

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 February 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(109) Output 2.4: Promoting the Benefits of Cultural Diversity

Senator Hurley asked:

2004-2005 DIMA annual report states that an access and equity feedback session was conducted at the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) annual conference in May.

- (a) What was the result from the access and equity feedback sessions?
- (b) Who are the contributors on the feedback sessions?
- (c) What is the outcome of this deliberation?
- (d) Have deliberations from the feedback session been effected as of yet?

Answer:

(a) In the feedback session, FECCA expressed the view that the Access and Equity Strategy is a vitally important function of DIMA and commitment by the government, and that it strongly supports the strategy and the principles behind it. FECCA expressed concern about the compliance with the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the *Charter*) and suggested that greater community input is required to counter the subjective nature of Access and Equity reporting by government agencies.

FECCA also identified the need for a greater sense of ownership by government agencies and for a stronger compliance regime, including in relation to third party service delivery.

- (b) The workshop participants were delegates attending the FECCA conference.
- (c) Information from the session with FECCA has been considered in the context of the recent evaluation of multicultural policy.
- (d) A new multicultural policy statement is being drafted using the evaluation of the multicultural policy and programs recently undertaken by DIMA. This statement will address Access and Equity issues and take into account the relevant recommendations of the 2003 *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants*.