SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION NO. 101.1

Supplementary to Submission of Robert Bean, Cultural Diversity Services Pty Ltd to Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into Multiculturalism, Public Hearings, Adelaide 28 July 2011

Supplementary Information to Cultural Diversity Services Pty Ltd Submission to the Joint Standing Committee On Migration Inquiry into Multiculturalism:

A Systemic Approach to Cultural Competence Development

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1. Introduction

Following my submission of April 2011 to the Parliament of Australia Joint Standing Committee on Migration (JSCM) national inquiry into multiculturalism, arguing for a systemic approach to cultural competence development, I appeared before the committee's public hearings in Adelaide on 28 July.

During the question and discussion period, the committee expressed interest in further information concerning cultural competence and cross-cultural training, evidence of its effectiveness and scope, and elucidation of the submission's recommendations.

This Exhibit is intended to address these items. While it reflects the views and suggestions of a range of organisations and individuals consulted before and after my submission and public hearings presentation, this Exhibit is an expression of my personal analysis of the current situation, the relationship between cultural competence and social cohesion in Australia's multicultural communities and workplace and the need to strengthen that relationship.

2. Definitions

The committee sought clarification of the terms 'cultural competence' and 'cross-cultural training'.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence can be most simply defined as the knowledge, awareness, skills, practices and processes that enable organisations and individuals to function effectively in situations characterised by cultural diversity.

The most commonly quoted definition comes from T.L.Cross et al, *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care (1989)* Georgetown University Child Development Center

"[Cultural competence is] A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency, or amongst professionals and enables that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations…. A cultural competent system of care acknowledges and incorporates – at all levels – the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally-unique needs." (Cross, et al, 1989)

The key element in this definition is the congruence of factors and elements in the planning and delivery of health services. The same elements and factors are equally applicable to all industries and public services.

The U.S. National Centre for Cultural Competence (2006) states that becoming culturally and linguistically competent requires that organisations;

- Have a defined set of values, principles, behaviours, attitude policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally
- Have the capacity to value diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalise cultural knowledge, adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of clients

- Communicate effectively with persons of limited English proficiency

- Respond effectively to the ... needs of populations served

- Have policy, structures, practices, procedures and dedicated resources to support this capacity

Cross-Cultural Training (CCT)

Cross-cultural training (CCT), also referred to as intercultural, cultural awareness or cultural diversity training, is broadly defined as that which increases the competence of individuals to function in cross-cultural situations domestically and abroad.

Other definitions of CCT reflect the range of perspectives on cultural competence, as well as the context in which the training is provided. Some definitions include reference to broader socio-political issues, such as the necessity of ensuring that CCT "protects and preserves the dignity" of individuals and communities (Tan & Chua 2003).

Effective CCT increases trainees' knowledge, encourages them to see the personal and organisational benefits of cultural diversity and cultural competence, and increases their skill and capacity to work with cultural diversity. A review by Hammer et al (2003) suggested that a higher degree of acceptance of and adaptation to cultural differences among employees would result in:

- Less stress
- More satisfaction with living/working in a foreign culture
- Greater job accomplishment in culturally-diverse environments
- Lower levels of prejudice and discrimination
- Less resistance to diversity initiatives.

The critical factors in ensuring that CCT meets its intended objectives are effective trainers, good design based on adult learning principles, appropriate models or theories of culture, and suitable resources.

While CCT is commonly seen as a stand-alone response to organisational and community cultural diversity issues, it is now becoming seen as one of several strategies contributing to cultural competence.

3. Evidence of the Effectiveness of Cross-Cultural Training in Australia

As outlined in my submission, two national studies have been conducted to determine the effectiveness of cross-cultural training and its contribution to service provision and workplace performance.

- *The Effectiveness of Cross-Cultural Training in the Australian Context*, Robert Bean et al, Department of Immigration and Citizenship for the Joint Commonwealth State and Territory Research Advisory Committee, Australian Government, 2006
  http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/research/
  Note: 1058 responses; 195 public sector and community organisations, 203 individuals, 515 public sector employees who completed cross-cultural training in 2005(39 training groups), and 145 who responded to a long term training evaluation survey in 2006.

- *Cross-Cultural Training and Workplace Performance*, Robert Bean, National Centre for Vocational Education Research for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government, 2008
  http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2027.html
  Note: 299 responses; 37 VET providers, 34 public and private sector employers, 94 individuals, and 134 currently employed graduates who had completed cross-cultural training within a VET qualification.

The main training topics were described as general cultural awareness, culture-specific training, Aboriginal cultural awareness and managing cultural diversity. The main ain objectives related to: customer service, workplace relationships, community relationships, compliance with policies or legal obligations, marketing to multicultural markets. The findings of these two surveys, with key questions replicated in the second survey, were remarkably similar and the key findings are aggregated below:

General Survey Information
- Respondents: 70% government, 30% business
- Total 1357 responses including 794 training participant responses
- Average length of CCT received by participants: 6.1 hours
- 92% of training programs 1 day or shorter

Employer Survey Responses
Benefits of CCT Reported by employers   (% of responses)
- Improved customer service   41.2%
- Increased cultural self awareness   29.4%
- Improved workplace relations   26.4%
- Improved compliance w/ laws & policies   24.9%
- Improved community relations   14.7%
- Improved marketing   8.8%
- Improved skills for international work   8.8%

Average employer ratings:
- Importance of cultural competence to business   4.3/5 (86%)
- Effectiveness of CCT in increasing cultural competence   4.2/5   (84%)

Training Participant Responses

Training participant perceived importance of cultural competence for;

- Customer/client service   4.5 (90%)
- Co-worker relations   4.2 (84%)

Training participant satisfaction with CCT

- 3.8 (76%)
- 65% participants rated CCT at 4 or 5
- Ratings tend to rise slightly over time (2006 longitudinal survey)
- Effectiveness of trainers rated 3.8 (75%)
- Interaction and field work most highly rated approaches

Training participant ratings of improvements resulting from CCT.

Note: In the 2005-2006 study a survey of participant s 4-8 months after their training program showed statistically significant increases in self-ratings, indicated below;

On a scale of 1-5, how much has CCT increased your:
- Understanding of cultural diversity issues & policies   3.5
  - 12.3% increase in 2006 longitudinal study

- Knowledge of cross-cultural skills   3.7
  - 17.1% increase in 2006 longitudinal study

- Knowledge of other cultures   3.6
  - 16.7% increase in 2006 longitudinal study

- Cultural self-awareness   3.7

- Confidence in cross-cultural interactions   3.6

- Ability in the job/ overall contribution to performance   3.5

Percentages of participants reporting improvements in:

- Customer service   77%
- Workplace relations   73%
- Interactions in personal life   49%
- Community relations   43%
- Compliance with policy, law   37%

Participant Demand and Recommendations for Future CCT (794 Responses)

- 65% would like more CCT
- 85% would recommend CCT to others
- 77% said CCT should be mandatory for everyone in their organisation
- 89% said CCT should be mandatory for everyone in their organisation in customer contact positions

4. Notes on the Submission Recommendations

My initial submission included two appendices from the above mentioned national research studies, providing detailed recommendations, summarised in the submission as;

1. Survey current practice in cultural competence development

2. Enable organisations to establish their 'business case' for developing cultural competence

3. Provide and support training and management resources

4. Increase training capacity through professional development programs

The following notes provide further information in each of the four areas.

Recommendation 1. Survey current practice in cultural competence development

While the two national studies described above were very useful in establishing the value of and benchmarks for CCT, they covered relatively small samples and are now out of date. It is understood that the Department of Immigration and Citizenship has requested the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia to conduct a scoping study to determine best practice in CCT, planned to commence in late 2011 or early 2012.

Consultations in preparation for my original submission confirmed that numerous well-established agencies and enterprises provide CCT. Subsequent consultations lead me to believe that there are many more individuals and organisations engaged in this field of training. Further research is needed to determine the actual scope and quality of CCT delivery.

This information would contribute to policy and planning processes and the development by appropriate government and business agencies of nationally-consistent benchmarks, registers or panels of qualified cross-cultural training providers and links to registers of related services and resources. Existing provider panels and registers tend to be incomplete, localised and not widely accessible or promoted.

Recommendation 2. Enable organisations to establish their societal and economic rationale for developing cultural competence

Note: Following consultations prior to and since the original submission, the term 'business case' has been modified to read 'societal and economic rationale' to account for government, community and commercial enterprise motivations.

All Australian organisations should be encouraged to establish a practical case for developing cultural competence by identifying the degree to which cultural competence will help them achieve their objectives and realise the many benefits of cultural diversity. Without senior management understanding of the rationale for developing cultural competence and support for sustainable development strategies, most efforts will be limited and short-lived.

One freely available resource designed to assist organisations in this regard is the "Managing Cultural Diversity Training Program Resource Manual" produced in 2010 by the Australian Multicultural Foundation, funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. While well-received, it needs to be more widely promoted and its use supported through advice and training programs.

Recommendation 3. Provide and support cultural competence training and management resources

As discussed above, there are several recently developed training programs, management guidelines and publications for developing cultural competence. Research shows that such resources are generally of high quality but are not sufficiently promoted to potential users, nor is there adequate support for organisations to adapt and utilise the resources. Also, the absence of promotion and support for existing resources often leads to duplication of effort.

The national research studies identified a number of areas in which training resources reflecting the Australian context should be developed,

There is a need for a coordinated national clearing house of available resources and registers of training providers and support services that governments and business and industry agencies could promote to organisations and communities to assist them in designing, conducting, benchmarking and sustaining cultural competence development programs. Such a clearing house could also host professional development resources and opportunities for new and existing facilitators.

Recommendation 4. Increase training capability and capacity through professional development programs

Consultations undertaken in the preparation of this submission indicated a growing demand for cultural competence training and development in government and industry sectors, accompanied by a growing shortage of skilled training facilitators. In the two national research studies referred to, the average age of cross-cultural trainers was 54, with none younger than 35. The studies and subsequent consultations also showed that very few trainers had received any formal professional development training in designing and conducting cross-cultural training. There are currently no such programs available in Australia, though there have been discussions regarding the positioning of cross-cultural facilitator professional development within tertiary and VET qualifications.

To meet current and anticipated levels of need and demand it is recommended that relevant federal and state education authorities should work with the cross-cultural training field to investigate the possibility of establishing professional development pathways and programs for cross-cultural trainers, including formal tertiary qualifications, continuing professional education and introductory train-the-trainer programs, to meet the needs of existing trainers and to attract new trainers to the field. Cross-cultural training practitioners have also recently been discussing the establishment of a professional association which would bring together practitioners, academics and researchers and would link with international associations.

5. Organisations Consulted and Supporting Submission Recommendations In-Principle

The following organisations were consulted during the preparation of the original submission and in most cases in the preparation of this Exhibit. Their advice on and in-principle support for the recommendations is gratefully acknowledged.

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (SA)
Australian Multicultural Foundation
Australasian Chinese Theatre Company
Barkuma Disability Services
Beasley Intercultural
Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing
Centre for Ethnicity and Health
City of Charles Sturt
Culture Resource Centre
Culture Works
Diversity Council of Australia
Education Adelaide
Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
Equals International Pty Ltd
Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia
Global Business Strategies Pty Ltd
ICDR Intercultural Community Development and Research Inc
Judith Miralles and Associates
Living Career Pty Ltd
Margaret Bornhorst Cross-Cultural Pty Ltd
Migrant Health Services, Government of SA
Multicultural Aged Care SA
SA National Football League
Surf Life Saving SA
Tony Mitchener Cross Cultural Communications and Management
UNESCO APNIEVE Australia - Asia Pacific network for international education and values education
Viv it Up! Corporate Training Pty Ltd
Working Culture Pty Ltd
Western Health, Government of Victoria

Time and resource constraints prevented the more intensive liaison required to confirm a wider range of organisations willing to confirm their in-principle support. However, representatives of several other government, non-government and business organisations who were also consulted, while supportive, were not in positions to confirm their organisations' in-principle support for the recommendations or would have had to engage multiple stakeholders, involving an effort that would have been excessive for the discussion purposes of this exhibit.

References

Cross T., et al 1989, *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care: A Monograph on Effective Services for Minority Children Who are Severely Emotionally Disturbed*. CASSP Technical Assistance Centre, Georgetown University Development Centre, Washington, DC. pp. iv-v

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J. & Wiseman, R. 2003, 'Measuring the intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 27, No. 4.

National Centre for Cultural Competence, 2006 *Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment,* Georgetown University Centre for Child and Human Development, Washington D.C.

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education and Training), 2008, *Cross-Cultural Training and Workplace Performance,* Adelaide

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Tan, J. & Chua, R. 2003, 'Training and developing cultural intelligence', in Earlery, 2003, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across Cultures*, Stanford Business Books, California.