

UNCLASSIFIED

## Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan, Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities

Proactive release of Cabinet material about the Ministry for Ethnic Communities' One Year Progress Update and Three Year Strategy

11 August 2022

These documents have been proactively released:

***29 June 2022 – SWC-22-MIN-0128 – Ministry for Ethnic Communities: One Year Progress Update and Three Year Strategy***

***29 June 2022 – Ministry for Ethnic Communities One-Year-On: An Update on Progress and the Strategy for the Next Three Years***

Some parts of this information would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to Redaction Codes:

- Section 9(2)(f)(iv) – confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.



# Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

## Minute of Decision

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Ministry for Ethnic Communities: One Year Progress Update and Three Year Strategy

**Portfolio** Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities

On 29 June 2022, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1 **noted** the progress update, outlined in the paper under SWC-22-SUB-0128, on the work of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry) since its establishment in July 2021;
- 2 **endorsed** the Ministry's inaugural operational strategy, attached under SWC-22-SUB-0128, which charts actions the Ministry aims to progress between now and 2025 to deliver on its strategic priorities;
- 3 **authorised** the Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities to finalise any editorial and design changes prior to publication of the inaugural strategy.

Rachel Clarke  
Committee Secretary

**Present:**

Hon Grant Robertson  
Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)  
Hon Andrew Little  
Hon Poto Williams  
Hon Peeni Henare  
Hon Kiri Allan  
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall  
Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan  
Hon Aupito William Sio  
Hon Meka Whaitiri

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Office of the Chair  
Officials Committee for SWC

**In Confidence**

Office of the Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities

Chair  
Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

**Ministry for Ethnic Communities One-Year-On: An Update on Progress and the Strategy for the Next Three Years**

**Proposal**

1. This paper:
  - 1.1 provides an update on the progress of Te Tari Mātāwaka, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry), following its establishment on 1 July 2021; and
  - 1.2 seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Ministry's inaugural operational strategy that charts actions the Ministry aims to progress between now and 2025, to deliver on its Cabinet-endorsed strategic priorities.

**Relation to government priorities**

2. The Ministry was established as part of the Government's response to recommendations of *Ko tō tatou kāinga tēnei - Report on the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain on 15 March 2019* (RCOI Report). The progress update set out in the paper supports the government priorities of improving wellbeing, delivering transparent government, valuing who we are as a country and having an international reputation we can be proud of.

**Executive summary**

3. This Government is committed to lifting the wellbeing of ethnic communities and creating a fairer Aotearoa New Zealand where all people feel safe, have equal access to opportunities and are not discriminated against.
4. The Ministry was established to reinforce this commitment and to lift wellbeing outcomes for ethnic communities.<sup>1</sup> Despite being established during a global pandemic and its small size, the Ministry is progressing with pace and momentum. In its first year, it has completed its transition from the Office of Ethnic Communities to a Ministry. Its Chief Executive is now present at various Chief Executive tables across the system. The Ministry's engagement approach, which was previously focused on specific regions, has expanded to nationwide. It has increasingly operated in a complex systems environment to deliver tangible actions to lift the wellbeing of ethnic communities.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ministry's remit included people who identify their ethnicity as Middle Eastern, Latin American, Continental European, Asian or African. This includes new and temporary migrants, former refugees, asylum-seekers, long-term settlers and those born in New Zealand.

5. Key achievements include swift responses to the Delta and Omicron Covid-19 outbreaks, the 2021 Afghanistan crisis, the 2021 Lynnmall attack and the 2022 Ukrainian crisis, while continuing to support government agencies implement RCOI Report recommendations. Over the past year, the Ministry has worked to ensure that key information is shared with different ethnic communities in ways that are relevant to them including video messages and translated materials. It has also engaged with local Afghan, Ukrainian and Russian communities to ensure they had access to culturally-appropriate support as events unfolded in their home countries. It also supported Muslim and Sri Lankan communities in the aftermath of the Lynnmall attack. It continued to deliver on its own work programme priorities such as the finalisation of the Former Refugees, Recent Migrants, and Ethnic communities Employment Action Plan, launching the Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme, working to improve ethnic diversity on governance boards, and administering the Ethnic Communities Development Fund and Vaccination Uptake Fund. At the same time, the Ministry put in place structural and accountability arrangements, and began work on developing its medium-term operational strategy in close consultation with the communities it represents.
6. I am pleased to share and seek your endorsement of the Ministry's inaugural operational strategy that charts actions the Ministry aims to progress between now and 2025 to deliver on its Cabinet-endorsed strategic priorities. Going into its second year, I expect the Ministry to be fully operational with additional capability funded through Wellbeing Budget 2022, to lean more firmly into its broad mandate to lead systems change.

7. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

### Background

8. In December 2020, Cabinet agreed to establish the Ministry for Ethnic Communities from 1 July 2021 as a departmental agency (with the Department of Internal Affairs as host agency), and the Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities as the responsible Minister [CBC-20-MIN-0093 refers]. This was in response to both the recommendations of the RCOI Report and advocacy over many years from communities. In June 2021 Cabinet endorsed the Ministry's initial strategic priorities, agreed to its core functions and noted my intention to provide an update to Cabinet on the progress of the new Ministry [SWC-21-MIN-0078 refers]. More information on these decisions is attached (**Appendix A**).

***Aotearoa New Zealand is richer because of its ethnic diversity***

9. Establishing the Ministry has raised the mana and visibility of almost one million people from ethnic communities who call Aotearoa New Zealand, home. Nearly 20 percent of Aotearoa New Zealand's total population identify as Middle Eastern, Asian, African, Latin American and Continental European. This is an incredibly diverse group, representing over 200 ethnicities and speaking over 170 languages. Over the next 16 years, Asian, and Middle Eastern, Latin American and African populations (MELAA) are projected to increase their share of the overall population to 22 percent for Asians and three percent for MELAA. Aotearoa New Zealand is becoming more diverse.
10. Providing and facilitating opportunities for ethnic communities to make a positive contribution to New Zealand society is a significant and challenging task for all of Government. I expect the Ministry, as the Government's Chief Advisor on ethnic communities, to play a critical role in supporting the Government enable ethnic communities to realise their potential and respond to their needs.

***Despite its small size, the Ministry is already making a tangible impact***

11. On 1 July 2021, the Ministry replaced the Office of Ethnic Communities which was a small business unit within the Department of Internal Affairs. Since then, the expectations of the Ministry have been raised and demand on its expertise and resources have significantly increased.
12. At the time of its establishment, the Ministry was expected to focus its first year on setting its foundations, scoping its new functions, strengthening strategic relationships and lifting its capability, in order to evolve into a fully functioning Ministry.
13. In order to do that, the Ministry received a funding injection of \$0.823 million of one-off establishment costs and \$0.731 million in 2021/2022 and \$1.044 million in 2022/23 and outyears to meet the costs of a new chief executive, a small team to support the chief executive and incremental corporate support costs to meet accountability requirements.
14. However, six weeks into its establishment, Aotearoa New Zealand entered its second nation-wide Alert Level 4 lockdown, two weeks later the New Lynn terrorist attack occurred, followed by the 2021 humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Ministry quickly pivoted to play a critical role in the Government's response ensuring that public sector agencies and affected communities were adequately supported, while also putting in place its operational foundations. Its progress is set out below.

***Taking action to support the delivery of Government priorities***

15. To be effective quickly, the Ministry established linkages between its work and the work already underway in central and local government. It built on the work of its predecessor on community engagement to provide a national overview of insights gleaned from the regions and began to use its new levers to influence across government in a range of areas. Having its own Chief Executive meant the Ministry was represented at top senior leadership tables for strategic and critical discussions. Key progress included:

**15.1 Responding to Delta and Omicron outbreaks:** The Ministry collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to help achieve vaccination targets and related health equity outcomes by:

- 15.1.1 *connecting 21 District Health Boards with ethnic communities*** to run 15 information hui and tailored vaccination events.
- 15.1.2 *supporting DPMC, MoH and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)*** to share information on vaccinations, the COVID-19 Protection and the Care in the Community frameworks.
- 15.1.3 *translating online, print and video vaccination information*** into 43 videos in more than 20 languages, and running targeted paid media campaigns in multiple languages.
- 15.1.4 *ensuring ethnic communities were reflected*** in the Covid-19 Care in the Community Framework.
- 15.1.5 *working with MoH to commit \$4 million funding*** for ethnic communities.<sup>2</sup>
- 15.1.6 *developing insights evidence into vaccination hesitancy***, in response to the lower level of uptake for 5 to 11 year-olds.

**15.2 Responding to the RCOI report:** The decision to establish the Ministry was partly in response to years of community advocacy and partly in response to the RCOI recommendation that the government consider machinery of government options for an agency focused on ethnic communities and multiculturalism. Now that the Ministry has been established, it continues to support other agencies to implement the RCOI recommendations on the ground and at the strategic level. For example:

- 15.2.1** the RCOI report discussed the need for:
  - **creating opportunities to build relationships and share understanding of countering violent extremism and terrorism.** This work is led by DPMC. The Ministry organised hui between Muslim communities and relevant public sector agencies on countering violent extremism and terrorism to raise awareness and provide an opportunity to suggest pragmatic community-led de-radicalisation programmes.

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<sup>2</sup> This included \$2.0 million Vaccine Uptake Fund administered by the Ministry with half of it focused specifically on increasing Booster uptake and 5 – 11 year-old vaccinations and \$2.0 million Communications Fund for which the Ministry sat on the assessment and allocation panel.

- **a whole-of-government work to building social cohesion.** This work is led by MSD. The Ministry has worked closely with MSD on the proposals set out in my paper titled *Strengthening social cohesion in Aotearoa New Zealand* and is responsible for delivering actions on the whole of government programme. Specifically, this includes a commitment to building capability across the public sector on organisational Cultural Intelligence and Safety and developing cultural competency.
- **prioritising collection of data on ethnic and religious demographics.** This work is led by both Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ) and the Ministry. The Ministry is working with Stats NZ on the review of the current ethnicity standard s 9(2)(f)(iv)  
 Both agencies are working together to increase ethnic communities participation in the five-yearly Census, which is the primary source of demographic information for public sector agencies.

**15.2.2 worked with other agencies on range of implementation matters such as** the Christchurch Call, aligning outcomes of the ethnic youth framework and participation, Foreign Interference, good practice guides for community engagement work programmes.

**15.2.3 developed closer relationships with communities.** This included strengthening or forming new connections with the Muslim national organisations, community in Christchurch, Otago and Southland regions and working closely with ethnic youth and women.

**15.3 Responding to local communities impacted by international conflicts:** The Ministry has played a role in supporting people from ethnic communities who still have strong familial links in countries facing conflicts or when issues unfolded domestically. Including in the:

**15.3.1 2021 Afghanistan crisis response:** Worked with the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Immigration New Zealand and Ministry for Women to hold conversations with Afghan communities (including women and youth) to understand the needs and connect them with wellbeing support.

**15.3.2 2021 LynnMall attack response:** Worked closely with the Sri Lankan communities to offer support in the aftermath of the terror attack. It also worked closely with government and relevant non-government agencies such as NZ Police, MSD, Corrections, the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand and the New Zealand Muslim Association to support communities on the ground.

**15.3.3 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine:** Worked with a range of public and private sector agencies to provide guidance to members of the Aotearoa New Zealand community who wish to provide support and to Ukrainian New Zealanders and their families seeking support. The Ministry continues to hold conversations with both the Ukrainian and Russian communities to understand needs and look at opportunities to bring communities together.

**15.4 Resettlement and integration of migrants and refugees:** The Ministry continued to work with MBIE and Immigration New Zealand to support the resettlement process and support access to government services - including for recent arrivals from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

***Delivering on the Ministry's Priorities***

16. In addition to the above, the Ministry delivered on its own work programme priorities. It:

- 16.1 finalised the Former Refugees, Recent Migrants, and Ethnic Communities Employment Action Plan (Employment Action Plan).** The Ministry, working with MSD and MBIE led the development, including consultation with communities, of the Employment Action Plan which was launched on 25 March 2022. This plan has been well-received by ethnic communities as well as the business community. I have had several discussions with employers and business groups interested to know how they can support the Government to achieve its goals.
- 16.2 launched the Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme.** The Ministry, in collaboration with 10 public sector agencies, placed 35 ethnic graduates in their first role in the public sector.
- 16.3 continued to improve ethnic diversity on governance boards and the recognition of ethnic people's contributions.** The Ministry has nominated 114 ethnic candidates for 77 public sector boards and committees roles. Candidates for Royal Honours are also being identified to increase recognition of the contributions of Aotearoa's ethnic communities where this is warranted.
- 16.4 empowered communities through grant funding community-led initiatives.** The ministry processed 329 applications and has awarded \$3.84 million (of \$4.232 million available in community grants and is on track to fully disburse available funds by 30 June 2022).
- 16.5 supported the delivery of the work of other government agencies and influenced across government to develop more inclusive policies.** Public sector agencies continue to seek the Ministry's advice on a range of government policies and engagement strategies and/or brokering relationships with ethnic communities. The Ministry is taking an active role in the development of the National Action Plan Against Racism and in the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence work programme.

**16.6 taken action to implement the RCOI recommendation** that any new agency focused on ethnic communities should have the capability to collate and use data to analyse, monitor and evaluate public sector efforts to improve the wellbeing of ethnic communities. The Ministry has scoped this function, funding has been provided for it in Budget 2022, and it will now be implemented.

**16.7 laid the foundations of its operational working environment** by making key appointments, putting in place accountability arrangements and internal policies negotiating its departmental agency agreement, developing its organisational values and its inaugural strategy, discussed below.

### Looking ahead – a delivery roadmap for the next three years

17. At the end of 2021, building on what communities said the Ministry should prioritise in its initial years, the Ministry's Chief Executive sought community feedback on the Ministry's inaugural strategy. Communities responded by saying they wanted to belong, to contribute and be seen as strong contributors to Aotearoa New Zealand's growth. They valued the bi-cultural foundations outlined in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, wanted to connect with Māori, Pacific and Pākehā communities and businesses, preserve their mother tongues and evolve their ethnic identities in Aotearoa New Zealand. Communities want to be remunerated fairly commensurate with their skills, and help build an inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand.
18. The inaugural operational strategy has now been finalised with tangible actions reflecting these aspirations (**Appendix B**). It sets out the actions underway and actions the Ministry plans to progress, in partnership with others, to deliver on its strategic priorities (which were also developed in consultation with communities and endorsed by Cabinet). I seek your endorsement of this inaugural strategy which will act as the Ministry's roadmap for the next three years, with a focus on unlocking the potential of a superdiverse nation, particularly paying attention to, and addressing the conditions that create inequities for ethnic communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. It will be a living document that evolves with the capability of the Ministry and the transformational systems change expected to occur across the public sector. To support the Ministry's community engagement, policy and data analytics capability to deliver this work programme, the Ministry has received \$2.473 million for the 2022/23 as part of Wellbeing Budget 2022.
19. With the new Ministry established and its inaugural strategy completed, the foundation for a better and more equitable future for our ethnic communities has been laid. The roadmap is ambitious and one the Ministry cannot achieve on its own. Given its small size, it intends to deliver through its own programme of work and by working in partnership with the public, private and community sectors.

20. While the Ministry's inaugural strategy sets out tangible actions it can take now to deliver better wellbeing outcomes, there is potential to do much more in the future to build on the improvements made and keep pace with high community expectations. We need to continue working together to ensure that Government policies and services are designed to work with our ethnic communities' aspirations and harness their potential. Their valuable skills sets, entrepreneurialism, global experiences and international connections can help invigorate Aotearoa New Zealand, diversify our economy and add to the richness of our culture.

#### **Financial and Legislative implications**

21. This paper has no financial or legislative implications. Delivery of any proposed actions, which may need government funding to progress, is contingent on funding being made available through reprioritisation of existing baselines and/or subject to future Budget decisions. Should additional funding be needed, then proposed actions will be assessed in the context of wider priorities at that time, considering the potential financial implications and the need to scale relative to any funding available.

#### **Impact analysis (Regulatory Impact and Climate implications)**

22. This paper has no regulatory impact or climate implications.

#### **Te Tiriti o Waitangi Analysis**

23. The actions of the Ministry are intended to honour the Crown's responsibility to act in a way that is consistent with the principles under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Engagement undertaken on the draft Strategy continues to indicate a clear desire within ethnic communities to have stronger links with tangata whenua, along with greater understanding of Te Ao Māori. As the Ministry starts to deliver on its role, I expect it will build on its engagement with Māori. Its first strategy includes actions specifically aimed at improving connections between ethnic communities and tangata whenua.

#### **Population Implications**

24. The actions of the Ministry are intended to have a positive impact on the outcomes for ethnic communities. Overtime, with the building of evidence base, the Ministry can start to identify the impact of its actions more credibly on other population groups and population groups within ethnic communities such as youth, older person, women recent or settled migrants and former refugees.

#### **Human Rights Implications**

25. The proposals in this paper are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

#### **Gender Implications**

26. The Ministry's Strategy include actions aimed at improving outcomes for ethnic women. Further to this, the existence of the Ministry should allow for better representation of the interests of ethnic women and ethnic members from rainbow communities.

### Disability Implications

27. This paper does not include any direct implications for people with disabilities. Though the Ministry will have a role in working with other government agencies, including the soon to be established Ministry for Disabled People to better understand interactions between ethnicity and disability, ensure better representation of interests and reduce barriers for members of the community that are disabled or are primary caregivers or sole support persons for disabled people.

### Consultation

28. The Ministry for Ethnic Communities has consulted with the following agencies:  
- Public Services Commission, the Treasury, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Development, Office for Seniors, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Ministry of Youth Development, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry for Women, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Te Arawhiti, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment and Statistics New Zealand.

### Communications

29. Subject to Cabinet's endorsement, the Ministry will make final editorial and design changes, and publicly release the strategy to coincide with its one year anniversary. I intend to issue a press release at the same time.

### Proactive Release

30. I intend to proactively release this paper, in accordance with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982, within 30 working days.

### Recommendations

I recommend that the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

1. **note** the update on the work of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (Ministry) since its establishment in July 2021 and its inaugural strategy (**Appendix B**).
2. **agree** to endorse the Ministry's inaugural operational strategy that charts actions the Ministry aims to progress between now and 2025 to deliver on its Cabinet-endorsed strategic priorities.
3. **note** that the Ministry, subject to Cabinet agreement above, will finalise editorial and design changes, and publicly release its inaugural strategy.

Authorised for lodgement.

Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan  
Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities

**Appendix A: Background to the Ministry's establishment**

1. In December 2020, Cabinet agreed to establish the Ministry for Ethnic Communities from 1 July 2021 as a departmental agency (with the Department of Internal Affairs as host agency), and the Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities as the responsible Minister [CBC-20-MIN-0093 refers]. This was in response to both the recommendations of the RCOI Report and requests from the community.
2. Following this decision, I hosted a series of targeted engagements in early 2021 to ensure that the new Ministry focused on what was most important to the communities it represented. In June 2021, based on these engagements, Cabinet agreed that the Ministry would be the Government's Chief Advisor on ethnic communities, the ethnic diversity therein and the inclusion of ethnic communities in wider society [SWC-21-MIN-0078 refers]. Its:

**2.1 initial strategic priorities are to:**

- 2.1.1 take action to promote the value of diversity and improve inclusion of ethnic communities within wider society.
- 2.1.2 ensure equitable provision of, and access to, government services for ethnic communities.
- 2.1.3 develop and support initiatives to improve economic outcomes for ethnic communities, including addressing barriers to employment.
- 2.1.4 work to connect and empower ethnic community groups

**2.2 core functions are to:** lead the system to improve outcomes for ethnic communities, provide policy advice, undertake monitoring and data analysis and undertake or support others effectively engage with ethnic communities

3. At the same time, Cabinet agreed that the task of reducing inequity through strengthening the inclusion and wellbeing of Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse ethnic communities within wider society is a shared responsibility across the public-sector. It also noted my intention to provide an update to Cabinet on the progress of the Ministry.

**Appendix B: Ministry for Ethnic Communities 2022 – 2025 Strategy**

Note: The Ministry for Ethnic Communities' 2022/2025 Strategy is publicly available at the Ministry's website: [www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz](http://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz).

Proactively Released by the Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities