



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

### OUR VISION

*'Working to Connect Communities'*

### OUR MISSION

To promote multiculturalism as a policy for all Australians.

To enhance the quality of life of Australians from Culturally and Linguistically Distinct backgrounds through providing culturally appropriate programs.

To advocate for services that empower people of immigrant and refugee backgrounds to fully participate in the social, cultural, economic, political and civic life of our Nation.

To oppose racism and discrimination.

### OUR VALUES

*We value:*

- ❖ Engagement
- ❖ Integrity and Credibility
- ❖ Creativity and Innovation
- ❖ Building Partnerships with communities
- ❖ Informed Decision Making
- ❖ Organizational Responsiveness to Community Diversity and Cultural Heritage
- ❖ A Value-based Civic Culture that Promotes Fairness and Quality of Life



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory is the peak organisation dedicated to advocacy and the representation of the interests, concerns and needs of peoples from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CALD) in the Northern Territory. The aim of the MCNT is to promote intercultural equality and acceptance for all Australians.

The MCNT was established in 1977 as the Ethnic Communities Council of the Northern Territory. In 2000 the MCNT changed its name to Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) in order to better reflect the inclusive nature of the MCNT (inclusive of all cultures) and to forge greater linkages with the wider community.

The upcoming Triennium Funding is a critical one for the MCNT. The political, social, cultural and economic environment that MCNT now operates is much more volatile. The Federal Government's re-branding of "multicultural Affairs" to "Citizenship", the shift away from the promotion of cultural diversity to integration, the increasing role of Section 457 Visa in the labour market, international events particularly in the area of terrorism that are putting pressure on Australia's internal social cohesion, the Pacific Solutions for asylum seekers who reached Australia and the change in focus of Australia's offshore refugee program from Africa to Asia contribute to this volatility and the challenges that MCNT has to face in steering its future directions.

The Management Committee of the MCNT has developed a Corporate Plan that identifies the six programs that will meet these challenges. This Plan is consistent with the aimed outcomes and objectives indicative of the strategic directions of the MCNT for three years through 2007-2010

The MCNT Corporate Plan for 2007-2010 also illustrates a growing need to increase access and acceptability for cultural communities through direct participation and individual Immigrant and refugee involvement in MCNT programs. As a community driven organisation, MCNT needs to increase its financial resources in order to enhance and expand its policy and advocacy role and to make its services available to individuals and families caught up in the rapid influx of the numbers of critically impoverished people who arrive from African countries, such as Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, and Ethiopia. MCNT needs to include in this plan the Federal Government's intention to source its off shore refugee program from impoverished countries of Asia.



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

Further, the MCNT Corporate Plan 2010 adopts the Northern Territory Business and Skilled Migration Strategy incorporated into the Northern Territory Government's Population Policy which recognises that skilled migrants also require settlement support programs for families migrating under this scheme and 457 visa arrivals in the Territory.

One of MCNT's strengths lies in the continuation of support that it receives from the first wave of immigrant societies who now make up a large portion of business, professional, governmental, organisational and cultural communities in the Northern Territory.

The established communities enrich the MCNT and contribute to the economic profile of the general community. MCNT's relationship with the earlier European and Asian communities is critically important for maintaining a solid base for the newer refugees and migrants that seek to integrate into Northern Territory life.

MCNT remains committed to providing newly arrived members of the founding ethnic communities with the services they require.

### **MCNT MEMBERSHIP**

MCNT has a large and diverse membership base of approximately 100 members, which includes multicultural groups, non-government and community organisations as well as Government Departments and individuals.

MCNT's membership is the most fundamental strength of the organisation. Indeed the membership community is integral to the ability of MCNT to be responsive to diverse cultural needs. This responsiveness is structured into the system through the composition of the organisation and also through the democratic relationship that exists between the executive and members of the broad representative base.

Member groups and individuals are an integral part of MCNT's expertise and so the organisation's objectives are closely related to the continuous vitality and growth of its membership base.

The stakeholders of the MCNT include:

- o Ethnic, multicultural groups, immigrants and refugees, whose members need:



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- Assistance and advice to access essential information and service support;
  - Access to venues and meeting places;
  - Support and advice on how to establish, form and operate ethnic or multicultural groups and associations;
  - Access to informed advice for individuals and communities on their rights and entitlements.
  - Support to involve themselves in advocacy on policy issues
  - Access to service networks and acceptance in the wider Northern Territory community
- Community Organisations, Businesses and Government Departments who require:
    - Information and advice in relation to people and communities who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and meeting their particular needs
    - Advice and expertise on the provision of culturally relevant service needs and on specific policies.

MCNT is an active member of many advisory committees for Government as well as the non-government Sector. As a consequence, MCNT is a valuable referral point for connecting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people and families to the community organisations and Government Departments.

### **CORPORATE PLAN 2010**

As an organisation MCNT has achieved a raft of significant achievements over many years. Details of these achievements are outlined in the MCNT's Annual Report. However, among the most significant reasons for MCNT's success is the administration and management of the organisation itself. This is a major feature of the 2007-2010 Corporate Plan.

- **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to:

- illustrate the short, medium and long term direction and specific purpose of MCNT's corporate objectives;
- match objectives with multi-level grants, continuing and envisaged;
- produce positive outcomes that match the stated objectives, measured by program progress and performance, of the organisation, and

MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY  
*'WORKING TO CONNECT COMMUNITIES'*



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- illustrate the MCNT's commitment to accountability (financial members and funding agencies) and to improving the cultural economic, social, and political life of the people and communities it is funded to assist.

In addition to the MCNT's Strategic Goals and Objectives, the Corporate Plan includes the establishment of a process for monitoring and evaluating the progress of programs; **Youth Support projects, Gender Equity**, and details of MCNT's **Communications and Engagement Strategies**

The evaluation process is contained in a matrix in the program tables in Part 2 and includes indicators for the continuous monitoring processes toward outcomes in:

- Program progress, implementation, change management, perceived risks to achieving objectives, or evaluating program completion.

### **MCNT OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES**

The MCNT manages and implements a diverse range of projects aimed at improving circumstances for people and communities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)

MCNT's services, organisations, and resources are in greater demand now more than ever before and, as a consequence of that, and also because of the need for a more strategic longer term approach, this Corporate Plan reflects a distinct shift in the way MCNT's activities will be organised over the next three years.

The MCNT has six strategic programs and two peak strategies:

- ❖ **Organisation Program Strategy (OPS);**
- ❖ **Policy and Advocacy Program (PAP);**
- ❖ **Social, Cultural and Economic Program (SCEP);**
- ❖ **Civic Outreach, Awareness and Appreciation Program (COAAP);**
- ❖ **Research Information Program (RIP)**
- ❖ **Emergency Coordination Response Program (ECRP)**

As the MCNT Corporate Plan illustrates, all activities and projects are now arranged within program frameworks with more emphasis on achieving program outcomes and measuring performance.



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

The program approach also highlights the way MCNT programs and outcome are integrated towards a common purpose, a strong orientation to outputs as well as providing clear and simple content descriptions.

MCNT's peak strategies are:

- ***Communications Strategy***

The Communications Strategy seeks to engage with MCNT members, government funding agencies, community leaders, youth, women, men, and those disadvantaged through language, discrimination or economic circumstances or lack of knowledge concerning available services, or of the way of life in the Territory (Table 8).

- ***Community Engagement Strategy***

Community Engagement will connect multicultural communities, governments, business, schools and other communities with the activities of the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory, both funded and unfunded (Table 7).

### MCNT STRATEGIC PROGRAMS

For each of the six programs, MCNT will develop and implement Communication and Engagement Plans as part of the overall delivery of these programs.

- ❖ **ORGANISATION PROGRAM STRATEGY (OPS)**

The primary role of the MCNT is to support and be responsive to the diverse multicultural communities in the Northern Territory and:

- To advocate, develop and expand the Administration of the MCNT as the creative and stable foundations for supporting the quality and efficiency of the Corporate Plan.
- To be a strong organisation by being an advocate for the needs of CALD individuals and communities in the Northern Territory;
- Operate as an organisation with an expanded administrative and financial role through establishing cooperative agreements with other



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- organizations and governments to meet the needs of people and communities from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background;
- Increase the efficient administration of MCNT's programs through promoting strong performance measures, risk awareness strategies, internal coordination and through accountability to members, target groups, and MCNT program recipients within cultural communities;
- Establish performance indicators that measure outputs, outcomes and
- To provide an equitable, safe, and professional working environment that meets the high standards required by staff and members.

### ❖ POLICY AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM (PAP)

The Policy and Advocacy Program is a cornerstone of the MCNT Corporate Plan. It is through this program that multicultural communities connect with each other through forming strong cooperative relationships to build on established MCNT projects that promote a greater participatory capacity;

Policy and Advocacy targets government and non-government with the capacity to access resources and offer social, economic and cultural support at every level: local, Territory and National;

This program combines advocacy campaigns through proposals that include the MCNT **Communications Strategy** and **Community Engagement Strategy**.

### ❖ SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAM (SCEP)

The Social, Cultural and Economic Program are a significant part of the foundations that support MCNT work. As a consequence of this program, people will achieve a greater social and economic quality of life for themselves and their families. The program aims to:

- Develop effective standard benchmarks for the improvement of settlement conditions for individuals through programs that provide levers for them to access employment opportunities and to improve their economic circumstances.

Around 60 percent of all MCNT's outputs and efforts are orientated directly towards employment;



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- Ensure that outcomes improve the economic and social well-being CALD individuals and their families
- Sharpen the focus on the extensive range of benefits available from MCNT's cooperative alliance with the many private and public agencies and organisations that provide services in cooperation with MCNT.

### ❖ CIVIC OUTREACH, AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION PROGRAM (COAAP)

The Northern Territory community is an open society and an appreciation of civics presents people from all age groups within and among different cultural and religious communities with options for making a better life for themselves and their families in the Northern Territory.

The outcome of a Civics awareness program will result in a more informed appreciation of improving their position within the Northern Territory society. The program will also help individuals and communities to gain a greater understanding of how Australian institutions are shaped. The program aims to:

- Encourage a resourceful appreciation of participating in community civic awareness programs that promotes acceptance, tolerance and harmony, particularly through the MCNT and throughout the wider government and non-government social, economic, and political systems.

The emphasis on civics leads to engagement by individuals and families with the way the Australian public institutions operate, the cooperative relationships between peoples and governments in the Northern Territory, and familiarity with Australia's tradition of social and economic benefits.

Projects include inter-school cultural outreach projects; organised inter-cultural forums; inter-faith symposiums; and involvement in events and activities specifically designed to encourage general public interest, at Local, Territory, and National levels.

Intended outcomes in the civic outreach program will contribute to achieving a knowledge-based appreciation of community diversity through understanding the importance of:



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- o cross cultural differences;
- o equality of rights in Australia;
- o benefits that accompany Australian citizenship;
- o shared common interests in education and employment;
- o community harmony; and
- o Increased individual confidence that flows from empowerment.

The program encourages better citizen participation in the formulation of advocacy by highlighting a variety of opportunities for individuals and communities to take part in the organisational profile of the MCNT itself. Ultimately the Civics Program will empower people to strive for their own life goals.

### ❖ RESEARCH INFORMATION PROGRAM (RIP)

#### ▪ *Aims*

The aim of the Research Program is to build a stronger information base that can support continuity of outcomes of MCNT programs in the North and also in Central Australia.

The MCNT has inherited an enviable source of information and history gathered over three decades of the organisation operating in the Northern Territory. The MCNT is now committed to broadening its information base and expanding its vision to include the changing cultural profile of new arrivals from countries such as: Sudan, Somalia, Liberia and Ethiopia and for the planned intake from Asian countries. Indeed, over the past few years, approximately 95 percent of humanitarian migrants arriving to settle in the Northern Territory have come from Africa.<sup>1</sup>

As an organisation dedicated to assisting the need of immigrants, refugees, and new arrivals into the Australian community, MCNT is at the forefront. MCNT's role is maintaining cooperative relationships throughout the governmental and non-governmental communities.

Research outcomes will assist individuals and families who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse to settle, improve their quality of life, and contribute positively to the general community in the Northern Territory.

---

<sup>1</sup> Multicultural NT, Newsletter of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, December 2006; Message from the Minister for Multicultural Affairs



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

Establishing a research capacity relevant to the work of the MCNT would enable the MCNT to make informed decisions and provide fresh insights into the growth of new, and also well established, communities in the Northern Territory.

The program will:

- o provide specific information and analyses for public funding agencies;
- o establish a knowledge based resource through which critical issues that shape policy decisions can be identified;
- o identify the general and specific needs of peoples, families and communities; and
- o create a greater resource for understanding values, processes and expectations surrounding Australian citizenship

Research projects will be linked directly to available financial support and could include employment growth, future accommodation planning, current and future policies requirements for addressing the complexity of ethnic and national identities.

The significance of such a research program will be the contribution that it can make to the government decision-making process as well as assisting our understanding of how the needs of cultural communities are likely to be reconfigured by political and economic changes over time.

On the flip side, research projects will be a valuable source of information for concerns about how processes of development and social change, as well as public policies, shape the social and economic environment.

At a more specific level, project options would include a greater understanding of patterns of acceptability, employment; exclusion and community stability.

- ***Research Support through Cooperative Arrangements***

The establishment of this program will depend on whether the MCNT is successful in obtaining funds. MCNT will seek research support from tertiary institutions, governments, and/or sections of the business community.



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

If funded MCNT will explore the issue of support from Universities such as Charles Darwin University and the Australian National University (ANU) and more specifically from the Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. Research support can be both in-kind, and as part of possible financial arrangement with potential funding agencies.

It is anticipated that in addition to providing access to select resources for a specific research project, MCNT would encourage individuals to seek support through secondment from within the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Government to conduct short term research projects, or to conduct primary social, demographic, and economic research as part of larger projects.

Research topics and direction would be decided through a process that incorporates a decision making structure comprised of and supervised by relevant experts and professionals. All research would be contingent on cooperation with MCNT and producing a publishable report/discussion paper for MCNT within a negotiated time frame.

### ❖ EMERGENCY COORDINATION RESPONSE PROGRAM (ECRP)

The MCNT has long been engaged in a facilitation role assisting individuals, families and groups directly and as an interim manager in raising the profile of peoples and communities from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds who need emergency relief or information.

This program is in response to the growing incidents of natural and environmental disasters in our near region, and in the increase in civil disasters that stem from community instability in countries such as East Timor. The past two years have illustrated that the likelihood of an increase in emergencies in the region that the Northern Territory community may have to confront, is very real.

All MCNT program implementation and outcomes depend on increased funding for the 2007-2010. MCNT has refined its aims and objectives substantially and, if it is to meet the increasing demands on its services, it will require an increase in its operating budget for the period of the Corporate Plan.



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

### INTRODUCTION OF NEW PROGRAMS

Increased financial support will enable MCNT to further develop its projects through the inclusion of the additional program strategies:

- **Civic Outreach, Appreciation and Awareness Program (COAAP)**

Civic awareness involves participation and, through access to employment, there is a much more likely chance that people's knowledge of their position in Northern Territory society will improve rapidly if they achieve employment;

The civic awareness program also strengthens the effectiveness of community engagement and the communication strategy and, depending on MCNT receiving adequate financial support to expand its program capacity, will raise the capacity of MCNT as an organisation;

- Building a modest and realistic research capacity within MCNT through establishing a **Research Information Program (RIP)** will link research directly to MCNT's strategic priorities and expands MCNT's knowledge base on immigration and citizenship;
- Establishing a **Regional Participation Process** through which the capacity for regional linkages through to central Australia can be developed will strengthen the decentralisation of government programs to Central Australia;

Building a regional capacity will be explored in three stages over the next three years. The limits of and potential for participation by refugee and immigrant communities in regional Northern Territory could be determined through the introduction of an exploration project within the **Research Information Program (RIP)** (is outlined in detail in the Program section);

- Establishing foundations for a regular communication, progress report and information process will move MCNT towards closer relations with its members, other organisations, and governments – A quarterly detailed progress report will facilitate this move: **Information Progress Report (IPR)**;



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

- Establishing an **Emergency Coordination Response Program (ECRP)** is an investment in the Northern Territory's capacity for rapid response to crises in our region. MCNT is an effective and experienced coordinating organisation. Evidence of this was made apparent in the role carried out by the MCNT in response to disasters that occurred in neighbouring countries such as Indonesia and East Timor over the past 3 years. Currently, the MCNT's ability to be fully effective is restricted by budgetary and, subsequently, by administrative constraints.
- MCNT believes that the quality and the extent of coordination capacity would be greatly enhanced with additional funds.

MCNT's suite of programs will improve the organisation's ability to ensure that new arrivals and established CALD communities achieve acceptance into the cultural, social, and economic life, of the Northern Territory community.

### **THE NEED TO BUDGET FOR IMPROVEMENT AND CONTINUITY**

MCNT is the Northern Territory's peak organisation working to support CALD individuals, families and communities. As an organisation, it offers a raft of services and projects, both voluntary and funded. Over three decades, MCNT has become a highly professional body with the experience and skills to respond to the changing needs of the Northern Territory's diverse immigrant and refugee groups.

MCNT's programs in the Corporate Plan have been reformed to ensure greater capacity for participation in the organisation and in the programs. As part of its budgeting strategy MCNT has an important contribution to make in securing professional skilled people into its organisation.

MCNT has established a solid reputation with governments and non-government organisations and, as the programs in this Corporate Plan illustrate, the MCNT is held accountable not only through professional administrative experience but also through a strong commitment to its members.

The Northern Territory faces increasing challenges mentioned elsewhere in this Plan and in the growth of its diverse communities. The MCNT has a major role in consultations, and in encouraging the cross cultural cooperation and participation in implementing programs that will assist in addressing these challenges.



# Corporate Plan

## 2007-2010

---

Investing funds in the MCNT for the period of this Corporate Plan will enable the MCNT to continue to provide the high quality services as it has in the past.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This Plan is considered an evolving process with regular monitoring and review to be conducted.

It is also considered critical to the continuing relevance of the Plan in an environment of dynamic change in public policy, in technology, MCNT membership, government and non-government bodies and community expectations and uses of MCNT services

Performance will be monitored and evaluated in two ways:

(i) Implementation Strategies

The implementation of the Plan will be monitored against the timeframe identified for each strategy. An initial evaluation of progress will be conducted in the first six months of implementation and a review held in 12 months.

(ii) Outcomes of the Plan

The efficacy of the Plan in achieving the key outcomes will be assessed against the Performance Indicators set out in the funding agreement and agreed upon by the NT Office of Multicultural Affairs and MCNT.

Evaluation of the Plan against Performance indicators will be conducted as per the timelines set in the funding agreement.