

**ECCV Submission  
To  
Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division  
Department of Premier and Cabinet  
On  
Safe Haven Enterprise Visa  
May 2017**

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria Inc. (ECCV) is the voice of multicultural Victoria and the peak policy advocacy body for eight regional ethnic community councils and up to 220 members including ethnic and multicultural organisations across Victoria since 1974. For over 40 years, we have been the link between multicultural communities, government and the wider community. ECCV has a strong history in advocating for the rights of Victoria's multicultural communities.

ECCV welcomes the opportunity to comment on Safe Haven Enterprise visa (SHEV) matters as raised by our members in Victoria to be included in the discussion at the Department of Immigration and Border Protection forum.

- ECCV members are generally concerned about the temporary nature of protection afforded by SHEV which offers little security and ability for individuals to plan their future.
- Compounding the nature of SHEV are the conditions of the SHEV which include work in a regional location or enrolled to study full time. Considerable barriers to secure employment and / or education are English language proficiency and employment availability in the regional location.
- SHEV applicants are forced to move from regional areas back to metropolitan areas to access support and services when their attempt to settle in the regional areas is unsuccessful. Specific factors which affect successful settlement are:
  1. There is lack of support services for people on SHEV pathways and;
  2. Lack of information and understanding on the SHEV and asylum seeker visas among regional communities, employers and services.
- The application process and approval times are lengthy with potential negative impacts:

Service provider feedback is that asylum seekers who have applied for SHEV are hoping that they will have a positive visa outcome and are already making their move to the regional areas. They often find employment in the regional areas before the outcome of their SHEV application is processed. These applications take lengthy time to process and some of them have negative

outcomes. The applicants who have already moved to the regional areas end up with very little support in these situations.

- Confusion over post codes:

Some of the post codes where the actual employment occurs are not included in SHEV. For example: The City of Greater of Bendigo only has a limited number of post codes in the SHEV employment options.

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