultative approach
Council's planning committee
Darebin Planning Scheme
Demographic trends
Enforcement
Fully integrated
Future developments
Implementing (its) urban planning strategies
Land use studies
Major policy issues
Mediation meetings
Objections to applications
Physical environment
Planning and Environment Act
Planning application
Reserve development
Resolve issues in dispute
Responsible authority
Strategic direction
Strategic planning
Strategic Planning Unit
Town planning
Urban Design Unit
Urban Planning Department
Zone/zoning/rezoning

AGED AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Assessment
Bus
Carers
Case management
Community cares
Community aged cares packages
Confusion
Culturally relevant program
Dementia cares
Dental care
Disabled parking scheme
Eligibility
Food services
Frail aged people
General home care
Home maintenance
Installation of handrails and ramps
Library services
Meals
Memory loss
Personal care
Payment of accounts
Podiatry
Provides access
Respite care
Reviews

Routine household tasks
Security devices
Senior citizens
Severe/moderate abilities
Shopping
Smoke detectors
Specific home care
Specifically designated
Support services
Taxi voucher
Transport
Window locks

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Additional needs and disabilities
Assist families
Baby capsules
Before and after school programs
Birth certificate
Central enrolment process
Childcare
Childcare centre
Children's services support workers
Community Care
Committee managed
Council approved caregivers
Council owned
Developmental assessment
Educational groups
Enrolment
Enrolment is centralised
Families in crisis
Family day care
Family counselling
Family income
Fees
Flexible child cares
Free dental care
Health advice
Hearing tests
Hire
Holiday programs
Home visits
Immunisation
Immunisation book
Immunisation certificate
Kindergarten
Maternal and child health
Maternal and Child Health Centre
Occasional care
Occasional care services
Parent education
Playgroups
Pre-school
Pre-school dental
Primary school holiday programs

Privately operated centres
Proof of identification
Provide educational and social program
Respite care
Sessional or casual care
Support services
Toy library

FAMILY SERVICES

Advocates with financial institutions
Budget/budgeting
Concessions
Counselling
Creditors
Darebin Family Services
Domestic violence
Emotional problems
Family counselling
Family relationships
Family support
Financial counselling
Government Departments
Groupwork
Home and child management
Nutrition
Options
Parent education
Parenting skills
Personal support
Practical assistance
Residents
Specialised support groups
Support groups
Support services

IMMUNISATION

Across the municipality
"At risk" children
Doctor
Free immunisation program
Hepatitis B injections
HIB (haemophilias)
Immunisation Certificate
Immunisations
Immunisation history
Immunisation records
Immunisation status
MMR (measles/mumps)
Sabine (poliomyelitis)
Triple antigen (diphtheria-tetanus-whooping cough)

SENIOR CITIZENS

Arts
Activities
Billiards
Bingo
Bowls
Cards
Community base
Community bus (list continues...)