

Serving in a New Land

an Orientation and Appraisal
for
Religious Workers Coming to Australia





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Anglican Church, Wattle Flat, Central West NSW
Jewish Synagogue, North Newtown, Sydney
Masjid Darul Imaan Mosque, Arncliffe, Sydney
Sze Yup Temple, Glebe, Sydney

Other photographs in sequential order:

Sydney Buddhist Centre, Sydney, NSW
Newtown Baptist Church, Sydney, NSW
All Saints Anglican Church, Warwick, QLD
Participants in the pilot Serving in a New Land course 1-2 February 2011
Baha'i Temple, Sydney, NSW
Greek Orthodox Church of the Assumption of Our Lady, Sydney, NSW
St Michael's Melkite Catholic Cathedral, Sydney NSW
Lakemba Mosque, Sydney, NSW
Country Sunday Mass, Toogoolawah, QLD

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Acknowledgement of Country

In preparing an educational resource and training material for religious workers coming to Australia, it is considered appropriate to include an acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of this country. This is now a growing and important convention in Australian society, and one that continues the age-old practices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The acknowledgement of country and, when invited to visit a specific clan group's lands, the welcome to country, conducted by representatives of the traditional custodians, present opportunities for non-Aboriginal people to show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Acknowledging traditional custodianship is a means of honouring the original inhabitants of Australia, who first migrated here more than 40,000 years ago, and reflecting on their unique place in Australian culture and history. The protocol rests, in part, on recognition of the relationship between the 600 or so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clan groups, their spirituality and their land.

We acknowledge that Australia is traditionally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of these people in this land.

The Duty of Australians

*'Tis the duty of Australians, in the bush and in the town,
To forever praise their country, but to run no other down;
Not to start at every nothing with the boast that bluffs and halts,
But to love their young Australia and explain away her faults.*

*Not to lose their heads in triumph, nor be bitter in defeat,
Not to rave about the coming of a fighting man – or fleet.
When a man or nation visits, in the key-day of its pride,
'Tis the duty of Australians to be kind but dignified.*

*We can worship foreign talent – give our money, hearts and hands,
While we send our own, embittered, to win bread in foreign lands.
We are great to men who pedal, men who kick or bat the ball,
While our duty to the stranger is Australia's overall.*

*'Tis our place, when asked directions by a stranger in the land,
Not to jerk our thumb and mutter, for he may not understand.
We are free and we're enlightened, but at times we may forget
That the grand old-world politeness hasn't ruined anyone* yet.*

*'Tis our duty to the stranger – landed maybe an hour –
To give all the information and assistance in our power.
To give audience to the new chum and to let the old chum wait,
Lest his memory be embittered by his first day in the State.*

*'Tis our duty, when he's foreign, and his English very young,
To find out and take him somewhere where he'll hear his native tongue.
To give him our last spare moment, and our pleasure to defer –
He'll be father of Australians, as our foreign fathers were!*

Henry Lawson 1867-1922
1909 in Haynes 2002:84

* changed from the original 'England'

Abstract

Background

With over 20 million people, from 280 different countries of birth, speaking 300 languages, and following more than 100 religions, Australian society is a multicultural (Hodge & O'Carroll 2006). What allows the society to cohere, as it does, is not a policy of multiculturalism (any more than it would be for one of assimilation), it is a broad-based commitment to the rule of law and, perhaps, a collective aspiration to an Australian way of life. While various attempts have been made to capture, categorise and catalogue this way of life, typically the complexity of the phenomenon defeats even the best social science. Yet life in Australia has a certain flavour, a certain something, that marks it out from life everywhere else. The expatriate returning to these shores recognises 'home' just as the five million or more migrants, who have come to Australia since 1947, initially recognise something foreign (MacLeod 2006).

Most Australians would argue, generally but usefully, that the Australian way of life is marked by the notion of a 'fair go'. Exceptions, no matter how graphic, do not knockdown the idea that usually, commonly, ordinarily, most people expect and receive a fair go, most of the time, in most places in the country. It is against the standard of a fair go that we judge the banker, police officer, politician, business manager, religious leader or young person. The standard accords with general experience, sets a benchmark for comparison, and establishes a goal for achievement.

Commitment to an ideal or goal is a work in progress, capable of setback and interruption, but also open to facilitation. In an effort to articulate and make concrete the notion of the fair go contributors have, over time, refined a collection of principles, such as freedom of speech, religion and association, which the law makers of the country have largely enshrined in their judgements and legislation. This text, *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia*, takes the idea of a fair go, its constituent principles and supporting laws, and uses them as the basis for a two part educational program for religious workers trained overseas and coming to Australia to work.

The text

The intention behind the text, and the two programs it supports, is to assist the 1,000 and more overseas educated religious workers, who come to Australia each year, to better understand the Australian context – way of life, laws, multicultural traditions, interfaith customs, intra-faith diversity and secular practices – and thus better serve their own faith community. The text is an educational resource for religious workers coming to Australia and their families and supporters, a curriculum framework for facilitators and educators, and a policy guide for all concerned. The ambit and design of the text, and the materials contained, are based on broad consultation and a multi-faith steering committee oversaw all aspects of development. As an educational resource the text is open to continual improvement, and remains open to contributions from all interested individuals and parties.

The first of the two courses, Program A - is a short online course and the second, Program B - is a longer face-to-face course to be completed after arrival in Australia. The two courses are

developmental, not judgemental, and neither is intended to be exhaustive. The principal aim is to assist participants in their ongoing efforts to practice professionally in the Australian context.

Program A

Program A - Preparing for Australia - is a short, self-paced, online, orientation and self-assessment to assist overseas recruited religious workers prepare for religious work in Australia. The course is entirely didactic, based significantly on the law, and covers:

- government and the constitution;
- Australian law, civics, culture and citizenship;
- family law;
- gender and young people;
- conflict resolution;
- public relations, corporate ethical responsibility and interfaith cooperation; and
- continuing professional development.

A short self-assessment, comprised of a series of true/false questions, completes the course and an online certificate is issued.

Program B

Program B - Serving in Australia - contains the syllabus and basic guidance and materials for a two day, face-to-face course for religious workers new to Australia. It is based on the facilitated exploration and discussion of the following topics:

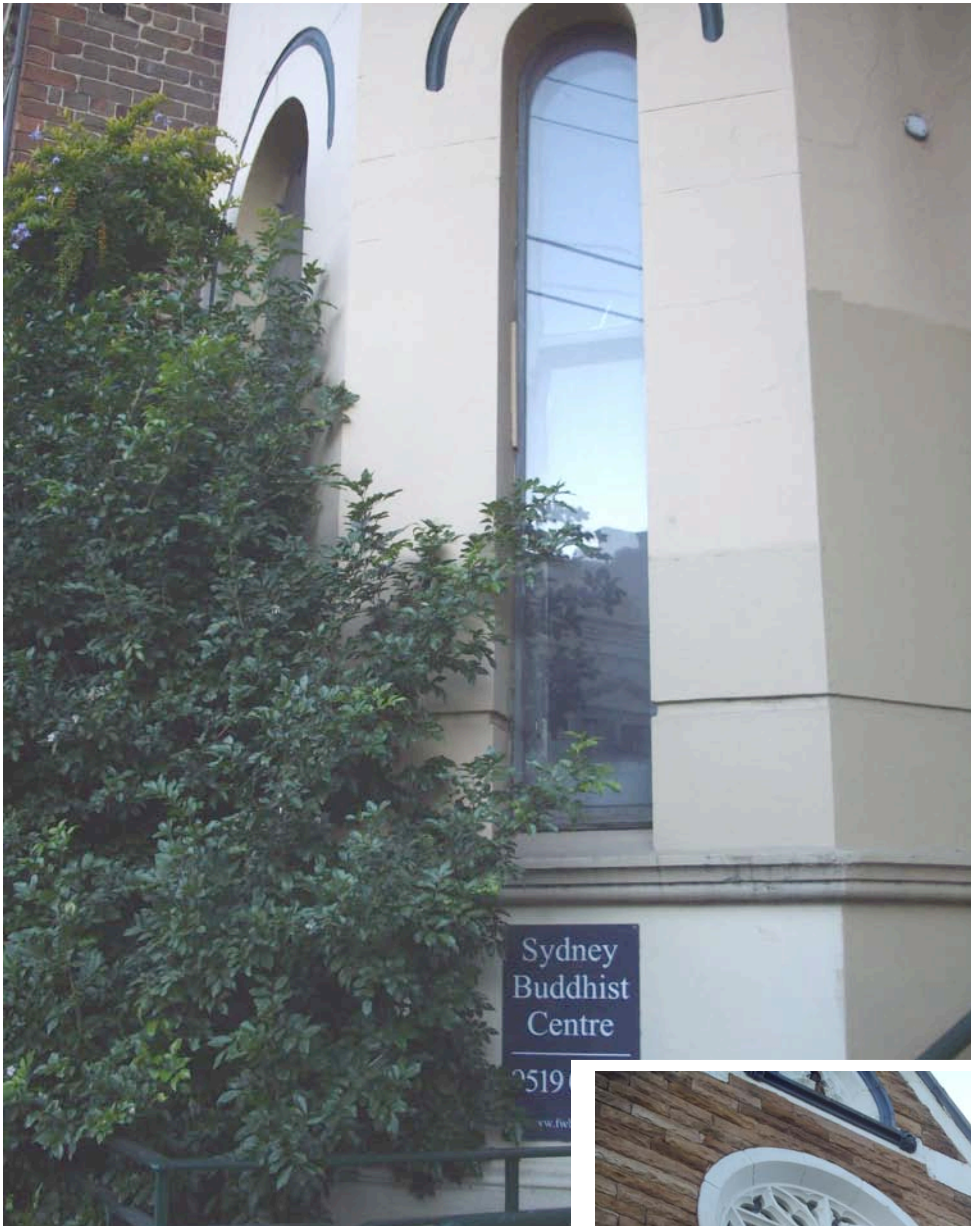
- the Australian context;
- civics workshop;
- supporting families;
- conflict, communication and community;
- representing your religion;
- working with young people; and
- continuing professional development.

Multi-faith participants and faculty, drawn from the same region, will work together with local/regional specialists to better explore the topics first addressed in Program A. Case studies, local issues and specific problems will fill out the curriculum. Networks established during the course should ensure that referrals, follow ups, and continuing development can be undertaken within the region. The course will be conducted at an appropriate non-denominational facility and faculty will represent and be drawn from regional religious groups. The faculty, namely the coordinator, host and three syndicate leaders, are the drivers of the course but support from local/regional specialists – academics, police, family law practitioners, community workers and religious leaders – will ensure that topics are explored critically and that content is contemporary.

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Preface

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 s116

The Australian Constitution guarantees all Australians the freedom to follow any religion or none as long as their actions and practices remain within the law. Australia has a secular government.

Along with freedom of religion, Australian law allows freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of movement. In Australia these freedoms and a civics of acceptance, mutual respect, peace and multiculturalism are underpinned by the law.

While the various governments of Australia are secular, its people are not. In the 2006 census only 18% of the population identified as having no religion. For the vast majority of the population then, one of the more than 100 religions practised in Australia plays some part in their lives.

Australia is a country of immigrants beginning with the Australian Aboriginals who first arrived here more than 40,000 years ago. Today, Australia's 20 million or so people speak more than 300 languages, and can trace their origins to 280 different countries. Australia's policy of multiculturalism continues to enrich our society and benefit our people.

This text, titled *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia*, is aimed at supporting religious workers new to Australia. It takes a multi-faith approach to assisting religious workers from all and any religion to serve their Australian faith communities. The intention is to foreground issues of culture, law, policy and life that are particular to Australia so that religious workers can meld these with their religious practice.

The acknowledgements page lists the individuals and organisations that have cooperated in producing this text and I thank them. I particularly thank Dr Mark Weston Wall for his expertise and knowledge in producing this resource and conducting the pilot delivery. The guidance provided by the Commission's Director Community Relations Service, Mr Richard Acheson, has been invaluable throughout the process. I also acknowledge funding from the federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

I commend this text to all religious workers coming to Australia and all who are interested in assisting them live a life of faith, service and citizenship in a new land.

Stepan Kerkyasharian AO
Chairperson
Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW

The Australian Kaleidoscope

Multicultural Australia

On the 1st of January 1901, the six independent colonies of Australia joined together as a federal nation under their own constitution. With a population of only 3.8 million, and nearly 8 million square kilometres of land, the new Australians entered the 20th century with one of the highest per capita incomes in the world (Woods 2001). In just over 100 years the country's population has grown to 21.6 million, including nearly 500,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (DFAT nd). As the population increased it also diversified, from one that was described as 'essentially British', to one that currently consists of people originating from 280 different countries of birth, speaking 300 languages and following more than 100 religions (Woods 2001, DIAC 2008 and ABS 2006 and see Appendix 1).

A non-racist immigration policy, and non-discriminatory public institutions at all levels of government, mean that Australia can benefit from diversity but it also allows Australia to do what is right in a moral sense. Not discriminating on the basis of religion is part and parcel of this and Australia is accordingly a secular society as '...reflected in the separation of religion from the state in Section 116 of the Constitution and in its embrace of the policy of multiculturalism' (Coleman & White, Eds 2006:2-3).

Multiculturalism is variously defined but it is essentially the celebration of a kaleidoscopic diversity of culture, ethnicity, language and religion revolving about a civics of equality and mutual respect. In our multicultural society the things that characterise an Australian identity are not and cannot be physical, such as height, hair colour or accent for example. Being Australian is about attitude and behaviour. It is about having a certain mind set and setting store in a suite of principles that are at once descriptive of the Australian character, and prescriptive of behaviour and a way of life that we collectively aspire to. These principles are variously described but they revolve around the following:

- 1) freedom of the individual;
- 2) freedom of speech;
- 3) freedom of religion;
- 4) freedom of association;
- 5) support for parliamentary democracy;
- 6) equality under the law;
- 7) equality of men and women;
- 8) equality of opportunity;
- 9) peacefulness; and
- 10) a spirit of acceptance, mutual respect and compassion for those in need.

The dividend of diversity

Diversity in Australia today is both real and irreversible, and it is the result of increasingly appropriate and fair immigration policies put in place since World War II. As a 'nation of immigrants', Australia has always benefited from the labour, skills, knowledge, capital, energy and drive supplied by new settlers (Whitlam 1985:485). It has also grown economically, as their demand for goods and services, including housing, education, food and recreation, provided new employment and business possibilities. Additionally, in the last 30 or more years, immigration from non-British and non-European countries has assisted Australian society to diversify its markets, mature internationally, and better align itself politically, geographically and economically.

As a diverse society founded on migration, Australia benefits in an almost trivial, but still enriching sense from better access to varieties of music, food, art, and dance. For example the choice of a restaurant for dinner, for the mostly urban population, now represents a veritable united nations of cuisine. Increasingly though, there is the realisation of an economic, intellectual and even strategic dividend in a society based on people of different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds sharing the same rights and responsibilities as citizens. New settlers from new countries open markets for trade and tourism, bring novel recipes and processes, pay taxes and earn wages, and add their voices to the democracy and the dialectic of ideas.

Secular Australia

Social and political arrangements within a state, whatever they are, and wherever they are made, require ongoing commitment and work if they are to support the state, enrich society and encourage the individual. These three planks, and an understanding of the national language, are central to the Australian way of life but, at the same time, a healthy diversity of ideas, examples, interpretations, innovations and experimentation produces a society that can cope with change and steadily improve the lot of its communities and individual members. Individuals are therefore essentially free, within the guidance of the law, to live their own lives and win their own fulfilment and happiness.

In Australia religion is seen as a matter of personal choice and one in which the state, namely the government and its officers, should not interfere.

All Australians are free to follow any religion they choose, so long as its practices do not break any Australian law. Australians are also free to not follow a religion. Religious intolerance is not acceptable in Australian society.

Australia has a secular government – it does not have any official or state religion. Governments treat all citizens as equal regardless of religion.

Religious laws have no legal status in Australia and only those laws enacted by parliament apply, for example, in divorce matters. Some religious or cultural practices, such as being married to more than one person at the same time are against the law in Australia.

(DIAC 2007:5)

While 'Australia prides itself on its secularism', more than 80% of its people still identify as religious (Coleman & White, Eds 2006:2). In the 2006 census (ABS 2007), out of nearly 20 million people:

- 64% identified as Christian,

- 2.1% as Buddhist,
- 1.7% as Muslim,
- .7% as Hindu,
- .4% as Jewish,
- 2.4% as other religions, and
- 11% did not state a religion.

Overseas-recruited clergy

Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism are the fastest growing religions in Australia, but the Catholic and the Anglican faiths account for nearly half the population by themselves (Ferguson 2008 and ABS 2007). Religious workers to serve the millions of faithful in Australia are in short supply because of a shortage of local vocations and a lack of training facilities for some faiths (Darragh nd). Religious workers are therefore increasingly being recruited from overseas and, as some religious communities prefer overseas educated clergy, this adds to the demand.

The Australian Government has instituted a specialist entry Religious Worker Visa (subclass 428) for the temporary stay of trained persons who work full-time to serve religious objectives, carry out pastoral duties, and conduct missionary work for a religious organisation in Australia (DIAC nd). Each year, over 1,000 temporary arrivals enter Australia under this visa subclass.

The religious worker definition includes:

- Christian brothers,
- deacons,
- imams,
- ministers,
- monks,
- nuns (sisters),
- pastors,
- priests,
- rabbis,
- Salvation Army officers, and
- other spiritual leaders.

These skilled migrants are sponsored by a religious organisation in Australia and are selected because of their religious training, education and experience. Almost inevitably they lack knowledge of the laws and customs of Australia and have often not been exposed to a culturally, ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse society. Concepts of interfaith cooperation may also be new to them and, importantly for their followers, intra-faith diversity may be as well.

Yet these men and women are being asked to leave their home country, travel thousands of kilometres and serve in a new land. It is expected of them that they will provide leadership to the faithful, counsel the troubled, guide the young, negotiate with other groups and agencies, and represent their religion in the wider community. In order to assist them in this onerous and important task, an orientation and a development program have been developed.

The text

Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia, is designed and developed to assist overseas-educated clergy and religious workers prepare for and undertake their religious duties in Australia. These men and women are answering a call to serve and their contribution to Australia is appreciated and can be facilitated.

The text houses this introductory chapter; and two education programs and supporting materials, Program A - Preparing for Australia, and Program B - Serving in Australia. It is supported by a bibliography that will assist readers wishing to further research any of the topics addressed.

Program A - Preparing for Australia - contains the educational material and design details for a standalone, online, self-paced, orientation to assist overseas-recruited religious workers prepare for religious work in Australia. The course touches on:

- government and the constitution;
- Australian law, civics, culture and citizenship;
- family law;
- gender and youth;
- conflict resolution;
- public relations, corporate ethical responsibility and interfaith cooperation; and
- continuing professional development.

The course does not cover aspects relating to migration or associated personal administration. It concludes with an online self-administered test and a certificate of completion is issued.

Program B - Serving in Australia - contains the materials, design details and syllabus for a two day, face-to-face, interactive and multi-faith program for religious leaders and workers new to Australia. The course syllabus embraces the topics in the online preparatory course, but it tackles these in a different format and at a greater depth. It also introduces a number of new topics. The course will be hosted at an appropriate regional venue by a joint party of local/regional community educational facilitators and multi-faith religious leaders. Participants will be of mixed faiths. A certificate of completion will be issued at the conclusion of the course.

Using this text

Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia is a resource for use by facilitators, administrators, policy and law makers, researchers, religious workers new to Australia and other parties interested in assisting immigrant religious workers better serve their Australian faith communities. The complete text covers the philosophy, practice and process of this assistance.

Programs A and B are fully developed as training and education programs. They can be modified, and pitched appropriately, to serve a wider community of learners.

Evaluation and improvement

Education is a humanistic intervention, undertaken in order to assist participants to achieve certain learning outcomes. The four primary questions to answer when formulating an educational intervention are: who teaches? who learns? what methods will be used? and what knowledge, skills, and attitudes should result? If subsequent program evaluation is to be critical then it must address these issues, and not rely solely on the standard post-course questionnaire based on how a participant feels about certain aspects of the program.

In one well accepted hierarchy the levels of evaluation in descending order of importance are:

- community benefit,
- work/life transfer,
- participant performance, and
- participant perception.

A pilot study delivery of Program A and B was conducted in early 2011 and the evaluation report is at Appendix 6.

Suggestions and pro forma for evaluating future deliveries of Program A and Program B are contained within the program materials.

Comments and suggestions on the text, materials and delivery strategies are always welcome.

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Program A - Preparing for Australia



Overview

Program A - Preparing for Australia - contains the educational material and design details for a standalone, online, self-paced, orientation course to assist overseas recruited religious workers prepare for religious work in Australia. The course does not cover aspects relating to migration or associated personal administration. It concludes with an online, self-administered test and a certificate of completion is issued.

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Topic A3 – Family Law

Topic A4 – Gender and Youth

Topic A5 – Conflict Resolution

Topic A6 – Public Relations, Corporate Ethical Responsibility and Interfaith Cooperation

Topic A7 – Continuing Professional Development

Assessment and Certificate

Evaluation

Introduction

As a result of an earlier needs analysis and in light of some community concern, a short, self-paced, education and orientation program for religious workers coming to Australia was proposed in early 2009. This program is developed here and will be available online for all interested parties.

The program represents a relatively simple and straightforward attempt to cover a number of topics identified as relevant, during a review of the literature and community consultation. The syllabus does not attempt to canvas all pertinent issues, nor exhaustively cover the issues it does address. Instead, the intention is to assist religious workers in their preparation for service in Australia by alerting them to some of the matters they will be required to come to grips with. Nothing is lost by this and there is much to be gained.

In other words, the program aims to sensitise participants to some of the issues of Australian context, culture, community and citizenship that may differ markedly from those of their parent country. Experience has shown that these are not matters to be rote learnt and recited. They need to be contemplated, considered and reflected on and an early introduction to their complexity and nuance will have positive outcomes for participants and their religious communities.

Sometime after arrival in Australia, participants will be invited to attend a two-day, face-to-face, multi-faith program, Program B - Serving in Australia - that will address these topics in more detail.

Learning objectives

At the completion of this program participants will:

- better appreciate the Australian context and political philosophy,
- be more aware of the diversity of the Australian population,
- be sensitised to the implications of religious work in a secular state, and
- have embarked on a process of continuing professional development and education relevant to religious work in Australia.

Syllabus

The course covers seven topics with four or five topical areas examined under each. At the completion of each topic, a small self-administered test allows the participant to assess their knowledge before progressing to the next topic. Topics in order are:

- government and the constitution;
- Australian law, civics, culture and citizenship;
- family law;
- gender and youth;
- conflict resolution;
- public relations, corporate ethical responsibility and interfaith cooperation; and
- continuing professional development.

At the completion of the last topic, participants can complete the final self-assessment. The assessment may be attempted any number of times. Scoring 100% will result in a certificate of completion being issued online. The certificate may be printed out and retained by the participant.

Online educational design

Online format follows the standard industry design (as used by the United Nations in their online training) including:

- bold text;
- contemporary, relevant, non-distracting Australian themed backgrounds;
- audio not required but could be incorporated;
- video not required;
- topic/sub-topic to a screen/page;
- references and citations not required on the page;
- login, password, rest, resume, logout and return capability;
- click to go forward/back;
- self-test to follow each topic;
- no going back from test until complete;
- click to answer test questions;
- self-test result display after completion of topic test;
- test answers limited to 'true', or 'false';
- no going back from final test until complete;
- 100% pass mark for certificate print out on completion of final test;
- field for entry of participant's full name on certificate;
- date on certificate to be automatically entered;
- online standard evaluation form with email back facility.

Participants may be online using early generation IT and community/shared facilities. Design should therefore be contemporary and educationally appropriate but not be too demanding on hardware and bandwidth.

Topic A1 – Government and the Constitution

A1.1 The Constitution

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (Imp) s1 gives the legislative or law making power of the Commonwealth of Australia to the Federal Parliament consisting of the Governor-General, the Senate and the House of Representatives (Sawer 1988:35-37).

'The Commonwealth Constitution provides and protects the framework for the Australian system of government. It is our most important founding document and a symbol of our national life' (Saunders 2001:1). The constitution is the supreme law of the land and it contains the fundamental rules for government. The constitution gives the federal parliament authority to make laws in relation to things like defence and marriage but it also limits its authority in other areas such as health, education and transport that are left to the parliaments of the various states.

A1.2 Religion

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (Imp) s116

The Australian Constitution guarantees Australians the freedom to follow any religion or no religion as long as their actions are in accordance with the law.

A1.3 Marriage I

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:

...(xxi) marriage;

(xxii) divorce and matrimonial causes; and in relation thereto, parental rights, and the custody and guardianship of infants;

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (Imp) s51

Marriage in Australia can only be performed by a person who has demonstrated to be a fit and proper person and who has been registered as a marriage celebrant.

Marriage celebrants are required to provide information on pre-marriage and relationship services. As such, they play an important role in developing longer-lasting family relationships and stronger communities.

A1.4 Marriage II

Under the *Marriage Act 1961 (Cwlth) s94* bigamy, marrying a person while still married to another, is a criminal offence and offenders are liable to seven years imprisonment.

Regardless of religious doctrine, it is illegal in Australia for a person to marry while already married.

A1.5 Amending the Constitution

The Constitution of Australia can only be amended by referendum and s128 of the constitution states that a proposed change must first be passed by an absolute majority of both houses of parliament. Once this hurdle is cleared, voters across Australia must decide and the amendment will only be passed if a majority of voters across the land, and a majority of voters in a majority of states (4 out of 6) approve.

In Australia only the people can change the constitution.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: In Australia people are legally free to follow any religion or no religion at all.

Q2: Any religious leader can conduct a marriage ceremony in Australia.

Q3: Being married to more than one person is legal in Australia.

Q4: The legal foundation for Australia is the constitution.

Q5: The laws on divorce in Australia are made by each religious group.

Topic A2 – Australian Law, Civics, Culture and Citizenship

A2.1 Law

All Australians are equal under the law. This means that nobody should be treated differently from anybody else because of their race, ethnicity or country of origin; because of their age, gender, marital status or disability; or because of their political or religious beliefs. Government agencies and independent courts must treat everyone fairly.

(DIAC 2007:6)

In Australia it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, disability and age. There is a commission that is responsible for investigating complaints of discrimination.

A2.2 Civics

Australians are entitled to the five fundamental freedoms:

- freedom of speech,
- freedom of association,
- freedom of assembly,
- freedom of religion, and
- freedom of movement.

These freedoms are reinforced by a civics of equality, mutual respect and multiculturalism.

A2.3 Culture

Australia has, through migration, developed into one of the world's most culturally diverse societies. As a nation, we now speak over 300 languages, practice more than 100 religions and originate from over 280 different countries.

(DIAC 2008)

Multiculturalism means that Australians from all cultures are welcome to retain and maintain their culture and contribute to the rich diversity of Australian life.

A2.4 Indigenous Australia

Australia's indigenous population consists of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are ethnically and culturally different from one another (DFAT nd:6). These peoples first migrated to Australia more than 40,000 years ago. It is increasingly the case that community events are initially marked by an acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the land they are held on. Sometimes government events, where overseas visitors are present, will be opened with a 'Welcome to Country' by a local Indigenous elder.

Respect for the culture, traditions and beliefs of others, is part of the Australian culture.

A2.5 Citizenship

Ethnicity, race, language and religion should not play any part in determining or defining the status of a citizen. Whilst the notions of loyalty and commitment to the state by a citizen should not relate to the individual's race, religion, language and ethnicity, an individual should have the right of self-identification by any of these factors.

(Kerkyasharian nd:3)

Citizens of Australia, and visitors, enjoy a wide range of rights and in return they accept certain responsibilities. One responsibility is the requirement to act within the law at all times.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: Australians practice more than 100 religions.

Q2: Everyone in Australia has a responsibility to act within the law at all times.

Q3: All Australians are equal under the law.

Q4: The Christian religions are the official religions of Australia.

Q5: Aborigines first came to Australia more than 40,000 years ago.

Topic A3 – Family Law

A3.1 Families first

'A marriage wisely entered into remains good for the economy and the community, for one's wellbeing, for wealth creation and for the environment too.... Marriage is a formative institution... we learn marriage...' and it is teachable (Regnerus 2009:11).

Religious workers play an important part in supporting the marriages of their faithful and marriages play an important role in the wider community.

A3.2 Domestic violence

As in other countries, violence towards another person is illegal in Australia and viewed very seriously. This includes violence within the home and within marriage, otherwise known as domestic or family violence. This is behaviour by a person which may result in the victim experiencing or fearing physical, sexual or psychological abuse and damage, forced sexual relations, forced isolation or economic deprivation.

(DIAC nd:24)

As a religious worker you may become aware of instances of domestic or family violence. Violence like this is a crime in Australia, as is violence against children.

A3.3 Divorce I

The *Family Law Act 1975* (Cwlth) allows divorce on the grounds of an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage demonstrated by a minimum period of 12 months during which the parties lived separately and apart. The divorce does not have to be the fault of either party. Guilt, blame and fault are not considered in deciding with whom any children should reside or what maintenance should be paid.

The *Family Law Act* establishes the principle of no-fault divorce and this means that a court does not consider why the marriage ended (Family Law Courts nd:1).

A3.4 Divorce II

The *Family Law Act 1975* (Cwlth) highlights the importance of counselling to assist couples who are in the process of separation and divorce. The Act also stresses that the welfare of any children is to be the most important consideration, and that continuing joint responsibility and cooperation in parenting after divorce is desirable.

Being granted a divorce does not mean issues about property, maintenance and parenting of children are resolved. A divorced couple can make an agreement and file it with a court, or they can seek a decision from a court. In making a decision, the court will take into consideration what a couple owns and what they owe.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: At law in Australia, one party is held to blame for a divorce.

Q2: A court must follow the decision of a religious leader in relation to a divorce.

Q3: Domestic violence is a criminal matter in Australia.

Q4: The welfare of any children from a marriage is the most important consideration following a divorce.



Topic A4 – Gender and Youth

A4.1 Equality

Across the ages, women of all cultures, languages, ethnicities and religions have a history of struggle against restrictions to their individual rights including their freedom of speech, opinion and movement.

In Australia, men and women have equal rights and discrimination on the basis of sex is illegal.

A4.2 Religious literacy

Australia has a culturally diverse society and it has a strong policy of multiculturalism. Living in a multicultural society means living in a multi-faith one as well and people need to be religiously literate in order to do so. Religious workers are well placed, particularly with young people, to teach about various religions and their practices and contribute to the awareness and acceptance of cultural and spiritual difference.

Interfaith education breaks down notions of strangeness and focuses on how Australians of all faiths can work together.

A4.3 Young people and the internet

Young Australians are technically savvy and have good access to the internet and other rapid communication technologies. While the internet has been a great boon to society, the technology also allows individuals and organisations to post obscene, racist, religiously intolerant, sexist and other discriminatory and even illegal material.

Religious workers can assist community leaders to be aware of what young people are accessing and contributing to on the internet.

A4.4 Dress and bearing

In Australia, women and young people, express themselves through their dress. Young women celebrate their individuality by wearing the latest and sometimes daring fashions and young men may mark their vitality with tattoos and earrings. Regardless, what one observer finds offensive another will find expressive and even attractive. What might look like a rag to one person, could be an expensive, tailor made fashion statement to another.

As is said in more than one religion: actions are but by intention.

A4.5 Sex, drugs and alcohol

Religious workers are often asked for advice and assistance by mothers attempting to cope with their adolescent children's questions and behaviour relating to sex, drugs and alcohol. For various reasons, religious workers are sometimes unable to directly assist but they must be able to refer the parent to local government or community services.

When faced with a request for help that they cannot meet, professional religious workers find someone who can.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: In Australia, women are legally subordinate to men.

Q2: Religious workers should seek assistance when confronted with complex problems.

Q3: Learning about the 100 or more religions practised in Australia contributes to a stronger multicultural community.

Q4: The way a woman dresses reveals her sexual availability.

Q5: Use of the internet is a strictly private matter.

Topic A5 – Conflict Resolution

A5.1 Conflict is inevitable

Conflict is inevitable in human affairs. Disagreements, disappointments, tension and arguments are part of family and community life and they can be productive rather than destructive.

Professional religious workers are prepared to manage conflict in their faith community.

A5.2 Discrimination

Unfortunately discrimination and racism are experienced by some people in Australia. For these people, religious workers may be their first point of contact after an event.

Religious workers should be able to support complainants and refer complaints about racism, particularly ongoing problems, to the appropriate authorities.

A5.3 Mediation

Two parties in conflict are often unable to resolve an issue satisfactorily. The religious worker called upon to mediate in an argument or dispute has an important role to play in restoring and maintaining harmony.

In mediating disputes, between husband and wife or between neighbours, religious workers must be fair. If they aren't then their authority is eroded and disputants will cease appealing to them for assistance.

A5.4 Families under pressure

Families experiencing unemployment and underemployment are placed under financial pressure that can affect their relationships. Short term assistance is available from a number of government and non-government agencies.

Professional religious workers are able to assist families under pressure in their communities by referring them to other agencies and service providers.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: Conflict in a family or community is always destructive.

Q2: Professional religious workers provide advice and assistance, they don't seek it.

Q3: Conflict in a family means that one party is wrong and one is right.

Q4: The best way to cope with racism is to just put up with it.

Topic A6 – Representing Religion

A6.1 Public relations

In Australia a religion is officially defined as 'a set of beliefs and practices, usually involving acknowledgement of a divine or higher being or power, by which people order the conduct of their lives practically and in a moral sense' (ABS 2006:1). Australians today report being affiliated with over 100 religions.

Religious workers are the most public representatives of their own religion. Their example of spirituality to those of their own faith is as important as their example of mutual respect and acceptance of others is to the rest of the Australian population.

A6.2 Media

The media can be a powerful ally and a staunch critic. Religious workers can use the media to increase the reach of their message but they should carefully consider the effect of their comments.

Religious workers, like all professionals, should consider media training so that they can better harness the beneficial effects of the medium and prevent embarrassing themselves and their faith community.

A6.3 Corporate ethical responsibility

Religious workers represent their religions and in their public pronouncements will be taken to do so. Criticising other religions, or basing the criticism of others on religious doctrine can be controversial. Religious workers acting as spokespersons must not defame another religion and their comments should be reasonable and in the public interest.

Above all, public comments by religious workers, and any Australian, must be made in good faith and they must be fair, accurate and reasonable.

A6.4 Interfaith cooperation

Most religious workers have a reasonable amount in common. Most adhere to the principle of the golden rule – do unto others as you would have them do unto you, most share an interest in making life more tolerable for their faithful, and most are interested in harmony, peace and cooperation. Religious workers from all faiths can accomplish a great deal if they work together, share information and exchange ideas.

Interfaith cooperation and multi-faith dialogue can be developmental for participants, and beneficial to faith communities and wider society.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: Public comment by religious workers reflects on their community and should always be reasonable.

Q2: Cooperation with other religions can assist a religious community and its members.

Q3: Professional religious workers use the media responsibly.

Q4: There are more than 100 religions practiced in Australia.

Topic A7 – Continuing Professional Development

A7.1 Communication skills

Religious workers make an important contribution to the spiritual and secular lives of their faith community. Making others feel comfortable, listening to their problems and providing advice are all part of the role for most. Being approachable, being a good communicator, and being a good listener are all things that can be learnt and they are things that all of us can improve at. Professional religious workers engage in professional and continuing development. Improving communication and problem solving skills is an ongoing task.

A7.2 Multi-tasking

In some faith communities in Australia religious workers are not just spiritual leaders. They are also involved in conflict resolution, family counselling, working with young people, fund raising, prison visits, inter-faith cooperation, community welfare, public relations and even political lobbying. Practitioners may even look to religious workers for guidance in relation to international and Australian events. When faced with a task for which they are not equipped, professional religious workers seek advice.

A7.3 Students of culture

In some faith communities in Australia followers come from a radical diversity of backgrounds. Muslims, for example, have migrated to Australia from over 60 different countries. Buddhism, the second fastest growing religion in Australia after Hinduism, has followers from all over Asia and increasingly from Europe and the Americas. Professional religious workers spend time improving their knowledge, testing their skills and reflecting on their attitudes. Learning about another culture, including the Australian culture, is just like travel; it broadens the mind, challenges the senses and enriches the spirit.

A7.4 Multi-faith cooperation

When religious workers new to Australia begin work in their community they can experience all the difficulties of any professional commencing work in a foreign land. While they can expect assistance from their new community, nearby will be a religious worker of another faith who can also assist. Interfaith cooperation is a hallmark of a multi-faith society.

Self test (True/False?)

Q1: Life-long learning is part of being a professional religious worker.

Q2: Culture can have a profound effect on religious practice.

Q3: Learning about Australia is part of serving as a religious worker in Australia.

Q4: In times of personal difficulty it would not be appropriate to seek assistance from a religious worker of another faith.

Assessment and certificate

The end of Program A - Preparing for Australia - is marked by an online self-assessment opportunity. Questions will be drawn from each topic area. One or two of the end of topic questions will be used in the test. Answers are again limited to true or false.

On successful completion of the self-test participants will be presented with the opportunity to print out a customised (date, name, place) certificate,

Evaluation

Evaluation of Program A, through the online collection of participant perceptions and program self-test results, will be supplemented by discussion during Program B.

Participant Experience of Program

Q	Question	Notes	T/F?
1	This program has helped me prepare for religious work and service in Australia	Tick box true or false by mouse	
2	I found the topics relevant and interesting		
3	I did not know that the Australian population was so multicultural		
4	I already knew that freedom of religion was a constitutional right in Australia		
5	I am experienced in interfaith dialogue		
6	I thought that the level of content in this program was about right		
7	I have learnt nothing new in this program		
8	I intend to continue learning about Australia and the Australian people		
9	I already knew that Australia was a secular state		
10	I would like to learn more about professionalism as a religious worker		
11	I had no trouble accessing this program		
12	Other comments	Open comments	

Program B - Serving in Australia



Overview

Program B - Serving in Australia - contains the syllabus, and some materials, for a two day, face-to-face, interactive and multi-faith program for religious leaders and workers new to Australia. The course syllabus embraces the topics in the online preparatory course, but it tackles these at a greater depth mainly through discussion and reflection. The course will be hosted at an appropriate, preferably non-religious educational venue, and facilitated by a joint party of local/regional community leaders and elders, educational facilitators, subject matter experts and multi-faith religious leaders. Visiting lecturers drawn from the specialists working in the region will present most of the course content and syndicate leaders will facilitate discussion. Participants will be overseas-recruited clergy, new to Australia, and drawn from mixed faiths. A certificate of completion will be issued at the conclusion of the course.

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Introduction

Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia is a two part program aimed at assisting immigrant religious workers better serve their Australian faith communities. Program A - Preparing for Australia - is a short, online, introductory course. Program B - Serving in Australia - is a two day, face-to-face program attended by religious workers within the first year of their arrival in Australia. The program is aimed at assisting religious workers new to Australia to work more effectively and comfortably in a multi-faith, multicultural, democratic Australia. The principal aim is to sensitise participants to the practicalities of a religious life in an Australian context.

Serving in Australia continues the themes and topics of the earlier program (Program A) but it does so in a face-to-face program, facilitated by a multi-faith faculty, working with a multi-faith group of participants. In this resource, the program syllabus is detailed, faculty and venue criteria are identified, and lesson/session notes and requirements are suggested. Enough information and guidance is provided for a reasonably experienced facilitator, given the staff and resources listed, to plan and deliver the program. As the program is conducted and evaluated, refinements and further guidance will make organising subsequent courses considerably less onerous.

Learning objectives

At the completion of this program participants will:

- be familiar with the Australian context and political philosophy,
- be more aware of the diversity of the Australian population and Australia's multicultural, multi-faith and democratic society,
- be more aware of the implications of religious work in a secular state,
- be more adept at supporting their faith community in remaining true to their religion while also exercising their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities as Australian citizens,
- have developed a continuing professional development plan based on self-assessment and reflection, and
- have established the basis of a local/regional, multi-faith and professional support network.

Faculty

Serving in Australia is a short course with some fairly demanding learning objectives. The teaching faculty should therefore be well selected and well briefed on the program requirements. Of the positions in the table below, the coordinator and the host will have most to do with the setting up of the program. Hosts would usually be an academic or educator working in peace education, multi-faith cooperation or religious studies. They would have extensive networks in their region, and good local knowledge of residential and course venues, local agencies and organisations.

The delivery of each program will rest mainly on the shoulders of the three syndicate/small group leaders (SLs). These local/regional religious leaders, identified with the assistance of the program host and coordinator, will facilitate small group discussions and act as coaches/advisors to participants.

Staff Table

Position	Tasks	Time	Notes
Host	Leadership and academic standards	2 day course and course preparation	Host of the educational venue
Coordinator	Liaison, coordination, bookings, administration, recruitment and briefing of visiting lecturers (VLs)	2 day course and course preparation	
Syndicate/small group leader (SL) x 3 max	Local/regional religious leaders (multi-faith) for small group work and participant support	2 day course and course preparation	1 x SL for each 6 to 8 participants
Australian context team	VL: local/regional politician, local/regional legal practitioner or academic	Half day	Topic B1
Supporting families team	VL: family welfare/law practitioner and/or Centrelink representative	Half day	Topic B3
Conflict, communication and community team	VL: Community police representative and community worker	Half day	Topic B4
Field trip team	Host and staff at field trip sites, local/regional interfaith leaders and youth services coordinators	Half day	Driver and bus Packed lunches Topics B5 & 6
Dinner speaker	Guest speaker – local/regional VIP – and all VLs invited	Evening only	The dinner is an optional and voluntary event
Venue and administrative staff	As required/contracted	As required/ Contracted	

Participants

A course panel of 18 to 20 participants is recommended and the course should ideally be attended within the first 12 months of arrival in Australia. Participant panels should be multi-faith, and participants should attend a program in their home state, and preferably their own region.

Special needs, disability, sex/gender, and literacy are not selection issues but participants should be at a basic or higher level in spoken English. Special arrangements for non-English speaking participants can be made given sufficient notice.

Participants should have already completed Program A - Preparing for Australia - online.

Etiquette

Throughout this program, the guidelines for interaction will be negotiated but will be backstopped by the *Principles of Interfaith Peace Building* developed by the United Religions Initiative in 2005.

- Establish equality.
- Develop a culture of pluralism and inclusion.
- Preserve symmetry.
- Create a 'voluntary atmosphere'.
- Go beyond the comfort zone.
- Build participation.

Facilities

Program B - Serving in Australia - is a two day face-to-face course requiring:

- a central presentation/discussion room with seating for up to 24 people,
- three small group/breakout areas each for eight people,
- tea and coffee area and facilities,
- toilets/washrooms,
- wheelchair access,
- parking for up to 10 vehicles, and
- private prayer room.

Ideally the venue for the course would be a non-religious space such as a university campus, technical college or conference facility. Nearby (walking distance) residential facilities, with single en-suite rooms, will be required for all non-local participants and program staff.

Logistics

- Stores such as whiteboards, pens, paper, OHP and slides will be required.
- All classroom consumables will be provided by the venue administrator.
- Audio visual equipment will be required by some lecturers and facilitators.
- 20 copies of *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia* are required.
- A program 'show bag' will be assembled.
- Meals (BLD): LD for Day 1 and BL for Day 2. Lunch on Day 2 is packed.
- Meals should be halal and kosher (as required) and vegetarian choices should be available.
- A mini-bus and driver will be required for the Day 2 field trip.
- Travel requirements will be determined for each participant.

Rapporteur

The appointment and duties of a rapporteur for each course should be considered. Notes taken by the rapporteur will assist in evaluation and can be used for reflection. They also provide a record of the presentations and discussions.

Syllabus

The course is conducted over two days and the syllabus comprises of seven main topic areas:

Topic B1 – The Australian Context;

Topic B2 – Civics Workshop;

Topic B3 – Supporting Families;

Topic B4 – Conflict, Communication and Community;

Topic B5 – Representing your Religion (Field);

Topic B6 – Working with Young People (Field); and

Topic B7 – Continuing Professional Development.

The daily timetable is shown below and plans and notes for each topic and session follow.

These are not scripts to be read out, they are guidelines/suggestions only. Presenters and facilitators will develop their own scripts and training materials in line with the directions given here.

Visiting lecturers and the directors/principals of any venues visited should be furnished with a copy of this text well before the course. They should be encouraged and assisted to develop their session using the relevant notes, but relying on their professional discretion and tailored to the regional context.

In keeping with good practice in adult development, presenters and facilitators should be guided by the actual concerns and problems being confronted and experienced by the participants. Using participant cases and examples, addressing specific issues and assisting participants reflect on their practice should take precedence over the delivery of set piece lectures. Sessions that practice participants in a model of learning from experience – planning, acting, reflecting – are therefore preferred.

Daily Timetable

Day 1

Session	Topic/Session	Facilitator	Notes
8.30am	Registration	Coordinator	Appendix 3
9.00am	Greetings, prayer and welcome to country	Host	Official opening & photograph
9.15am	Introductions and etiquette	Coordinator	All
10.00am	Self-assessment	Coordinator	Appendix 4
10.30am	Morning tea		
11.00am	The Australian context	SL1	B1 VL team
12.30pm	Lunch		VL team hosted
1.30pm	Civics workshop	Coordinator	B2
3.00pm	Afternoon tea		
3.30pm	Supporting families	SL2	B3 VL team
5.00pm	Close		All
Evening	Own time		
7.30pm	Dinner	Host	Optional and voluntary

Day 2

Session	Topic	Facilitator	Notes
8.30am	Coffee and reflection		
9.00am	Conflict, communication and community	SL3	B4 VL team
10.30am	Morning tea		VL team hosted
11.00am	Representing your religion	Coordinator	B5 Field trip
12.30pm	Lunch		Field trip
1.30pm	Working with young people	Coordinator	B6 Field trip
3.00pm	Afternoon tea		
3.30pm	Continuing professional development	SLs	B7
4.15pm	Evaluation	Coordinator	Appendix 4
5.00pm	Farewells and prayer	Host	

Session Plan – Greeting, Prayer and Welcome to Country

Topic

This is a short, 15 minute session comprising:

- a formal opening,
- a welcome to country, and
- a short multi-faith prayer for the success of the program.

Method

The session will commence with a formal welcome to the course and the venue conducted by the host.

A welcome to country by an elder or other representative of the traditional custodians of the land on which the training is to take place should then be conducted. Where a welcome to country cannot be arranged, an acknowledgement of country should be made.

An opening multi-faith prayer should be offered for the success of the program.

Faculty

All faculty and participants are required to attend this session

Content

A suggested acknowledgement of country is shown below.

I respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this land on which we are meeting, the (insert name) people. It is a privilege to be standing on (insert name) country.

I also acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to this country we all live in and share together – Australia.

The scripts for the welcome to country, formal opening and multi-faith opening prayer should be prepared by the various speakers. Content for the opening can be easily drawn from the preface and introduction to this text.

Session Plan - Introductions and etiquette

Topic

This 45 minute session is designed to allow all participants and staff on the program to introduce and be introduced, and to agree on the rules and procedures for the next two days. Guidelines for interaction will be negotiated but will be backstopped by the *Principles of Interfaith Peace Building* developed by the United Religions Initiative in 2005.

- Establish equality.
- Develop a culture of pluralism and inclusion.
- Preserve symmetry.
- Create a 'voluntary atmosphere'.
- Go beyond the comfort zone.
- Build participation.

The self-assessment drawn from Program A – Preparing for Australia is completed, where time allows, after the introductions. It should be done in the way of a quick quiz and should be treated as an ice-breaker and discussion starter.

Method

Introductions will be facilitated by the coordinator who may use any technique, such as the introduction in pairs whereby participants pair-up and each introduces the other to the wider group. This ensures that all participants have an opportunity to be introduced and serves as an icebreaker. The registration forms completed earlier could be used during this session.

This session is considered vital to the success of the program. It should draw out the participants, establish a sense of collegiality and set the scene for the next two days.

Participants' expectations of the program should also be discussed during this period, and a brief overview of the next two days work should be outlined. Participants should be issued the text and materials for the program.

Faculty

All faculty and participants are required to attend this session. Key members of staff from the hosting institution should also be present and faculty and staff should introduce themselves.

Content

Content will be as determined by the coordinator and participants.

Breaks for prayers, tea, washroom visits etc will be agreed during the introductions session.

Special meal timings, menus and requirements should also be raised during this session.

The short self-assessment exercise drawn from Program A – Preparing for Australia is at Appendix 4.

Topic B1 – The Australian Context

Topic

The Australian Context – an introduction to the context for practice as a professional religious worker in Australia. Based on an appreciation of the basic history of Australia, Aboriginal Australia, transportation, white Australia and multiculturalism. The session touches on the current context, politics, demographics, employment, urbanisation and globalisation including trends and possibilities, and Australia in the future.

Method

- Central presentations and open forum discussion.
- Classroom only required.
- Chaired by SL1.
- VLS introduced and thanked by the chair.
- 2 x 45 minute periods.

Faculty

- Chaired by SL1.
- SLs 2 and 3.
- Suggested VL team – local/regional politician, local/regional legal practitioner or academic. Alternatives include a lecturer in government or Australian history, or a teacher of Australian studies.

Content

The session is deliberately broad but will attempt to touch on aspects of the following:

- Aboriginal history.
- White Australia.
- Multiculturalism.
- The Australian constitution.
- The separation of powers.
- Parliamentary democracy.
- The Westminster system.
- The three levels of government in Australia.
- Taxation.

VLS, selected and briefed by the coordinator, should be in a position to present on the above topics for the two periods allocated. However, VLS should also look to open the topic up to participants' questions and concerns. As this is the first session in the course, SLs may be required to 'break the ice', ask questions and carry the discussion in the first instance.

The chair will introduce the speakers and thank them after the session. VLS will be invited to morning tea afterwards and to the dinner on the first night if it is held.

Case

Stories of practice from the field are a vital component in all sessions of the program. Participants and presenters are encouraged to use cases from their practice to make, illustrate and elaborate on a point or lesson.

Notes

These notes present a brief outline of the system of government in Australia, the Australian constitution, the three tiers of government, parliamentary democracy, the separation of powers, and taxation. They should be used as a guide only and VLs are welcome to produce their own notes and handouts.

Brief Outline of the System of Government in Australia

After attending this session participants should become reasonably familiar with how the Australian legal system works. The session briefly covers four main areas:

1. Australian federation;
2. The Australian constitution;
3. Three tiers of government; and
4. The separation of powers doctrine.

The Australian political system may be described in three ways:

1. a federation;
2. a constitutional monarchy; and
3. a parliamentary democracy.

It is a federation because political power is shared between a central or federal government in Canberra and a state government in each of the six states which make up the Australian federation, legally known as the Commonwealth of Australia.

It is a constitutional monarchy because the head of state is a monarch, currently Queen Elizabeth the Second, who must act in accordance with the Australian Constitution and all relevant laws. The modern role of the Queen is to appoint a governor general in Canberra and a governor in each state. The main role of the Queen's Representative is to swear in the different ministers and to sign into law all acts of the different parliaments both federal and state.

It is a parliamentary democracy because all laws are made by parliament whose members are elected by the citizens.

Australian Constitution

Before 1901 Australia consisted of six separate British colonies. These colonies decided to unite into one country under a federal system of government. They obtained the consent of the United Kingdom Parliament to do so. This consent is the legal basis of the Australian Constitution which commenced on the first of January 1901.

The Australian Constitution is the document that gives authority to the Federal or Commonwealth Parliament in Canberra. Under the Constitution, political power is shared between Canberra, which makes laws for the whole of Australia, and the states, which make laws binding only in their geographical territory. The way the Constitution works is that certain enumerated heads of power are given to Canberra. All other powers remain with the states. Examples of laws within the province of the Federal Parliament are defence, foreign affairs, and immigration.

The Constitution may be amended by a referendum which has to be passed both by a majority of all Australians and by a majority of people in the majority of states.

The Three Tiers of Government

In Australia there are three tiers of government, each complementing the others. The three tiers are known as federal, state, and local.

The federal government consists of the two houses of parliament and the Governor-General who represents the Queen of Australia. The modern role of the Governor-General is mainly to sign all laws which are passed by the two houses of parliament. The two houses are the Senate (Upper House) which has members representing the states, and the House of Representatives (Lower House) which has members representing individual electorates. Traditionally the government of the day is formed in the Lower House.

Each state similarly has an Upper House and a Lower House with the exception of Queensland which only has one House of Parliament. Each state has a governor who plays a similar role in the state to the role of the Governor-General in the federal sphere.

The local tier consists of local Councils who deal with such matters as health and hygiene, planning, and maintenance of streets in the local area. Councillors are elected. The power of local councils is determined by the state government where they are located.

The Doctrine of Separation of Powers

Similar to the United Kingdom and the United States, political and legal powers of government are exercised separately by three different bodies, commonly known as the three arms of government. These are firstly legislative, secondly executive or administrative, and thirdly judicial.

Briefly, the Parliament makes the law, the executive government puts the law into effect, and the Courts deal with the legal disputes either between citizens or between the citizens and the executive government.

The legislative power is vested in the parliaments. Executive and administrative power is vested in the Queen through the different ministries (the executive) and their respective administrative departments. Judicial power is vested in the Courts.

The executive government is made up of the Governor-General (or state governors), the Prime Minister (or state premiers) and the different ministers. The Prime Minister (or state premiers) and senior ministers are collectively called the Cabinet. Important proposals generally have to be endorsed by the Cabinet before they are placed before Parliament for a vote.

Traditionally the Court system consisted of local courts, district or county courts and a supreme court for each state. Specialised courts have been set up by different parliaments. These courts include the Family Court of Australia. Besides the Courts, there are administrative tribunals which operate similarly to the Courts but with restricted powers or specialised functions.

The highest court in Australia is the High Court, which is the final court for appeals from all other courts. It is also the court which interprets the Constitution and makes a final determination where there is a dispute about any provision of the Constitution.

Parliamentary democracy

- All Australians have the right to participate in the governance of Australia.
- For Australians over the age of 18, voting is compulsory.

'The Commonwealth Constitution provides and protects the framework for the Australian system of government. It is our most important founding document and a symbol of our national life' (Saunders 2000:1). Section 1 of the Constitution vests the legislative or lawmaking power of the Commonwealth in the Federal Parliament.

In s51 of the Constitution (1900) the Legislative powers of the parliament are listed and they include the power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to:

- taxation;
- postal, telephone and like services;
- defence;
- quarantine;
- the census;
- currency and banking;
- citizenship;
- marriage and divorce;

- pensions and allowances including maternity and unemployment;
- immigration; and
- external affairs.

Each of the states and territories has its own constitution with a considerably wider ambit of authority than the federation. The *Constitution Act 1902* (NSW) for example states:

s5. The Legislature shall, subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, have power to make laws for the peace, welfare, and good government of New South Wales in all cases whatsoever...

The *Crimes Act 1914* (Cwlth) s28 makes it an offence for any person who, by violence or by threats or intimidation of any kind, hinders or interferes with the free exercise or performance, by any other person, of any political right or duty.

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cwlth) extends as far as possible the right of the Australian community to access information in the possession of the government. This right strengthens the democratic process.

Taxation

Income tax paid by individuals is the most significant source of revenue for government in Australia. A progressive rate of tax is utilised so that individuals pay more tax as their taxable income increases. A progressive rather than flat rate tax is considered most in keeping with the ability-to-pay rule of distributive justice. The current tax threshold is \$6,000 per annum. The highest marginal rate, 45%, is paid on income over \$180,000. Most Australians also pay a 1.5% Medicare levy. The table below shows the 2010/2011 FY marginal rates.

Income	Tax	Rate
Nil to \$6,000	Nil	0%
\$6,001 to \$37,000	15c	12.6%
\$37,001 to \$80,000	30c	21.9%
\$80,001 to \$180,000	37c	30.3%
\$180,000 +	45c	45%

Government has no real assets of its own. It therefore uses the taxation system to raise money to provide the public goods and services expected in a civil society. Effectively any service, subsidy, pension, allowance or assistance provided by government is paid for by the taxpayer. Part of the notion of a fair go in Australia is based on the axiom that any policy move that allows the least well off to be slightly better off, without making the better off appreciably worse off, is considered justifiable. Unemployment benefits are an example of taxpayers banding together to assist someone in difficulties.

Topic B2 – Civics Workshop

Topic

Civics Workshop – an exploration of the principles and civics of freedom, equality and democracy of Australian society and the underpinning legal framework. Participants will be encouraged to discuss the concepts in light of their religious beliefs and establish a set of guidelines for active citizenship with those in mind. This is a key topic in the course and the themes and questions will be returned to throughout.

This session should allow participants to raise the issues that concern them in relation to the 10 principles, norms and civics of our shared life in the multicultural of Australia. The session should commence with an examination in detail of the freedom of religion and what that means. Participants can then range across the remaining topics according to interest and need. There is too much material here for the two 45 minute periods and participants will be encouraged to read through the other issues as part of their ongoing professional development after the course.

Method

- Facilitated small group work.
- Breakout areas required.
- 2 x 45 minute periods.

Faculty

- Coordinator and/or host will visit each small group during the sessions.
- SLs x 3.

Content

Small group discussion of the identified issues will take both 45 minute periods. Detailed lesson notes follow, however, the cases for discussion are examples only and local/regional, contemporary and more tailored examples should be used where available. The notes for Program A - Preparing for Australia - may be of use in these sessions particularly the topics on the constitution and the law.

SLs should be mindful that this session may generate some 'heat' while participants work to throw some 'light' on the topics being discussed. SLs should be well prepared for the first topic 3) Freedom of religion, and should be creative in facilitating the discussion.

It should be noted that each question that comes up in the session, such as the question of freedom of religion, can be answered using reasoning and argument in ethics (moral philosophy), religion (theology) or the law. In any jurisdiction these three often inform each other but in Australia the law will always be decisive.

Notes

Australia is a nation of immigrants, so much so that in Australian English the word is shortened to migrants! Most Australians are either migrants of this generation or one of the last six generations. The Australian Aboriginals are descendants of migrants who settled in this continent perhaps 40,000 years ago. (Whitlam 1985:485)

Part of the appeal of Australia, as a destination for migration and place to bring up children and live a good life, is its society's respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual and for the ideals of democracy, equality and mutual respect. In broad terms the issues which underpin life in a harmonious, multi-faith, cohesive society like Australia are of concern to all who live here regardless of faith, ethnicity, language or culture.

The norms of behaviour and civics of respect, acceptance and equality used in this resource are what Australians aspire to, but they can also be seen in action every day. We aspire to them, but we assume them, and rely on them, in the day to day running of society. Things go better in our life if we respect each other, tolerate our differences and help each other out.

In order to maintain a stable, peaceful and prosperous community, Australians of all backgrounds are expected to uphold the shared principles and civics of freedom and democracy that underpin Australian society. These principles and civics are variously expressed, but they can be usefully grouped around issues that concern all Australians and under which the various Australian parliaments have made laws and regulations.

These 10 issues are each illustrated with a story or example. Participants will be asked to consider the illustration and issue and compose an equivalent statement of principle in their own words.

- 1) *freedom of the individual;*
- 2) *freedom of speech;*
- 3) *freedom of religion;*
- 4) *freedom of association;*
- 5) *parliamentary democracy;*
- 6) *equality under the law;*
- 7) *equality of men and women;*
- 8) *equality of opportunity;*
- 9) *peacefulness; and*
- 10) *acceptance, mutual respect and compassion for others.*

Each of these is now examined in detail. First, drawing from the publication *Life in Australia* (DIAC 2007:5-7), the issue in question is elaborated on; secondly, an example or story is used to illustrate the principle. These should be used by SLs to stimulate discussion.

1) Freedom of the individual

The Idea

All Australians are free and equal and are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect.

Commonwealth laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, sex, disability and age in a range of areas of public life under the:

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth);

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth);

Disability Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth); and

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth).

There is a Human Rights Commission which is responsible for handling complaints of discrimination and harassment under these laws.

Australians reject the use of violence, intimidation or humiliation as ways of settling conflict in our society.

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)

Breaches of human rights by any Commonwealth body or agency and discrimination in employment on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, age, medical record, criminal record, marital status, impairment, disability, nationality, sexual preference are all covered in the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)*.

A Story

On the 20th of August 1860, the ill fated Burke and Wills expedition set out from Melbourne with 14 men, including cameleers Dost Mahomet and Esan Khan, and a good collection of camels and horses. The party travelled 900 miles in stages until at Cooper's Creek, near the border of South Australia and Queensland, Burke left most of his men, animals and stores in a depot and made a dash with three others, one horse and six camels for the Gulf of Carpentaria (Moorehead 1963 and Cathcart 1993).

They were getting to know one another very well. The social distinctions remained: Burke [40] and Wills [27] were officers and gentlemen and gave orders, Gray [40s] and King [22] were men and did what they were told. But they were now committed together, all of them were encompassed by the same risks, the same hardships and the same hope; and this feeling of a shared adventure counted for much more than the differences between officers and men, Irish and English and between the younger and the older.

Any weakness in one man weakened them all, and each little triumph – a day's march completed, a lost camel brought back, a waterhole discovered – was a shared accomplishment. Moreover, they were now building up that intimate network of habits, the knowing of one another's abilities and failings and oddities, and the acceptance of these things, that develops among any group of men who are isolated on a long journey and entirely dependent upon one another. One man was best with a rifle, another at cooking, a third with physical strength, and all these matters were established without pride or jealousy and were fitted into a pattern. Everything depended of course on their liking and respecting one another, and this they evidently did. (Moorehead 1963:69-70)

Four months later, after covering 1,400 miles and becoming the first Europeans to cross the continent south to north, Burke, Wills and King, with two remaining camels, returned to the depot to find it abandoned just nine hours earlier (Moorehead 1963 and Blainey 2003). Later labelled as one of the great mistakes of Australian history, the expedition cost seven lives, including those of Burke and Wills, and £60,000 (Atkinson in Crotty & Roberts, Eds 2006).

Further reading

All Australians are entitled to the five fundamental freedoms:

- Freedom of speech.
- Freedom of association.
- Freedom of assembly.
- Freedom of religion.
- Freedom of movement.

With the exception of the right to trial by jury (s80) and the right to freedom of religion (s116) the Australian Constitution does not have many express provisions for personal rights or freedoms which may be enforced by the courts (Jordan 2001).

However, s51 (xxix) of the Constitution gives the Commonwealth Parliament power to 'make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to external affairs'. This power is often used to enter into and give effect within Australia to obligations under international treaties and conventions.

For example, on the 10th of December 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The declaration was put by the President of the General Assembly Dr H.V. Evatt, an Australian, and Australia was one of the original signatories (McMullin 1991). The UDHR states:

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

After signing the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination the Australian lawmakers enacted the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cwlth) which states:

s9(1). It is unlawful for a person to do any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

After signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1980, the Australian parliament enacted the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cwlth) which states:

s5(1). For the purposes of this Act, a person discriminates against another person on the ground of the sex of the aggrieved person if, by reason of:

the sex of the aggrieved person;

a characteristic that appertains generally to persons of the sex of the aggrieved person; or

a characteristic that is generally imputed to persons of the sex of the aggrieved person;

the discriminator treats the aggrieved person less favourably than, in circumstances that are the same or are not materially different, the discriminator treats or would treat a person of the opposite sex.

s7D(1). A person may take special measures for the purpose of achieving substantive equality between:

men and women; or

people of different marital status; or

*women who are pregnant and people who are not pregnant; or
women who are potentially pregnant and people who are not potentially pregnant.*

There is no single head of power in Constitution that is relied upon for the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth). The Act draws its authority from a cocktail of the corporations, banking, insurance, trade and commerce and external affairs powers of s51. In particular the Act gives effect to:

- the (ILO) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1958,
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

s3. The objects of the Act are:

to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:

work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs, and sport; and

the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and

existing laws; and

the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and

to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and

to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cwlth) protects younger and older Australians from discrimination on the basis of age by making it '...unlawful to discriminate on the ground of age' (s4).

The *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986* (Cwlth) establishes the Human Rights Commission with a mandate to inquire into complaints of unlawful discrimination. The Act also stresses at s10A the indivisibility and universality of human rights, and the principle that every person is born free and equal in dignity and rights. Each of the states and territories of Australia has legislation specifically relating to discrimination and equal opportunity. State and territory legislation is overridden by s109 of the Constitution where the two are inconsistent.

2) Freedom of speech

The Idea

All Australians are free within the bounds of the law, to say or write what they think about Australian governments or about any other subject or social issue as long as they do not endanger people, make false allegations or obstruct the free speech of others.

The same applies to Australian newspapers, radio and television and other forms of media. Australians are free to protest the actions of government and to campaign to change laws.

Freedom of speech allows people to express themselves and to discuss ideas. There are laws that protect an individual's good name against false information or lies. There are also laws against inciting hatred against others because of their culture, ethnicity or background.

A Story

Mavis Anderson was a waitress in Sydney when she married Abdul Samad Amjah in November 1943. He had been born in 1920 in Malacca (Melaka), Malaya, and was thus a British subject. A seaman and member of the Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve, he served on the MV Gorgan, which ferried Australian troops and supplies to New Guinea. On 12 April 1943, Japanese aircraft attacked the Gorgan in Milne Bay. Abdul Samad Amjah was wounded and lucky to survive drifting unconscious in the water for more than two hours....

After his discharge, he moved to Sydney where he met his future wife.... Mavis (who embraced Islam and became also known as Minah) and Abdul Samad Amjah had their first child on Christmas Day 1945, followed by a second child in 1947.

During World War II, thousands of non-Europeans were allowed to enter Australia.... [But, like Abdul Samad Amjah their] ...stay was never meant to be permanent.... The Labor government was determined to uphold the principles of the White Australia policy and effect the departure of all non-European temporary entrants.... Abdul Samad Amjah received his first notice to leave Australia in October 1947.

Abdul had been in Australia for six years when he left under orders, fully intending to return, on the 7th of February 1948. By September he was back in Sydney and, having deserted his new ship, reunited with Minah. He was soon picked up and early in 1949, having failed a dictation test, of not less than 50 words in French, he was destined for deportation, without his family, when the story broke.

The press, parliamentary opposition, newspaper editors, church leaders, unionists and many ordinary Australians took up his case. Eventually the High Court ruled that Abdul Samad Amjah had been absorbed into the community and was no longer, for the purposes of the law, an immigrant (Neuman in Crotty & Roberts, Eds 2006:186-193).

Further reading

- All Australians are free to hold opinions without interference.
- All Australians are free, within the law, to express their opinions.

The Australian Constitution (1900) does not have an express provision for freedom of speech. However, Australia is a signatory to the UDHR which states:

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Australia has also ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states:

Article 10(2). Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

Where a right, like freedom of speech, is not expressly mentioned in the Constitution it may be protected by the common law, sometimes called case law, built up by the decisions of the courts and tribunals rather than through legislation. It is impossible to legislate for all possible human behaviour, so in deciding a particular case a judge will look at what is reasonable in the circumstances, what decisions have been made before, and what accords with long held social principles. One of these principles is freedom of speech.

Freedom of speech, like most rights, is not absolute and it may be limited by considerations such as privacy, safety, defamation, vilification, trade secrets and national security for example. The *Racial Hatred Act 1995* (Cwlth) sets limits on the freedom of speech but under s18D it:

...does not render unlawful anything said or done reasonably and in good faith:

- a) in the performance, exhibition or distribution of an artistic work; or*
- b) in the course of any statement, publication, discussion or debate made or held for any genuine academic, artistic or scientific purpose or any other genuine purpose in the public interest; or*
- c) in making or publishing:*
- d) a fair and accurate report of any event or matter of public interest; or*
- e) a fair comment on any event or matter of public interest if the comment is an expression of genuine belief held by the person making the comment.*

The *Crimes Act 1914* (Cwlth) s30C limits freedom of speech by making it an offence for any person who by speech or writing advocates or encourages the overthrow of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, the overthrow by force or violence of the established government of any civilised country, or the destruction of property belonging to the Commonwealth.

The *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) s529 makes it an offence to criminally defame another such that any person who, without lawful excuse, publishes matter defamatory of another living person: (a) knowing the matter to be false, and (b) with intent to cause serious harm to the victim or any other person or being reckless as to whether such harm is caused, is guilty of an offence. For instance, the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) s574 states:

No person shall be liable to prosecution in respect of any publication by him or her orally, or otherwise, of words or matter charged as blasphemous, where the same is by way of argument, or statement, and not for the purpose of scoffing or reviling, nor of violating public decency, nor in any manner tending to a breach of the peace.

3) Freedom of religion

The Idea

All Australians are free to follow any religion they choose, so long as its practices do not break any Australian law. Australians are also free to not follow a religion. Religious intolerance is not acceptable in Australian society.

Australia has a secular government – it does not have any official or state religion. Governments treat all citizens as equal regardless of religion.

Religious laws have no legal status in Australia and only those laws enacted by parliament apply, for example, in divorce matters. Some religious or cultural practices, such as bigamy (being married to more than one person at the same time) are against the law in Australia.

A Story

WorldWide Religious News (WWRN) - "Lord's Prayer questioned in Australian Parliament"

Canberra, Australia – The speaker of Australia's Parliament has called for a public debate about whether the country's lawmakers should end the practice of starting each session with the Lord's Prayer.

Lawmakers have started every day of Parliament with the Christian prayer for more than a century – a tradition inherited from Britain during colonial rule.

But some are now questioning whether a prayer adopted by the first Australian Parliament in 1901 remains relevant in an increasingly secular and religiously diverse nation.

Dumping the prayer is unlikely to happen any time soon, though, as Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and opposition leader Malcolm Turnbull said, on Sunday, they wanted to keep the prayer.

More than 65 percent of Australians still identify as Christians, and there are no Muslims or Aboriginals among Australia's 226 federal lawmakers. The only Jewish lawmakers, both members of the government, did not return calls by Associated Press on Monday.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Harry Jenkins told News Ltd newspapers that lawmakers and members of the public had repeatedly raised the issue with him since he took office in February.

"one of the most controversial aspects of the parliamentary day ... is the prayer," Jenkins was quoted as saying. "On the one end of the spectrum is: "Why have a prayer?"

Jenkins declined to be interviewed Monday but issued a statement saying he had "received a wide range of opinions about the opening prayer" and its relevance "in modern Australia."

Senator Bob Brown, leader of the Australian Greens, a minor opposition party, wants the prayer replaced by a period of silent reflection, while independent lawmaker Rob Oakeshott wants each day to begin with a recognition of Aborigines as Australia's original inhabitants.

Brown failed in 1997 to replace the prayer with a period of silence. He has said he plans to propose 30 seconds of silence after the prayer, as a "period of reflection" for those who did not want to pray.

Ikebal Patel, Australian Federation of Islamic Councils president, said he did not object to the prayer, but supported Brown's proposal as more inclusive.

"There should be an attempt to try and be a little more generic and inclusive," Patel said.

"Aborigines and other religions should be acknowledged."

"Parliament should not be seen as a Christian club," he added. (McGuirk, AP, October 27, 2008)

Further reading

- All Australians are free, within the law, to follow any religion or no religion.
- Australians are free to change their religion or belief.
- The Australian state is secular.

The Australian Constitution expressly grants all Australians the freedom to follow any religion, or no religion, as long as their practices do not break the law.

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 s116

In 1983, the High Court of Australia defined religion as 'a complex set of beliefs and practices which point to a set of values and an understanding of the meaning of existence'. Islam, even though some commentators argue that it is not a religion because it is a complete way of life, meets this basic definition.

In Australia people with no religion make up 21% of the population and include agnostics, atheists, humanists and rationalists (DIAC 2008). These people enjoy the same rights and responsibilities as all other citizens. Australia is also a signatory to the UDHR which states:

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

4) Freedom of association

The Idea

Subject to the law, Australians are free to gather together and to protest against government or any other organisation as long as the protest is peaceful and does not damage or injure people or property. The freedom to associate includes the freedom to join or not to join any organisation or group, provided it is legal. Such organisations and groups include political parties, trade unions and social groups.

A Story

... when I tuned into an ABC radio programme on the subject of Iraq, during the Gulf War... I was pleasantly surprised. (The topic was whether or not Iraqis and the Arabs in Australia – particularly Australians with Arab ancestry – should be allowed to demonstrate against Australia's anti-Iraq stand, as they already had done.)

Many of those who called into the radio station were themselves migrants to Australia way back, just after World War II – from Britain, from Germany, from Eastern Europe. Of 15 callers, seven said No, Arabs in Australia should not be allowed to demonstrate against Australian government policy, while a majority of eight said, Yes, absolutely, they must have the same democratic right to protest as other Australians... (Sharp 2001:64-65)

5) Parliamentary democracy

The Idea

Australia is a parliamentary democracy, which means that Australian citizens participate in how the country is governed and how society is represented. Governments are accountable to all Australians. Elected parliaments are the only bodies able to make laws in Australia or delegate the authority to make laws.

Everyone in Australia must obey laws established by governments. Equally, all Australians are protected by the rule of law. This means that no-one is exempt from or 'above the law', even people who hold positions of power like politicians or the police.

The Constitution

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT

An Act to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia

[9th July 1900]

CHAPTER I

THE PARLIAMENT

s1 The legislative power of the Commonwealth shall be vested in a Federal Parliament, which shall consist of the Queen, a Senate, and a House of Representatives, and which is herein-after called "The Parliament", or "The Parliament of the Commonwealth."

s2 A Governor-General appointed by the Queen shall be Her Majesty's representative in the Commonwealth, and shall have and may exercise in the Commonwealth during the Queen's pleasure, but subject to this Constitution, such powers and functions of the Queen as Her Majesty may be pleased to assign to him.

(Sawer 1988:35-37)

6) Equality under the law

The Idea

All Australians are equal under the law. This means that nobody should be treated differently from anybody else because of their race, ethnicity or country of origin; because of their age, gender, marital status or disability; or because of their political or religious beliefs. Government agencies and independent courts must treat everyone fairly.

Being treated fairly means getting a job or being promoted must be on the basis of a person's skills, ability and experience, not their cultural background or political beliefs. It also means that people cannot be refused service in a shop or hotel or any other service facility because of their race, colour, religion, gender or marital status.

A Story

By the time of Captain Cook's explorations, international law recognised three ways of acquiring territory: first, by conquest in war; secondly, by persuading the indigenous inhabitants to submit themselves to new overlordship, or cession; and thirdly, occupation of land that was terra nullis by unilateral possession, on the basis of first discovery and effective occupation.

Prior to the setting out of the First Fleet in 1788, the assumption was made in London that Australia was empty, either by argument that there were very few Aboriginal inhabitants, or that those who were there were of an insufficiently high standard of civilisation by European standards....

On 3 June 1992, the High Court handed down its decision in the case of *Mabo v Queensland (no 2)* and four-and-a-half years later, on 23 December 1996, handed down its decision in *Wik v Queensland*. Both decisions altered the system of land tenure in Australia and forced white Australians to confront the way their land was settled, and even their moral claim to be present in the country.

Aboriginal groups had campaigned for many years to gain land rights over country once belonging to their forebears.... However,... all land in Australia was claimed by the Crown from discovery, and colonial governors then allocated it by grants, sale or lease, with all remaining land regarded as owned by the Crown. This meant there was no unoccupied land and no land for Aborigines, other than any the Crown might allocate as an act of generosity, as in, for example, the passing of the title to Uluru. In two major cases, *Mabo* and *Wik*, the High Court changed all this, establishing a form of Aboriginal title to land....

Mabo ended the legal fiction that Australia was unoccupied in 1788 and ended the idea that differing states of "civilisation" could be regarded as a reason to take away rights to land. (Hughes 1998:213-214, 219, 223)

7) Equality of men and women

The Idea

Men and women have equal rights in Australia. Jobs and professions are equally open to women and men. Men and women can serve in the military and both can also hold positions in government.

A Story

At age 52, Sara Henderson, and her two daughters, changed a property, 360 kilometres south west of Darwin, with debts of nearly a million dollars, into a profitable cattle station. The transformation of the million acre property won her the 1991 Bulletin/Qantas Businesswoman of the Year award.

Cattle are very methodical animals and if anything seems out of place, even in the slightest, they all stop and stare. The steers were bad enough, but the cows were hilarious. We had four hundred of the most inquisitive sticky-beaks on four legs. If one of the riders even changed position, they became suspicious. I was the worst rider, so I was the lead. The second morning I changed my shirt and they would not follow.

It was one of the Aboriginals who told me about the different shirt. 'Them got a picture of you, Missus, if you change you clothes, 'em don't know ya!'

Anything to keep the peace and get the cows home, so I washed the shirt every night and wore it all the way. It was fit for the rag bag when we finally made it home, but the 'lead cow' was happy and faithfully followed the back of my shirt for fifty miles. Sometimes she would walk beside me and I would chat to her or sing. She would look up at me with those warm chocolate-brown eyes as if she understood every word I said. That first hundred miles of droving developed my love for cattle and for cattle droving. We walked cattle for about four to five years before the first cattle truck ventured down our road. (Henderson 1992:210)

8) Equality of opportunity

The Idea

Australians value equality of opportunity and what is called a 'fair go'. This means that what someone achieves in life should be a product of their talents, work and effort rather than their birth or favouritism.

A Story

Wayne Swan, born in 1954, the 36th Treasurer of Australia, has been a politician since 1993. He was previously an academic and political advisor, and is married with two daughters and a son. Swan is a member of the Australian Labor Party and an extract from his book on poverty and inequality is shown below.

I grew up in Nambour, a small sugar-growing town in south-east Queensland. It's a busy place now, almost swallowed up by the great metropolis that stretches from Byron Bay to Noosa, but when I walked to school along the narrow-gauge sugar train tracks, barefoot and sucking a stick of [sugar] cane, it was a place of greenness and idyll and wonder. My father had fought in the Second World War, and with a war service loan he brought our family a small fibro house alongside the cane fields, working two jobs to pay it off. My mother was a cleaner at the local school – when not doing church or charity work – and together they raised five children and instilled in us the values that would guide us all our lives:

that you should give back to your community as much as you take from it;

that the fundamental requirement for a better life is a good education;

that dignity and achievement come from a hard day's work;

that no-one owes you a living; and

that the best form of welfare is a job;

My parents' example taught me something else – which I believe is at the core of what it means to be Australian: that we are all in this together. (Swan 2005:6-7)

9) Peacefulness

The Idea

Australians are proud of their peaceful society. They believe that change should occur by discussion, peaceful persuasion and the democratic process. They reject violence as a way of changing peoples' minds or the law.

A Poem

*Stranger, go tell the Spartans
We died here obedient to their commands.
Inscription at Thermopylae [480 BCE]*

*Linger not, stranger; shed no tear;
Go back to those who sent us here.*

*We are the young they drafted out
To wars their folly brought about.*

*Go tell those old men, safe in bed,
We took their orders and are dead,*

*Inscription for a War
Alec Derwent Hope 1907-2000
1981 in Leonard, Ed 1998:253*

10) Acceptance, mutual respect and compassion for others

The Idea

Australians have a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces mutual respect, tolerance and fair play. This does not mean that everyone is the same or that everybody has equal wealth or property. The aim is to ensure there are no formal class distinctions in Australian society.

There is a strong community spirit in Australia and Australians seek to enhance and improve the society in which they live.

Many Australians contribute to the community in their daily lives. They demonstrate this through caring for the environment, lending a hand and working together in times of need in pursuit of the public good.

A Story

The woman on the \$50 note — Edith Dircksey Cowan (b1861-d1932).

Born Edith Brown in Geraldton, Western Australia on the 2nd of August 1861, her mother died in childbirth seven years later and her father, possibly suffering a mental illness, was hanged for murder in 1876. Despite these tragedies, she went on to become the first woman member of an Australian parliament and a true Australian pioneer (Brown 1981).

Married to a magistrate and with five children, Cowan worked as a volunteer, lobbyist, fund raiser, parliamentarian, social worker, and justice of the peace to support women's rights, state education, child protection and infant health, migrant welfare, civic rights, and women's development and education. During World War I she volunteered with the Red Cross and was later awarded an Order of the British Empire for her work (RBA nd).

Cowan entered the Western Australia Legislative Assembly as a member and served until 1924. While a member of the National Party she voted independently and pursued matters in her own right including introducing a bill to allow women to become lawyers (DEEWR nd).

Topic B3 – Supporting Families

Topic

Supporting Families – is a session aimed at reinforcing the value of the family as the basic building block of community and society and introducing participants to problems and their possible solutions. Topics addressed include those identified as inadequately and even badly addressed by some religious workers acting as family advisors. These include child abuse, domestic violence, divorce, child custody and maintenance, inheritance laws, and dowry issues.

During research for this project, including during stakeholder consultation, respondents reported that religious workers from overseas sometimes based advice they gave on precedent and practice from their country of origin and not on Australian law and customs. This session is designed to raise awareness of some of the issues, and to introduce participants to local/regional family support workers.

Method

- Lecture, discussion, case study and small group work.
- Classroom and breakout areas required.
- Chaired by SL2.
- VLS introduced and thanked by SL.
- 2 x 45 minute periods.

Faculty

- Chaired by SL2.
- SLs 1 and 2.
- VL team – any one or two of family welfare/law practitioner and/or Centrelink representative.

Content

This session is deliberately broad and presenters will be guided by the specific concerns of participants but the following topics should be attempted.

- Family law.
- Marriage and bigamy.
- Child abuse.
- Domestic violence.
- Separation and divorce.
- Child custody and maintenance.
- Property settlement.
- Dowry.
- Government family and youth allowances.

Where there are two VLs, each should be selected and briefed by the host/coordinator, and asked to speak for 20 to 30 minutes on their specialist area as related to the above points. Cases and examples are encouraged. After both speakers have presented, the chair will put specific questions to them on behalf of the participants. The notes for Program A - Preparing for Australia - may be of use in this session particularly the topics on the constitution and family law. Alternatively, a single VL may make a central presentation, take questions and then work through a case study. Presenters should be encouraged to provide handouts, contact lists and resources in relation to the above topics. Previous presenters have offered participants follow up services, site visits and posters, flyers and literature.

Case

Stories of practice from the field are a vital component in all sessions of the program. Participants and presenters are encouraged to use cases from their practice to make, illustrate and elaborate on a point or lesson.

Notes

- Men and women have equal rights and equal responsibilities under Australian law.
- Religious doctrine is not a defence in criminal matters.

The *Family Law Act 1975* (Cwlth) (FLA) is the main Australian law governing the dissolution of marriage. It deals with families, children and property after divorce, including parenting arrangements after separation, property settlement and financial maintenance involving children and divorced spouses. The FLA is based on the principle of no fault divorce.

The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cwlth) protects individuals across Australia from discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status or pregnancy and, in relation to employment, family responsibilities. The Act also makes sexual harassment illegal. A Sex Discrimination Commissioner is appointed to the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999* (Cwlth) has as its principle objects the principle that employment for women should be dealt with on the basis of merit, to eliminate discrimination in employment based on sex, and to foster workplace consultation on equal opportunity.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) makes it illegal to discriminate or treat less favourably a person based on their sex, marital or domestic status (see s24 and s39).

The *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) makes it a crime for a person to have sexual intercourse with a person without their consent (see s61I, 61J, 61JA and 61K). Under s61T marriage is no defence to these offences.

Topic B4 – Conflict, Communication and Community

Topic

Conflict, Communication and Community – a session designed to look at community and the give and take of conflict and communication in maintaining it. A premise of the session is that conflict is inevitable and can be healthy.

Method

- Panel discussion, case study and small group work.
- Classroom based and breakout areas required.
- Chaired by SL3.
- Each speaker is introduced and thanked by a participant representative.
- 2 x 45 minute periods.

Faculty

- Chaired by SL3.
- SLs 1 and 2.
- VL team: community police representative and community relations worker.

Content

- Conflict resolution.
- Alternative dispute resolution.
- Social capital.
- Radicalisation.
- Countering violent extremism.
- Community policing.
- Community relations.
- Multiculturalism.

VLs, selected and briefed by the host/coordinator, will be asked to speak for 20 to 25 minutes on their topic using cases. Small group work will be utilised to examine one case in detail. VLs will circulate during consideration. Short central presentation and debrief ends the session.

Case

Stories of practice from the field are a vital component in all sessions of the program. Participants and presenters are encouraged to use cases from their practice to make, illustrate and elaborate on a point or lesson.

Notes

Threatening, assaulting and killing another are all crimes under Australian law.

The *Crimes Act 1914* (Cwlth), the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cwlth) and the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) variously make the following behaviour illegal:

- destroying or damaging property,
- sabotage of a public facility,
- intimidating behaviour,
- predatory driving,
- robbery and stealing,
- embezzlement and fraud,
- perverting the course of justice,
- blackmail and kidnapping,
- people smuggling,
- piracy,
- domestic violence,
- assault,
- rape,
- manslaughter,
- murder,
- affray,
- terrorism,
- war crimes,
- unlawful assembly, and
- riot.

The criminal law is developed to deter certain behaviour and to punish those who are found guilty of it. Not all prohibited behaviour is a crime – littering for example, or smoking on a railway station – but an action is deemed criminal because of the harm it does to others and to society.

A Case Study

In what has been called the anti-anti-burqa-protest, seven men have been charged and police are looking for one unidentified woman, after up to 50 people held a protest rally at the site of an anti-burka mural in Newtown. The one meter high mural depicts a niqab clad woman, surrounded by a red international no sign, with the text "say no to burquas". It was painted in September 2010 on the street-front wall of the artist's own studio and has been vandalised on numerous occasions. An adjacent wall has the text "free speech' on it in large capital letters.

In this latest protest, an unidentified woman threw paint at the mural and left the scene. Shortly afterwards, the crowd turned on police who had moved to arrest a man who also threw paint. Police reinforcements were called.

The artist has refused to remove the mural in the interests of free speech and public debate. While the police have asked him to reconsider, and at least one local politician said "she is not a fan of the mural", the government has no authority to order its removal as it is painted on private property by the property owner.

Offences alleged to have been committed by the seven men charged include destroy/damage property, assault police, and resist/hinder police.

Topic B5 – Representing your Religion (Field)

Topic

Representing Your Religion – a field trip designed to familiarise participants with the workings of a medium to large religious organisation/head office and the various tasks carried out in administering and representing a religion at the state level. Venue selection by the host/coordinator is the key to this topic. A state level facility should house most of the functions to be addressed.

Method

Visit by the group to a religious organisation/head office hosted by a representative of the facility. A general briefing on religions in Australia, their executive councils and the major inter-faith cooperative organisations should open the session. A tour of the facility will then be followed by a 'fireside' chat with the principal/head. The intention is to engage a successful religious leader, comfortable in interfaith dialogue, to talk about religious leadership, professional religious work and use examples from practice to illustrate these.

An open forum with questions from participants and faculty will conclude the session. Speakers introduce themselves and are thanked by participant representative. 2 x 45 minute periods are allocated to the visit. Lunch will be taken in transit.

Involvement by staff and volunteers of the facility should be considered and literature on services offered, strategic and business plans in place, and the general history of the facility would assist participants.

Faculty

- Coordinator.
- SLs x 3.
- Principal and staff of the facility being visited.
- Driver.

Content

- Religious leadership.
- Administering a religious organisation.
- Representing a religion in the wider community.
- Representing religion in the media.
- Serving and supporting the faithful.
- Managing staff and volunteers.
- Interfaith cooperation.
- Managing and developing self.
- Coordinator to discuss other points with host and principal/head.

Case

Principal briefed to use examples from practice to illustrate points raised and to encourage participants to reflect on the issues of representing their religion. AV presentations, particularly of PR and press interviews would be valuable.

Involvement of specialist staff from the facility including PR, management, family support, community relations, auxiliary, fund raising, homeless support, etc would be advantageous.

On the 2nd of February 2011, participants, faculty and staff of the first two-day, face-to-face course of Serving in a New Land visited the Ashfield site of Rev Bill Crew's Exodus Foundation. We had travelled by school bus from Greenacre, the home of the Maronite Catholic Eparchy. After a quick lunch in a nearby park – where we served a halal, kosher, vegetarian and 'standard' picnic, all prepared by Sister Diyana, at a time early enough for our two Theravada Buddhist monks to finish eating before 12 noon – we drove through the heat to our destination.

Rev Bill met us personally and before long his two senior staff members had shown us through the kitchen and dining hall, where hundreds of meals are served free to anyone who comes as a guest. Next was the catch-up reading program for children, the young persons' development program, and the parcelled food distribution program. We saw the free dental clinic, the clinic, the book swap shop and the hairdresser.

It reminded me of Syria, where the word you hear most often everyday is the English word 'welcome'. Everyone welcomed us.

The guests at lunch in the hall and about the grounds, and the kids in the reading program looked like they had been gathered together to do an advertisement for SBS. Every race, nationality, culture, colour, class and tribe seemed to be present and getting on. Old men played chess, young men played the guitar, children ran about and a woman, telling us about a homeless family, cried for them.

Topic B6 – Working with Young People (Field)

Topic

Working with Young People – is a field visit aimed at identifying and discussing the pressures and issues faced by young Australians – relationships, drugs, alcohol, sex, gangs, radicalisation, discrimination, bullying – in their development as young adults.

Method

Visit by the group to a government service, PCYC or NGO working with young people, street kids, at risk young people or young offenders. Regardless of venue, the involvement of young people is considered important to the success of this session. Privacy and confidentiality issues will require close liaison and negotiation between the coordinator and the principal.

A briefing by the principal of the venue/facility, followed by a tour, presentations and open forum are envisaged. 2 x 45 minute periods are allocated to the visit.

Faculty

- Coordinator.
- SLs x 3.
- Principal and staff of facility/venue being visited.
- Driver.

Content

The points below should assist in the selection of the venue/facility and in briefing the principal/head.

- Education and employment for young people.
- What young people think, what counts and what's in.
- What young people do, their behaviour and aspirations.
- Dealing with drugs and alcohol.
- Dealing with sex.
- Dealing with bullying and discrimination.
- Religion and young people.
- Recreation, clubs, dance and music venues.
- Youth allowance and Austudy.

Case

Principal briefed to use examples from practice to illustrate points raised and to encourage participants to reflect on the issues of supporting young people. The involvement of young people in this session would be advantageous. However, privacy and confidentiality concerns should be carefully managed.

A Story

Spending 20 years in one job may be hard to imagine for some people, but for Father Dave Smith it's his life. The minister of Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Dulwich Hill, celebrated the 20-year milestone at the church in December.

He was sent to the church in 1990 to oversee its closure, but managed to save the parish and help the community in more ways than anyone expected. "It was a very rough area and no one wanted to come here," he said. "The idea was I was just here on the weekend and the place was dead on its feet. There were only three people under the age of 70."

But through an almost cruel twist of fate, Father Dave made the church his number one priority. "My marriage ended within a few months of me being here and then I ended up putting all my time and energy into it," he said.

It wasn't long before Father Dave turned the church around, and put [young people] at the top of his list.

Although they didn't have much money, the parish had lots of land, and turned an old Scout's hall into a space for the community. "It was a very rough area 20 years back, nine out of 10 kids we were dealing with had heroin issues, but it was a safe place for them," he said.

But it wasn't until 1993 when Father Dave made his biggest impact on the community and started a boxing program. "I issued a challenge to all the kids in the neighbourhood to take me on in a five round challenge – if they won I buy them dinner, if they lost they had to come to church," he said.

He became a professional boxer at 34 to raise money for Holy Trinity and to pay for a youth worker. "I had the [Archbishop] at my door wagging his finger asking me to shut it down," he said. But the boxing program is still running today, with more than 100 [young people] using the facilities each week.

"its like a hidden treasure that we have uncovered," he said. By the time we get a kid inside the ring he's not in trouble with the law, he's off drugs and without letting the kids know, we change their peer group.'

(Murada 2011:1)

Topic B7 – Continuing Professional Development

Topic

Continuing Professional Development – is a session designed to have participants think about professionalism as a religious worker, to reflect on their own practice and to develop a continuing professional development/education plan.

Method

- Central presentation and discussion, small group work and central reporting.
- Classroom based and breakout areas required.
- Chaired by coordinator and host.
- 1 x 45 minute period.

Faculty

- Coordinator.
- SLs x 3.

Content

Lesson notes for the facilitator follow.

Notes

I have been the whole day without eating and the whole night without sleeping, - occupied with thinking. It was no use. The better plan is to learn. Learning without thought is labour lost; and thought without learning is perilous.

na The Wisdom of Confucius 1963:42

Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Continuing Professional Education (CPE) are both hallmarks of professionalism. Engaging in self-assessment, ongoing learning, critical reflection and peer review and discussion allows for ongoing development and even lifelong learning. Very few if any fields allow for the luxury of an end to learning and practitioners can almost always do better, know more and be less egoistical. The practitioner who learnt their profession 20 years ago becomes dangerous without continuing professional education. For this reason mandatory continuing professional development is prescribed for engineers, doctors, lawyers and teachers in many jurisdictions.

This session is designed to assist participants privately reflect on their professional development needs and design their own personal professional development plan. The premise of the session is that professional religious workers have an obligation to themselves and their faith communities to continue to improve their practice. Participants are welcome

to share their insights and findings but that is not required and it is not necessary to the outcomes of the session.

Continuing development

CPD is an opportunity and perhaps an obligation for a professional religious worker. It allows practitioners to provide a higher standard of service to their faith communities and it simply formalises what good practitioners are doing anyway. Planning CPD, making time, setting an agenda, clearing a study and reflection space, collecting study materials and building a support network, means it is more likely to happen.

Engaging in CPD means staying up to date in the field, maintain skills that aren't always being used, continually improving practice, broadening understanding, building personal qualities and attributes, testing knowledge, and setting an example. CPD allows for a practice-based, self-directed and lifelong approach to learning. Religious workers have the potential to influence the lives of their community members profoundly and in almost every aspect. Questions on marriage, employment, schooling, parenting, legal issues and daily coping, to say nothing of faith, are all addressed by religious workers.

Religious workers undergo extensive and rigorous training, they sacrifice part of their lives to their calling, and they are often at the beck and call of the faithful. Accordingly, they are held in high regard by most and their advice is seldom questioned. Like other helping professions such as nursing, social work and teaching, religious workers hold enormous sway in people's lives often when they are at their most vulnerable.

Professional religious workers have three knowledge claims. The first and most important is their claim to a deep and developing knowledge of their religion, the second is their personal knowledge and experience, and the third is their knowledge of processes and how to go about things in a life of faith. In utilising these three knowledges, the religious worker employs three skill sets: the interpersonal, the technical and the decisional. Each and all of these can be improved.

Self-assessment exercise

It is widely agreed in the literature that the functions of management the world over are planning, leading, organising and controlling. All managers do these things to various degrees and at varying standards. Managers use their disciplinary, personal and process knowledge, and their interpersonal, technical and decisional skills to plan, lead, organise and control their resources and processes and achieve results. Less is known and agreed about religious workers so before conducting a self-assessment it is necessary to identify the primary tasks and functions.

Functions and Tasks of a Religious Worker

Q	Functions and Tasks	Frequency (0-10)	Grade (0-10)
1	Expert in own religion		
2	Spiritual guide and advisor		
3	Advocate and representative		
4	Conflict mediator		
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Developing the list of tasks and functions should be carried out using a brainstorming method. A scribe will record all responses from the group on a whiteboard. After this exercise like functions will be grouped and a consolidated list will be agreed.

The consolidated list of tasks/functions will then form the basis of the self-assessment exercise. Participants will be asked to use the list to rate the frequency with which they engage in each task (rating 0 to 10, 0 being never and 10 being constantly).

Following this activity, participants will be asked to rate themselves against each activity (rating 0 to 10, 0 being not yet competent and 10 being expert practitioner).

Both activities are private unless the group determines otherwise.

Professional development plan

Writing a professional development plan is an aid to reflection and self-assessment and provides a template and even a contract for self-improvement. If it is to be successful, then it requires a frank review of personal strengths and weaknesses and a good understanding of the opportunities and threats posed in the external environment. The table below may assist.

Personal Strengths	Personal Weaknesses (areas to be improved)
External Opportunities	External Threats

From the above activities, participants are asked to develop a plan to address their professional development. The facilitator should be prepared to discuss means and methods, and agencies and institutions that can assist participants in their continuing professional development. Local community colleges and NGOs might assist by providing course catalogues and materials for the program show bag.

The steps in a suggested professional development planning process are shown in the table below. They follow but elaborate on the time honoured sequence of planning:

- Where are you now?
- Where do you want to be?
- How will you get there?

#	Step
1	Critical reflection on own performance including self-assessment against performance criteria
2	SWOT analysis – increase self awareness and awareness of the operating/external environment
3	Develop a personal vision statement – where will you be in 10 years
4	Develop a personal mission statement that will serve for the next three to five years
5	Break the mission up into manageable steps/objectives and develop the corresponding strategies/activities to achieve them
6	Establish clear timelines
7	Seek assistance
8	Revise

Session Plan – Evaluation

Topic

Outcome and development evaluation exercise to determine the extent of achievement of learning and other program objectives and to assist in the further improvement of future training.

Method

The participant evaluation pro forma at Appendix 3 should be reproduced and circulated. Participants should be given time to complete the pro forma. Discussion on the administrative and logistical aspects of the program should also be encouraged. Where possible, Program A and B should then be discussed generally.

Faculty

This session should involve all faculty and participants. Notes should be taken of all points raised.

Content

Education is a humanistic intervention, undertaken in order to achieve certain learning outcomes for participants, and it is usually aimed at a particular capacity, talent, worry, problem or possibility. It is in achieving its set target that the intervention is properly evaluated. In one well accepted hierarchy the levels of evaluation are:

- participant reaction,
- participant learning,
- work/life transfer, and
- community benefit.

The first two of these are relatively easily sampled with post-program evaluation and testing. However, the third and fourth levels are the most important but also the most difficult to gather evidence on. They can only be attempted in the long run. Evaluation at this stage will consist of a short questionnaire addressing the participants' experiences of the program and an open forum discussion chaired by the coordinator. The questionnaire (at Appendix 3) will be completed before the discussion. Discussion points will be recorded.

Evaluation of Program A – Preparing for Australia

As part of the longer term evaluation of Program A - Preparing for Australia - participants are asked to reflect on that course and comment on the topics below. The facilitator will use the headings below to generate points of concern to the participants relating to their preparation to come to Australia. The intention is to determine how religious workers can better prepare themselves for work in Australia and how Program A can assist.

Topics:

- Do you still agree with your initial evaluation of Program A?
- What should be included in the program?
- What should be excluded?
- Is an online program appropriate?
- What else can be done to assist religious workers prepare for service in Australia?
- What did you do that helped you prepare for service in Australia?
- Open comments.

Evaluation of Program B – Serving in Australia

Discussion-based evaluation of Program B will concentrate on the following before opening up to a general critique.

Topics:

- How did the program help you understand your work in Australia better?
- What comments would you make about facilitation and teaching?
- What should be included in the program?
- What will you do differently as a result of this program?
- Comment on venue, facilities and administration.
- Other comments.

The evaluation of the pilot delivery of Program B was used to revise this text. The evaluation report is held by the Community Relations Commission in its Sydney offices. Overwhelmingly participants reported that they enjoyed the course, had learnt much to assist them with their work, and appreciated meeting other religious workers from diverse faiths.

Session Plan – Farewells and Prayer

Topic

Final prayer and farewells.

Method

The host/coordinator will preside over a final multi-faith prayer.

Faculty

This session should involve all faculty and participants.

Content

The final prayer will be written by the host/coordinator.

A Prayer

May the respect that we have shown to one another continue beyond these walls. May we continue to listen to one another, learn about the diversity of our faiths, and recognise that our differences need not cause division and strife.

As we continue our religious work, may we serve our people and help them live a life of faith and citizenship in this land. May we continue to learn about Australia, her history and her people.

May we continue to grow and develop as religious workers and as leaders in our communities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Religious Affiliation of Australians

Appendix 2: Religious Peak Bodies and Inter-faith Organisations in Australia

Appendix 3: Evaluation – Participant/Student Feedback

Appendix 4: Program A – Self-assessment

Appendix 5: Participant Details and Registration

Appendix 6: Evaluation Report Serving in a New Land



Appendix 1: Religious Affiliation of Australians

Buddhism

Christianity

Apostolic Church
Church of God
Australian Christian Churches
Anglican Church of Australia
Anglican Catholic Church
Baptist
Brethren
Western Catholic
Maronite Catholic
Melkite Catholic
Ukrainian Catholic
Catholic
Churches of Christ (Conference)
Churches of Christ (Nondenominational)
International Church of Christ
Jehovah's Witnesses
Latter Day Saints
Church of Jesus Christ of LDS (Mormons)
Community of Christ
Lutheran
Oriental Orthodox
Armenian Apostolic
Coptic Orthodox Church
Syrian Orthodox Church
Ethiopian Orthodox Church
Assyrian Church of the East
Ancient Church of the East
Assyrian Apostolic
Eastern Orthodox
Albanian Orthodox
Antiochian Orthodox
Greek Orthodox
Macedonian Orthodox
Romanian Orthodox
Russian Orthodox
Serbian Orthodox
Ukrainian Orthodox
Eastern Orthodox
Presbyterian
Reformed
Free Reformed
Salvation Army
Seventh-Day Adventist
Uniting Church

Pentecostal
Apostolic Church (Australia)
Assemblies of God
Bethesda Churches
Christian City Church
Christian Life Churches International
Christian Outreach Centres
Christian Revival Crusade
Faith Churches
Foursquare Gospel Church
Full Gospel Church
Revival Centres
Rhema Family Church
United Pentecostal
Pentecostal
Other Protestant
Aboriginal Evangelical Missions
Born Again Christian
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Church of the Nazarene
Congregational
Ethnic Evangelical Churches
Independant Evangelical Churches
Wesleyan Methodist Church
Other Protestant Religions
Apostolic Church of Queensland
Christadelphians
Christian Science
Gnostic Christians
Liberal Catholic Church
New Apostolic Church
New Churchs (Swedenborgian)
Ratana (Maori)
Religious Science
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Temple Society
Unitarian
Worldwide Church of God
Other Christian
Hinduism
Islam
Judaism
Other Religions
Australian Aboriginal Traditional Religions
Baha'i
Ancestor Veneration

Confucianism
Taoism
Other Chinese Religions
Druse
Shinto
Sukyo Mahikari
Tenrikyo
Other Japanese Religions
Animism
Druidism
Paganism
Pantheism
Wiccan/Witchcraft
Other Nature Religions
Sikhism
Spiritualism

Caodaism
Church of Scientology
Eckankar
Rastafarianism
Satanism
Theosophy
Jainism
Zoroastrianism
Agnostics
Atheism
Humanism
Rationalism
New Age
Theism
(DIAC 2008)

Appendix 2: Religious Peak Bodies and Inter-faith Organisations in Australia

Australian Baha'i Community

Australian Ecumenical Council

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils

Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations

Executive Council of Australian Jewry

Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils

Hindu Council of Australia

National Council of Churches in Australia

Sikh Council of Australia

World Conference of Religions for Peace (Australia)



Appendix 3: Participant Details and Registration

Name:.....

Course:.....

Place:.....Date:.....

The following information will allow the organisers of this program to keep in touch with you and will assist in the evaluation of the two-day, face-to-face program.

Religion	
Position	
Organisation	
Nationality	
Time as a religious worker	
Place of training as a religious worker	
Time spent in Australia	
Time remaining in Australia under current visa	
Postal address	
Email	
Phone and fax	
Mobile	

Please confirm if you will be attending Day 2 of the program	
Please list any medical or dietary information	

Appendix 4: Program A - Self-assessment

Answer the following questions with a T or F to show that they are True or False.

Topic A1 – Government and the Constitution

Q1: In Australia people are legally free to follow any religion or no religion at all.

Q2: Any religious leader can conduct a marriage ceremony in Australia.

Q3: Being married to more than one person is legal in Australia.

Q4: The legal foundation for Australia is the constitution.

Q5: The laws on divorce in Australia are made by each religious group.

Topic A2 – Australian Law, Civics, Culture and Citizenship

Q1: Australians practice more than 100 religions.

Q2: Everyone in Australia has a responsibility to act within the law at all times.

Q3: All Australians are equal under the law.

Q4: The Christian religions are the official religions of Australia.

Q5: Aboriginals first came to Australia more than 40,000 years ago.

Topic A3 – Family Law

Q1: At law in Australia, one party is held to blame for a divorce.

Q2: A court must follow the decision of a religious leader in relation to a divorce.

Q3: Domestic violence is a criminal matter in Australia.

Q4: The welfare of any children from a marriage is the most important consideration following a divorce.

Topic A4 – Gender and Youth

Q1: In Australia, women are legally subordinate to men.

Q2: Religious workers should seek assistance when confronted with complex problems.

Q3: Learning about the 100 or more religions practised in Australia contributes to a stronger multi-cultural community.

Q4: The way a woman dresses reveals her sexual availability.

Q5: Use of the internet is a strictly private matter.

Topic A5 – Conflict Resolution

Q1: Conflict in a family or community is always destructive.

Q2: Professional religious workers provide advice and assistance, they don't seek it.

Q3: Conflict in a family means that one party is wrong and one is right.

Q4: The best way to cope with racism is to just put up with it.

Topic A6 – Representing Religion

Q1: Public comment by religious workers reflects on their community and should always be reasonable.

Q2: Cooperation with other religions can assist a religious community and its members.

Q3: Professional religious workers use the media responsibly.

Q4: There are more than 100 religions practiced in Australia.

Topic A7 – Continuing Professional Development

Q1: Life-long learning is part of being a professional religious worker.

Q2: Culture can have a profound effect on religious practice.

Q3: Learning about Australia is part of serving as a religious worker in Australia.

Q4: In times of personal difficulty it would not be appropriate to seek assistance from a religious worker of another faith.

Appendix 5: Evaluation – Participant/Student Feedback

Name:.....

Course:.....

Place:.....Date:.....

The following questions are based on the four level model of summative evaluation for training effectiveness first proposed by Kirkpatrick (1959, 1975 and 1994).

Level 1 – Reaction (student reaction to training)

What is your overall feeling about this course/training?

.....
.....
.....

Which specific activities, topics, events appealed to you on this course and why?

.....
.....
.....

Which specific activities, topics, events did not appeal to you on this course and why?

.....
.....
.....

Level 2 – Learning (knowledge, skills and attitudes)

What knowledge did you develop or confirm during this course?

.....
.....
.....

What skills did you develop or improve during this course?

.....
.....
.....

How did this course change or affect your attitudes?

.....
.....
.....

Level 3 – Performance (subsequent behaviour at work)

What specifically will you do differently at work as a result of this course?

.....

.....

.....

Level 4 – Outcomes (organisational results)

How will this course affect productivity at your workplace?

.....

.....

.....

Other comments

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Thank you for your assistance and good luck with your work.

Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers New to Australia



An evaluation of the pilot training course for the religious workers' orientation program, designed and developed by the Community Relations Commission (CRC), under a partnership project with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), as part of the National Action Plan to Build Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP).

Prepared by:

Deacon Michael Suliman, Melkite Catholic Eparchy

Dr Rosemary Suliman, Melkite Catholic Eparchy

Dr Mark Weston Wall, Community Relations Commission

1 March 2011, Sydney

Evaluation is the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence leading, as part of the process, to a judgement of value with a view to action.

(Beeby 1977 cited in Wilcox 1992:7)

Executive Summary

Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia (2011) is a two-part program designed to assist the 1,000 and more overseas educated religious workers, who come to Australia each year, to better understand the Australian context – way of life, laws, multicultural traditions, interfaith customs, intra-faith diversity and secular practices – and thus better serve their own faith community. It is also designed to be delivered regionally, not centrally, to allow participants to begin to establish a network of multi-faith, professional religious workers and community and family service practitioners.

The program, text and supporting materials were developed by the Community Relations Commission (CRC) under the terms of the National Action Plan to Build Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP) and based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

A pilot delivery of the face-to-face course and self-assessment parts of the program, conducted at the Melkite Catholic Eparchy in Sydney over the period 1-2 February 2011, is evaluated in this report. While the delivery was evaluated by participants, faculty, presenters and organisers as highly successful, several policy issues related to program continuity, participant recruitment, and ongoing coordination and oversight require clarification before the program can be delivered more broadly.

The authors recommend a national roll-out of the program utilising state-based coordination of delivery under arrangements with DIAC.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 On the 1st and 2nd of February 2011, a pilot of the two-day, face-to-face training course component of the religious workers' orientation program, entitled *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia* (2011), was conducted at the premises of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy, 80 Waterloo Rd, Greenacre NSW. Bishop John Issam Darwish hosted the event, Deacon Michael Suliman and Dr Rosemary Suliman jointly coordinated it, and Mr Louay Mustafa and Dr Suliman acted as small group discussion facilitators. Dr Mark Weston Wall, the designer of the course, and author of the supporting text and materials, oversaw the delivery of the program. Guest lecturers were used in the delivery of specialist content, and the 19 participants also had an opportunity to visit two sites and talk with, and observe, professional religious practitioners at work.

1.2 This evaluation report looks critically at the preparation and conduct of the two-day course, and at the wider issue of the program and its design, development, future delivery and sustainability. The evaluation looks at participant learning outcomes, using the four level summative evaluation model first proposed by Kirkpatrick (2011) in 1959. Program delivery, including participant and guest lecturer recruitment, course housing and hosting, learning facilitation, administration and logistics, and sustainability are examined using a critical issues/key decisions evaluation technique. The report includes recommendations and its authors conclude that the pilot course was highly successful, and support a wider roll-out of the program across Australia.

2.0 Background

2.1 By late 2008, the Community Relations Commission (CRC) was well into discussions with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) regarding the development of a religious worker's orientation training project. The project was eventually funded under the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP) and commenced after the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by DIAC, and the Government of New South Wales, represented by CRC. Funding of \$135,000 was allocated on signing of the MoU, and project completion, initially envisaged for late 2010, was subsequently extended to June 2011.

2.2 Project objectives were:

- a) Objective 1. Research and develop a religious worker's program, which includes a multi-faith focus but which can also be delivered, where necessary, in the language of origin of the participants.
- b) Objective 2. Ensure more informed religious workers and local community resource people.
- c) Objective 3. Evaluate the program so it informs future directions of religious workers' training.

Objective 1 was completed in late 2010 and this report marks the achievement of Objectives 2 and 3 of the MoU.

2.3 By May 2009 a first draft of *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Workers Coming to Australia*, the text and materials for the religious worker's orientation program, was prepared. The text was designed as a resource and reference for future program faculty and participants, and as a policy and program guide for community groups and regional cooperatives that would host the training. After consultation within CRC, a modified version was ready for wider consultation through a steering committee that first met in late 2009.

2.4 The steering committee members were:

- a) Ms Susan Bures AM, Great Synagogue;
- b) Mr Ertugrul Coruhlu, Turkish Islamic Cultural Association;
- c) Rev Bill Crews AM, Exodus Foundation;
- d) Bishop John Issam Darwish, Melkite Catholic Eparchy;
- e) Ven Thich Phuoc Dat, Phuc Hue Temple;
- f) Sr Giovanni Farquer and later Fr Maurizio Pettina, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney;
- g) Mr Hasan Kadri and later Mr Oliver Dreyfus, DIAC;
- h) Mr Kaylan Ram, Sri Mandir;
- i) Mr Khaled Sukkarieh, Islamic Council of NSW; and
- j) Mr Pasa Unsal, Western Sydney Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre.

2.5 By the time of the second steering committee meeting, in September 2010, a third draft of the text and materials was nearing completion, and the basic approach of a two-stage training intervention was agreed. In the first stage (Program A – Preparing for Australia) it was envisaged that religious workers, contemplating the move to Australia, could go online, do a short training course and attempt a self-assessment comprised of 30 or so true/false questions. The intention was to raise awareness of the possibility of contextual differences between religious life in Australia, and life in the religious worker's country of origin. This is a type of first contact, sensitisation training and it can assist individuals in their decision making regarding coming

to Australia, and in their early pastoral work in the country. The online delivery of this part has not been trialled, however the self-assessment has been administered, see Annex A, and proved to be a robust test instrument, even for religious workers who have spent some time in Australia. The simple course and test design is modelled on international online courses used by the UN and other multi-national agencies, but it could easily be prepared in a workbook format. Translation has not been costed or trialled.

2.6 The second part of the text and materials contains the curriculum, timetable, faculty requirements, venue specification and materials necessary for any reasonably experienced educator to coordinate the two-day, face-to-face component of the project. Session plans and guidance on participant numbers, facilitation and lecture notes, and suggested delivery techniques are also included in what can rightly be called a 'training package'. This part of the project (Program B – Serving in Australia) is designed to be run regionally, with minimal input from CRC (or other government agency), using a 'contagion' model of dissemination whereby the community/regional coordinator of the last program, liaises with the coordinator of the next program, to assist in its smooth planning and delivery, and in the recruitment of regionally-based presenters, facilitators and participants. This is a least cost option that can easily be made more robust with additional funding and dedicated community or agency staffing.

2.7 The two-day course was developed on a framework curriculum of seven major topic areas. The topics were selected based on a literature search, stakeholder consultation, and steering committee review. Lessons learnt from the training conducted by Monash University and the Australian Multicultural Foundation, in 2005 and 2006, were also incorporated. Each topic was allocated two 45 minute periods in the daily timetable, shown at Annex B, and session plans were developed. The topics/sessions and primary delivery techniques are:

- a) The Australian context (presentation and discussion);
- b) Civics workshop (small group discussion);
- c) Supporting families (presentation and discussion);
- d) Conflict, communication and community (presentation and discussion);
- e) Representing your religion (field visit);
- f) Working with young people (field visit); and
- g) Continuing professional development (CPD) (small group and individual work).

2.8 This is a sweeping and complex set of topics that can only be covered generally in a two-day program. The educative intent was to reinforce the

lessons learnt in Program A, cover the topics at a slightly greater depth using a non-didactic method, introduce participants to local/regional subject matter specialists who could assist them in their practice, and direct participants into further professional education and development.

3.0 Activities

3.1 In late 2010 it was decided by agreement that the pilot of Program B – Serving in Australia, the two-day, face-to-face component of the project would be hosted by Bishop John Issam Darwish of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy, on the 1st and 2nd of February 2011. It was also decided that the course was to be held at the premises of the Melkite Eparchy, at 80 Waterloo Rd Greenacre, where rudimentary but adequate and affordable classroom, breakout and dining facilities were available, and public transport service to the site is reasonable. Bishop Darwish nominated Deacon Michael Suliman and Dr Rosemary Suliman as joint coordinators, and established liaison between those two and Dr Mark Weston Wall of CRC on the 7th of December 2010.

3.2 The first task embarked upon was the recruitment of participants and the selection of presenters. It was decided early to limit the course panel to about 18 participants, and letters calling for nominations were sent to each member of the steering committee in early January. These were followed up with numerous (and in at least one case evidently annoying) email and phone messages, and the extension of the original invitation to a slightly broader group. Participation was initially limited to trained religious workers, relatively new to Australia and with at least basic spoken English. This was later relaxed to allow a number of non-trained religious workers, such as a monk's assistant and an executive assistant to a religious leader, to attend. The English language requirement was also relaxed if the participant was to be accompanied by a colleague or acquaintance who could interpret.

3.3 It quickly became evident that early January is a difficult time to establish contact with the disparate group being targeted. A number of religious workers had taken leave after the hectic round of Christmas and New Year, others had seized the opportunity presented by shoulder season airfares to travel back to their original homeland, and some peak body organisations were closed. It was not until the week prior to the course that numbers, at just 13, were considered sufficient to run the program. By the 31st of January numbers were up to 17, and on the 1st of February 19 participants and one observer from DIAC registered. Participant details are at Annex C.

3.4 Faculty for the course, based on the positions recommended and tasked in the text and materials, were, in the main, selected/suggested by the host Bishop Darwish. Their details are shown below:

- a) Course host – Bishop John Issam Darwish;
- b) Course coordinator – Deacon Michael Suliman and Dr Rosemary Suliman jointly;
- c) Syndicate leader 1 – Mr Louay Mustafa, Lebanese Community Council;
- d) Syndicate leader 2 – Dr Rosemary Suliman.

The third syndicate/small discussion group leader was not recruited due to initially low participant numbers. On the day, and given the higher than expected numbers, these duties were performed by Deacon Suliman and/or Dr Wall.

3.5 Recruitment of the visiting lecturers, specialist presenters and subject matter experts was the next activity undertaken. The text and materials set out topic details for each session to be facilitated by a visiting lecturer and specify that discussion, case studies and Q&A methods are preferred over lectures and protracted power-point presentations. Given the intent of the course, and the characteristics of the participants, presentations by eminent academics and researchers were discounted. Instead, preference was given to local and regional practitioners who would conceivably work with participants in the future and possibly become part of their network. Presenters, facilitators and hosts for the classroom sessions and two field visits are listed below:

- a) The Australian context – Mr Joe Metledge, legal advisor to the Maronite Catholic Eparchy;
- b) Civics workshop – syndicate leaders;
- c) Supporting families – Mr Ross Butler, Manager Bankstown Family Relationship Centre and Ms Omeima Sukkarieh, Manager Auburn Community Development Network;
- d) Conflict, communication and community – Mr Richard Acheson, Director Community Relations Service, CRC and Detective Superintendent John O'Reilly NSW Police;
- e) Representing your religion – Rev Bill Crews, CEO Exodus Foundation;
- f) Working with young people – Fr Dave Smith, MD Fighting Fathers Ministries; and
- g) Continuing professional development (CPD) – syndicate leaders.

All of these people gave their time freely, had prepared handouts and resource directories, extended invitations for further correspondence and

communication with participants, circulated their business/visiting cards, and expressed an interest in cooperating on future programs.

3.6 Participants on the course required vegetarian, halal, kosher and 'standard' meals, snacks and beverages on the two days. Additionally, the Theravada Buddhist monks have only two meals per day, require assistance to take their meals, and are bound to complete the second meal of the day before midday. While strictly vegan meals would have satisfied all participants, it was considered more appropriate, and even educational, to cater more specifically. One contract caterer approached refused the task and it was not until Sister Diyana Al Zaraneh, of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy, took on the job that the question of catering was resolved.

3.7 Other specialist assistance and tasking included Mr Allen Madden for the welcome to country; Mr Joseph Salama for course photography; bus driving, cleaning and kitchen staff at the Melkite Catholic Eparchy; Mr Jim Munro, Chief Operating Officer Exodus Foundation; Ms Maureen Eagles, Director Child and Youth Catholic Care; and Rev Mike Wilson, Presbyterian Cross-Cultural Ministry. Ms Thida Yang, CRC, assisted in recruiting participants and Ms Rosa Stathis, CRC, prepared the satchels containing paper, pen and some CRC literature for participants. Ms Sue Nabaki of the Melkite Catholic Eparchy assisted with typing and photocopying during the course. Dr Wall printed and had bound the 24 copies of the text and materials used in the program.

3.8 The actual delivery of the two-day course went almost without a hitch. Given that the training design and delivery was based on non-market criteria, some allowances had to be made for late arrival times by participants, particularly on Day 2, but this did create difficulties with scheduling most noticeably during the field visits. Also, given such a heterogeneous group, including different religious background, cultural heritage, nationality, English language ability, pastoral duty statements, length of time in Australia and personal motivations, topics of interest to some proved to be of less interest to others. This was particularly the case with the Supporting Families session. Nevertheless, there was a spirit of cooperation and collegiality that overcame these difficulties and saw a Lebanese-Australian Melkite sitting with a Cambodian Theravada Buddhist to explain who Burke and Wills were, and an English Rabbi and Turkish Imam boxing while an Australian Priest refereed.

3.9 All participants were issued with a copy of the text and materials as a course guide and learning resource. In addition they were issued with a DVD of the photographs taken during the program. These serve as personal mementoes but more importantly they allow participants to reflect on the

program, remember the participants, and brief their own colleagues and community on the program and its message. For example, the photograph on the cover of this evaluation is itself a powerful and evocative example of multicultural and intra-faith diversity and cooperation.

3.10 A post-course faculty debrief was held on the 10th of February at the Melkite Eparchy premises. A draft of this evaluation was discussed, amended and finally agreed. Invoices and costings were finalised, and the text and materials were reviewed and some amendments made. The modified text and materials were finalised in late February.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Participant input into evaluation was collected, using the *pro forma* from the text and materials, shown at Annex D, during the last session of Day 2. The four level evaluation asked participants to comment on their reaction to the training, their learning, their future actions, and the likely impact of the training on their organisation and community. Overwhelmingly the comments reflected that participants felt the course was 'worthwhile', 'good', 'very important', 'necessary', 'wonderful', 'well organised', 'fruitful', 'very informative', 'a great resource for newcomers to Australia', and that they were 'so happy' to attend. Only a few participants had suggestions for improvement or change and most particularly appreciated the opportunity to sit with religious workers from other faiths, to discuss the laws and history of Australia, and to visit and listen to two outstanding religious leaders.

4.2 The visits to Rev Bill Crews' Exodus Foundation and Fr Dave Smith's gymnasium, and the picnic lunch on the way, were considered highlights. Participants and faculty found Rev Crew's operation 'heart warming', 'inspiring', and an example of 'great humanity'. Fr Dave's 20 years of practice, used as a case study and as a lesson in working with young people, was considered an inspiring story of service and faith. When he got out the boxing gloves and jumped into the ring with Father Youssef Matta, of the Maronites, participants knew they were in for a treat.

4.3 The success of Day 1, and possibly the scheduling of the visits for Day 2, seem to have assisted to retain participants. At the completion of the second day only three participants, of all those available and expected, had not returned to the course, and one returning participant had brought along another. Participant retention is always a concern on volunteer, non-residential, non-market courses and it will be addressed in the revision of the text and learning materials and the course program.

4.4 The learning objectives of the two-day course are set out in the text and materials and are derived from DIAC and CRC MoU Objective 2, namely 'to

ensure more informed religious workers and local community resource people'. Longitudinal evaluation would be required to comment decisively on outcomes here however participants are self-reporting as confirmed in the good feelings they have towards Australian society, more knowledgeable about Australia and its laws and people, newly equipped with good local contacts that can assist them in their work, not feeling scared anymore, open to informing their community to help and associate with outsiders, reinforced in their attitude to interact more with other religious people, inspired to serve more efficiently and respect other faiths. One participant stated that:

This course affect my thinking about other religious worker. Now I think more free.... In every year, a day must celebrate "Religious Worker Day" in Australia. Because there are a lot of different religions man in Australia. This will be good to multicultural Australian society.

The course has also practiced the faculty members as multi-faith, community-based educators and developed a pool of participants who can be called upon to assist in recruiting future participants, and who might act as future small group discussion leaders. The course proved of use to religious workers who are not that new to Australia, and Imam Abdul Jimale and Dr Rosemary Suliman both saw value in recruiting participants who have been in Australia some time but not attended a course such as this.

4.5 The text and materials were well received by all participants and there was some evidence on Day 2 that participants had read more deeply into the materials overnight. During recruitment, presenters were sent the session plans and topic outlines extracted from the materials and most found these useful and easily followed. However some remedial work will be undertaken and Topic B2 – Civics Workshop will be revised to become more of an open forum designed to address participant concerns with life in Australia. Days were overly long and the timetable will be trimmed back to 9.00am - 5.00pm and the dinner on Day 1, which was not conducted due to the enormous difficulty of finding a suitable venue, will be listed as optional in the timetable and voluntary for participants.

4.6 Only two women participants were recruited for the first course although one presenter and one faculty member were also female. Chinese-based or Chinese origin/influenced religious workers were mostly not available to attend due to the proximity of Lunar New Year. Hindu religious groups contacted did not see the relevance of the program as they stated that their religious workers do not perform pastoral duties. As was to be expected, there was some slight tension between some participants of different

faiths/denominations and the text and materials will also be expanded to address this for future courses.

4.7 Administration arrangements and logistics for the course were all adequate. The hall used for presentations and meals became incredibly, but understandably hot in the afternoon of Day 1 when the outside air temperature reached 41°C. The nearest rail station to the site is Punchbowl at 2.2km and this caused some difficulties. One participant was adamant that he would not enter a consecrated space, ie: a church, however this was not required and not included in the program.

4.8 The text and materials suggest that the course should be '...hosted at an appropriate, non-denominational venue, and facilitated by a joint party of local/regional community leaders and elders, educational facilitators, subject matter experts and multi-faith religious leaders.' This can possibly be better put, but the intention was to guard against any one religion or faith coming to dominate or being perceived to own the program. There was not much risk of this during the pilot program because, even though the host, both coordinators, and one small group discussion leader were Melkite Catholics and that the venue was a Melkite church hall, the Melkites are considered as a 'bridge' between denominations in the Catholic Church but also between religions and cultures more broadly. However, this risk is best avoided and the wording in the text and materials will be strengthened to ensure that it is.

4.9 Costings for the course delivery were kept to an absolute minimum as shown in the table.

Commodity/item/service	Cost	Notes
Hall hire, set up, cleaning	\$600.00	2 days, classroom, breakout and meals areas
Bus and driver hire/rental	\$320.00	½ day 2 nd Feb only
Catering (onsite and kosher)	\$2,500.00	2 x M/Tea, 2 x L, 2 x A/Tea for 25 pax
Welcome to country	\$300.00	Mr Allen Madden
Photography	\$312.00	Mr Joseph Salama
Professional and administrative services	\$800.00	Melkite Eparchy
Steward/Kitchen hand	\$300.00	\$30.00/hr x 5hrs x 2 days
Printing	\$108.00	Printed in house, 24 bound at Bob's Printing

DVD	\$500.00	25 DVDs at \$20.00 each
Total	\$5,740.00	

A similar two-day program using commercial venues and costings was recently priced at \$18,000.00 by one member of the evaluation team.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 The delivery of the pilot, two-day, face-to-face course component of *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Worker's Coming to Australia*, is considered by participants, faculty, presenters and organisers to have been successful. Participants have self-reported as enjoying the program and collegiality, and having improved knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to working more effectively and comfortably in a multi-faith, multicultural and democratic Australia. There is, as usual, room for continual improvement and the recommendations that follow pick up on the lessons that have been learnt during this pilot delivery. However, the most pressing issues for decision-makers are now questions of policy in relation to funding, participant recruitment, staffing, program roll-out and longitudinal evaluation.

5.2 *Serving in a New Land: an Orientation and Appraisal for Religious Worker's Coming to Australia* is currently designed as a two-part program. Program A – Preparing for Australia is proposed as a short, offshore, online course and self-assessment exercise. Program B – Serving in Australia has been successfully piloted as a regionally-based, two-day, face-to-face, multi-faith course. While Program A could be rolled into Program B, retaining the two is recommended. Above all it has the marked advantage of helping religious workers prepare for their work in Australia, and even reflect on their decision to come, before embarking. Participants could also commit to attending a Program B course on completion of Program A.

5.3 Program B is currently proposed as a regionally-based, low cost, multi-faith, face-to-face course. Like all non-market driven training it will be unlikely to be self-sustaining, and should be considered as an investment in social cohesion, harmony and security. Funding will be required to cover the costs of delivering the course, and funding would assist in recruiting host and other faculty interested in delivering the program. Program oversight and evaluation will also require periodic agency staffing.

5.4 Policy questions that result from these deliberations are:

- a) How are religious workers coming to Australia to be recruited and retained in the two programs?
- b) Where will the online (Program A) course be hosted?
- c) What incentives will be offered to recruit hosts and others into delivering the face-to-face course (Program B)?

In considering the last question, it should be noted that the immediate past course coordinator is in the best position to advise the next course coordinator on course delivery. Therefore, part of the incentive package should include a deferred benefit that becomes due once the next course in line has been successfully completed. As an example, one of the pilot course coordinators could be called upon to assist in the planning and delivery of the next course. Once a host organisation, say a community group in Coffs Harbour NSW, applies for assistance to deliver the course, the immediate past coordinator would be available to assist.

5.5 There are at least two alternatives to the arrangements outlined above: the first is a high risk strategy relying on community goodwill, the second is a high cost strategy relying on federal funding. Neither is further developed here. The recommendation of this review is that the contagion model of low cost delivery be implemented once the policy aspects of this program are addressed.

5.6 In total, the recommendations of the authors are:

- a) Program A – Preparing for Australia is retained as a pre-embarkation course.
- b) Program A is developed by an IT specialist for online delivery.
- c) The text for Program A includes a field where participants are invited to commit to participate in Program B.
- c) Program B – Serving in Australia is rolled-out nationally for regional and metropolitan delivery.
- d) Program B is coordinated by a suitable agency in each state/territory jurisdiction.
- e) DIAC enter into bilateral MoUs with coordinating agencies to fund and administer delivery of Program B.

5.7 As a final note the authors of this report would like to express their thanks for the opportunity to organise, deliver and evaluate this program. The good grace, professionalism and cooperation of the participants and presenters made this an enjoyable and professionally developmental experience.

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Annexes – not included here

- A. Self-Assessment
- B. Daily Timetable
- C. Participant Details
- D. Participant Evaluation