

**Joint Standing Committee on Migration****Chair: Ms Vamvakinou MP****Deputy Chair: Mrs Louise Markus MP**

Migration Committee public hearing in Melbourne

The effects of multiculturalism in Australia will be discussed at a public hearing of the Migration Committee's inquiry into multiculturalism in Australia in Melbourne on Friday, 8 June.

The public hearing will include appearances from the South Pacific Islander Forum, Women's Health in the North and Community Languages of Australia. The Committee will also hear from the Salt Shakers, the Australian Defence League and Q Society of Australia who are concerned by the overall effect multiculturalism is having on contemporary Australia.

Committee chair Ms Maria Vamvakinou said the committee has taken extensive evidence on what has become a broad ranging inquiry.

"We look forward to hearing from the South Pacific Islander Forum on some of the local settlement and participation issues currently affecting their community and Women's Health in the North's provision of services for culturally and linguistically diverse women to better participate in Australian society," Ms Vamvakinou said. "We also welcome evidence from the Community Languages of Australia."

The Federal Member for Calwell said that some of the submissions to the inquiry are particularly concerned by the short and long term effects multiculturalism is having on Australian society.

"The committee has received a number of submissions concerned by what is perceived to be the destabilising effects multiculturalism is having on Australia's identity and culture," Ms Vamvakinou said.

"An underlying theme of these concerns has to do with the compatibility of Islam with Australian society. While reinforcing that Australia is, and always will be, a secular and liberal democracy, the committee hopes to have an informative and engaging discussion with these organisations at the public hearing."

Ms Vamvakinou said this is likely to be the final public hearing of the inquiry as the committee begins to draft its final report to government.

The committee's public hearing will commence at **9.30 am in Committee Room G6, Parliament of Victoria, Melbourne.**

Audio of proceedings of the public hearing will be webcast on <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>.

Full program and other information about the inquiry can be obtained from the committee's website www.aph.gov.au/mig or from the secretariat on (02) 6277 4560

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