



MIGRANT  
RESOURCE  
CENTRE  
(Southern Tasmania) Inc.

# **MEDIA RELEASE – 92.1 FM**

## **Monday, 10.09.07 : 1-2 pm**

“Migrant Resource Centre (Sth) Inc – a brief update  
from the General Managers Office”

*Interview outline with Vikki Miteff*

**1. Vikki: “Cedric, I believe you have just completed a comprehensive strategic plan that is about to be ratified by the Board of Directors of the Migrant Resource Centre”**

**Cedric:** Yes, Vicki. Our strategic plan took almost 7 weeks in total to construct workshopping with the Leadership team consisting of Ann Hughes, Anne Hamilton, Angela Allan, Monika Dutkiewicz, Marianne Potma and facilitated by Kiros Zigege.

In total the MRC decided on 3 strategic pillars through this process and we are sure that the plan will place us in good stead for future growth. The plan was broken down into bite sized chunks and workshopped with each team leader, with particular reference to each program area. One thing that I am particularly proud of in the strategic plan is the execution of a comprehensive stakeholder analysis. This included:-

- Power interest grid – a quadrant analysis of people, agencies and community groups that contribute to the wonderful tapestry of services that is the MRC. People in the high interest high power were clearly delineated from people and agencies with low interest and low power on a sliding scale. The importance of such an analysis is that the Leadership Team can clearly see where we need to spend the bulk of our time – such that it provides effective and meaningful representation for the organisation as a whole
- Contribution commitment grid – each stakeholder will play a different level of commitment to the project, even throughout the life cycle of a project. The range of commitment is on a sliding scale from committed, supportive, neutral and disagrees. This was an interesting analysis that looked at how the MRC through better communication and engagement of the right stakeholders at the right time can actually move various stakeholders in their support factor such that the end point, which is serviceability to the client is enhanced
- Stakeholder management plan – after analysis of the the two grids previously mentioned we then looked at the way we engage our stakeholders and this was mapped into a stakeholder communication plan with the specific emphasis on keeping all of our stakeholders committed to servicing the needs of our target communities

So Vicky you can see that we have sunk significant energy into mapping out the needs of our stakeholders such that we can service them more effectively and hopefully this will result in better sharing of information for all those concerned

**2. Vikki: “Cedric on the subject of stakeholders, I heard that the Ethiopian community group have an important milestone that will happen tomorrow”**

**Cedric:** Yes Vicki. The Ethiopian Millennium is an important event that is formally being celebrated as a milestone tomorrow on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Let me give you a little background on this event.....

Ethiopia is old, old beyond all imagination. As Abyssinia, its culture and tradition dates back over 3000 years and far older than that lived 'Lucy' or Dinkeneshe meaning 'thou art wonderful', as she is known to Ethiopians, whose remains were found in a corner of the country of mystery and contrasts.

Ethiopia's ancient and rich culture can be traced to pre-historic times. Archaeological findings have identified Ethiopia as one of the cradles of mankind. The discovery of one of the most complete hominoids as well as ancient cave paintings and tools, are but some of the evidences of its pre-historic glory. Ethiopia has so much to offer visitors, the Historic Route, covering the ancient town of Axum, with its amazing carved obelisks, Christian festivals and relics, including the Arc of the Covenant; Gondar, with its castles and monasteries; Lalibela, with its remarkable Rock-Hewn churches, the palace of Abba Jiffar in Jimma and the walled Muslim city of Harar.

Ethiopia is a land with over 80 languages spoken by its various Nations and Nationalities and Peoples. The three major religions Christian, Islam and Judaism as well as traditional are being freely practiced and their followers co-existed for centuries with equal respect and understanding.

Ethiopia is a land of wonder and enchantment, a country with one of the richest histories on the African continent, a land of contrasts and surprises, of remote wild places, home to cultured and friendly people who have descended from some of the world's oldest civilizations. This is the land of the fabled Queen of Sheba, home of the Arc of the Covenant, the birthplace of coffee and the cradle of mankind.

Ethiopia uses the Julian calendar that divides the year into twelve months of thirty days each with the remaining five (or six days in a leap year) constituting the short 13th month of "Pagume". In Greek, Pagume means "additional". Ethiopia used a unique calendar and the New Year commences on the 11th September, 2007 or the 12th (in a leap year) of September every year.

Ethiopia will welcome its millennium with a year-long celebration that marks this momentous turn of the calendar with grand spectacles, various breathtaking entertainments, cultural shows and activities and tastes from all around the country and by engaging the wider Ethiopian public, Government and non-Government Organisations, civic societies and businesses on high projects which would have considerable impact on the country's economic and social landscape.

Many thanks to our 2 Ethiopian Associations:-

- The Ethiopian Community Association of Tasmania Inc
- Tasmanian Ethiopian Association Inc

Who hosted a number of events over the weekend and last week in a colourful display of their vibrant culture. In particular many thanks to their respective presidents of the associations

- Gemechu Chiro Datu
- Zenebe Kidane

For their personal invitations to attend their celebrations which I did so with much appreciation . Thanks for sharing your culture with us and for your continued efforts in promoting multicultural events in Tasmania.

**3.Vikki: “Cedric , apart from the Ethiopian celebrations I hear that there are a number of exciting events coming that the MRC has particular interest in”**

**Cedric:** Thanks Vicki. There are quite a number of events that are coming up that the MRC has active involvement in

- On 12 September(that is this Wednesday) from 2-4 pm, we will be hosting African Elders group at the MRC. The group is held every 5 weeks. It is an opportunity for older people who have come from Africa to meet socially, and also to find out about interesting health matters. People should ring the MRC and let Ann Hughes know if they want to attend and need transport. On the subject of transport many thanks to our dedicated volunteers who actively transport our community groups to and from these events. A special cheerio to Mr. Rex Stoessiger who has untiringly ferried passengers to these events over the last 3 months – well done Rex
- MRC will be hosting a Safe at Home workshop on Thursday 13th September 2007 MRC at 49 Molle Street from 10am until 2.00pm for youths. We previously held one session for the adults in July, where we hosted this events with Bi-cultural workers giving interpretations on a presentation by Seargant Debbie Williams on behalf of Tasmanian police.

*Safe at Home* is a major whole-of-government initiative developed in response to family violence within Tasmania. Government agencies, in consultation with other key stakeholder groups, have developed an integrated service delivery system built around the principle of primacy of safety of the victim.

*Safe at Home* has two key elements:

- Managing the risk that the offender might repeat or escalate their violence; and

- Implementing strategies to enhance the safety of victims of family violence.

The initiative is intended to achieve a reduction in the level of family violence in the medium to long term and, in the shorter term, improve safety for adult and child victims as well as changing the offending behaviour of those responsible for the violence.

- The Tassal African Perpetual Cup – Saturday 15th September at Thompson Oval Pontville – Kick-off 10.30am. Come and see Hobart United Football Team and ETHIOTas play plus many other African players! The PCYC will have their Mobile Activity Center there for families to participate in other sports other than soccer! A BBQ will be held so we're encouraging families to come along and cheer your favorite team on!
- The TOP GEAR driving program now has a new car. For those listeners that are not aware of what Top Gear is - it is a learn to drive program designed for humanitarian entrants. Trained volunteers supervise participant learner drivers to assist them in gaining their provisional drivers licence. A minimum of 50 hours driving experience is required to obtain a driver's license. Roads in Australia are vastly different from back home. The challenge of driving on a different side of the road often becomes challenging for learner drivers. Many students are required to spend additional hours with our volunteers on the TOP GEAR program. TOP GEAR is a unique partnership between private companies, community organisations and local, state and federal governments.

**Our TOP GEAR partners include;**

Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
 Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources  
 Tasmanian Police  
 STEPS Employment and Training Solutions  
 Workskills Employment Solutions  
 VIP Driving School

Listeners who are interested in joining as a volunteer can call the MRC on 6234 9411 to register their interest with Anne Hamilton.

- On September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 there will be Cross Cultural Awareness Training offered to the public. This is an all day course at a charge of \$110 per person and the class is filling fast. Please contact reception on 6234 9411 to register your interest for this day.

- Seniors week event coming up on the 4<sup>th</sup> October at Tolosa Park. The 3 day centres combined in a Multicultural BBQ and walk around the water reservoir. We have 20 places available for the public from which 11 already taken. If people want to join they should call the MRC and Book a place. Price for the BBQ is \$8.00 ( Hut 10 ) RSVP no later than 26<sup>th</sup> September 2007. Many thanks to Joaquin Maza and Marianne Potma for all the organizing they have put into this event – I'm sure it will be a great event. A very special cheerio to Marianne Potma also in the loss of her father 2 weeks ago – our thoughts are with you and your family for this loss.
- On October 18th at 7pm we are holding the Annual General Meeting of the Migrant Resource Centre at 49 Molle Street. Just a friendly reminder all membership renewals for the 2007-2008 financial year are now due An application form can be obtained here at the MRC at 49 Molle Street in person or by contacting reception on 6234 9411. Membership fee is \$5 and gives you access to member facilities including meeting rooms at discount rates. Alternately you can visit our website at [www.mrchobart.org.au](http://www.mrchobart.org.au) and fill out the on-line application form and send this along with your cheque to our friendly reception staff.
- On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the MRC will be marching in the Hobart City Council Christmas pageant. It is my intent to have a team of 300+ people of all ages and cultural composition marching behind the MRC banner. For those community groups interested in supporting the MRC in the march, can you please contact reception on 6234 9411. We will shortly be holding a steering committee meeting on the event with view to inclusion of as many representative nations as possible in the event. Imagine a festival Vicki where everyone marches in their national costume. I am particularly excited about this event. The MRC has featured strongly in this parade previously with strong representation from the emerging community groups consisting mainly of our African communities – this year I am hoping for a broader representation from peoples of all nations.
- Also looking further afield the African Cultural Festival will be held next year during the TASTE of TASMANIA on Saturday 5th January at St David's Park. Keep your radio tuned into 92.1FM to hear more information in the coming months.

**4.Vikki: "Cedric , wow it sounds like the MRC has a lot going on. Last time you were with us you mentioned that the organisation has grown 25% in funding terms since you have started. Can you tell me a bit more about the growth of the MRC and any new staff that are coming on board"**

**Cedric:** Thanks Vicki. There are quite a number of program areas that are experiencing growth at the moment. As you are aware the MRC has been funded by the Department of Health and Ageing for a one year project for Suicide Prevention with particular emphasis on

intervention, prevention and postvention suicide strategies for culturally and linguistically diverse community groups. This is a statewide initiative - a special cheerio to Jannette Papps who is part of the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Steering Committee for her thoughts to date on this wonderful initiative. The MRC will be working collaboratively with the University Department of Rural Health in developing professional training and supervision models as relevant to this Tasmanian initiative. A special hello to Dr. Peg Levine and her team consisting of Martin Harris, Andrew Harris and Stuart Auckland.

If you are an organization that wishes to participate in this project can you please contact Ms. Ann Hughes on 6234 9411 to register your interest. Again the MRC has workshopped the stakeholder analysis around this project and formal letters will be sent out shortly inviting your support on this initiative.

Vicki, the MRC continues to grow at a manageable rate. In line with our growth I'm pleased to announce that we have appointed a new Finance Officer and also a new receptionist that should bolster our administrative support staff as led by Ms. Angela Allan. Also in line with the new project we are about to offer 2 further positions in the Phoenix Centre under Ms. Ann Hughes. So as you can see we are attracting some really good individuals to our organisation that should enable our future growth strategies.

On the subject of staffing a quick hello to all my wonderful staff at the MRC. I guess one thing I have mentioned previously Vicki, is that my staff are so committed and skilled in delivering our services. Their contribution and commitment to what they do is exemplary and I applaud each and every one of them for the value they bring to servicing our community groups and individuals.

Of course, in addition to having such wonderful staff we must recognize that we are funded for our activities through a number of Federal and State agencies and to that end I would like to thank our funding partners

- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Department of Health and Human Services

- Department of Premier and Cabinet

In addition, I would also like to recognize Hobart City Council and the Tasmanian community fund for their support of our organization.

**5.Vikki: “Cedric , what other activities have you been involved in since we last spoke. I hear that you have represented the MRC at a National Level recently”**

**Cedric:** Vicki, recently I attended the National Security for a Diverse Community forum in Canberra. I was one of 83 delegates selected by the Attorney Generals Department nationally because of our extensive community representation. There were 3 participants from Tasmania, Imam Sabrie from the Hobart Mosque and Mr. Frances Blango from MRC North. At the forum we discussed a number of national security issues with view to creating strategies and outlets to air issues before they actually reach crisis point. It was a 2 day series of workshops and lectures and I was fortunate to have met Mr. Kevin Andrews (Immigration Minister), Nick Keelty (Commissioner of Police) and Kevin Rudd (Attorney General). This culminated in a dinner on the last night at the National Museum of Australia – and was a great networking exercise to put me in touch with what is happening with other service providers on a national scale.

I was also lucky to have attended the National Fecca Congress on July 30<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup> at the Wrest Point Casino. It was interesting listening to and meeting with the key stakeholders from around the country on topics relevant to our industry. Mr. Kevin Andrews delivered the key note speech and I was lucky to have had lunch with him on that day where I gained a more thorough understanding of the Immigration portfolio. A special thanks to MR Davor Perovic, MS. Marcella Perovic and everyone at Multicultural Council of Tasmania for their efforts in co-ordinating this event. Congratulations and well done.

**6.Vikki ; “Cedric, apart from representing the MRC at a number of functions, I have heard that you are also in the midst of creating a new website for the Migrant Resource Centre?”**

**Cedric:** “Vikki, yes that is right,. I have subcontracted this exercise to a firm called “Doodlefish” and Deb if you are listening....love your work. The new website will be state of the art graphics and search

engines, with translation competencies that will provide better functionality and information to the Community organisations and individuals that we serve. In preparation for the Launch, the Migrant Resource Centre had a photo-shoot with Australian Idol photographer Mr. Stuart Bryce, who took photo's of all team members including group shots. I'm hoping the new site will be ready by the end of September and we will be able to celebrate the website launch shortly.

**7.Vikki** : "Cedric thanks for coming in today, how do we access services at the migrant resource centre?"

- **Establish how we can help you Email [reception@mrchobart.org.au](mailto:reception@mrchobart.org.au)**
- **Tel 03 6234 9411**
- **Fax : 03 6231 1264**
- **49 Molle Stree, Hobart. 7000.**