

FECCA Log of Claims – 1996 Federal Election Kit

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia FECCA 1996 Federal Election Kit Canberra, 1996, pp.3-7.

For the 1996 Federal Election, FECCA developed a set of claims (along the lines of a trade union "log" made against an employer). In this Log FECCA set out what it wanted the political parties to do after the election. You could try to find out how successful FECCA was - how many claims were adopted or endorsed by the Coalition Parties before the election? How many of those were acted on after the election?

FECCA Log of Claims

Australia is a diverse, multicultural society where a significant number of languages (over 200) are spoken daily and different cultural and religious norms are practiced. However, we have yet to see this diversity reflected in our major institutions or in our political discourse.

It is important that electors be given the opportunity to assess the multicultural policy aspirations of the various parties, as a central element of their vision for Australia's future.

FECCA therefore seeks the following commitments from the various parties:

Multicultural Policy and Programs

Compact

- A commitment to the multicultural compact.
- Supporting a referendum to:
 - 1) amend the constitution to include a preamble which acknowledges the multicultural nature of Australia; and

- 2) amend s44 of the constitution to allow dual citizens to stand for election to the Commonwealth Parliament.

Taxation

- An equitable taxation regime.

Cost: \$50m for referendum and nil expenditure outcomes for more equitable taxation regime.

Civics

- A commitment to ensuring that adequate funding is made available for curriculum development and courses on civics and Australian history that reflect the multicultural reality of Australia; and courses and material in languages other than English for those with poor English literacy.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

Centenary of Federation

- FECCA's constituency actively involved in national, state and local initiatives leading to the centenary of federation.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations

- Our major institutions reflecting the composition of and properly catering for the needs of a diverse multicultural society.

Australian Public Service

- Developing a merit based system that will ensure that all continuing officers of the Australian Public Service be proficient in English and another language by 2030.

Cost: Significant educational infrastructure costs, to be spread over several years and between

Commonwealth and State/Territory governments.

Advisory Function

- Maintaining an effective multicultural policy advisory function in the Prime Minister's portfolio.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

FECCA

- Effective support for FECCA's functions as the national umbrella body for the ethnic sector.

Cost: \$0.15m to be met from existing portfolios allocations.

Participation

- Setting a target of 20% for non-English speaking background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on Commonwealth advisory bodies.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations

Racial Hatred Act

- Amending the Racial Hatred Act 1995 to provide for criminal sanctions as per the 1995 bill.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

Austudy, HECS and Assurance of Support

- (i) Ensure criteria for Austudy and HECS do not discriminate between citizens and non-citizens
- (ii) Remove assurance of support requirements.

In a truly multicultural society all residents should be treated equitably.

Cost: To be costed.

Access and Equity

- Modifying Access and Equity policy, monitoring and implementation to cater for the concerns of all residents of Australia and not just the non-English speaking background population; to encourage the Office of Multicultural Affairs to produce four year work plans on their whole of government Access and Equity implementation and monitoring responsibilities; greater user of ethnicity data in planning and delivery; and involve stakeholders in A&E implementation across all Commonwealth program and service delivery.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

Diverse Service Approaches

- Pursue implementation of diverse service delivery approaches (eg. clustering in nursing homes, ethno-specific programs and services), particularly recognising the need to develop non-metropolitan models of service delivery for rural and remote regions.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

- Commitment to include an ancestry question in the 2001 census, along the lines of the 1986 ancestry question.

Cost: \$1.2m

Landcare Model

- Commitment to the development, organisation and delivery of a community based program that would meet a range of the employment, industrial relations, community relations and community service needs of the ethnic, particularly NESB, population, adapting the Landcare funding model for this purpose.

Cost: \$1m for planning and initial organisational costs; program funding determined in the 1997-98 budget process.

Employment, education and training

Settlement Arrangements

- Modifications to the settlement and labour market programs to provide:

access for partners to skills recognition processes and bridging courses and to English language training for those partners who do not meet the current time limits.

Cost: \$60m over 3 years.

English as a Second Language

- The allocation of funds under the ESL General Support Program from 1997-98 to be on the basis of need rather than total State/Territory NESB population, to enable children to cope with subject materials and upgraded ESL training through the CES to levels which enable people to get jobs rather than to levels which just enable them to cope with training programs.

Cost: \$90m over 3 years.

- ESL programs to be excluded from competitive tendering processes.

Languages other than English

- Trialing of language and vocational training in languages other than English (LOTE) for mature workers not making adequate progress in ESL courses; and work experience for them in workplaces which function extensively in their first language.

Cost: \$10m over three years.

- Trial the provision of recurrent vocational, personal, cultural and social development opportunities for people of NESB, (regardless of their employment status) delivered in LOTES.

Cost: \$10m over three years.

Ethnic Schools

- Increase funding from 1996-97 under the Commonwealth's Community Language Element Program to take account of current student enrolments at ethnic high schools (rather than 1991 enrolment figures)

Cost: \$5m.

- Separate pool of funds be made available for professional development and materials development, beginning with \$1m in 1996-97.

Cost: \$1m.

Outworkers

- Retraining for garment industry outworkers.

Cost: \$100m over three years, including income support.

DEET MLOs

- Increase the number of DEET Migrant Liaison Officers from 51 to 60, with the new allocations targeting rural areas.

Cost: \$0.5m.

CES

- Increase funding to CES for case management to reduce the current case load from 100 to 40 per case manager.

Cost: TBA

Skills Recognition

- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission inquiry into skills recognition and quota processes with emphasis in the first instance on the medical profession.

Cost: To be absorbed within existing portfolio allocations.

Communications

Public Broadcasting

- Increase funding for public broadcasters and establish a new project funding pool for professional development and harnessing new technology.

Cost: \$4.3m per annum.

Health and community services

Commonwealth Funding Agreements

- All Commonwealth funding agreements in the area of health and community services (eg. the Medicare Agreements, the Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement etc.) to include specific access and equity criteria and accountability mechanisms for measuring outcomes for people of NESB.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

Interpreters

- The Medicare Agreements and the agreements which allocate funds to nursing homes (under the Care Aggregate Model) to make specific allocations for interpreters.

Cost: TBA.

Outcomes Standards

- Renewed commitment to the development and monitoring of outcomes standards in the health and community services area and that such standards be refined to acknowledge Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity.

Cost: To be met from existing portfolio allocations.

Ethnic Older Persons Strategy

- Funds allocated to various areas under the Ethnic Older Persons Strategy be at least

maintained.

Cost: Nil.

Nursing Homes

- That a means test be used to determine what costs nursing home residents should pay in preference to allowing homes to charge more than the standard rate for beds in 1 or 2 bed rooms (ward differentials).

Cost: To be absorbed within existing portfolio allocations.

Carers

- The eligibility for carers pension be changed to increase from 42 days to 52 days the amount of respite carers are able to receive annually.
- The eligibility criteria for carers pension be changed to allow recipients to undertake up to 20 hours per week (up from 10 hours per week) employment, education or training.
- The Domiciliary Nursing Care Benefit (DNCB) and Child Disability Allowance be incorporated into a single allowance and increased (from \$28 & \$36 respectively) to at least \$40 per week, indexed to inflation and remain tax and means test free.

Cost: \$23m annually (plus inflation).

Respite

- Increase funding allocated to respite through both the Home and Community Care Program (HACC) and the Commonwealth Respite Program (CRP).
- Increased flexibility and innovation in the allocation of respite funds and the development of more culturally appropriate forms of respite.

Cost: \$90m.

National HIV/Aids strategy

- Continued commitment to the National HIV/Aids Strategy and its focus on people of NESB.

Cost: To be absorbed within existing portfolio allocations.

Interpreters

- Commitment to Industry Commission inquiry into improvements in supply of, access to and funding of interpreter services.

Cost: To be absorbed within existing portfolio allocations.

- National registration scheme for interpreters and translators in collaboration with the states and territories.

Cost: TBA.

Youth

Employment Program

- Pilot for two years a new Youth Employment Partnership Program (YEPP) (as recommended by the Jobs for Young Australians Conference) targeted at ten regions with high levels of youth unemployment (15-24 years). Program to include provision of special assistance for the needs of NESB young people.

Cost: \$45m.

National Strategy

- Development of a National NESB Youth Strategy to ensure the needs of young people of NESB are addressed in a coordinated way.

Cost: To be absorbed within existing portfolio allocations.