



refugee council of australia
annual report 2006-2007

contents



Photo: UNHCR/E. Kanelstein

Refugees return to Sierra Leone from Liberia in a UNHCR convoy. More than 280,000 Sierra Leoneans have returned since the country's 10-year civil war ended in 2000.

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acknowledgements

The Refugee Council would like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organisations and individuals for the work of the Council during 2006-2007:

- ACL
- Actors for Refugees
- Alumni Travel
- AMES Victoria
- Amnesty International Australia
- Arnold Zable
- Australian Catholic University
- Australian Council for International Development
- Australian National Maritime Museum
- Australian Refugee Foundation
- Australian Theatre for Young People
- Caritas Australia
- City of Sydney
- Claudia Karvan
- Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW
- Connect Infobahn Australia
- Department of Human Services (Federal)
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Ecumenical Migration Centre
- Inari Kiuri
- Jesuit Refugee Service Australia
- Khao Do
- Kate Durham
- Leichhardt Council
- Mallesons Stephen Jaques
- Multicultural Arts Victoria
- National Council of Churches in Australia
- Oxfam Australia
- Reichstein Foundation
- Sarah and Baillieu Myer Family Foundation
- Steve Thomas
- Timothy Seeto
- Tobys Estate Coffee and Tea
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Regional Office, Canberra
- University of Sydney
- University of NSW
- Victorian Multicultural Commission

president's report

When the 2006-07 year began, the Board of the Refugee Council of Australia was looking forward to a year of renewal and growth. In the previous year, the organisation had undertaken a strategic planning process to ensure that, as the 25th anniversary of RCOA's foundation approached, it remained a relevant and vital advocate for refugees and asylum seekers. In May 2006, Paul Power was appointed as Chief Executive Officer, to lead the organisation's renewal.

The Board's high expectations for 2006-07 were exceeded. In 12 months, the changes within RCOA have included:

- new offices in both Sydney and Melbourne;
- the appointment of the organisation's first National Policy Director, to increase our capacity for research and policy development;
- a new organisational logo and new format for RCOA publications;
- the launch of a popular email bulletin, now being distributed monthly to more than 2000 supporters across Australia; and
- a 60 per cent increase in membership – a clear sign that our supporters are impressed by what the revitalised Refugee Council is doing.

Our aim has been to strengthen our role as a national umbrella body for organisations and individuals who work with and for refugees. We are working hard to ensure that we remain a member-focused and consultative organisation.

Our commitment to this approach was well illustrated by the impressive effort put in by our staff in conducting consultations for our annual submission on the Refugee and Humanitarian Intake. Between October and January, 35 public consultations were held in 14 cities around Australia, with more than 170 organisations contributing to the process. The 70-page submission was our most comprehensive to date, with 96 recommendations across 25 policy areas. It was pleasing, when the Federal Budget was announced in May, to note that the Government responded to some of the issues raised by the community sector in



Photo: UNHCR/B. Heger

Fetching water at a borehole in Aisha refugee camp, Ethiopia.

its \$202.9 million package of additional settlement services.

When the 2006-07 year began, agencies working on refugee issues, including RCOA, were working hard to raise their concerns about the Migration Amendment (Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill. The withdrawal of the Bill in August, in the face of opposition within the Government's ranks, was a highly significant advocacy victory for the sector. During the year, the Council prepared submissions and raised concerns about the impacts on refugees of the new citizenship legislation, to no avail. We and others enjoyed more success, however, in suggesting amendments to the Government's proposals for changes to the Special Humanitarian Program. The proposer support system to be introduced in 2008 has been designed with significant community involvement.

The Council built on its constructive working relationship with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. While we disagree with significant aspects of Government policy on asylum matters, we maintain a respectful dialogue which enables us to outline the case for change and to work together more closely where

opportunities for change develop. The year saw continued progress by the Department on its process of cultural change, a process we are keen to see continue.

Our role in connecting Australian NGOs with international partners was enhanced during the year. RCOA's relationship with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is as strong as ever. In November, we were delighted to host UNHCR's Head of Resettlement, Vincent Cochetel, at our Annual General Meeting at NSW Parliament House in a forum on Australia's role in refugee resettlement.

This annual report outlines some of the many activities and achievements of our organisation in 2006-07. None of this could have been achieved without the tireless efforts of our staff – Paul Power, Carolina Gottardo, Annette McKail, Jacki Whitwell, Martyn Green, Marwah Evans and Lydia Ho. During the year, they have been supported by an enthusiastic team of volunteers and interns.

As president, I have greatly appreciated the support of my fellow Board members who have all in various ways despite their own heavy individual

about RCOA

workloads committed time and brought wisdom to our collective decision-making. During the year, we farewelled two Board members – Dr Nouria Salehi, who gave 12 years dedicated service to the organisation, and James Chol, who has returned to Southern Sudan to work in the rebuilding of the country. We were pleased to welcome Lionel Conyer as our new Treasurer and Fr John Murphy as a Board member.

After the 2006-07 year closed, all associated with the Council were saddened to hear of the passing of the person who was the driving force in the foundation of our organisation, Major General Paul Cullen. His death in September 2007 at the age of 98 drew to a close a life of extraordinary service, in the military, in business and in countless humanitarian organisations. Paul Cullen served the needs of refugees for more than six decades, through the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, through Austcare (which he founded in 1967) and through RCOA. He served as our organisation's President for its first nine years, as a Board member for 13 years and as a Life Member since then. Paul Cullen's tenacity and dedication will remain an inspiration for many years to come.

On a personal note, I would like to single out Paul Power and Carolina Gottardo for special mention. Paul, since his appointment last year, has earned the respect of the sector for his dedication and commitment to refugee issues. I greatly value the manner in which he has managed the multiplicity of issues which have arisen over the past year. We were fortunate to have Carolina as our first National Policy Director for a year before family commitments took her back to the UK. In that time her intellectual force, her dynamism and her humanity had a significant positive impact on the work of the Council and how the Council is viewed in the broader community sector.

On behalf of the Board and the Council I look forward to the coming year and the challenges and opportunities it will present.

*John Gibson
President*

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is a national, not-for-profit organisation with over 230 organisational and individual members. Formed in November 1981, RCOA's aim is to promote the adoption of flexible, humane and constructive policies towards refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons by the Australian and other Governments and their communities.

To achieve this aim, the Council has a number of key objectives which are to:

- act as a unifying organisation and general representative for its members;
- present the case on matters relating to refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons as strongly as possible, wherever appropriate;
- increase public awareness and media sensitivity towards refugee needs;
- build the capacity of the refugee sector; and
- build an effective and respected national organisation.

The priority activities for RCOA are set by its members, as represented by an elected Board. They centre on conducting research, policy analysis, advocacy, training and community education. We are funded through membership fees, by project grants, by trusts and foundations, by undertaking consultancies and through donations.

The Council works to further the interests of over 230 members who themselves are involved in the full spectrum of work with refugees, from assisting refugees in countries of first asylum and when they repatriate to their homelands, to providing settlement support to refugees in Australia and providing protection and legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers.

We maintain close ties to many international organisations including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and refugee councils in other countries. The Council is also engaged in regular dialogue with federal and state government departments, in particular the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and with bodies such as the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT), the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).



A young Somalilander refugee on the move in eastern Ethiopia.

Photo: UNHCR/B. Heger

RCOA's people

Executive Committee

President

John Gibson, BA(Hons), B.Juris, LLB(Hons), LLB LLM(Lond)
Barrister at Law
Principal, International Refugee Consulting

Vice President

Professor William Maley AM PhD
Barrister-at-Law
Director, Asia Pacific College of Diplomacy
Australian National University

Chairperson

Barbara Young AO BA (Hons) in Sociology
Director, Austcare Board,
Chairperson of the Austcare Project Advisory Committee

Immediate Past President

David Bitel BA (Hons), LLB
Secretary General, International Commission of Jurists (Australian Division)

Hon. Secretary

Esta Paschalidis-Chilas BSW
Consultant

Hon. Treasurer (from November 2006)

Lionel Conyer BCom CA LLB MBL
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia

Executive Committee members

Maureen Adamson
Individual RCOA member, Hobart
Elizabeth Biok BA (Hons), Dip Ed, DipLaw
Solicitor, Legal Aid Commission of NSW
Member, International Commission of Jurists

James Chol (until June 2007)
African Settlement Officer, Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau
Former President, Australian Southern Sudanese Support Group Inc

Sky de Jersey BA MA
Program Manager, Timor and Indonesia, Austcare

Kevin Liston BPh (Lateran University, Rome).
Director, Australian Refugee Association

David Manne BA LLB
Solicitor, Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre

Grant Mitchell BA MSA (Stockholm)
Grad Dip (Refugee Studies)
Director, Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project

Rev Monsignor John Murphy OAM (from November 2006)
Director, Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office

Dr Nouria Salehi OAM PhD (until November 2006)
Specialist in Nuclear Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne
Treasurer, Ecumenical Migration Centre

Jenny Semple BA GradDipMgt
Director, South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre

Staff

Chief Executive Officer

Paul Power MA (Hons)

National Policy Director

Carolina Gottardo BEc BLaw MSc (from July 2006 to July 2007)

Anna Samson BEc(SocSc) (Hons) LLB (Hons) AMusA (from July 2007)

Research and Policy Officers

Annette McKail BA Grad Dip (Social Work)

Jacki Whitwell RN BA

Project Officer

Lydia Ho BA MISD (February to June 2007)

Accounting Officer

Martyn Green BEc FACPA

Administrative Officer

Marwah Evans BLibStud (Hons) MA (until August 2007)

Consultants

Camille Moldrich, Payroll

Sylvia Winton BSW, Research (until July 2007)

Volunteers and Interns

Andrew Corkhill

Katy Davies

Sayed Fadel

Laura Goodrich

Diana Hanaor

Jan Ho

Imdad Imam

Ian Mallett

Verona Manuel

Sophie Mast

Madelena Minutillo

Emma Nicholson

Sherona Parkinson

Maria Puoy

Julia Roy

Madeleine Selwyn

Dung Vu

Eileen Wahab



Dr Nouria Salehi, who stepped down from the RCOA Board in 2006 after 12 years' service, with vice-president Professor William Maley (left) and president John Gibson.

Vale Major General Paul Cullen (1909 – 2007)



Photo: UNHCR/A. Diamond

Major General Paul Cullen receiving the Nansen Medal from Poul Hartling, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in Geneva, Switzerland in October 1981.

The founder and first President of RCOA, Major General Paul Cullen AC CBE DSO ED, died in Sydney at the age of 98 on September 19, 2007.

An outstanding humanitarian who gave decades of tireless service to disadvantaged people nationally and internationally, Paul Cullen was a driving force in many organisations. He was a founder of Austcare and served as the organisation's president from 1970 to 1990. He also served terms as president of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Australian Overseas Disaster Response Organisation, Royal Blind Society of NSW, Australian National Council of and for the Blind and the Australian Jewish Welfare Society.

He led the movement to form the Refugee Council of Australia in November 1981 and served as President of the Council until 1990, remaining on the Council's Executive Committee until 1994. He became the Refugee Council's first Life Member.

In 1981, Paul Cullen was honoured by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with the Nansen Medal for his international work with refugees. In 1983, he was awarded the RSL ANZAC Peace Prize.

Major General Cullen had a distinguished military career, serving for 39 years in the militia, second AIF and CMF. He was decorated for his service and leadership in World War II in Crete, North Africa, Greece and Papua New Guinea. A keen businessman, he founded Festival Records and established Australia's first supermarket, merchant bank and was a pioneer of agricultural development in the Northern Territory.

The life and contributions of Major General Paul Cullen were remembered at a memorial service at Sydney's Victoria Barracks on September 26.

Board and staff changes

The Council welcomed two new members to our Board in 2006-07 – Fr John Murphy, Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, and Lionel Conyer, who joined the Board as Treasurer. After 12 years of participation on our Board, the Council farewellled Dr Nouria Salehi, who did seek re-election at the November 2006 Annual General Meeting. Nouria has dedicated much of her life to assisting Afghan refugees in Australia and supporting rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, with a particular focus on the support of Afghan women. In June 2007, the Board received the resignation of James Chol, African Settlement Officer of Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau, who had served for four years on the Board.

James has returned to his country of birth to work as an adviser to the new Government of Southern Sudan.

2006-07 saw a few changes for the staff at the Council. Jacki Whitwell went on maternity leave in November in preparation for the birth of her second child and Lydia Ho returned on a part-time basis in January to manage the Good Practice Guide project and assist with other work in our Sydney office. In July 2007, the Council was sad to say goodbye to our National Policy Director, Carolina Gottardo who returned to the UK with husband Chris for the birth of their first child. We also welcomed our new National Policy Director, Anna Samson.

New offices in Sydney and Melbourne

During 2006-07, the Refugee Council moved offices in both Sydney and Melbourne, to provide additional space for interns and volunteers. After seven years in Glebe, the Council's Sydney office moved in October to an office suite in Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills bought for the Council's use by the Australian Refugee Foundation. The Melbourne office moved in March from the Ecumenical Migration Centre in Fitzroy to a larger space within the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH) in Carlton.



RCOA's Sydney staff in June 2007, (from left) Paul Power, Marwah Evans, Carolina Gottardo, Lydia Ho and Martyn Green.

research, representation and advocacy

The core work of RCOA

is its national research, policy development, formal representation of its members and advocacy on refugee issues. During 2006-07, this work included regular consultations across Australia, research projects, submissions and formal and informal meetings with key decision-makers.

2007-08 Intake Submission

Formulating our annual submission to the Minister for Immigration on the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program (Intake Submission), Council staff consulted broadly with our members, community agencies working with refugees and refugee communities. A total of 170 organisations, drawn from every state and territory, participated in our consultation process. In addition to presenting our recommendations on the size and composition of the program, the submission highlights views of the community sector regarding settlement services, health, employment, education, housing, offshore processing, detention issues and community-based asylum seekers.

While continuing to highlight the positive elements of Australia's settlement program, the Council believes it is important to reiterate our concerns regarding aspects of our onshore program that fall short of our international obligations. The intake submission provided us with a unique opportunity to raise issues of concern relating to asylum seekers, detention issues, offshore processing and the continued impact of temporary visas for recognised refugees.

Through undertaking such an extensive consultative process, the Council is able to gain new insight each year into emerging issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers and the agencies that support them. Looking forward to the 2007-08 program year, the Council made 96 different recommendations and highlighted eight priority areas for urgent consideration by policy makers which included family reunion, temporary protection and temporary



UNHCR's Head of Resettlement, Vincent Cochetel (right), who was guest speaker at RCOA's 2006 Annual General Meeting at NSW Parliament House, with RCOA board member Kevin Liston, Kerrin Benson of Multicultural Development Association and Associate Professor Mary Crock of University of Sydney's Law Faculty.

humanitarian visas, secondary movement, migration advice, visa conditions, access to health care, housing and education for young people.

The Council was pleased to note that some of the community concerns expressed in the Intake Submission were addressed by substantial increases in funding to refugee settlement services (\$202.9 million over four years) in the 2007-08 Federal Budget announced in May. New measures included greater assistance for young refugees with English language learning, improved support for refugees with complex needs, additional financial support to refugees immediately on arrival in Australia, increased funding for torture and trauma services and a new system of support for Special Humanitarian Program proposers.

The Council would like to thank the many hundreds of individuals and organisations that provided their time and expertise in assisting us with formulating the submission and we will continue to advocate for positive changes to Australia's refugee program.

National teleconferences

RCOA hosts two bi-monthly teleconferences to enable member organisations and key partners from across Australia to share information

and work together on issues of common concern.

The Policy Teleconference brings key individuals and agencies together to discuss current policy and legislative issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers. This teleconference has a number of standing agenda items relating to protection issues, onshore refugee status determination procedures, detention issues and concerns facing community-based asylum seekers. The information shared is a valuable source of information for RCOA, informing our advocacy work with government and creating opportunities for us to work together with other agencies on advocacy strategies.

The Settlement Teleconference serves more as a national discussion forum, bringing people together to discuss common issues and share information about innovative approaches to refugee settlement. During the past year, the teleconferences have focused on thematic areas including:

- refugees and the justice system;
- rural and regional settlement;
- Australia's Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program;
- refugee young people;
- migration advice for Special Humanitarian Program applicants.

Dialogue with government

Together with other key agencies concerned with refugees and asylum seekers, RCOA continued to be an active participant in formal bi-annual consultations with senior DIAC officials during 2006-07. The DIAC-NGO consultations cover issues relating to humanitarian settlement, onshore protection issues, detention related issues and areas of policy and practice affecting refugees and asylum seekers. In addition to sharing relevant statistics and settlement trends, the consultations provide an opportunity for agencies to raise issues of concern directly with senior DIAC personnel.

During the year, RCOA participated in numerous formal meetings with DIAC on a variety of issues relating to refugee settlement, asylum seekers and immigration detention. We also participated in formal dialogue on human rights issues with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Attorney-General's Department. Issues of concern to RCOA's membership were also taken up through many individual meetings, discussions and correspondence with Federal and State government officials and political representatives.

DIAC Good Practice Guide

In January 2007, Council staff began work for DIAC on the "Humanitarian Settlement: A Good Practice Guide" project which aimed to profile some of Australia's most successful and innovative settlement projects. In researching the projects for inclusion in the Guide, Council staff met with a broad range of community groups and agencies across the country working with refugees at various stages of settlement. Staff also met with refugees exploring the ways in which different settlement projects have benefited them and their communities. Due for publication in 2008, the Guide will highlight 29 projects that focus on employment, education, youth and families, cross-cultural training, community education, health and recreation.

Research on travel loans

Throughout 2007, the Council is conducting research to explore the effects of the costs of travel to Australia for proposers and Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) entrants. Supported by the Reichstein Foundation, the project looks at the experiences of refugee communities in Victoria, to gain a deeper insight into how travel for SHP entrants is being funded, how loans are being repaid and the impacts of loan repayments on

settlement outcomes. This research will also highlight the various travel loans available to SHP entrants.

Submissions

Each year, the Council's many submissions and responses to proposed legislation support the ongoing advocacy work that we do on behalf of refugee communities and our members. In August 2006, after extensive lobbying by the Council and other agencies the Government's Migration Amendment (Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill was withdrawn following objections voiced by a number of Government backbenchers. If passed, the Bill would have further eroded the rights of people seeking protection from persecution.

In November 2006 and again in July this year, the Council made submissions to the Australian Government in response to proposed changes to citizenship legislation and the introduction of the Citizenship Test. Our views have been reflected by the many voices of opposition to aspects of these changes and in particular, the ways in which the new legislation disadvantages refugees wishing to become Australian citizens.

In November last year, DIAC also invited submissions from the sector on a number changes to the Special



Volunteer tutor Ashleigh Davis (right) and students (from left) Adau Pager, Jean-Pierre Ntunzweninama, Enkelieda Marku and Matilda Marku participate in Australian Refugee Association's Homework Clubs project in Adelaide, one of 29 projects nominated for a Good Practice Guide for refugee settlement.

research, representation and advocacy

Humanitarian Program, in particular changes to the proposer support system and the introduction of Complex Case Support. In addition to making a submission, the Council also consulted broadly within the sector about these changes and their potential to impact settlement outcomes for proposers and entrants. At the request of DIAC, the Council coordinated a series of consultations and focus groups with interested parties to discuss some of these practical outcomes and we remain engaged in dialogue with DIAC to ensure these changes will produce positive outcomes.

Asylum issues

In addition to formal research projects, the Council maintains a 'watching brief' on a number of important policy issues regarding immigration detention, asylum seekers, processing issues and a broad range of settlement issues.

While domestic detention issues affecting asylum seekers have largely gone from the front page, the same cannot be said for those affected by offshore detention. In 2006-07, the failings of the Government's "Pacific

Solution" were brought into sharp focus once more with the interception of 83 Sri Lankan and eight Burmese asylum seekers. Despite significant improvements made in relation to onshore detention, the Council raised serious concerns during the year about ongoing problems associated with offshore policies, such as the transfer of asylum seekers from Christmas Island to Nauru and the subsequent denial of legal assistance to the group. Asylum seekers detained on Nauru are also denied the right to independent review of immigration decisions and other basic safeguards afforded to those who lodge claims onshore.

Following calls from the Refugee Council and many other organisations, the Australian Government announced the decision in May this year to resettle Afghani and Iraqi asylum seekers stranded in Indonesia for the past five years. The group of 240 was turned back in 2001 and 2002 while trying to reach Australian shores and despite the Australian Government taking this positive step, resettlement places were only offered to half the group. The Refugee Council has continued to

advocate for the resettlement of the entire group to Australia.

In terms of onshore asylum issues, the Council has remained actively involved in discussions on DIAC's Community Care Pilot which aims to provide alternative care arrangements in the community for vulnerable, long-term detainees. The pilot is operating through a number of non-government agencies headed by the Australian Red Cross. Issues affecting asylum seekers living in the community on Bridging Visa E also remained high on the agenda for the Council during 2006-07. Together with other agencies, the Council actively participated in DIAC's Bridging Visa Review which provided another opportunity to highlight some of the key problems such as the 45-day rule, lack of work rights and access to Medicare. The Council also remains actively involved in the Right to Work Campaign calling for a reversal of the 1997 legislation which prevents asylum seekers who do not lodge applications within 45 days of arrival from accessing work rights and Medicare.



Asylum seekers being brought to Christmas Island in August 2006 by members of the Australian Navy after interception in the Indian Ocean. RCOA continues to lobby for an end to Australia's offshore detention system for asylum seekers who arrive by boat.

international links

As the national umbrella body for Australian NGOs working with refugees, RCOA has an important role in building links with NGOs, inter-governmental organisations and government bodies from around the world. During 2006-07, RCOA participated in key international meetings hosted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), particularly its annual NGO Consultations, Executive Committee and Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement.

In March 2007, RCOA became a member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), a Geneva-based global network of NGOs focused on humanitarian and refugee issues. ICVA plays an important role in coordinating NGO contact with UNHCR. During the year, RCOA's CEO Paul Power attended meetings of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles and the International Detention Coalition.

UNHCR Executive Committee and NGO Consultations

Each year, the Refugee Council joins other Australian NGOs and Australian Government representatives in attending the meeting of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Executive Committee (UNHCR ExCom) in Geneva. The meetings that take place provide a unique opportunity to discuss key issues affecting refugees worldwide and aspects of UNHCR's global operations. NGOs from 172 countries participate in consultations which occur in the lead up to ExCom, providing an opportunity to further develop our international links and highlight issues of common concern.

Attended by CEO Paul Power and President, John Gibson, the 57th Session of the UNHCR ExCom in October 2006 focused on issues including:

- the asylum/migration nexus and the relationship between migration management, border protection and international protection;
- the passing of the Conclusion on Women and Girls At Risk which will



Tenneh Kpaka, a member of the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women, addresses UNHCR's Executive Committee meeting in Geneva in October 2006 on behalf of the world's non-government organisations.

act as an operational tool improving efforts to address the needs of women and girls and in particular address issues of rape and gender-based violence. This Conclusion has been driven by continued advocacy from Dr Eileen Pittaway, Linda Bartolomei and the team from the Centre for Refugee Research of the University of NSW;

- the Conclusion on Identification, Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness and Protection of Stateless Persons was also passed. This Conclusion calls on states to act in greater cooperation with UNHCR in adopting legal safeguards to protect some 11 million stateless persons worldwide;
- Durable Solutions for refugees in protracted situations, particularly in Africa and Asia; and
- UN reform and UNHCR's increased mandate in relation to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

In preparation for the 2007 UNHCR NGO Consultations and ExCom meetings, the Council has been closely engaged with Australian NGOs to plan and maximise opportunities for involvement in the consultations. The Council has been raising support to send two refugee community representatives to the meetings. Financial support has come from Oxfam Australia, Caritas Australia, the Australian Council for International

Development, National Council of Churches in Australia, Jesuit Refugee Service Australia and Amnesty International Australia.

UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement

Another key international forum in which the Council participates is the UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR), held in Geneva in June. Attended by government and NGO delegates from 22 countries, the key themes discussed in 2007 included:

- the further entrenching of protracted refugee situations;
- UNHCR's struggle to build capacity to refer people for resettlement;
- the situation in Iraq;
- the challenge of managing the impacts of resettlement for those left behind in camps; and
- the use of integration potential criteria by some governments.

While the ATCR is a productive forum for discussing issues of high relevance to resettlement in Australia, there is always room for enhanced involvement from the community sector. In preparation for ATCR in 2008, the Refugee Council hopes to gather greater information from the NGOs in Australia and showcase some of the valuable thinking and resettlement resources we offer.

information and community education

RCOA furthered its work of increasing public awareness of refugee issues during 2006-07 through a variety of public events, through the publication of newsletters and email bulletins, an active website and involvement with national and local media.

Refugee Week – October 2006 and June 2007

Refugee Week was celebrated twice in the 2006-07 year – the 2006 celebration in October and the 2007 celebration in June. The shift from October to June occurred to bring the Australian celebration of Refugee Week into line with World Refugee Day (June 20). Both celebrations of Refugee Week were highly successful.

In 2006, RCOA played a key role in coordinating Refugee Week in Victoria and NSW, with the theme being "Journeys". The Victorian launch at Melbourne University's Carillo Gantner Theatre featured a performance of "Amal's Journey" by the Actors for Refugees group and hosted by Arnold Zable. A keynote speech was given by Julian Burnside QC. In NSW, Refugee Week was launched at the Australian National Maritime Museum by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Councillor Clover Moore MP. Focusing on the journeys of refugees, the event featured the personal story of Sierra Leonean refugee Fatmata Bangura and performances of drama and dance.

In 2007, Refugee Week was bigger than ever, with more than 130 events held across Australia around the theme "The Voices of Young Refugees". RCOA coordinated national promotion of the Week's events, as well as the Sydney and Melbourne launches. The Sydney launch, held at the Australian Theatre for Young People, featured filmmaker Khoa Do, young artist Behista Joya and music from performers born in Liberia, Iraq and Sudan. The Victorian launch was held as part of the Emerge Festival, hosted by Multicultural Arts Victoria at Fitzroy Town Hall.

The Refugee Week posters featured the artwork of Kate Durham (2006) and



A Sudanese drumming group from Delany College, Granville performs at the NSW launch of Refugee Week 2007 at the Australian Theatre for Young People, Sydney.

Inari Kiuri (2007). RCOA appreciates the financial support given to Refugee Week by Victorian Multicultural Commission, AMES Victoria, NSW Community Relations Commission, ACL, Mallesons Stephen Jaques, City of Sydney and Leichhardt Council.

Refugee Welcome Zones

RCOA's Refugee Welcome Zone initiative continues to grow with 63 local government areas across the country publicly declaring their support for refugees and asylum seekers. Becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone is not only an important symbolic step, but also provides an opportunity for local government to become directly involved in the practical support of refugees and asylum seekers. The most recent Councils to join the initiative have been Surf Coast Shire Council (Victoria), Lismore City Council (NSW) and two Councils with the same name – Campbelltown City Council (NSW and SA).

Publications, website and media

With the support of the Sarah and Baillieu Myer Family Foundation, RCOA boosted its efforts to improve national information on refugee issues to members and a broad range of community supporters. A key strategy

was the launch of a new monthly email bulletin, which gives an overview of current issues, coming events, new publications and sources of information and a summary of refugee issues in the press. This bulletin, distributed free, has been well received and is now distributed to more than 2000 people across Australia.

RCOA's website continues to be an important source of information on refugee matters. Updated every week, it offers information on the national refugee program, key issues of concern, volunteering opportunities, coming events, links to member agencies, RCOA's submissions, media releases and publications. During the year, the site was visited by more than 70,000 people from across Australia and around the world.

As a national voice for its membership, RCOA regularly takes up issues through the media. In 2006-07, the organisation issued 18 national media releases and handled hundreds of media interviews and enquiries on a diverse range of issues, including refugee resettlement matters, citizenship, government legislation and initiatives, asylum seeker issues, Australia's offshore processing of asylum claims, multiculturalism, racism and the contribution to Australia of refugees and humanitarian migrants.

support for our work

As a small not-for-profit organisation with no source of core funding, RCOA has to rely on support from a diverse range of sources to maintain its work. In 2006-07, our income came from:

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|-----|
| Australian Refugee Foundation | \$102,742 | 28% |
| Department of Immigration contracts | \$89,990 | 25% |
| Grants from non-government sources | \$82,767 | 23% |
| State government grants (Refugee Week) | \$37,500 | 10% |
| Public donations | \$24,818 | 7% |
| Training and consultancies | \$13,346 | 4% |
| Membership fees | \$12,950 | 4% |
| Interest | \$893 | - |
| TOTAL | \$365,006 | |

The Australian Refugee Foundation

The Australian Refugee Foundation was established in 1997 to support the work of the Refugee Council and to build the organisation's capacity to act as an independent voice for refugees. The Foundation's aim is to secure and manage funds so as to maximise the long-term benefits to the Refugee Council and is accomplished under the supervision of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees are James Altman, David Bitel, Lionel Conyer, John Gibson, Valerie Grogan AM and Barbara Young

AO. The Patrons of the Australian Refugee Foundation are the Rt Hon Sir Zelman Cowan AK GCMG GCVO and the Rt Hon Malcolm Fraser AC CH.

The Australian Refugee Foundation is registered with the Australian Taxation Office as a charitable organisation and gifts of \$2 and over are tax deductible. Members and friends of the Council are encouraged to remember the Foundation when considering donations and when making plans for wills and bequests. Further information about the Australian Refugee Foundation can be obtained from the Refugee Council.

Grants and contracts

The main grants received by RCOA during 2006-07 were from the Reichstein Foundation (\$30,000), Sarah and Baillieu Myer Family Foundation (\$30,000), Victorian Multicultural Commission (\$15,000 for Refugee Week 2006 and \$20,000 for Refugee Week 2007) and AMES Victoria (\$10,000). RCOA's contracts with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship were for the 2007-08 Intake Submission (\$45,000) and the Good Practice Guide (\$44,900).

Donations, memberships and consultancies

Donations, memberships and consultancy fees provided \$51,114 in income for RCOA in 2006-07. Continued public financial support is vital to the organisation maintaining its role and independence. Tax-deductible donations to the Council, or through the Australian Refugee Foundation, are always gratefully received. For more information about donations, contact our Sydney or Melbourne offices or visit our website – www.refugeecouncil.org.au



Photo: UNHCR/B. Bannan

Refugees are moved to the Hagadera refugee camp after flooding created havoc in the Dadaab refugee complex in north-eastern Kenya in November 2006

our members

The 2006-07 year saw the largest annual increase in membership of the Refugee Council of Australia in the organisation's 26-year history. The number of organisational members increased by 25 and individual memberships by 64 to take total membership to 234. As at June 30, 2007, RCOA had 96 organisational members and 138 individual members (including four honorary life members).

During 2006, RCOA introduced a new membership fee structure for organisations, scaled according to organisational income and expenditure. Fees range from \$55 per year (for organisations with annual income under \$100,000) to \$440 per year (for organisations with income over \$5 million). Individual memberships remained at \$55, with a concession rate of \$27.50 for people out of the paid workforce.

Members are a vital part of the organisation. They elect RCOA's Executive Committee and have direct input into the organisation's priorities. In this annual report, we give a brief snapshot of some of the organisations and individuals which make up our membership.

RCOA Members

Austcare

Locked Bag 5515, Camperdown
NSW 1450
Phone: (02) 9565 9111
Email: info@austcare.org.au
Website: <http://www.austcare.org.au/>
CEO: Major General Mike Smith AO

Since its inception in 1967, Austcare has managed projects in over 30 countries throughout Asia, the Pacific and the Middle East. With an initial aim of drawing attention to the situation facing refugees around the world, Austcare has also become a leading agency in landmine reduction campaigns and humanitarian assistance around the world.

The Refugee Council's close relationship with Austcare goes back to when Austcare established the Council in 1981 in order to represent the views of refugee communities and agencies working with refugees in Australia. We look forward to future opportunities to

work with Austcare toward our common goals of improving outcomes for refugees and asylum seekers.

Communify Queensland

180 Jubilee Terrace, Bardon QLD 4065
Phone: (07) 3510 2700
Email: info@communify.org.au
Website: <http://www.communify.org.au/>
Manager: Karen Dare

Communify Queensland (formerly the Redhill Paddington Community Centre) has auspiced the Refugee Support Group since 2002. The Refugee Support Group is a network of community volunteers who undertake fund-raising activities and provide practical 'settlement' support to asylum seekers or refugee claimants who are living in the community without income support or access to Medicare. Communify Queensland works closely with the Refugee Claimants Support Centre and became a member of the Refugee Council in 2001.

Anyone wishing to support the work of Communify Queensland can do so by making a financial donation or volunteering to provide much needed assistance to asylum seekers.

Sudanese Online Research Association

PO Box 2105, Little Lonsdale Street,
VIC 8011
Phone: 03 9679 3272
Email: sail@africanoz.com
Website:
<http://sora.akm.net.au/index.php>
Contact: Matthew Albert

Launched in October 2003, the Sudanese Online Research Association (SORA) provides a repository of global research, knowledge and information about people of Sudan and the Sudanese Diaspora. Associated with the UNHCR Kenya Operation, SORA is run entirely by volunteers. SORA provides access to a range of research publications relating to the settlement needs and experiences of refugees from Sudan in Australia and around the world. The website also holds a range of resources and information for service providers, teachers, students and others working with Sudanese refugees including links to images, information

about the varied cultures, history and languages of the Sudanese people.

Joining in June 2007, the Council welcomes SORA as one of our newest members and we look forward to many opportunities to support and promote SORA throughout the sector in Australia.

Diversitat

153 Pakington Street, Geelong West
VIC 3218
Phone: (03) 5221 6044
Email: gmerc@diversitat.org.au
Website: <http://www.diversitat.org.au/>
CEO: Michael Martinez

Beginning as the Geelong Ethnic Communities Council in 1976, Diversitat has enjoyed over 30 years of service to migrant and refugee communities settling in Geelong and surrounding areas. One of the organisation's major undertakings is Pako Festa, the largest multicultural festival staged in Victoria attracting around 100,000 people. The Festa has been running for 25 years and engages both established and emerging communities in a full day of food, dance, music and celebration of our diversity.

Diversitat delivers an extensive range of services to migrant and refugee communities including the Settlement Grants Program, a Multicultural Mental Health Program, Family Support Services for refugee families experiencing difficulties, a Multicultural Problem Gambling Program, PRAISE Volunteer Project and is currently undertaking the Out of Africa Into Soccer Project – aiming to enhance the settlement experience of African refugees through increased participation in sporting activities.

In 2006-07, Diversitat assisted around 3,500 clients from a range of communities. This assistance ranged from providing emergency short-term accommodation for a number of newly-arrived refugees to a program called Experience Counts in Colac, allowing members of the Sudanese community to clock up driving hours in preparation for their probationary licences. To assist refugee children and their parents with homework tasks, Diversitat introduced GREAT – Geelong Refugee Education Assistance Team with volunteers helping to build literacy and numeracy skills.



Young men participate in a cooking class as part of a STTARS life skills program, featured in the SBS-TV documentary "Ayen's Cooking School for African Men".

RCOA was very pleased to welcome Diversitat as a new organisational member in February 2007 and we hope to explore further opportunities to work in support of Diversitat's goals in service provision and advocacy.

STTARS (Adelaide)

12 Hawker Street, Bowden SA 5007

Phone: (08) 8346 5433

Email: sttars@sttars.org.au

Website: <http://www.sttars.org.au/>

Director: Bernadette McGrath

Operating since 1991, the Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS) provides assistance to migrants and refugees settling in South Australia who have previously experienced torture and/or trauma resulting from conflict, war, violence or unlawful imprisonment. A free service, STTARS provides counselling, education and training and a range of natural therapies to assist in rehabilitation.

In 2006-07 STTARS received 275 new referrals and provided specialist counselling to a total of 440 clients, an increase of 7% on the previous year. Of these, 71 were children and young

people under the age of 21. An unexpected trend was the substantial increase in the number of asylum seekers. 43 of new referrals were asylum seekers, compared with 16 in the previous year. During the year 56% of clients came from the Middle East, 25% from Africa and 10% from Europe.

An outstanding achievement of 2006-07 was the screening of an SBS documentary called "Ayen's Cooking School for African Men" based on a cooking class STTARS runs each week. The class began to meet the needs of a number of Sudanese teenage boys who arrived in Australia without family or the basic life skills needed to support themselves. A Sudanese community worker meets the boys at the market, takes them shopping and the group cooks and shares a meal together. In addition to learning practical skills, participants have an opportunity to share their experiences and provide support for each other in building their new lives in Australia. The group has been running for four years and has become an important gathering place for the community.

STTARS has been a member of the Refugee Council since 1996 and has been a valued partner in supporting the work of the Council, in particular our annual Intake Submission and community consultations relating to a range of settlement issues.

CARAD (Perth)

245 Stirling Street, Perth WA 6000

Phone: (08) 9227 7322

Email: carad@iinet.net.au

Website: <http://www.carad-wa.org/>

Treasurer: Rev. Eira Clapton

Since 2000, the Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD) has assisted thousands of community-based asylum seekers, temporary protection visa holders and detainees with settlement support, English language tuition, immigration advice and social support. CARAD has continued to be a lead voice in Western Australia in awareness-raising and advocacy for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

CARAD is a predominantly volunteer-run organisation and welcomes support and donations.

our members



Nasim Khatun, a widow from the Rohingya community, with her grandsons outside her home after her 2003 return to Burma. While many of the 250,000 Rohingya Muslims who fled across the Burma-Bangladesh border in the early 1990s have since returned, thousands remain displaced in Bangladesh, Malaysia and elsewhere.

Individual Members - John and Isabel McLean

Drouin, Victoria

Becoming individual members of RCOA in March 2007, John and Isabel McLean are by no means newcomers to the refugee support sector or to the work of the Council. While John served on the St. Vincent de Paul Society's Victorian State Council in 1998, he learned the formerly very busy and much respected Migrant and Refugee Committee was in recess. John and Isabel set out to reinvigorate the Committee and Isabel remains secretary to this day. Initially providing vital support and household goods to Kosovar refugees, the Committee also went on to provide hundred of foam mattresses and bed linen for refugees released from the now defunct Woomera Detention Centre. In 2001, the Department of Immigration approached St Vincent de Paul Society to provide basic household goods to newly arrived refugees under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy. John and Isabel managed the program's operations for the next four years. Driven by John and Isabel, the Committee has also provided around \$100,000 in

support to Bridging Visa E holders and East Timorese asylum seekers. Most recently, the Committee has been involved in a range of activities including a partnership with the Red Cross Tracing Service to reunite separated families, the establishment of a No Interest Loans Scheme for refugees and a driver tuition program. In the future, the Committee hopes to establish a tuition program for young refugees of school age in Melbourne's south east.

Tireless workers and advocates, John and Isabel continue to be inspired by the courage of the many refugees and asylum seekers they have worked alongside over the years. The Refugee Council greatly values their input into our work, in particular their knowledge and contribution to our annual Intake Submission.

Membership

Honorary Life Members

H.E. Professor Marie Bashir
Major General Paul Cullen (died 19 September 2007)
Harold Grant
Tuong Quang Luu

Organisational Members

* ACCES Services Inc, Woodridge Qld
Afghan Refugee Women's Network, Fitzroy Vic
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association of Australia Inc, Marsden Park NSW
* AMES, Melbourne Vic
* Anglicare North Coast Incorporated, Grafton NSW
Anglicare Sydney, Parramatta NSW
* Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors Inc, Perth WA
Asylum Seekers Centre, Surry Hills NSW
Auburn Migrant Resource Centre, Auburn NSW
Austcare, Camperdown NSW

Photo: UNHCR/C. Schwetz

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, Canberra ACT

Australian Council of Trade Unions, Melbourne Vic

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, Sydney NSW

* Australian Forum for Minorities in Bangladesh Inc, Claremont Meadows NSW

* Australian Kurdish Association, Blacktown NSW

Australian Lutheran World Service, Albury NSW

Australian Refugee Association, Underdale SA

Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre, Blacktown NSW

Canberra Refugee Support Inc, Canberra ACT

Canterbury-Bankstown Migrant Resource Centre Inc, Campsie NSW

Caritas Australia, North Sydney NSW

Catholic Immigration Office, Sydney NSW

Catholic Religious Australia, Annandale NSW

* Centacare Tasmania, Moonah Tas

Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care, Paddington Qld

* Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Carlton Vic

* Centre for Refugee Research – University of NSW, Kensington NSW

Centrecare Incorporated, Perth WA

Coalition for Asylum Seekers Refugees and Detainees, Perth WA

Communitify Qld Inc, Bardon Qld

Community Relations Commission of NSW, Sydney NSW

* Diversitat, Geelong Vic

Ecumenical Migration Centre, Collingwood Vic

* Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education, Croydon NSW

* Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka WA

* Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre, Cabramatta NSW

Fremantle Multicultural Centre, Fremantle WA

* Friends of the Earth Australia, Fitzroy Vic

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project, North Melbourne Vic

Illawarra Multicultural Services Inc, Wollongong NSW

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association NSW Inc, Harris Park NSW

International Commission of Jurists – Australian Section, Sydney NSW

International Social Service Australia, Melbourne Vic

Jesus Family Centre, Cabramatta NSW

Jesuit Refugee Service, Kings Cross NSW

* Justice and Freedom for Ceylon Tamils Inc, Dandenong Vic

Lao Community Advancement (NSW) Co-operative Ltd, Cabramatta NSW

* Legal Services Commission of South Australia, Adelaide SA

* Limestone Coast Multicultural Network Inc, Mount Gambier SA

Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre, Liverpool NSW

Macarthur Diversity Services Inc, Campbelltown NSW

* Melbourne Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, East Melbourne Vic

Mercy Refugee Service, Lewisham NSW

* Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, Mirrabooka WA

Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania) Inc, Hobart Tas

Migrant Resource Centre North West Region, St Albans Vic

Migrant Resource Centre South Australia Inc, Adelaide SA

Multicultural Development Association Inc, Stones Corner Qld

* Multicultural Information Network Service, Gympie Qld

National Council of Churches in Australia, Sydney NSW

* New Hope Foundation Inc, Prahran Vic

* Northern Settlement Services Limited, Newcastle NSW

* NSW Refugee Health Service, Liverpool NSW

Oromia Support Group in Australia, Noble Park Vic

Oxfam Australia, Carlton Vic

Pratt Family Foundation, Melbourne Vic

Public Interest Law Clearing House, Melbourne Vic

* Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre, Queanbeyan NSW

Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, Woolloongabba Qld

Red Cross Australia, North Melbourne Vic

Refugee Advice and Casework Service, Surry Hills NSW

Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre, Fitzroy Vic

Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, West End Qld

Salvation Army, Sydney NSW

* South Australian Refugee Health Network, Adelaide SA

* South East Region Migrant Resource Centre, Dandenong Vic

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre Inc, Preston Vic

Spiritus – Anglican Refugee and Migrant Service, Annerley Qld

Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau, Springvale Vic

St George Migrant Resource Centre, Rockdale NSW

* St George Youth Services, Rockdale NSW

St Vincent de Paul Society, Deakin ACT

Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service, Bowden SA

* Sudanese Liaison Office Australia Inc, Dandenong North Vic

* Sudanese Online Research Association, Melbourne Vic

Sydney Multicultural Community Services, Daceyville NSW

* The Smith Family Community Settlement Services, Burwood NSW

* Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc, Aitkenvale Qld

United Nations Association of Australia, Canberra ACT

our members

* Uniting Care Cutting Edge,
Shepparton Vic

Uniting Church Queensland Synod,
Justice and International Mission
Advocate Office, Brisbane Qld

* Uniting Church National Assembly,
Sydney NSW

Victorian Arabic Social Services,
Broadmeadows Vic

* Victorian Foundation for Survivors of
Torture, Brunswick Vic

Victorian Multi Ethnic Slavic Welfare
Association, Melbourne Vic

Victorian Multicultural Commission,
Melbourne Vic

* *New member in 2006-07*

Individual Members

Maureen Adamson

Joan Addison

James Altman

* Chris Ansted

Patricia Asch

Ruth Beltran

* Susie Biljuh

* Gray Birch

David Bitel

* Robert Blackburn

* Philip Bliss

* John Blount

* Kathleen Boland

* Suzanne Bouchier

* Kim Boyer

* John Brentnall

Linda Brightford

Bernard Broughton

Anne Brown

Jennifer Bryce

* Robin Burns

* Elaine Butler

Alison Caddick

* Marion May Campbell

Carolyn Carter

* Michael Cashman

* Henry and Mary Chan

Bernard Collaery

* Lionel Conyer

* Bernard Cooney

* Rosemary Cork

Peter and Linda Crawford
Mary Crock

* Aileen Crowe

* Hilary Da Costa

* John Dargavel

* Heather Dawson

* Sky de Jersey

Mary Justine de Merindol

* Jillian Dellit

* Jenny Ellis

Ralph Evans

Ruth Farmer

Barbara Ferguson

* Penny Fry

Michael Gale

* Luke Geary

John Gibson

* Helen Glass

* Andrea Goldsmith

Diane Gosden

Keren Gould

* Michael Grainger

Mark Green

Valerie Grogan

* Catherine Guinness

* Alexia Hall

Riaz and Selva Hassan

* Jan Ho

* Katie Holmes

Richard Home

* Matthew Howard

Andrew Hugh

Andrew Hunter

Peter and Julia Hutten

* Heather Johnson

* Kate Johnson

Ann-Mari Jordens

Ulrike Kalthaus

* Antigone Kefala

Ron Kessels

* Gaik Khong

Carol Klooger

Natasha Layton

* Dorothy Leeder

* Pamela Lemoine

* Helen Light

* Penelope Little

David Lloyd

George Lombard

Gabrielle Lord

* Vicki Lynar

William Maley

John Marlton

Elaine Mayer

* Sandra McCullough

* John McLean

Vera Meier

Susan Metcalfe

Diana Montgomery

* Mary Moore

* Peter Morgan

* Sharyn Munro

John Murphy

Kerry Murphy

* Geoff Neely

Nicholas Nicola

* Jan Noakes

* Katie O'Hare

Fortunee Ovidia

* Michael Pearce

* Jennifer Perry

* Margaret Ralph

Nola Randall-Mohk

Mark Raper

* Sheridan Roberts

* Philippe Roussel

* Gillian Rubinstein

Nouria Salehi

* Marian Sawyer

* Madeleine Selwyn

* Susan Sheridan

* Nizza Siano

Virginia Spate

Erika Stahr

Gary Steadman

* Harvey Stern

* Jennifer Strauss

* Sabaratnam Sundaramourthy

Keith Suter

* Colin Tefler

Janet Thompson

* Sally Trevena

* Lina Varon

* Eileen Wahab

* Elizabeth Walpole

Renate Watkinson

* Sanjula Weerasinghe

* Graham Wells

* Sylvia Winton

* Peter Yeldham

Alice Young

Barbara Young

Samir Yousif

* *New member in 2006-07*

auditor's report

Refugee Council of Australia Inc • ABN 87 956 673 083

Income Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2006

| | Note | 2007 \$ | 2006 \$ |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Revenue | 3 | 243,846 | 310,530 |
| Other income | 3 | 121,160 | 21,379 |
| Employee benefits expense | 4 | (268,664) | (195,224) |
| Depreciation, amortisation and impairments | | (5,483) | (3,932) |
| Other expenses | 4 | (103,088) | (131,492) |
| Profit before income tax | | (12,229) | 1,261 |
| Income tax expense | 1(i) | - | - |
| Profit attributable to members | | (12,229) | 1,261 |

Balance Sheet

30 June 2007

| | Note | 2007 \$ | 2006 \$ |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ASSETS | | | |
| Current assets | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 6 | 32,744 | 28,600 |
| Trade and other receivables | 7 | 17,678 | 14,445 |
| Total current assets | | 50,422 | 43,045 |
| Noncurrent assets | | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 8 | 11,915 | 7,993 |
| Total noncurrent assets | | 11,915 | 7,993 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 62,337 | 51,038 |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| Current liabilities | | | |
| Trade and other payables | 9 | 35,024 | 10,735 |
| Shortterm provisions | 10 | 9,582 | 10,341 |
| Total current liabilities | | 44,606 | 21,076 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | 44,606 | 21,076 |
| NET ASSETS | | 17,731 | 29,962 |
| EQUITY | | | |
| Retained earnings | | 17,731 | 29,962 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | | 17,731 | 29,962 |

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2007

| | 2007 | Retained Earnings \$ |
|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Balance at 1 July 2006 | | 29,962 |
| Profit attributable to entity | | (12,229) |
| Balance at 30 June 2007 | | 17,733 |
| | 2006 | \$ |
| Balance at 1 July 2005 | | 28,701 |
| Profit attributable to the entity | | 1,261 |
| Balance at 30 June 2006 | | 29,962 |

Cash Flow Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2006

| | Note | 2007 \$ | 2006 \$ |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Cash from operating activities: | | | |
| Receipts from customers | | 194,585 | 224,142 |
| Receipts from consultancy & training | 3 | 13,346 | 3,457 |
| Interest received | 3 | 893 | 2,021 |
| Donations received | 3 | 24,818 | 19,988 |
| Receipts from other funding sources | | 128,207 | 106,100 |
| Payments to suppliers and employees | | (348,299) | (392,469) |
| Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities | 11 | 13,550 | (36,761) |
| Cash flows from investing activities: | | | |
| Acquisition of property, plant and equipment | 8(a) | (9,405) | (2,473) |
| Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities | | (9,405) | (2,473) |
| Net increase (decreases) in cash held | | 4,145 | (39,234) |
| Cash at beginning of financial year | | 28,599 | 67,833 |
| Cash at end of financial year | 6(a) | 32,744 | 28,599 |

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2007

1 Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) General information

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act of the Australian Capital Territory.

The financial report covers Refugee Council of Australia Inc as an individual entity. Refugee Council of Australia Inc is an association incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory under the Associations Incorporations Act 1991.

The financial report of Refugee Council of Australia Inc as an individual entity complies with all Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) in their entirety.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the company in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(b) Basis of Preparation

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected noncurrent assets, financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

(c) Comparative Figures

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

(d) Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets including buildings and capitalised leased assets, is depreciated on a straight line basis over their useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings | 5% |
| Computer Equipment | 18% |

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

(e) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short term borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

(f) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on costs. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits.

(g) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

(h) Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of assets that necessarily take a substantial period of time to prepare for their intended use or sale, are added to the cost of those assets, until such time as the assets are substantially ready for their intended use or sale.

All other borrowing costs are recognised in income in the period in which they are incurred.

(i) Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(j) Revenue

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon the delivery of goods to customers.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(k) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

2 Deductible Gift Recipient

The Council is a Public Benevolent Institution and has been endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient.

3 Revenue

| | 2007 \$ | 2006 \$ |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Operating activities | | |
| - consultancy & training fees | 13,346 | 3,457 |
| - DIAC contracts | 89,990 | 88,227 |
| - Australian Refugee Foundation funding | 102,742 | 182,476 |
| - interest received | 893 | 2,021 |
| - donations | 24,818 | 19,988 |
| - member subscriptions | 12,950 | 16,382 |
| - grants | 95,000 | 17,868 |
| - Other income | 25,267 | 1,490 |
| Total Revenue | 365,006 | 331,909 |

4 Profit from Ordinary Activities

| | 2007 | 2006 |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Expenses by nature | | |
| Depreciation | 5,483 | 3,932 |
| Employee costs include: | | |
| Salaries | 155,956 | 126,758 |
| Superannuation contributions | 21,454 | 24,015 |
| Fringe benefits tax | 86,752 | 29,133 |
| Total | 264,162 | 179,906 |
| Rental expense on operating leases | | |
| Premises minimum lease payments | 7,255 | 12,973 |
| Refugee Week expenses | 19,704 | 14,653 |
| Telephone and fax | 10,484 | 8,158 |

5 Auditors' Remuneration

Remuneration of the auditor of the entity for:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Auditing or reviewing the financial report | 1,256 | 1,562 |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|-------|

6 Cash and Cash Equivalents

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Cash on hand | 543 | 635 |
| Cash at bank | 32,201 | 27,965 |
| | 32,744 | 28,600 |

(a) Reconciliation of Cash

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the cash flow statement is reconciled to items in the balance sheet as follows:

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | 32,743 | 28,600 |
| | 32,743 | 28,600 |

7 Trade and other receivables

Current

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Trade receivables | 13,637 | 12,000 |
| GST receivable | 3,365 | 2,445 |
| Other receivables | 676 | - |
| Total | 17,678 | 14,445 |

8 Property Plant and Equipment

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Furniture, fixture and fittings

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| At cost | 43,562 | 43,089 |
| Less accumulated depreciation | (42,495) | (40,325) |
| Total furniture, fixture and fittings | 1,067 | 2,764 |

Computer equipment

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| At cost | 20,929 | 11,997 |
| Less accumulated depreciation | (10,081) | (6,768) |
| Total computer equipment | 10,848 | 5,229 |
| Total plant and equipment | 11,915 | 7,993 |

(a) Movements in Carrying Amounts

| | Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings \$ | Computer Equipment \$ | Total \$ |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Current Year | | | |
| Balance at the beginning of year | 2,764 | 5,229 | 7,993 |
| Additions | 473 | 8,932 | 9,405 |
| Depreciation expense | (2,170) | (3,313) | (5,483) |
| Carrying amount at the end of year | 1,067 | 10,848 | 11,915 |
| Prior Year | | | |
| Balance at the beginning of year | 4,918 | 4,534 | 9,452 |
| Additions | - | 2,473 | 2,473 |
| Depreciation expense | (2,154) | (1,778) | (3,932) |
| Carrying amount at the end of year | 2,764 | 5,229 | 7,993 |

9 Trade and Other Payables

CURRENT

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Unsecured liabilities | | |
| Trade payables | 3,767 | - |
| Goods & services tax payable | 8,783 | 97 |
| Sundry payables and accrued expenses | 22,474 | 10,638 |
| | 35,024 | 10,735 |

10 Provisions

| | | |
|---------|-------|--------|
| Current | 9,582 | 10,341 |
| | 9,582 | 10,341 |

| | Employee entitlements \$ | Total \$ |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Opening balance at 1 July 2006 | 10,341 | 10,341 |
| Utilised during the period | (759) | (759) |
| Balance at 30 June 2007 | 9,582 | 9,582 |

11 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Profit after Income Tax

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Net income/loss for the period | (12,229) | 1,261 |
| Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities | | |
| Non cash flows in profit | | |
| Depreciation | 5,483 | 3,932 |
| changes in assets and liabilities, net of the effects of purchase and disposal of subsidiaries | | |
| (Increase)/decrease in trade and term receivables | (3,152) | 23,795 |
| Increase/(decrease) in trade payables and accruals | 24,207 | 2,580 |
| Increase/(decrease) in deferred income | - | (33,000) |
| Increase/(decrease) in provisions | (759) | (35,329) |
| Cash flow from operations | 13,550 | (36,761) |

Directors' Declaration

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 4 to 16:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Refugee Council of Australia Inc as at 30 June 2007 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Standards board.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Refugee Council of Australia Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

John Gibson
President

Lionel Conyer
Treasurer

30 October 2007

Independent Audit Report to the members of Refugee Council of Australia Inc

Scope

We have audited financial report of Refugee Council of Australia Inc for the financial year ended 30 June 2007 as set out on pages 17 to 24.

The financial report includes the financial statements at the year's end or from time to time during the financial year. The company's directors are responsible for the financial report. We have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the company.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the company's financial position and performance as represented by the results of their operations and their cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we followed the applicable independence requirements of Australian professional and ethical pronouncements and the Corporations Act 2001.

In accordance with ASIC Class order 05/83, we declare to the best of our knowledge and belief that the auditor's independence declaration as set out in the financial report has not changed as at the date of providing our audit opinion.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Refugee Council of Australia Inc is in accordance with:

- (a) the Corporations Act 2001, including:
 - (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2007 and of their performance for the year ended on that date; and
 - (ii) complying with Accounting Standards in Australia and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
- (b) other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

Steven Heller
Partner
DFK Laurence Varnay
Chartered Accountants
Sydney
30 October 2007

auditor's report

Profit and Loss Account

For the Year Ended 30 June 2006

| | 2007 | 2006 |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Income | | |
| Consultancy & training fees | 13,346 | 3,457 |
| DIAC contracts | 89,990 | 88,227 |
| Australian Refugee Foundation funding | 102,742 | 182,476 |
| Interest income | 893 | 2,021 |
| Member subscriptions | 12,950 | 16,382 |
| Grants | 120,054 | 17,868 |
| Donations | 24,818 | 19,988 |
| Other income | 213 | 1,490 |
| Total income | 365,006 | 331,909 |
| Less: Expenses | | |
| Advertising | - | 2,586 |
| Auditors remuneration | 1,256 | 1,562 |
| Bank charges | 622 | 915 |
| Board expenses | 11,672 | 28,219 |
| Computer expenses | 3,420 | 5,116 |
| Consulting and professional fees | 4,723 | 37,848 |
| Depreciation | 5,483 | 3,932 |
| Electricity and water | 624 | - |
| Insurance | 2,602 | 1,198 |
| Lease rentals on operating lease | 7,255 | 12,973 |
| Leave pay | (758) | 10,341 |
| Market research | 437 | 921 |
| Other employee costs | 88,482 | 29,284 |
| Office relocation expenses | 4,021 | - |
| Postage | 2,669 | 1,266 |
| Printing and stationery | 12,553 | 3,912 |
| Rates and taxes | 246 | - |
| Public Event expenses | 19,704 | 14,653 |
| Registration fees | 2,038 | 1,521 |
| Repairs and maintenance | 3,006 | 665 |
| Salaries | 155,956 | 126,758 |
| Staff training | 247 | 2,005 |
| Staff amenities | 371 | 533 |
| Subscriptions | 2,751 | 462 |
| Sundry expenses | 6,407 | 3,297 |
| Superannuation contributions | 21,454 | 24,015 |
| Telephone and fax | 10,484 | 8,158 |
| Travel domestic | 6,227 | 5,687 |
| Workers compensation insurance | 3,283 | 2,821 |
| Total Expenses | (377,235) | (330,648) |
| (Loss) / Profit before income tax | (12,229) | 1,261 |



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Incorporated in ACT

ABN 87 956 673 083

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.



Refugee Council
of Australia

