MEDIA RELEASE

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STRONGER ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS TO ENSURE OUTCOMES FOR OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello MP today announced reforms to ensure that services provided by NSW Government agencies are well matched to the increasingly diverse NSW community.

The new changes to the Multicultural Policies and Services Program (MPSP) hold the Ministers and Directors General of key Government agency clusters responsible for the planning, conduct and reporting of strategies that meet the principles of cultural diversity.

“Given our citizens come from some 200 countries and speak some 200 languages, the MPSP should provide our public sector agencies with an imperative to maintain equitable, responsive and cost effective service delivery,” Mr Dominello said.

“We achieve that by having senior cluster Ministers and their Directors General take greater and direct ownership of cultural diversity practices and results.

“These reforms to the MPSP place stricter accountability on the whole NSW Government to deliver appropriate services to all of our communities, whatever cultural background they are from and whatever language they speak,” Mr Dominello said.

“With some 25 per cent of the NSW community born overseas, and some 40 plus per cent of our community with one parent born overseas, it makes good sense in terms of customer service.

“We have introduced a very clear line of responsibility at the highest level of Government for implementing this crucial program.

“At the cluster level, Directors General must now compile and submit multicultural plans with the input of their Ministers, and must report against those plans to the Community Relations Commission, who will assist agencies to focus on those strategies that best produce outcomes for all NSW citizens.

“This ensures these key Directors General maintain a comprehensive oversight of the multicultural performance of all the agencies in their clusters and that they will liaise more effectively with their relevant Minister and the Community Relations Commission to enhance their performance where required,” Mr Dominello said.

Minister Dominello said the reforms also provide for early warning mechanisms where an agency is struggling to meet their MPSP obligations.
Within three months of advice from the Community Relations Commission, Directors General will need to provide an account of the multicultural performance, and any recommendations for improvement, to the relevant cluster Minister,” Mr Dominello said.

“The former Government did not take MPSP seriously enough. As a result, there were some gaps in agency performance. This change shows that the Liberals and Nationals Government’s approach to cultural diversity is founded on improved service delivery and respect for communities,” Mr Dominello said.

ENDS.