

MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL OF TASMANIA
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE DRAWING ROOM, THURSDAY 26 MAY 2022

Good evening everyone and a warm welcome to this reception for members of the Multicultural Council of Tasmania, our peak body representing Tasmanians from culturally and linguistically diverse background.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our Aboriginal People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history. And on this National Sorry Day, I remember and acknowledge the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

First of all, I would like to thank our musicians, Roman Astra and Lynne Griffiths for their delightful performance as we entered.

I am pleased to be able to host the Multicultural Council here at Government House. I continue the long association between the Vice-Regal office and the Council. I am committed to work for a state where people from all backgrounds are respected and are able to participate and to contribute to our State.

May we all reflect upon the many ways that we can each contribute to a more inclusive, diverse and tolerant society and embrace all of the benefits that multiculturalism brings.

According to our Tasmanian Multicultural Policy, Tasmania has a rich history of migration to our Island State. Our Island is home to people born in 177 different countries, we have 159 identified languages spoken in Tasmanian homes. According to the 2016 Census, more than 61,000 Tasmanians were born overseas¹ with 25% of all Tasmanians having one or both parents born overseas.²

Our Council represents some 100 member organisations from across our State, advocating for the interests of Tasmanians from culturally, linguistically and religiously

¹ <https://www.communities.tas.gov.au/csr/news-csr/our-multicultural-island> accessed 18 May 22

² http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/214387/Engaging_with_multicultural_communities_and_CALD_14_August_14.pdf accessed 18 May 22

diverse backgrounds.³ Our Council has a history of more than forty years promoting social cohesion and representing multicultural communities across Tasmania. I acknowledge and thank the Council for your important work to link our communities and to advance the benefits of multiculturalism for us all. Our Tasmanian Government's Statement 'Our Multicultural Island – Tasmania's Multicultural Policy' opens with the words:

“Our vision is for a harmonious, inclusive and respectful Multicultural Island where Tasmanians of all cultures, languages and faiths have an equal opportunity and responsibility to belong, contribute, achieve and succeed.”⁴

An important way that the Council will contribute to that vision is by organising the upcoming Multicultural Tasmania Employer Conference, to held in Hobart on Thursday 7th July. The theme of the conference is 'Diversity is good for business.' There is evidence for this. The Diversity Council Australia's *Inclusion@Work Index*, which surveys over 3,000 working Australians, shows that “inclusive organisations have improved performance and innovation, better customer service, more satisfied and secure staff, and less harassment and discrimination.”⁵ A 2020 McKinsey report of research found that companies with greater gender and ethnic diversity were more likely to out-perform and be more profitable than their peers.⁶

I am sure of your great success assisting businesses to identify organisations who can connect potential employers with highly skilled and enthusiastic migrants wanting work.⁷

So, my heartfelt appreciation to everyone from the Multicultural Council of Tasmania for the important work that you do supporting our diverse community. That diversity enriches us all, socially and economically.

Your advocacy and policy input are essential to build an inclusive society by providing information and promoting cultures, languages, and multicultural issues within our community, and helping to welcome new migrants and refugees to Tasmania.

I now invite you to join me for refreshments and look forward to meeting and speaking with you. Thank you.

³ <https://mcot.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MCOT-Annual-Report-19-20.pdf> accessed 15 Feb 21

⁴ http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/467345/Our_Multicultural_Island_Policy.pdf p7 accessed 15 May 22

⁵ <https://wgea.gov.au/gender-equality-and-diversity> accessed 8 March 2022.

⁶ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters> referenced in <https://wgea.gov.au/gender-equality-and-diversity> accessed 8 March 2022.

⁷ <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/multicultural-tasmania-employer-conference-2022-tickets-223049696647> accessed 9 May 22