



# Fair Work Ombudsman

## Multicultural Access and Equity Action Plan 2023-2025

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# Our Agency

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) is a statutory office created by the Fair Work Act 2009.

The FWO's purpose is to promote harmonious, productive, cooperative and compliant workplace relations in Australia.

The FWO's functions include:

- providing advice and assistance
- promoting and monitoring compliance with workplace laws
- investigating breaches of the law
- taking appropriate enforcement action.

The services of the FWO are free to all workers and employers in Australia.

# Our Plan

Many workplace participants come from multicultural communities. In some cases, they may be vulnerable to exploitation because of a lack of understanding or awareness of their workplace rights and responsibilities.

This Multicultural Access and Equity Action Plan assists the FWO in setting out how it will continue to work with multicultural communities to ensure that both employers and employees from these communities are aware and educated about their workplace rights, entitlements and responsibilities. It will also assist the FWO in continuing to develop accessibility and address any barriers that exist for members of multicultural communities in accessing our services and assistance.

# Our Actions

## Commitment 1: Leadership

Demonstrate a commitment to multicultural access and equity and take responsibility for its implementation.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Relevant Senior Executive Service (SES) sponsor continues to be responsible for the implementation of Multicultural Access & Equity Policy obligations.	Executive Director, Policy Branch	Ongoing	Relevant SES sponsor has oversight of the implementation of this Plan.
Develop the agency's 2023-2025 Multicultural Access & Equity Action Plan.	Policy Branch	Early 2023	Publishing of the FWO's 2023-2025 Multicultural Access and Equity Action Plan in early 2023.
Promote staff awareness of the 2023-2025 Multicultural Access & Equity Action Plan.	Policy Branch	Ongoing	Promoting the Plan with an intranet article, referring to the importance of access and equity, and how it applies to staff members' work at the FWO.  Policy Branch staff continuing to engage across FWO Branches and Teams.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Continue to engage employees and the Executive in the promotion, maintenance and improvement of workplace diversity within the FWO.	People and Internal Communications Branch	Ongoing	The FWO's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is maintained as a key mechanism to promote workplace diversity within the FWO.

## Commitment 2: Engagement

Identify and strategically engage with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) customers, stakeholders and communities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
<p>Continue to work closely with community leaders, businesses, workers and other intermediaries to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- educate and engage multicultural communities about workplace relations and the role of the FWO</li> <li>- promote FWO's advice services, including Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), and</li> <li>- promote and distribute FWO's in-language resources, including education resources, web content and the anonymous reporting tool.</li> </ul>	<p>Policy Branch</p> <p>Enforcement Branches</p> <p>Advice and Education Branch</p> <p>Employer Assistance and Compliance Branch</p> <p>Engagement and Communications Branch</p>	Ongoing	<p>FWO staff are regularly engaging with CALD employers, employees and their intermediaries, and these customers are reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an increased knowledge of Australian workplace laws</li> <li>- an increased understanding of the role of the FWO, and</li> <li>- an increased understanding of the tools and resources FWO has available for CALD customers.</li> </ul>

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
<p>Ensure in-language offerings meet community needs now and into the future, including taking a tailored approach to professionally translated material based on data and projected needs, and reviewing the current in-language offerings.</p>	<p>Advice and Education Branch</p>	<p>2022-2023 (subject to availability of Census data)</p>	<p>Review of languages offered to ensure they are contemporary and future proof.</p>
<p>Continue to maintain and revise (and expand where necessary) web content and other education resources targeted toward CALD employers, employees and their intermediaries, including professionally translated information, resources and the translator plug-in.</p> <p>Continue to promote FWO tools and resources, using in-language communications, including storyboards, and in-language videos. Enhance accessibility across tools and resources, applying findings from research undertaken by FWO relating to priority language groups.</p> <p>Continue to promote FWO's online feedback and complaint mechanisms via the FWO's website and invite feedback from stakeholders on FWO's tools and resources.</p>	<p>Advice and Education Branch</p> <p>Engagement and Communications Branch</p> <p>Policy Branch</p> <p>Corporate Services Branch</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Customers continue to engage with the FWO's in-language content / resources and provide positive feedback to the FWO on the usability / accessibility of these resources.</p> <p>Translation of online materials is undertaken in line with the FWO's Translation Policy.</p> <p>Feedback is being used for business improvement to improve and enhance FWO services, products and operations.</p>

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Where appropriate, utilise multicultural communication channels and in-language communications to promote key FWO messages.	Engagement and Communications Branch	Ongoing	An average of one media release per month is translated and provided to relevant multicultural media outlets, promoting FWO activities and in-language resources.  Two (or more) targeted activities per year that focus on marketing information / resources in-language.
Continue to maintain and utilise in-language channels for customers to contact the FWO.	Advice and Education Branch  Enforcement Branch  Analytics and Intelligence Branch	Ongoing	TIS and the in-language anonymous report service are maintained for customers to contact the FWO.  FWO staff and CALD customers are utilising these services effectively.

### Commitment 3: Responsiveness

Strategies are in place to ensure that policies, programmes, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are responsive to CALD customers.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Maintain an internal Translation Policy to manage the updating and creation of translated content and resources.	Advice and Education Branch	Translation Policy reviewed and updated (October 2022).	Translation Policy is utilised by FWO staff.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Continue to guide staff to explore ways to ensure procurement incorporates costs of language and translation services or other services to remove barriers to multicultural customers.	Corporate Services Branch	Ongoing	Procurement Guide is utilised by staff.
Maintain internal guidance for use of interpreter services.	Advice and Education Branch  Legal and Specialist Advice Branch	Ongoing	FWO frontline staff are aware of guidance documents relating to use of interpreter services.

#### Commitment 4: Performance

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Seek feedback from multicultural communities and key intermediaries	Advice and Education Branch  Engagement and Communications Branch	Ongoing	Customers are reporting that FWO programs and resources are effectively meeting their needs.  Feedback is being used to improve and enhance FWO services, products and operations.



## Commitment 5: Capability

Understand, and have the capacity to respond to, the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia’s population.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
<p>Maintain cross-cultural awareness of FWO employees by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing appropriate learning opportunities for staff to build their cultural awareness, and</li> <li>- regularly sharing insights gained from engagement with multicultural communities</li> </ul>	<p>People and Internal Communications Branch</p> <p>Engagement and Communications Branch</p>	Ongoing	<p>Insights and trends gained from engagement with multicultural communities are regularly shared with FWO staff via internal communications.</p>
<p>Build cultural and linguistic diversity through recruitment and retention of staff from CALD backgrounds in accordance with the FWO Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.</p> <p>Support and actively maintain and utilise a register of linguistically diverse FWO staff, including those that are accredited with the National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).</p> <p>Recognise and retain FWO staff from CALD backgrounds by supporting access to the Community Language Allowance (CLA) and Cultural Leave provisions in</p>	<p>People and Internal Communications Branch</p>	Ongoing	<p>Encourage the recruitment and retention of staff from CALD backgrounds.</p> <p>FWO staff with diversity and personal language skills are known and provide appropriate assistance across the agency. This includes assistance with legal proceedings (for example, records of interview, affidavit evidence, witness preparation and understanding of court proceedings).</p> <p>FWO staff from CALD backgrounds access the CLA and Cultural leave provisions.</p>

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
accordance with the FWO Enterprise Agreement.			
Capture, promote and use internal and external data about multicultural customers (as permitted and appropriate)	Analytics and Intelligence Branch People and Internal Communications Branch Advice and Education Branch Engagement and Communications Branch	Ongoing	FWO is able to provide accurate data on our CALD clients to internal and external stakeholders.  Data is regularly shared across the agency.
Recognise events and occasions that celebrate cultural diversity, such as Harmony Day.	People and Internal Communications Branch	Ongoing	Agency wide participation and recognition of cultural events.

## Commitment 6: Openness

Be transparent in the implementation of multicultural access and equity.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Report on the Multicultural Access & Equity Action Plan and assess against targets as required.	Policy Branch	Internal reporting against the Plan in or around September each year.	FWO meets Australian Government requirements for multicultural access and equity.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
		Where required/requested, reporting to the Department of Home Affairs	
Publish Multicultural Access & Equity Action Plan on the FWO website.	Policy Branch Advice and Education Branch	2023-2025 Plan will be publicly available on the FWO website in early 2023.	The most current version of the Plan is maintained on the website and updates are made, as required.

# Contact

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