

Employment issues

Introduction

- 11.1 The Committee received a wealth of evidence discussing the barriers faced by first and second generation migrants and refugees attempting to gain employment in the Australian workplace. This chapter discusses the predominant employment barriers for first and second generation migrants and refugees living in Australia. It then considers the adequacy of Job Services Australia's (JSA) provision of services to CALD job seekers and recommends improvements to JSA in order to better cater for the needs of all CALD job seekers.
- 11.2 Throughout the inquiry, the Committee was made aware of government, business and community initiatives designed to provide greater employment outcomes for people with CALD backgrounds. This chapter outlines some of these current initiatives that support CALD individuals wishing to participate, or gain experience, in the Australian workplace.

Barriers to employment

- 11.3 It is clear to the Committee that common barriers exist for first and second generation migrants and refugees wishing to work in Australia. CALD individuals find it particularly difficult to gain long-term employment in industries relevant to their skills, qualifications and experience due to the issues of discrimination in the workplace, the recognition of overseas

qualifications by Australian employers and the need for Australian work experience.

- 11.4 Research has revealed that CALD communities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States (US) have poorer employment outcomes than either the native-born or those who originate from other English-speaking countries. In addition to language proficiency, Dr Val Colic-Peisker notes that having a 'similar' cultural background to that of the host country helps facilitate a successful employment transition following migration.¹

Discrimination in the workplace

- 11.5 The Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments have introduced laws to protect people from discrimination and harassment in the Australian workplace. Relevant Federal laws include:
- the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
 - the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
 - the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- 11.6 Furthermore, a bill concerning the consolidation of the Commonwealth's five existing anti-discrimination acts into a single comprehensive law is under review in the Australian Parliament.
- 11.7 Despite the existence of legislation, varying levels of discrimination exist for CALD people either seeking work or who are currently employed in the Australian workplace. The Chairman of the Federation for the Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA) stated that while there is a low level of race-based complaints to the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Discrimination Board, evidence from academia suggest that direct and/or systematic racism and discrimination does exist in Australia.²
- 11.8 This view was reinforced by Professor Graeme Hugo who informed the Committee that there is a general disadvantage for CALD people living in Australian society:

Identifying what those disadvantages are is a fairly key question. There has been a fair bit of research on that, and one of the things

1 Dr Val Colic-Peisker, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University, *Submission 87*, pp. 2–3.

2 Mr Pino Migliorino, FECCA, *Committee Hansard*, 15 June 2011, p. 9.

as an Australian that disturbs me about it is that, even once you control for education, you control for qualifications, you control for everything, there is still disadvantage left. That can only be discrimination. To me, in our society, we have got terrific legal institutions and laws available to oppose discrimination but the reality is that among employers, and in society generally, there is still discrimination.³

- 11.9 In quantitative terms, the 2010 Scanlon report on social cohesion found that 14 per cent of participants surveyed had experienced some form of discrimination because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion, an increase from nine per cent and ten per cent in 2007 and 2009.⁴
- 11.10 The prevalence of indirect discrimination by employers against CALD job seekers during the application process was revealed to the Committee in evidence. Mr Power from RCOA spoke to the Committee of the various forms in which discrimination can occur:

Say if you have a whole series of candidates applying for a position and 15 of them are from professional backgrounds that you understand and you understand what the meaning of their qualifications and their work experience is in relation to your workplace. Say then that there is somebody whose background you really do not understand and you do not know whether they are going to fit into your workplace. Many risk-averse employers would go with the type of people that they know rather than those that they do not. That factor plays heavily against refugee and humanitarian entrants. There has also been research done about subtle and unsubtle forms of discrimination in the workplace against refugees and migrants from a particular background. There have been various studies involving CVs being put forward to employers with different names, English- or European sounding names versus Middle Eastern, Asian or African names, which suggests that there is subtle or unsubtle discrimination against people from different backgrounds who are applying for positions.⁵

3 *Committee Hansard*, 2 April 2012, p. 4.

4 Professor A Markus, 'Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys Summary Report 2010', *Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements*, Victoria, pp. 13; 17.

5 *Committee Hansard*, 3 February 2012, p. 8.

- 11.11 Research has shown that people with a name that does not sound Anglo-Saxon are less likely to progress through the preliminary stages of a job application process, compared to those with an Anglo-Saxon name.⁶
- 11.12 The situation of David Kuel, see **Case study 11.1**, further alerted the Committee to the problem of discrimination by employers against CALD job seekers.

Case study 11.1 Mr David Kuel - Employment barriers for refugees

David Kuel is a Sudanese humanitarian entrant currently living Tasmania. Upon his arrival to Australia in 1999, Mr Kuel decided to complement his experience as a social worker by undertaking study at an Australian university. During this time Mr Kuel worked as a university mentor for five years, a community volunteer, founded a multicultural youth group, and was awarded Young Citizen of the Year in 2004.

Having successfully completed two degrees and a college certificate, Mr Kuel thought that his qualifications and experience in community volunteering would greatly enhance his employment opportunities in Tasmania. However, Mr Kuel has found it particularly difficult to get a job relevant to his qualifications and experience in Tasmania. Mr Kuel's ability to speak three different languages and engage with local migrant communities has also had little effect on his employment outcomes.

Mr Kuel believes that being identified as a refugee or humanitarian entrant can immediately lead to a negative perception of the individual's skills. Based on his experiences, Mr Kuel is of the opinion that there is a high level of institutional racism that does not allow everybody equal access to employment in the Australian workplace.

Source Mr David Kuel, *Multicultural Council of Tasmania Inc*, Committee Hansard, 9 March 2012, p.15.

- 11.13 While acknowledging that Australia's current racial discrimination laws at both the Federal and State level have had a net beneficial effect, the Race Discrimination Officer, Dr Helen Szoke, noted that they are being changed in order to more effectively address the issue of institutionalised discrimination.⁷
- 11.14 Dr Szoke also informed the Committee of the 'National Anti-Racism Strategy for Australia', a key component of Australia's multicultural

⁶ Dr Andrew Leigh and Ms Ruth Tay, *Submission 147*, p. 10.

⁷ *Committee Hansard*, 23 February 2012, p. 5.

policy, *The People of Australia*. Working across three government departments – DIAC, the Attorney-General’s Department and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) – together with the Australian Multicultural Council and the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Strategy aims:

...to promote a clear understanding in the Australian community of what racism is and how it can be prevented and reduced. We are also looking at three broad objectives: to create awareness of racism and its impact, to build on good practice to prevent and reduce it, and to build capacity for people to address it.

...we believe that the current consolidation process of antidiscrimination laws should be monitored to ensure that enhancement of these protections continues in the future as a complement to the multicultural policy.⁸

11.15 The Committee notes that on 24 August 2012, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) officially launched the ‘National Anti-Racism Strategy’. The Strategy has three core objectives:

- create awareness of racism and its effects on individuals and the broader community;
- identify, promote and build on good practice initiatives to prevent and reduce racism; and
- empower communities and individuals to take action to prevent and reduce racism and to seek to redress when it occurs.⁹

Committee comment

11.16 From the evidence taken, the Committee recognises the ongoing importance of the Government addressing matters related to the discrimination against CALD individuals in the workplace. The Committee welcomes the launch of the ‘National Anti-Racism Strategy’ and supports the progressive implementation of the Strategy from July 2012 to July 2013.

8 Committee Hansard, 23 February 2012, p. 2.

9 Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), *National Anti-Racism Strategy*, July 2012, p. 9.

Language barriers

- 11.17 A CALD individual's proficiency in English can be a significant barrier in their attempts to find employment relevant to their skills. This stems from the lack of available opportunities for CALD individuals to develop their language skills relevant to the workplace. Also, in some instances, employers may be unaccepting of foreign accents regardless of an individual's English proficiency.¹⁰
- 11.18 The South Australian Department of Trade and Economic Development's (DTED) research has indicated that differences exist between migrants from English and non-English speaking backgrounds with respect to their employment level achieved. That is, the higher the proficiency of English, the greater the likelihood that the migrant's skills will be effectively utilised in the local labour market.¹¹
- 11.19 A competent command of English is also an important stepping stone for CALD individuals in gaining greater knowledge of the customs associated with the Australian workplace. The Limestone Coast Multicultural Network Inc. told the Committee that the ability to communicate in English creates more opportunities for CALD individuals to become involved in traineeships, work placements and volunteering opportunities.¹²
- 11.20 English continues to remain a barrier to employment partly due to the lack of specific English courses designed to meet needs in areas such as medicine, engineering and science. The lack of industry-specific, English vocabulary training was a common concern expressed in the evidence received.

Australian work experience

- 11.21 As identified by the Adult Migrant English Service (AMES), Australian work experience is important because it:
- provides newly arrived job seekers with experience to strengthen their job applications and satisfy an employer's preference for workers with Australian work experience;
 - educates job seekers on the Australian workplace; and

10 Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre, *Submission 404*, p. 8.

11 South Australian Government, *Submission 470*, p. 30.

12 Mrs Heather Muirhead, Manager and Mr Danny Aye, Spokesperson, Karen Community, Limestone Coast Multicultural Network Inc., *Committee Hansard*, 29 July 2011, pp. 19–20.

- gives employers the opportunity to assess the capabilities of job seekers through direct observation.¹³
- 11.22 However, the Committee heard from a range of first generation migrants and refugees who have found great difficulty in finding work in Australia due to their lack of local work experience. In some cases, skilled migrants or refugees who hold a qualification/s from an overseas university find themselves in low skilled jobs in industries not relevant to their acquired skill set on the basis that they do not possess relevant Australian work experience.
- 11.23 The AHRC observed that Australian employers usually require relevant work experience before hiring a prospective candidate. The problem for CALD individuals is the difficulty in finding first-hand work experience and knowledge of the industry when they do not have any local Australian work experience to begin with.¹⁴

Job Services Australia

- 11.24 JSA is the Australian Government's national employment services system. It offers personalised support and services for disadvantaged job seekers in the Australian workplace by providing access to training, skills development and workplace experience through the 2 100 JSA sites located across Australia. JSA services are available to all job seekers entitled to work in Australia, though the level of assistance provided is dependent upon the job seeker's individual circumstances, such as their income support status.¹⁵
- 11.25 There are four different streams of support services offered by JSA for eligible job seekers. Stream 1 provides limited services to job seekers deemed most prepared for employment. They have access to services including resume and job interview preparation, as well as advice on employment opportunities in the local job market. Job seekers referred to Stream 2 and Stream 3 are identified as having moderate or significant barriers in gaining employment, while Stream 4 deals with those who face severe barriers.¹⁶

13 Adult Migrant English Service (AMES), *Submission 118*, p. 15.

14 AHRC, *Submission 423*, p. 8.

15 DEEWR, *Submission 474*, p. 15.

16 DEEWR, *Submission 474*, p. 15.

- 11.26 The Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) is the initial assessment tool used to determine what JSA stream job seekers are eligible for. Job seekers shown to have significant and multiple barriers through the JSCI are referred for a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA): an independent assessment examining the job seeker's circumstances in detail. As DEEWR notes, all job seekers that have arrived in Australia as a refugee within the last five years are referred for a JCA.¹⁷

New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

- 11.27 The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) is an employment service provided by JSA. DEEWR's submission notes that the NEIS provides accredited small business training, business advice and mentoring for eligible job seekers, as well as ongoing income support for up to 52 weeks. To be eligible for NEIS a job seeker must be in Stream Services, receive an eligible income support payment and have a business idea that meets the business eligibility criteria. Disadvantaged job seekers, such as migrants who are Stream 3 or Stream 4 job seekers, may be able to access additional mentoring support and assistance during their participation in NEIS.¹⁸

CALD job seekers

- 11.28 Since the establishment of JSA on 1 July 2009 through to 31 July 2011, there were approximately 49 562 initial referrals from job seekers who identified themselves as holding a refugee or humanitarian visa. In addition, 328 776 initial referrals for job seekers all identified themselves as being from a CALD background. On 31 July 2011, 31 158 job seekers on the JSA caseload identified themselves as holding either a refugee or humanitarian visa, while 130 158 job seekers were from CALD backgrounds.¹⁹
- 11.29 The Committee was informed that approximately 16 per cent of total NEIS commencements for the 2010-11 financial year identified themselves as having a CALD background. A further two per cent of total NEIS commencements were identified as refugees.²⁰
- 11.30 As displayed in **Table 11.1**, the Post Program Monitoring Survey (PPMS) used by DEEWR reveals that the employment outcome rates for CALD job

17 DEEWR, *Submission 474*, p. 15.

18 DEEWR, *Submission 474*, p. 16.

19 DEEWR, *Supplementary submission 474.1*, p. 3.

20 DEEWR, *Supplementary submission 474.1*, p. 3.

seekers who have received assistance from JSA are marginally lower than that achieved by job seekers overall.²¹

Table 11.1 JSA Stream PPMS Outcomes – December 2010

	Employed Full-Time (%)	Employed Part-Time (%)	Employed Total (%)	Unemployed (%)	Not in the Labour Force (%)	Education and Training (%)	Population
CALD job seekers	18.1	25.0	43.1	37.4	19.5	24.5	238 412
All job seekers	20.2	29.6	49.7	34.8	15.5	18.1	1 406 022

Source Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Submission 474, p. 16.

Gaps in the provision of services

- 11.31 The Committee was interested to hear about the level of collaboration between DIAC and DEEWR in addressing some of the gaps in the JSA's provision of services. Representatives from DIAC informed the Committee that there was a high level of interdepartmental cooperation in enhancing the efficiency of JSA's services for CALD individuals:

They [DEEWR] have analysed their data to identify which Job Services Australia providers are getting the best results for refugees and, more broadly, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We [DIAC] are currently in the process of workshopping with some of those providers and local settlement service providers to try and unpack what works well to help get good results for refugee and CALD clients...²²

- 11.32 While the Committee recognises that JSA provides important services to individuals seeking employment in the Australian workplace, evidence received for the inquiry identified gaps in the current provision of JSA services for CALD job seekers.

²¹ DEEWR, *Submission 474*, p. 16.

²² Mr Garry Fleming, First Assistant Secretary, Citizenship, Settlement and Multicultural Affairs Division, and Dr Wendy Southern, Deputy Secretary, Policy and Program Management Group, DIAC, *Committee Hansard*, 21 March 2012, p. 5.

Recommendation 29

- 11.33 **The Committee supports an investigation of the effectiveness of Job Services Australia provision of services to CALD individuals with the aim of improving access to and outcomes from these services.**

Lack of language services

- 11.34 A number of submissions to the inquiry were concerned by the lack of language services within JSA in both the facilitation of lessons and services. Job Prospects noted that Karenni job seekers eligible for JSA services are sometimes not competent enough in their ability to communicate in English and thus encounter significant barriers whilst participating in JSA services. Job Prospects also found that many CALD job seekers have completed the AMEP without being able to effectively read, speak or write in English.²³
- 11.35 The Committee also heard that current funding allocated to NEIS providers does not take into account the additional language and literacy support that may be required for participants, forcing providers to apply for additional funding for the provision of these services.²⁴
- 11.36 However, representatives from DEEWR told the Committee that there are problems of CALD job seekers claiming proficiency in English so as to not disadvantage themselves. Furthermore, DEEWR said that they do not generally know the competency of CALD job seekers referred to JSA by outside agencies in terms of their English ability.²⁵
- 11.37 The Committee was informed that the current provision of telephone interpreting services within JSA is significantly limited in its capacity in dealing with job seekers independently or in groups.²⁶ The FECCA submission stated that more interpreters and translators are required for jobseekers with low English language skills and training within JSA.²⁷

23 Service to Youth Council Inc (Job Prospects), *Submission 489*, p. 2.

24 Mrs Elke Unger, Community Service Advisor, Department of Human Services, *Committee Hansard*, 29 July 2011, p. 28.

25 Ms Borka Buseska, Director, Language Literacy and Numeracy, and Mr Stuart Watson, Branch Manager, Stream Services Branch, DEEWR, *Committee Hansard*, 6 July 2011, p. 8.

26 Service to Youth Council Inc. (Job Prospects), *Submission 489*, p. 2.

27 FECCA, *Submission 176*, p. 47.

Recommendation 30

- 11.38 **The Committee recommends Job Services Australia increase its interpreter and translator services, and improve access to these services for its clients.**

Assessment criteria

- 11.39 The assessment process for determining which stream of service a job seeker is eligible for has been criticised for not taking into account some of the major barriers faced by CALD communities, such as language competency. This absence means that CALD job seekers who are disadvantaged by factors specific to CALD communities are not recognised, thus making it difficult for some job seekers to be placed in a stream appropriate to their overall circumstances.²⁸
- 11.40 Mr Paul Power of RCOA similarly felt that JSA does not provide adequate support for many refugees and asylum seekers in overcoming specific obstacles. He stated:

We hear lots of feedback from refugee communities about the fact that in the early years many refugees feel they get little support from Job Services Australia agencies, which are the agencies funded by the federal government to actually provide this work in brokering employment.²⁹

Lack of cultural competency

- 11.41 Evidence to the Committee argued that JSA's services lack the necessary cultural competency to effectively accommodate the needs of Australia's culturally diverse society.³⁰ FECCA noted that the NEIS does not address the distinctive needs of CALD job seekers which thereby limits the level of involvement of CALD job seekers in the NEIS.

While the NEIS program provides a supportive avenue to entrepreneurship and self-employment for migrants with strong English language skills, it has come under criticism for failing to provide pathways for CALD participants with low English

28 Service to Youth Council Inc (Job Prospects), *Submission 489*, p. 4.

29 Mr Power, Chief Executive Officer, RCOA, *Committee Hansard*, 3 February 2012, p. 8.

30 FECCA, *Submission 176*, p. 47.

language and literacy skills. Lack of systems knowledge and cultural factors also play a part in limiting CALD involvement in NEIS, as does the lack of cultural competency in JSA and NEIS providers.

It is therefore clear that...the program needs to be adapted and given the resources to accommodate Australia's cultural diversity. Providing interpreters and translators within the program for migrants with low English language skills, and training JSA and NEIS staff in cultural competence matters, could greatly improve the uptake and outcomes of NEIS for migrants.³¹

- 11.42 The Committee believes Job Services Australia should implement cultural competency training for Job Services Providers where required to accommodate the distinctive needs of CALD job seekers. The issue of cultural competency is investigated in greater detail in Chapter 9 of this report.

Government, business and community co-operation

- 11.43 The Committee became aware of a number of government, business and community-based initiatives designed to enhance the employment outcomes of migrants and refugees living in Australia. These initiatives aim to overcome the common barriers to employment faced by migrants and refugees through schemes like pathways, work placements and volunteer based programs.

African Australian Inclusion Program

- 11.44 Of the evidence received regarding business and community co-operation to enhance employment outcomes of refugees and migrants, the Committee was particularly impressed by the collaboration between National Australia Bank (NAB) and Jesuit Social Services in delivering their African Australian Inclusion Program which enables qualified African Australians to gain six months of paid corporate experience working for NAB.³² As stated by Jesuit Social Services:

The vision is to open up the best of what NAB has to offer to this community, to provide people with an employment opportunity

31 FECCA *Submission 176*, p. 47.

32 Jesuit Social Services, *Submission 496*, p. 10.

which sits within their field of training to prepare them, and to give them a real leg in and some deep understanding of the Australian world of work, and for them to do a real job while they are doing it.³³

- 11.45 Despite some CALD individuals possessing excellent qualifications and language skills, Jesuit Social Services recognised the lack of available work experience for those individuals in the Australian business sector. In this sense, Jesuit Social Services notes that the program is developmental and aims to provide participants with an intensive program of learning and workplace experiences within the NAB environment, so that participants are more likely and more ready to access opportunities in the broader Australian employment market. This focus does not preclude the option of ongoing NAB employment, but it is made clear to participants that ongoing NAB employment is not the intent of the program.³⁴

Case study 11.2 Adeela: Securing a place in the Africa Australia Inclusion Program

Adeela (name changed for privacy) arrived in Australia from the Horn of Africa in the mid 1990s, completing a Bachelor's Degree in 2002 and a Masters in 2003. Despite these qualifications, Adeela was not able to find full time work due to a lack of relevant work experience.

In 2006 Adeela took an opportunity to work in Cairo and then moved to Dubai. She successfully found work and held a number of roles, including a role as Business Development Manager.

Returning to Australia in 2010, Adeela once again began looking for work. However, she was faced with a tighter job market and was competing against people who had Australian work experience.

Having heard about the African Australian Inclusion Program, Adeela submitted an application and was selected for an interview. While the interview panel were impressed with her qualifications, she was not accepted on the basis that she had only been in Australia for three months and would still be able to independently access employment over the coming months.

33 Ms Pamela Webb, Director, Just Leadership, Jesuit Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, 3 February 2012, p. 29.

34 Jesuit Social Services, *Submission 496*, p. 6.

Six months later Adeela applied again for the Program and was once more selected for an interview. Given the open nature of the interview process, Adeela shared her experiences and the barriers she faced to the interview panel. Based on her qualifications, work experience and ability to confidently present herself, Adeela was successful in securing a position.

Source Jesuit Social Services, Submission 496, pp.11-12.

- 11.46 Jesuit Social Services told the Committee that the experiences of NAB with the program has created greater cultural awareness of new and emerging communities:

When you get a CV from somebody with a name that is clearly African you go, 'Oh, terrific, let's have a look at that.' You put it alongside rather than toss it to the side of the pile. That is a very important vision and NAB is now using that language. It then becomes core to changing the whole way they see their workforce. I see it as very important for NAB systemically in terms of building its capacity with the way our society is moving to respond to emerging communities and to be inclusive of emerging communities.³⁵

The Social Studio

- 11.47 The Social Studio was started in 2009 by a group of community members and local designers interested in the idea of 'upcycled' fashion³⁶ as a vehicle for social change. The Social Studio describes itself as a fashion school, a designer clothing label, a café, and a community space 'for the young refugee community'. It also provides social support including legal advice, counselling, tutoring, driving and formal training in clothing production, retail and hospitality as part of its holistic and long-term approach to its students.³⁷
- 11.48 A representative from the Social Studio explained to the Committee the four key strategies employed in the studio:
- the provision of education through partnership with TAFE institutions and pathways to further education;

35 Ms Webb, Jesuit Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, 3 February 2012, p. 31.

36 Refers to products made from used and unwanted material.

37 The Social Studio, *Submission 429*, p. 1.

- employment through retail, hospitality and clothing production and pathways to further employment;
 - a creation of a sense of social inclusion through participation in the studio;
 - community engagement through interaction with customers and members of the public.³⁸
- 11.49 None of the programs offered by the Social Studio have an exit date as they are designed to help members from the local refugee population in achieving their long-term personal and professional goals. As noted in their 2010-11 Annual Report, some the achievements of the Social Studio include:
- two students being accepted into a Diploma in Fashion Design at RMIT;
 - 10 students gaining paid work in the fashion industry through the Social Studio's employment pathway partnership; and
 - 28 students graduating with certificates in fashion design and retail.³⁹

Tasmanian Government

- 11.50 The Tasmanian Government recognises the importance of providing an introduction into the Australian work culture for newly arrived migrants in order to widen employer understanding of the value of workplace diversity.⁴⁰ As a result, the Tasmanian Government has established and funded a number of programs to help facilitate workforce participation for migrants, particularly for humanitarian entrants and refugees which constitute the largest proportion of migration intake in Tasmania.⁴¹
- 11.51 Jointly administered by Multicultural Tasmania and the Public Sector Management Office, the public sector Work Placement Program (WPP) provides three weeks of work experience for humanitarian entrants in the Tasmanian State public service. The aim of the WPP is to facilitate greater understanding of the Australian work culture, develop necessary workplace skills and provide guidance on how to best prepare high quality job applications.⁴²

38 Dr Grace McQuilten, Chief Executive Officer, The Social Studio, *Committee Hansard*, 26 October 2011, p. 8

39 *The Social Studio Annual Report 2010-11*, pp. 7; 12.

40 Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, *Submission 441*, p. 16.

41 Mr Nick Evans, Director, Community Development Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmania, *Committee Hansard*, 9 March 2012, p. 6.

42 Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmania, *Submission 441*, p. 16.

- 11.52 The Tasmanian Government also funds work placement programs for humanitarian entrants in the business sector through the 'Creating Connections and Opportunities Project' and the 'Foot in the Door Project'.⁴³

The Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre

- 11.53 The Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (SMRC) offers support services for migrants and refugees across Melbourne. SMRC notes in their submission that:

All Spectrum MRC activities are driven by a client focus and help to support newcomers in their transition to Australian society and the organisation aims to foster economic and social inclusion at the onset of clients' arrival.⁴⁴

- 11.54 SMRC is responsible for running a number of courses that are designed to enhance employment opportunities. In order to run projects that are relevant to the community's needs, SMRC consults with clients, community groups and other services providers in order to identify major 'gaps' concerning the economic and social participation of migrants and refugees.⁴⁵
- 11.55 SMRC's education and training specialises in practical, flexible and hands-on training courses for people from CALD backgrounds as well as for those with literacy and numeracy difficulties. SMRC employs skilled trainers with experience working with these target groups, as well as through customised training adapted for migrant groups – with extra language, literacy and numeracy support. Most of SMRC's courses have a work experience component.⁴⁶
- 11.56 SMRC has worked in partnership with other organisations to address barriers to employment. These include:
- the Assyrian Chaldean Women's Education and Employment Expo which brings together a range of speakers and provides an opportunity for the Assyrian Chaldean community to have their awareness raised about the AMEP program and funding for social enterprises to set up small businesses; and

43 Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmania, *Submission 441*, p. 16.

44 The Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (SMRC), *Submission 106*, p. 1.

45 SMRC, *Submission 106*, p. 2.

46 2012 Term 1 Courses, *Spectrum Education and Training Centre* <www.spectrumvic.org.au/Education-Training/SET-2012-Course-Timetable3> viewed 3 September 2012.

- the African Pathways Program: Positive Transitions Project which is a program to investigate the community, education and family issues facing Horn of Africa communities settled in Victoria that serve as barriers for young people transitioning from school to employment.⁴⁷
- 11.57 In addition to these projects, SMRC also recognises the importance of promoting cultural competency in the workplace. SMRC representative, Ms Rosemary Kelada told the Committee that the organisation provided profiles on communities when they held the contract for Job Network:
- when we had the Job Network contract, there was a caravan manufacturer that had a large intake of Sudanese clients that we placed with them. We delivered a profile on the community, their cultural norms and things like that to the workplace so that their colleagues also had a better understanding and also the employer, so they did not misinterpret things that they were doing as unappreciative.⁴⁸
- 11.58 Awareness of Australia's work culture is also important for migrants and refugees entering the Australian workforce for the first time. Ms Kelada told the Committee that SMRC works on a case-by-case basis to facilitate culture competency for both their clientele and the employers by creating a greater sense of awareness of both workplace and culture practices.⁴⁹

Recommendation 31

- 11.59 **The Committee recommends that the Australian Government develop initiatives for organisations to provide tailored opportunities for employment for CALD individuals such as the collaboration between National Australia Bank and Jesuit Social Services in delivering the African Australian Inclusion Program.**

47 SMRC, *Submission 106*, pp. 4–5.

48 *Committee Hansard*, 29 March 2011, p. 23.

49 *Committee Hansard*, 29 March 2011, p. 23.

