
ECCV Submission on the Review of the National Triple Zero (000) Operator to Triple Zero Review

August 2014

About the ECCV

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria Inc. (ECCV) is the *Voice of Multicultural Victoria*. As the peak body for ethnic and multicultural organisations in Victoria, we are proud to have been the key advocate for culturally diverse communities in Victoria since 1974. For 40 years we have been the link between multicultural communities, government and the wider community.

We aim for a culturally diverse and harmonious society that is just, fair and inclusive where all people have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to, community life. We advocate for freedom, respect, equality and dignity for multicultural communities and strive with others, to build a strong, vibrant Victorian community.

Meeting the needs of culturally diverse communities

As of December 2013, the population of Victoria was estimated to be about 5.8 million people. Of these, 26 percent were born overseas, over 40 percent were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas and more than 20 percent speak a language other than English at home. Whatever arrangements emerge from the review of the national Triple Zero (000) operator, it is important its services continue to be responsive to this diversity within the community.

ECCV welcomes the awareness campaign and promotional materials developed by the Triple Zero (000) operator to ensure that people from culturally diverse communities are aware of the existence of this service and necessary steps to follow when making a Triple Zero (000) call. The awareness initiatives include advertisements in traditional media (radio and television) and visual and written materials in some community languages (e.g. Triple Zero Kids' Challenge online game and posters). However, ECCV proposes that these initiatives should be complemented with outreach sessions delivered in partnership with ethno-centered organisations to extend the learning experience of multicultural community members. Those information and education sessions will likely meet the needs of some members of multicultural communities who may be reluctant using the Triple Zero (000). Special attention should be given to the following groups of people:

- People with lack of or limited English language proficiency and literacy skills
- People who do not have access to internet and computer facilities
- Elderly members who may not be comfortable using computer
- People with a disability

Recommendation 1:

That culturally appropriate information session with role plays and scenarios be provided to multicultural communities.

ECCV sees benefits in emergency services such as Ambulance and Fire fighting services holding events once or twice a year in order to establish and develop relationships with culturally diverse communities. Victoria Police's community engagement event could be used as a model. This will involve emergency services personnel getting to know people from culturally diverse in social settings, at the same time making them aware of necessary steps to use the Triple Zero (000). This kind of interaction helps fear and anxiety held by some members of the community about people in uniform slowly dissipate.

Recommendation 2:

That community engagement event be held to nurture relationships between emergency services and culturally diverse communities.

Another crucial step towards awareness about the Triple Zero (000) emergency number is to involve people from culturally diverse communities in emergency management as volunteers. A few years ago, an attempt was made to recruit people from these communities, resulting in workshops being held by Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum in Mt Macedon, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth. ECCV believes that similar workshops should be conducted with particular focus on people from new and emerging communities when necessary so that emergency services can renew or grow their pool of volunteers from culturally diverse communities.

Recommendations 3:

That workshops or seminars be conducted to recruit people from culturally diverse communities as volunteers when necessary.

For further information please contact:

Me'ad Assan, Policy Officer at massan@eccv.org.au or 03 9349 4122

Sylvia Daravong, Policy Officer at sdaravong@eccv.org.au or 03 9349 4122