

CULTURAL HARMONY THE NEXT DECADE 2002 – 2012

Report on the responses to the Green Paper

and development of

The Community Relations Plan of Action 2012



*New South Wales Government
June 2004*

WHITE PAPER

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT

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I am proud that NSW continues to lead the way in Australia in recognising the benefits of its cultural diversity.

The White Paper, *Cultural Diversity The Next Decade 2002-2012*, flows from and builds on policies initiated in the 1996 document *Building on Our Cultural Diversity*.

The White Paper was developed after wide-ranging consultations with community organisations, individuals, and thorough consideration by public sector agencies.

I acknowledge the contribution of 102 responses and submissions received during the consultation, and a further 29 communications from public sector agencies during the drafting process.

These contributions have greatly assisted in developing a framework for better delivery of services to our culturally diverse community of NSW in the coming decade.

I trust that the White Paper, in conjunction with the provisions outlined in the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*, will be an important resource in helping us strengthen our harmonious society.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Bob Carr".

Bob Carr
Premier
Minister for the Arts
Minister for Citizenship

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Under the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*, there is a legislated requirement for the chief executive officer of each public authority to implement the principles of multiculturalism within the area of his or her administration.

This White Paper, *Cultural Harmony The Next Decade 2002-2012*, is intended to provide broad guidelines to chief executive officers and agencies in implementing the requirements of the Act over the next decade.

The White Paper is divided into three sections. The first section gives a brief overview of the historical background to the paper, the review process that led to its development, and the demographic context that underlies the guidelines that are developed within it.

The second section reports on the range of critical issues that were identified as current during the review process. It also outlines current government policies and initiatives being undertaken to meet some of the issues identified. These policies provide a springboard for future actions in providing appropriate and equitable services to our multicultural society, and maintaining mutual respect, tolerance and harmony within it.

The third section sets out the Community Relations Plan of Action 2012, based on four Key Objectives:

- leadership
- community harmony
- access and equity
- economic and cultural opportunities.

These Key Objectives flow from the principles of multiculturalism and articulate the Government's aims and the results expected from NSW Government agencies.

It is expected that the Key Objectives and provisions of the Act will be addressed by agencies through the development of their corporate plan, and the linking of each agency's corporate plan with its EAPS plan and business plans.

The EAPS program will remain the cornerstone for service provision by public sector agencies in NSW, and the main mechanism for the Community Relations Commission to assess and report on the effectiveness of public authorities in observing the principles of multiculturalism in the conduct of their affairs.

Under the Community Relations Plan of Action 2012, it will be the responsibility of agencies to develop strategies and set specific milestones, appropriate to their area of service, through their business plans.

In addition to agency-based services, the Plan of Action also places an increased emphasis on partnerships and whole-of-government initiatives.

Specific initiatives to be undertaken under the Community Relations Plan of Action 2012 and the lead agencies responsible include:



Key Objective 1: Leadership

- development and circulation of a Premier's Memorandum to update EAPS reporting requirements
- development and delivery of a training package for community leaders [Community Relations Commission (CRC)]
- ongoing promotion of opportunities to serve on government boards and committees
- appointment of two Youth Commissioners [CRC].



Key Objective 2: Community harmony

- integration of the principles of multiculturalism and implementation strategies into local council Social/Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines [Department of Local Government]
- incorporation of Civics and Citizenship and Multiculturalism across the school curriculum [NSW Board of Studies]
- assistance for parents from language backgrounds other than English to engage with their children's schools [Department of Education and Training]
- establishment and ongoing implementation of a Ministerial Award in Education to recognise efforts by schools in promoting a cohesive community [Department of Education and Training]
- maintenance and progression of interagency campaigns to counter prejudice, racism and discrimination [Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation]

- implementation of the Diversity Health Institute based in Western Sydney Area Health Service to provide a statewide service ensuring that health services and programs are responsive to the social, cultural, linguistic and religious values and practices of the diverse NSW population [NSW Health]
- expansion of the NSW Government's Community Solutions Crime Prevention Strategy, which addresses social issues within local communities [multi-agency, co-ordinated by the Department of Community Services]
- targeting of police recruitment towards attracting people from diverse backgrounds into the NSW police force [NSW Police].

Key Objective 3: Access and equity

- increased emphasis on cross-cultural training at all levels within agencies
- introduction of a new definition of EAPS and release of a revised edition of the EAPS Resource Handbook [CRC]
- monitoring of the impact on community relations of the Commonwealth policy on Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) holders [CRC]
- extension of technology to service provision through video-conferencing and on-line services [CRC]
- refinement and improvement of language service provision [CRC].

Key Objective 4: Economic and cultural opportunities

- ongoing provision of advice and assistance on small business issues to new arrivals; continuation of the Business Migration and Referral Scheme [Department of State and Regional Development]
- facilitation of business networking opportunities [Department of State and Regional Development]
- exploration of commercial and trading opportunities overseas [Department of State and Regional Development]
- establishment of a permanent exhibition space for migrant artists [Ministry of the Arts]
- implementation of the Tourism Masterplan 2020 [Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation]

- streamlining of recognition processes for migrants' skills and qualifications [Department of Education and Training]
- use of interdepartmental networks to progress the NSW Government's initiative to increase employment opportunities for people whose first language is not English [Office of Equal Employment and Diversity - Premier's Department].



Specific Rural and Regional Initiatives

- expansion of Regional Advisory Councils [CRC]
- implementation of a whole-of-government approach to ensure appropriate service delivery for regional and rural areas under the Premier's Regional Coordination Program [Premier's Department]
- review of the Community Development Grants Program with a view to assisting smaller and isolated community groups to submit grant applications [CRC].

In addition, many of the strategies and initiatives that were developed under the previous Ethnic Affairs Action Plan 2000 will be maintained, and continue to provide the high level of service which has contributed to the development and sustainability of the successful multicultural community of New South Wales.

A review of agencies' progress against the principles of multiculturalism and the Key Objectives of this White Paper will be carried out in 2008 and released in the same year.