IMPROVING CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TO CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Organisation: Multicultural Education team, Educational Standards, NSW Department of Education

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Inquiry into improving crisis communications to culturally and linguistically diverse communities

a) **use of multicultural and culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD) community groups and networks to distribute in-language information**

- ensure the identified multicultural and CALD community groups and networks are adequately resourced to effectively support their communities to access services while complying with crisis response mandates
- ensure the identified multicultural and CALD community groups and networks are adequately resourced to continue to support their communities, especially vulnerable members of their communities, beyond the current crisis
- collaborate with and enable community groups and networks to take ownership and leadership of the crafting and distribution of in-language information from the start
- engage the support and participation of local religious leaders from the start
- investigate, understand and be sensitive to the intra-cultural relational dynamics between members of community groups and the sub-groups within and the appropriate ways to engage with each cohort
- ensure that community information drives are led and coordinated by community members with a strong connection to and understanding of the needs of the community they are supporting and working with.

b) **ways to improve channels of communication with CALD communities**

- investigate and effectively use community preferred and culturally responsive channels of communication
- investigate ways to collaborate with staff at SBS radio and television to provide critical communications relevant to education settings so that these messages can be quickly translated and used as part of the news services at SBS
- consult and collaborate with appropriate community and religious leaders, including youth leaders, on culturally appropriate effective messaging
- ensure all communication is provided in language or appropriate dialect where possible or necessary
- where written translations of critical information are being undertaken ensure that the company chosen to do the work can provide translations in a timely manner and can provide all the languages required
- if the number of languages for translation needs to be limited ensure that the languages chosen are those most in need of translation i.e. those most recently arrived, not simply the biggest groups which include communities that are well established and resourced
- avoid figurative, colloquial language and/or language that may be easily misconstrued in translation (use plain language)
- hold regular in-language community forums to update communities on changing response protocols.

c) **addressing racism and discrimination related to crisis communications**

- implement equitable and transparent crisis response protocols across all communities
- allocate resources to enable communities to access critical in-language information in a timely and culturally appropriate manner
- engage directly with members of the community and provide safe spaces and channels to address community concerns regarding perceptions of racism in the implementation of crisis response protocols, and to allay community fears of being unduly scapegoated or targeted
- provide culturally responsive channels for in-language community feedback to engender a sense of agency, active engagement, belonging, and inclusion
- provide interpreters to support and enable members of the community to overcome systemic 'red tape' to access services and government-funded crisis-related programs in a timely and culturally responsive manner
- use non-biased language in media broadcasts to avoid stigmatising certain communities or generalising across communities

- use inclusive and consensus building language that unites rather than marginalises and polarises communities.