OMI Kalgoorlie-Boulder

Consultation summary

September 2015

# Introduction

The Office of Multicultural Interests’ (OMI) Strategic Plan 20014–2018 commits the agency to assist the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests and the Western Australian Government to achieve the full potential of multiculturalism.

OMI’s strategies relate to the whole community including business and industry groups, government and non-government agencies, culturally diverse communities and the wider community. The role of the office is as an ‘enabler’—providing information, advice, funding, training and support, and facilitating partnerships and collaboration.

As part of its community engagement model OMI holds regular consultations with culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities and key stakeholders. Since 2009, OMI has held regional consultations in Karratha, Port Hedland, Broome, Katanning, Mt Barker and Albany. OMI conducted community consultations in Kalgoorlie-Boulder from 5 to 7 September 2014 and follow-up consultations from 2 to 4 May 2015.

The 2014 consultations were conducted in partnership with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, while the 2015 follow-up consultations were conducted by a single OMI officer.

The consultations in Kalgoorlie-Boulder comprised individual meetings with key community groups and agencies, and aimed to:

* identify issues and their related impacts on people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds
* explore possible solutions and find ways to achieve them.

# Background

Kalgoorlie-Boulder is one of Australia’s largest regional cities, located in the eastern Goldfields, around 600km east of Perth. With a population of more than 30,000 people, and an area of 95,576 square metres, the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is one of the most dynamic regional centres in Western Australia.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Census indicated that for the Kalgoorlie-Boulder area:

* the total population was 31,107 people
* 22.2 per cent of the population was born overseas
* top countries of birth were New Zealand (8.6 per cent), United Kingdom (3.6 per cent), Philippines (1.4 per cent), India (0.9 per cent) and China (0.4 per cent)
* top ancestries were Australian, English, Irish, Scottish and Maori
* top non-main English speaking countries of birth were Philippines, India, China, Papua New Guinea and Germany
* main languages other than English were Tagalog (0.6 per cent), Filipino (0.6 per cent), Mandarin (0.4 per cent), Hindi (0.3 per cent) and Italian (0.2 per cent)
* top religious affiliations were Christianity (55.0 per cent), Buddhism (0.8 per cent), Hinduism (0.7 per cent) and Islam (0.5 per cent).

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder’s Strategic and Community Plan 2015–2025 (Draft) recognises that cultural diversity in the region is growing, noting that 34 per cent of the population is from outside of Australia and almost seven per cent from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island backgrounds.

Key CaLD groups include the Papua New Guinea Association, the Eastern Goldfields Filipino Australian Club, Indian Association of Goldfields WA, Friends of Africa Kalgoorlie, Indonesian Community Group, New Zealand Community, Kalgoorlie Mosque Association and the Goldfields Islamic Community Centre.

## Community engagement

Two rounds of consultation were held in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, from 5 to 7 September 2014 and from 2 to 4 May 2015. Following these consultations, OMI coordinated a Funding Forum and a Civics and Citizenship workshop in August 2015.

To undertake the consultations held in September 2014, OMI established partnerships with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. The consultations were conducted by two staff from OMI and two staff from the Department of Social Services and involved meetings with six organisations on Friday 5 September, seven community groups on Saturday 6 September and attendance at a community event on Sunday 7 September 2014 presented by the Indian Association of the Goldfields.

A total of 35 people participated in the meetings: 16 government and non-government (45 per cent) and 19 CaLD community members (55 per cent).

The consultations from 2 to 4 May 2015 were scheduled to align with the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Multicultural Festival held at Centennial Park on 3 May. The event is the largest in regional WA, with attendances of more than 5000 people, and provided an opportunity to scope a future Funding Forum and Civics and Citizenship workshops. The consultations were undertaken by an OMI staff member and involved meetings with five community groups and three government and non-government organisations.

A total of 17 people participated in the meetings: six government and non-government representatives (35 per cent) and 11 CaLD community members (65 per cent). The Multicultural Festival also provided an opportunity to engage with an additional five multicultural community groups outside of the formal meetings.

On 27 August 2015, OMI coordinated a Funding Forum in partnership with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder to help community groups and organisations identify sources of funding and learn how they can fund their projects. This was the third regional funding forum coordinated by OMI and delivered presentations from eight key funding agencies from Australian, State and local governments including the Department of Local Government and Communities, Department of Culture and Arts, Lotterywest, Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Social Services and the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission.

The Kalgoorlie-Boulder Funding Forum attracted 45 attendees representing more than 33 different community associations and not-for-profit organisations. Participants travelled from around the Goldfield-Esperance region, including from Coolgardie, Kambalda, Norseman, Dundas and Esperance. OMI has subsequently attracted a number of grant applications from the region in its September round of the Community Grants Program.

On 29 August 2015, OMI in partnership with the Constitutional Centre of Western Australia, Electoral Education Centre and Australia Day WA, coordinated a Civics and Citizenship workshop in Boulder for representatives of CaLD community organisations. The key objective of this training is to empower and increase the participation of CaLD communities in the social and civic life of the community and State.

## Key issues:

**Community strengthening—**the need to maintain support for multicultural programs and events in order to support social cohesion and a sense of belonging, particularly due to the transient nature of the population and growth of multicultural communities.

**Migrant services—**the need to improve the coordination and planning of migration and settlement support services through regular forums that included employer groups, government and non-government bodies, community leaders and ethnic groups. Currently, no settlement support services operate in Kalgoorlie to service the needs of CaLD communities.

**Settlement issues for 457 visa holders—**457 visa holders face unique issues and challenges relating to long term employment, employment conditions and potential settlement. The long process for securing 457 visas and other temporary work visas is an issue for both employer/employee and impacts on the ability of employers and employees to plan effectively for the future.

**Family support—**the need to provide greater support to women experiencing domestic violence, in particular women who migrate on a spouse visa and who are not aware of their rights. These women can be reluctant to seek support services because of their cultural backgrounds, stigma, fear of being deported and the impact on their children.

**Governance—**the need to support the incorporation of multicultural communities that previously operated informally and now seek to establish a professional identity, apply for funding and develop formal responsibilities within the membership. Newly established community organisations also require support to address the needs of their communities.

# Next steps

OMI will continue to support the Kalgoorlie-Boulder community and will work strategically in its role as an enabler—providing information, advice, funding, training and support, and facilitating partnerships and collaboration.

OMI will work to:

* advocate for the needs of local CaLD communities
* maintain relationships with CaLD networks
* support community groups to plan for and address the needs of their members
* support programs that build the capacity of local CaLD communities
* work with the local government to advance services, programs and policies for CaLD communities
* work with the Australian Government to support provision of full-time migrant services
* support the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Multicultural Festival as a way to strengthen social cohesion and promote multiculturalism across the regions.