

ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL

New Settlement Program WORKFORCE PILOT

Final Report | August 2023



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
BACKGROUND	6
Workforce Landscape	7
Community Landscape	8
Ararat’s Existing Settlement Support Services	9
Project scoping	10
WHAT WE DID	11
Pilot and New Settlement Team	11
Consultation and engagement	11
Community Leadership Support	11
Communication Strategy	12
Telling the Stories of New Settlement Through Imagery	13
Delivering Jobs and Settlement Support in Partnership	14
New Settlement Operational Process	14
Encouraging New Settlement	16
Training Program	17
Transitional and Settlement Housing	19
OUTCOMES	20
What we achieved	20
Profile of New Settlers	21
KEY LEARNINGS	23
What worked	23
Promoting the Lived Experience	23
Employment Interface	23
Employment Program	24
Community Interface	25
Project Governance and Nature of the Project Brief	26
Housing	26
English language training as a pathway to community engagement	27
WHERE WE STRUGGLED	28
Employment	28
Engaging with Government Agencies	28
Existing Settlement Services for Ararat	28
ARARAT POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACH	29
Moving Forward - Options for Settlement Support	29
Key elements and service provision	29
BENEFIT ASSESSMENT / VALUE FOR MONEY	31
MAP OF ARARAT	32
KEY EMPLOYERS	33
ARARAT PROJECT - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST	34
PROJECT SUMMARY	35
PROJECT ENGAGEMENT PLAN	38
Engagement Summary	40
Communication Plan	41
Timelines for Engagement and Communication	42
CULTUREVERSE	45

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEMONSTRATED SUCCESS

- The New Settlement Program and Workforce Pilot have delivered a relational model for workforce capacity building.
- The Pilot's operational framework has demonstrated the importance of providing both employment and settlement support to generate safe settlement.
- The Program has delivered a cost-effective way of filling job vacancies in a culturally sensitive manner, responding both to the needs of the employee and employer.
- The Pilot has generated significant social impacts across the community including benefits to sporting and service clubs, expansion of school communities, as well as building cultural inclusivity.
- The extension of the Pilot's time frame by 9 months as supported by RDV was significant and enabled the earlier short term successes to be progressed from **7 new settlers** in October 2022 to **46 new settlers** in August 2023.

KEY OUTCOMES

- The Pilot has delivered on the expected outcomes:
 - o The Pilot has attracted **23** new workers to Ararat, and **46** new settlers including family members.
 - o Four employees including family members, are no longer part of the Pilot, and there are **40** new settlers currently living in Ararat.

Jobs have been filled in



- o The Pilot's operational approach has demonstrated the ability to enable employment across a broad range of industries.

- The Pilot has also demonstrated cost efficiency and value for money:
 - o The average cost of filling a job is estimated at **\$3,100** per employee (excluding Program salaries and on-costs)
 - o The average cost of relocation is estimated at **\$4,200** per settler (excluding Program salaries and on-costs)
 - o Overall, the New Settlement Program, inclusive of salaries and on-costs, has delivered safe and successful settlement at a **total cost of \$14,130 per settler.**
- The Pilot has supported employment and training over 6 and 12 month periods, which was a key deliverable of the project:
 - o The average length of employment is 6.5 months, and 4 of the new settlers have been in the Program over 12 months.
 - o **56%** of employees undertook pre or post employment training.
- The Pilot has attracted a critical mass of new settlers and an ongoing Programming transition is now underway.
- ARCC and its partner Wyndham CEC will continue to work collectively to ensure the positive impact of the Pilot
- Funding considerations including the ability to sustain the Program over the long term, are ongoing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The Pilot has filled **23 jobs** and generated an estimated direct effect of **\$18.7 million**.
- An estimated 19 jobs have been generated as part of the consumption and supply chain impact.
- In total, the Pilot has generated 42 direct and indirect jobs to August 2023.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- The Pilot has provided a means to deliver workforce capacity to local employers, including providing financial support previously not available to Ararat businesses.
- For the employers, it has provided a more diverse workplace, with learnings from the initial Pilot assisting in understanding and responding to culturally diverse work sites.
- The community building impacts of the Pilot are significant and include:
 - o New family settlement in Ararat, including expanding the cultural diversity of schools, with 8 children enrolled in local schools.
 - o Community connections established through conversational English classes, funded as part of the Pilot. The extension of the conversational English classes to shorter term labour mobility workers resulted in the development of a volleyball program, initially with 6 players and now regularly attracting 30 players per weekly event. The Pilot funding assisted in the continuation of the volleyball program.
 - o Providing new members for service clubs such as Lions and extending the membership of the local Community Garden.
 - o Building faith based communities, with new settlers connecting into community through established faith based organisations.

KEY LEARNINGS

The Pilot has highlighted:

- the importance of relationship building particularly bridging trust across all partners and participants
- the demonstrated value of working with settlement and job matching expertise, working with employers, faith leaders, community leaders, and government agencies.
- a lived experience of settlement support provides best option for culturally safe settlement
- options for a resettlement model which responds to the limitations / challenges of existing settlement and employment support services.
- the complexity of the Pilot and program
 - o Each aspect, job placement, settlement support, housing and training including adult migrant English classes, requires a level of specialism and expertise.
 - o Pulling it together requires commitment and funding.

Critical success factors highlighted by the Pilot include:

- providing housing which provides long term culturally safe settlement.
- employer and host community support including supporting ambassadorial roles.
- Council commitment and advocacy for the Program.
- building capacity in education and learn local sector.
- the nimbleness of the funding model to extend reach and capacity as opportunities presented.
- providing Adult English programs to support ongoing settlement and inclusivity.

MOVING FORWARD

- A draft Rural Resettlement Model has been proposed which recognises the role community based support plays in the migrant journey.
- The model proposes an innovative way of delivering settlement and employment support in regional and rural areas, through the development of a partnership with an expert settlement support service providing an outreach function.
- The model also aims to build a community of inclusiveness by working with employers and community leaders to engage and support long term settlement.

“ New Settler Expectations – 10 Years From Now ”

In 10 years, I will still live here in Ararat, my work will go well, and I will live with my family. I will be here in the next 10 years. Because I like living here there is no traffic and less crowded. Our plan and goal is to live and settle down here. We build our home here, we will live here, we don't know what the future holds for us and we cannot see our future but in the next 10 years we still want to live in Ararat or around Ararat town.

(Source: Transcribed interview with new settler)





BACKGROUND

The New Settlement Program and Workforce Pilot funded by Regional Development Victoria (Living Regions Living Suburbs Recovery Initiative 2021) aimed to develop an organic, relational model for worker resettlement, through a direct partnership between Ararat Rural City Council (ARCC) and Wyndham Community and Education Centre (Wyndham CEC). The Pilot and Program partnership aimed to implement a model involving working directly with local employers, ARCC, and their existing new arrival clients to provide pre-employment education and training relevant to employment needs in Ararat. Working with new migrants from the communities of Burma, primarily the Karen, the new settlement program aimed to deliver both improved workforce capacity and culturally safe settlement.

This report provides an overview of the operational aspects of the Pilot and New Settlement Program, including community and business engagement processes, as well as its key learnings and the social and economic impact assessment. The report details the pilot's key outcomes, including the significance of leveraging partnerships in settlement services and job creation. Importantly, the report details a model for consideration by other rural and regional areas, looking to attract new migrants and build culturally safe settlement.

The Pilot ran from January 2022 to May 2023. Combined, the grant allocation was \$931,000.

Project Objective and Expected Outcomes

The Pilot and New Settlement Program had the following key objectives:

- Boost regional migration to meet the workforce needs of local industry
- Deliver a successful resettlement program that connects migrants with education, vocational training, employment and housing
- Builds the critical mass of the population in Ararat and Northern Grampians via in-migration of workers and their families to secure long-term viability and prosperity.

The program was expected to result in the following outcomes:

- evidence workers have been provided with pre-employment education;
- evidence of resettlement and employment;
- evidence people are in employment six (6) months after initial engagement; and
- evidence people are in employment 12 months after initial engagement.

The project acknowledged that to achieve the outcomes, a commitment was required from the key stakeholder partners, local community groups and health services to ensure targeted resettlement support and migrant services were consistently available. The project also acknowledged that a key challenge would be developing an adaptable model to delivering migrant support services in a range of rural and regional settings. It also recognised the significance of more broadly, embracing solutions that provide effective and efficient resettlement services and workforce capacity building in rural Victoria.

Workforce Landscape

The Pilot and Settlement Program were responses to Ararat's chronic labour force shortage. Major local employers highlighted the need to urgently address labour force demands so that business viability was not compromised. Significant pressures for local industry were identified with many having reached their capacity for fulfilling new contract work. There were some examples identified where penalties have been imposed on local industry based on an inability to meet supply benchmarks from existing contracts, solely because extra shifts could not be added to meet demand without a local labour force to fill the jobs available. In some industries, particularly meat production this is still the case.

As identified in the project plan, Ararat's trajectory that led to fully exhausting the local labour market was confirmed in the December 2020 release of the Small Areas Labor's Markets data by Australian Government's Department of Education, Skills and Employment. This data showed that the LGA had an unemployment rate of 3.3% with only 172 unemployed people out of a labour market of 5,151. This trend of low unemployment has continued with the most recent estimates indicating a rate of 3.8% in the LGA (June 2022).

Many of the challenges facing the Ararat labour market are reflected at a national level, with the tightening of the market forecast to continue. As illustration, overall, more occupations were in national shortage in 2022 compared to the previous year, with 31% of occupations assessed as being in shortage compared with 19% in 2021 (National Skills Commission, October, 2022). Critical shortages were identified in nursing, health, IT and professional occupations, however, the most significant increases occurred in technician and trade (47%) and labourers (26%). As way of providing a national context, an overview of skill priority lists is attached. During the course of the Pilot, the scenario of low unemployment and high demand for workers seemed to escalate and the competitive nature of the labour market did impact in first 12 months of the project.

In response to the shortages, local and regional manufacturers have shown strong support for a migrant workforce to address their labour market challenges and have worked hard to enter the Pacific Labour Scheme in an urgent effort to secure workers to meet current labour demand. This labour mobility program aimed at addressing immediate workforce demand in host communities and provides recipient benefits including valued return to local economies.

A New Relational Approach to Workforce Capacity Building

While acknowledging the immediate benefits of labour mobility programs, ARCC felt that a longer-term solution was also required to address the strategic aspects of workforce capacity building. ARCC also identified that existing strategic alliances and reporting, such as the Opportunities Pyrenees, Ararat and Northern Grampians (OPAN) project, looking at regional workforce migration, did not adequately address the urgency of the needs of the municipality's industry. This coupled with the fact that more than 90 percent of migrants settling in Victoria do so in metropolitan Melbourne and tend to cluster in geographically similar areas, instigated a partnership between ARCC and Wyndham CEC to work on a collaborative approach to rural resettlement.

The partnership approach built on the existing relationships between the two organisations and acknowledged the long-standing role of Wyndham CEC in delivering settlement support as well as employment options for new migrants. It recognised that Ararat's current settlement engagement program did not adequately address the needs of its CALD community, particularly with the expectation of long term growth. It also recognised the key opportunities offered to new migrants by Ararat and the broader region including affordable housing, varied employment opportunities and excellent road and rail transport connections.



BACKGROUND

Community Landscape

Ararat local government area is large geographically (4,211 km²) and features a rural and agricultural landscape with access to a range of nature based experiences and activities. Like many rural municipalities, its population is dispersed and includes the township of Ararat as a larger, service centre, with pockets of smaller communities across the locality. This type of population settlement provides both opportunities and challenges, particularly in service delivery, infrastructure maintenance, digital connectivity and healthcare provision. Lifestyle migration is evident in some of these smaller communities, particularly the towns of Pomonal and Moyston, building reputations around bespoke hospitality and tourism product. The attached map illustrates the municipality's population dispersion and the geographic scale of the municipality.

Approximately 9% of Ararat's estimated population of 11,821 are born overseas, with over half coming from Non-English-speaking backgrounds. This compares

to 12.4% overseas born average for regional Victoria. Workforce participation in the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population is estimated at 4.2% of the total estimated workforce of 5,358.

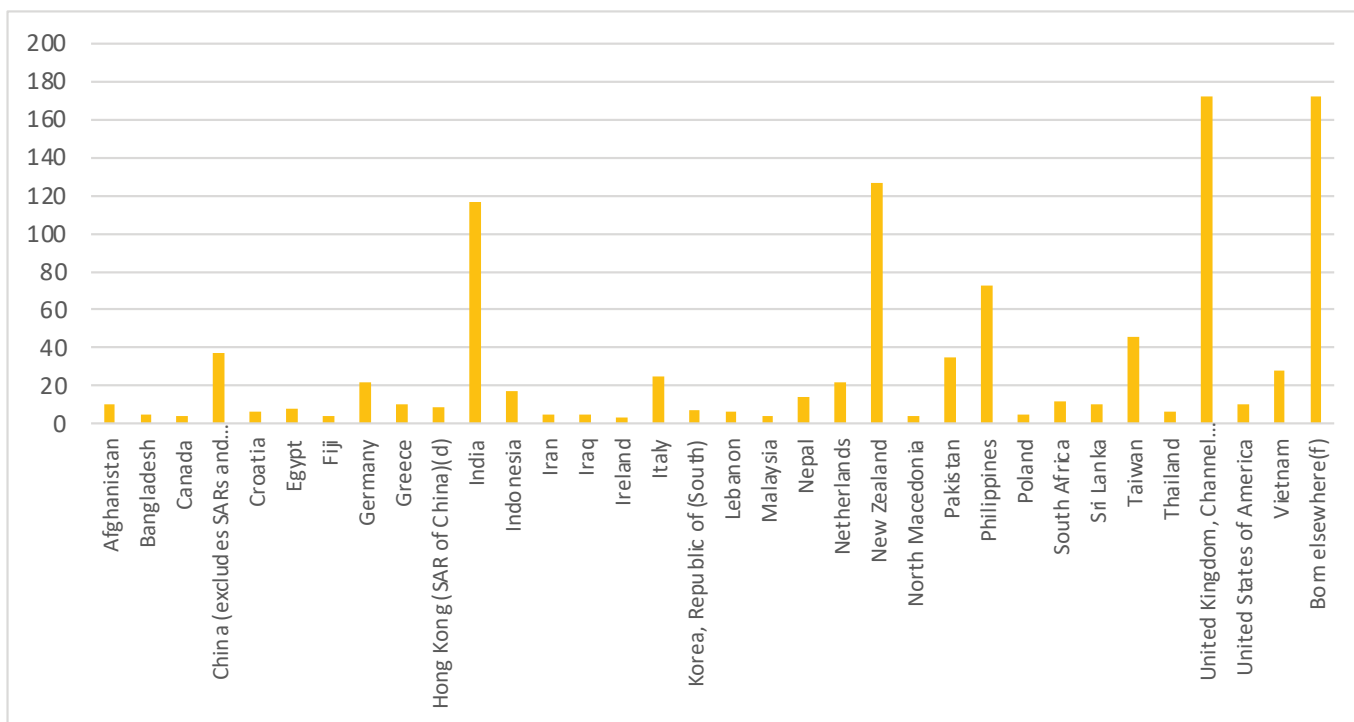
Table 1: Key Community Statistics

Population	11,821
Percentage born overseas	8.7%
Households where a non-English language is used	5.9%
Humanitarian entrants	Unknown
Percentage workforce main language non-English	4.2%

Source: ABS Census 2021

People from India, the Philippines and Pakistan make up larger proportions of Ararat's CALD community, and this reflects national migration trends to larger settlement areas, particularly metropolitan localities. This is shown in Figure One.

Figure One: Ararat's Overseas Born Profile



Ararat has a strong faith-based community, with census data indicating 31% of the population identify with a religious affiliation, particularly with the Anglican and Uniting Churches. As part of the background scoping for the Pilot, it soon became evident that faith-based connections are a priority for people from the Communities of Burma and this extends across a range of spiritual beliefs and traditions (see for example, Lane et al, 2013). Consequently, connecting with Ararat's faith community was identified as an immediate and important part of enabling culturally supportive and safe long-term settlement.

Ararat was among the first Victorian rural Councils to become a Refugee Welcome Zone and a Welcoming City (2015).

It has sustained community development through capacity building in volunteer organisations, such as Rural Australians for Refugees which has enabled a bottom-up approach to inclusivity and community support for new settlers. The wider community has embraced the benefits of multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion and Ararat is home to many community groups, churches and sporting clubs that are enthusiastic to volunteer their time to provide settlement support. This aspect of the community has been highlighted throughout the Pilot program. It is the intention of the rural resettlement program as described later in this report, to move this forward and to continue to build a community of inclusiveness.



Ararat's Existing Settlement Support Services

Existing settlement support services for Ararat are provided by Ballarat Community Health and this includes a locum visit to Ararat on a needs be basis. This program is funded through the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program through the Department of Home Affairs. Contracts are awarded to suitable providers through a tender process, and provide settlement support services for refugee humanitarian entrants and eligible migrants who have been in Australia less than five years. There is however, increasing awareness among SETS providers of a need to further support beyond the current five-year timeframe, with acknowledgement that language and cultural barriers are not time dependent but travel along the longer term settlement journey.

Ararat settlement service provision has been low and this in part due to no clear ways of identifying those in need of support, particularly humanitarian entrants. Currently, the existing SETS funding supports a case manager who covers a wide geographic area, extending from Ballarat to Nhill. A new settler nurse is also funded for interim visits to assist identified new settlers. There is currently no provision for

employment connector services in Ararat. Engagement with BCH indicated the need to expand and provide greater levels of support to new migrants and identified geographic isolation and inconsistencies in outreach support as challenges to navigate.

On the basis of the limitations of the existing SETS provision, building Ararat's capacity to host and provide long term culturally safe settlement, was identified early in Pilot and options for this are further discussed from page 14. Building Ararat's settlement support capacity is a critical outcome of the Pilot and BCH settlement support is not viewed as mutually exclusive of the partnership model with Wyndham CEC. Moving forward with a metropolitan – rural partnership model of settlement support is discussed further in the report.

Ararat's Learn Local also provides some level of support to new migrants and runs a program of courses and gatherings targeting new arrived residents. It has conducted English conversation classes over several years and has sustained interest from shorter term settlers particularly PALM workers. Observations and feedback indicates that the Centre's capacity building would benefit from a mentoring program either connecting in with another Centre more locally or a metropolitan area.

BACKGROUND

Settlement Support through Wyndham Community & Education Centre

Wyndham CEC is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, with charity status, that is governed by a Board of Governance. It offers a range of education, employment and community service programs across Melbourne's west and Greater Geelong. Founded in 1974, Wyndham CEC is a leader in supporting people and communities make positive changes for the future and is recognised internationally for its capacity to enable culturally, long term safe settlement.

Wyndham CEC's current programs include:

- language, literacy, numeracy (LLN) training;
- pre-accredited programs (language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy);
- vocational education (VET) including community services and business administration training;
- senior secondary programs;
- settlement services for eligible migrants and refugees;
- community support group programs (South Sudanese) and,
- Job Victoria Employment Services (JVES) as part of the west@work consortium.

Combined, Wyndham CEC has a wealth of expertise in providing culturally safe settlement with a focus on the lived experience of the refugee and migrant journey. This is evidenced by its focus on supporting safe settlement through direct engagement and employment of people who have experienced the migrant journey. The success of Wyndham CEC's approach is evidenced by international interest in how it successfully provides and navigates the full breadth of the resettlement experience.

The combination of the capacity to deliver settlement support as well as employment services is recognised as a critical factor in providing long term resettlement. Wyndham CEC's JVES program has successfully worked with a range of firms in Victoria and has well-established relationships with large firms across a range of industries seeking

workforce capacity building through migrant and CALD employment. Examples include Werribee based agricultural supplier Fresh Select, bespoke manufacturing Veritech Hume, and other regional meat manufacturing workplaces where Wyndham CEC has enabled ongoing labour provision within safe and supportive workplaces.

Project scoping

As part of the initial scoping for the Pilot, a desk-based review of existing literature was conducted focusing on exploring other localities' approaches to migrant resettlement. This provided important background and supporting case studies on how other communities have built inclusiveness, both at a workplace and community level. The scoping also included a field trip to Nhill to explore and gain knowledge of the communities of Burma settlement experience in the rural locality.

The decision was made to internalise the Pilot as a project. This strategy provided an environment to explore options and draw on best practices, but not be limited by what is, but rather focus on what could be. It also importantly, provided the Pilot the necessary time to assess the process and outcomes, including learnings over the project's lifecycle.

The initial stages were particularly focused on building strong relationships between the team members, and partner organisations particularly the Wyndham CEC's settlement team and employment team. The subsequent stages saw activation of business and community engagement, workplace communication and new settler recruitment. The Pilot's method and staging are detailed in the following section.



WHAT WE DID

Pilot and New Settlement Team

The Pilot commenced in January 2022, with three key staff members engaged to manage the Pilot and implement the new settlement program. These three roles were based in Ararat and included a:

- Project manager
- Project co-ordinator / settlement support officer
- Community liaison officer

This Ararat based team provided direct settlement support including housing, connection to services and connection to the broader Ararat community. In addition, the Pilot's project plan allowed for a business liaison function focused on placing potential new settlers into well matched employment. Given the well-established employment function already in place at Wyndham CEC through JVES West@Work program, this business employment function was placed within this program. The rationale, benefits and challenges of this approach rather than a dedicated position are detailed in the learnings of the Pilot. The settlement support role and employment functions are detailed in the operational plan of the Pilot.

Wyndham CEC senior management team provided strategic and operational input throughout the Pilot and this proved invaluable in being able to work through the issues and complexities in the Pilot as they arose.

Consultation and engagement

Consultation and engagement within the Ararat community was identified as critical to the Pilot as well as the long-term success of the program. The function of community engagement was provided through a community engagement officer, as well as the Pilot Lead. As part of the approach to build trust and steer the Pilot within the community, a consultation and engagement strategy was developed. This strategy was underpinned by the recognised need of bringing the community along. This required careful but clear communication on the potential benefits of the program, as well as harnessing support for a long-term approach to workforce and community capacity building. Key stakeholders were identified leveraging off ARCC's existing knowledge base, and a snow-balling approach was activated whereby business and community leaders could provide further support for the Pilot and Program through their own engagement channels. The engagement and consultation strategy is attached.

Community Leadership Support

The Pilot's community engagement commenced with a top-down approach and it did this in recognition that industry and business support were critical to activating workforce capacity building. Without the support and active engagement of ARCC's key businesses, job and employment matching would not be achieved.

As way of communicating the intentions of the Pilot a series of low-key luncheons were held with business leaders, key employers and industry group representatives. This soft approach to 'bringing the community' along also extended to leaders in the community and faith-based services where a similar set of forums took place. These events were conducted at the start of the program, and the nine-month point of the Pilot's lifecycle. The initial forums spoke to the intentions of the Pilot and the operational details of the Program including how employers can connect with the Program. The follow-up forums spoke to the Pilot's outcomes and the options for transitioning into a long-term program. Wyndham CEC leadership or representatives were present at the forums.



WHAT WE DID

These forums provided a gauge of support and as described in the following section on the Pilots' learnings, provided a firm indication of community and business support for the program and its long-term vision. Stakeholder engagement and key contacts established and maintained throughout the Pilot are provided in the attachments.

Face to face engagement with identified employers were also undertaken following the initial outreach, providing a more detailed approach to how the Pilot could be applied particularly in the workplace.

Communication Strategy

The Pilot also recognised the need to engage with the broader Ararat community on the program and its benefits to growing a community of inclusiveness. Wyndham CEC assisted in identifying a specialist marketing agency with expertise in developing strategies for CALD communications and they were engaged to assist in formulating a workable framework for all communications. This strategy included a workshop with locally based people with a CALD background, as well as targeted community and business representatives. The strategy revealed the Pilot's key messaging as place, people and opportunity and this subsequently flowed throughout the Pilot's internal and external communication with community. It also assisted in informing the broader community-based settlement support framework. The objectives of the communication plan were to increase awareness and understanding of the pilot program and its benefits with the Ararat community. It also developed a set of key messages that explained and narrated the story of the pilot program so as to bring the community along the journey. The following figure provides a brief overview of the communications key messaging, with the full strategy included as an attachment.

Communicating with Community

– Key Messaging



Telling the Stories of New Settlement Through Imagery

In addition to the strategic focus identified in the Communications Strategy, the decision to document all elements of the Pilot through photography and video evidence provided a rich source for understanding the new settlement program. A photo journalist was engaged to work alongside the Pilot Team and this included capturing the beginning, middle and end point of the Pilot. It is expected that this content will form part of media story talking to the Pilot and resettlement in Ararat. The experienced captured by the photo journalist included:

- The first bus tour to Ararat, capturing images of workplaces, potential new settlers and the engagement events;
- Travelling alongside the first couple as they relocated to Ararat
- Interviewing these settlers and a new family about their settlement experiences

The Pilot team also endeavoured to photograph key events including induction training in the workplaces, new settlers engaged in recreational activities and generally any event which captured the essence of the Program. This documentation provided not only a visual record of the Pilot, but included rich material to share with Wyndham CEC, the community and RDV. It also enabled the team to reflect on the lifecycle of the project particularly as they worked across the Pilot and program.



WHAT WE DID

Delivering Jobs and Settlement Support in Partnership

Working with the partnership model required a functional operational process to ensure the delivery of safe settlement as well as providing workforce capacity building. While the focus on was on enabling an organic model, the process of working with people, their lives and settlement decisions required structure and clear process. Subsequently an operational framework was developed which provide a process to work alongside for each of the team members and this is detailed in the following. This is also outlined in the Figure below.

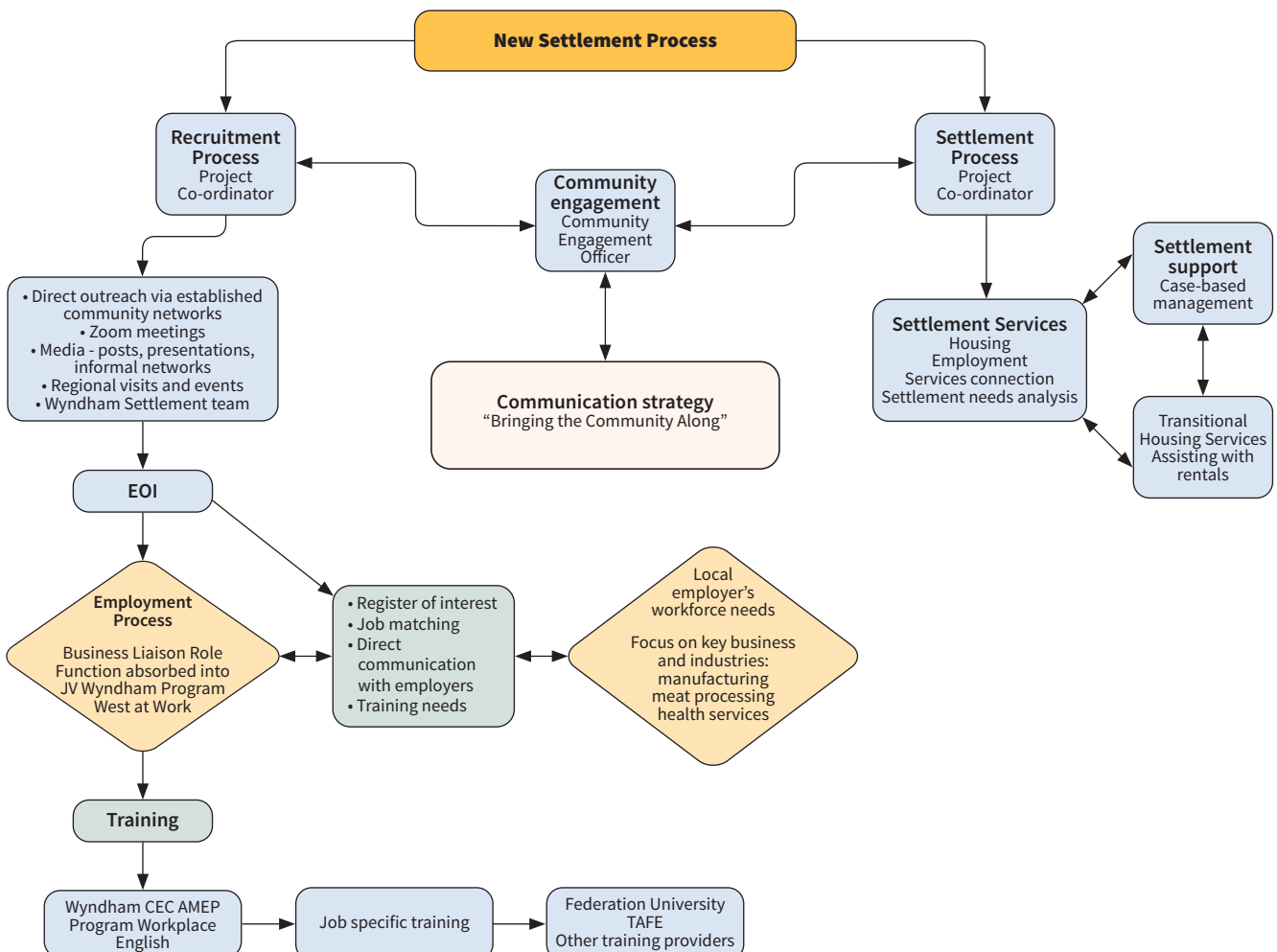
New Settlement Operational Process

An operational plan was developed in the early stages of the Pilot and this mirrored the approach taken by Wyndham CEC to settlement and employment services. The operational process included a funded outreach settlement support role, located in Ararat and this provided both a lived

experience of settlement services and enabled the capacity to draw on the expertise of Wyndham CEC settlement team. The selection of the candidate was placed with Wyndham CEC as well as leaders within the Karen community. The employment service operated as a separate function, once again mirroring Wyndham CEC approach, but with a strong connection to settlement support.

As would be expected, ongoing and regular communication was required to ensure clear understanding of each potential new settler and where they were at any given time, in their settlement and employment journey. The function of managing team communication as well as internal governance was the responsibility of the Project Lead.

The operational plan was presented to the Project Governance Group for approval and subsequent activation in April 2022. The key elements of each aspect of the operational process are detailed in the following and diagrammatically detailed below.



Place Based Settlement Support

A critical element of operationalisation of the Pilot, was a place-based settlement support function drawing on the expertise of Wyndham CEC settlement support team. The Ararat based settlement support was delivered through a settlement support project co-ordinator role who provided assistance in:

- understanding and communicating the lived experience of a new settler in Ararat
- encouraging new settlers to experience Ararat either through familiarisation tours or one on one visits to the municipality
- working with the employment team to assist in understanding job needs and preferences
- securing short-term and long term accommodation
- accessing health services
- navigating the geography of their new community
- sourcing specialist services where required
- enrolling in school, where needed, and English language classes
- establishing social support networks and fostering community engagement

This role, when required, provided direct employee support assisting in understanding workplace and job requirements, translating documents, and providing bi-lingual support on orientation and induction days. There was a strong connection established with Wyndham CEC settlement team, and included weekly team meetings, ongoing dialogue about the program and what they were doing and possibly where

assistance was needed. The settlement support officer also became the point of contact and public face of the recruitment campaign.

As part of the settlement support function, a case management system was developed drawing on the operational procedures and documentation supplied by Wyndham CEC. This included a confidential filing system detailing each new settlers journey. All communications and reported incidents including workplace reporting, were documented through this system.

The process for settlement support for each new settler, as detailed by the Settlement Support officer, and activated for each case, is detailed as an attachment.

Employment and Employer Support – Business Liaison Function

As part of the RDV grant project plan, a business liaison function was identified as part of the skill set required to deliver the program and it was expected this would be based in Wyndham CEC. In the early stages of the Pilot, it was quickly identified that Wyndham CEC West@Work program already had an established process and system. The West@Work program has expertise in the placement of CALD candidates, particularly the Karen in suitable workplaces and had internal capacity to engage on workforce placement, including pre and post job training. Languages across four dialects were also supported through the Jobs Victoria funded program and it also enabled 6 month ongoing support for all placed candidates. Subsequently West@Work performed the function of employee and business liaison, with the focus on job placement of candidates in Ararat workplaces. This function was in addition to the contractual arrangements with Jobs Victoria.

Working in Partnership – Navigating Immigration Documentation

On placing a new settler in a job he was very happy to be in, it became apparent that the employee had an expired Immigration Card. The complexity of the Federal government's immigration system soon became apparent to the ARCC team including a possible 30 day minimum wait period for documentation to be assessed.

The ARCC settlement officer worked very closely with the Wyndham CEC settlement and employment team and drew heavily on their expertise in navigating the process for updating the documentation. Knowing which document could demonstrate the right-to-work and how best to approach the situation, was critical in delivering a positive outcome to the employee and employer.

The ARCC team also worked very closely with the new settler and employer detailing the process that was underway. An updated Immigration Card was subsequently provided within 7 days.

WHAT WE DID

Encouraging New Settlement

The Pilot's initial intention was to encourage potential new settlers through the Wyndham CEC settlement case management and settlement support program. Wyndham CEC settlement support program provides services to newly arrived migrants and those who have lived in Australia for less than five years.

There was recognition that time was required to build trust in program outcomes and enable understanding of exactly what the program had to offer. The leadership structure of the Karen community was recognised as significant to growing support for the program. Many of the Wyndham CEC settlement team members are leaders within the Karen community, and their support and expertise was identified as essential in the success of the partnership and building capacity in long term settlement support.

Wyndham CEC worked with ARCC team to develop a targeted, recruitment campaign aimed at promoting the program through existing community networks, providing information on what was offer and the benefits of employment and a rural lifestyle. The campaign included an informational video, social media posts and podcasts targeting people from the Communities of Burma. On the advice from Wyndham CEC settlement team, the faith based and geographic populations of Werribee and Ringwood were targeted where larger populations of Karen currently live.

The campaign also included a series of online forums providing face to face discussions with Wyndham CEC and ARCC team members in Karen, Chin, Karenni and Burmese. The capacity of the Wyndham CEC settlement team to provide language support across the dialects of the communities of Burma was an essential element of the forums. Resulting from the forums, interested people were encouraged to register interest in familiarisation tours of Ararat.

Familiarisation Tours

Over the first 12 months of the pilot, three familiarisation tours were run and included site visits to workplaces including manufacturing, health services, meat export and agricultural businesses actively recruiting new workers. Wyndham CEC provided support throughout the tours.

As a host community, local volunteer services, faith-based community members were invited to welcome events and lunches. These events were well supported and a photo journalist was engaged to record the initial tours including travelling with bus tour to Ararat. This provided a rich base to understand the experiences of each potential new settler. The all-day tours typically ran from 8am to 6pm and required careful event management planning and support.

In addition to the familiarisation tours, a cane ball and volley ball event was held in Ararat as part of the communities of Burma tournament program. This event was proposed by Wyndham CEC as part of extending the program's reach and it attracted 118 participants from across Victoria, mostly younger high school aged students. Following from this event, an additional bus tour was organised and 16 participants visited Ararat, mostly younger families.

In total, 42 people travelled to Ararat over the three bus tours. Several families also travelled separately and were supported by the ARCC team during their visit.



Connecting Settlement to Employment

The process from recruitment to new settler was managed through an expression of interest (EOI) approach generated through the recruitment campaign. All EOIs triaged through West at Work, seeking to understand skills, assist and assess resumes and actively understand what type of work would be suitable. This process required continual communication between the team to move from EOI to job placement. It is estimated that each job placement and new settlement activation took on average 8 to 12 weeks.

A process was established between the Wyndham-based employment team and the ARCC based team as detailed below. Weekly team meetings worked through the settlement and employment needs of each potential new settler and this established pattern of communication proved invaluable in both establishing the work needs of the new settler as well as identifying ways of communicating with employers. This flexible approach also proved invaluable in building co-operative relationships with employers and potential employees.

A register of interested candidates was established and this provided the record keeping function of current employment, skill set, family support and likely time required to relocate. The employment team managed the register and shared with the ARCC team on a regular basis. The agreed communication process between the Ararat based team and Wyndham employment team is detailed as an attachment.

Training Program

A critical element of the Pilot was the capacity to provide job related and English language training. Wyndham CEC, as experts in this area, developed a program tailored to the Pilot with a particular focus on orientation to Ararat, the types of job opportunities available and a focus on the corresponding language, literacy, numeracy & digital (LLND) requirements. Initially targeting only new settlers in the Pilot, the Ararat program struggled to find traction and only two new settlers were part of the English classes.

The second iteration of this course reached out to employers who were operating with labour mobility scheme employees, and this vastly improved both the capacity to deliver meaningful and engaging English classes. A locally-based English as a Second language (ESL) teacher was engaged to run the classes and the use of Public Library after hours provided a family-friendly space where children could also attend and utilise the play zone while parents and carers engaged in learning. The program was broad and adaptive working through life skills and understanding Australian culture and had a focus on workplace based conversational skills.

Over the course of the program, the classes attracted on average 10 learners per session. The classes also provided a strong element of social inclusion and this is discussed in the Learnings section of the report. Options for ongoing delivery of an English language program in Ararat include exploration of a volunteer-based program (based on other successful regional programs such as Sunraysia Conversational English Program). This model is also discussed in the Learnings of the Pilot.



WHAT WE DID

On Boarding and Workplace Based Training

The Wyndham CEC employment program provided expertise in working with potential employees to understand their skills sets and work preferences, as well as interview preparation and bilingual language assistance. It also provided the ability to manage employer's onboarding processes including induction and pre-employment workplace training. The employment program was able to assist employers with understanding the skills of potential candidates and extended to paid work trials, medical and hearing checks, as well as standard and bespoke PPE when requested.

The ability to draw on bi-lingual support was a critical component of the employment program, and this provided benefit to both employees and employers. Often, this component could be flexibly managed across the ARCC based team and Wyndham CEC's employment team and extended to

- explaining the program and what could be provided to employees and employers
- being present at interviews
- being present at induction

- assisting in understanding the workplace needs of the new employee
- translation of employment contracts and associated documents
- translation of on-site work procedures

The employment program also funded job skills training which best matched employer and employee needs. The Wyndham employment team provided support in connecting to training providers and finding best fit options. The range of training which was funded under the Pilot included:

- Welding
- Chainsaw Use
- Forklift driver
- Heavy vehicle license
- Time management skills
- Food handling and barista skills
- Transition to manual license

In total, 13 employees (56%) undertook pre or post employment training. The key learnings from the employment program are described further in the report.

Gason - Welding Training

As part of the Pilot and to meet the needs of Gason a local export manufacturing firm, a welding training program was developed in consort with Federation University TAFE. This took time to achieve with the requirements of the Pilot training somewhat different to the accredited training programs typically on offer. Only one training session was delivered, on site in Ballarat. This bespoke training did however, demonstrate to Gason, that the potential employee had the necessary skills to be engaged as a welder.

Gason also run their own form of internal training through Federation University and have a well established relationship with the training provider. On a yearly basis, Gason engage Federation University to run a 'boot camp' style on-site training workshop which looks to assess the skill levels for potential apprenticeship entrants. For the three workers engaged by Gason as part of the Pilot, two expressed some level of interest in an apprenticeship. However, the English language capacity was a potential issue for one employee.



Embedded Workplace English Program

In the early stages of the Pilot the concept of embedded workplace English programs were explored with similar examples already in operation in other workplaces with a high proportion of CALD employees and where Wyndham CEC had an active employment placement relationship. This approach was not immediately attractive to the two Ararat businesses where this suggestion was discussed. It was decided that an offsite English classes provided the better option for the course of the Pilot, but with a view to continue to encourage consideration and possible funding for such initiatives particularly through Jobs Victoria funding streams.

Transitional and Settlement Housing

The provision of housing is a critical element of the settlement process and connecting with local real estate agents and housing providers was identified as the preliminary task of the Pilot. This included one on one meetings with Real estate agents, as well as phone contact detailing the aim of the new settlement program.

Initially, two houses were secured under ARCC tenancy and provided transitional housing for new settlers. A transitional housing policy was established which was based on the critical awareness of the need to manage the needs of existing community needs with additional demand

on housing stock. The policy is attached. The Pilot funded the fit-out of the property and guidelines for shared living were developed and translated to Karen to assist in the smooth running of the transitional house. The transitional houses were not without issue, and these are discussed in the Learnings section of the report.

Importantly, the Pilot provided the capacity to support resettlement through funding relocation, providing furniture and household goods to reestablish new lives. Support for housing was provided through bond and limited rental assistance typically payment of one month in advance, and each case's level of support was determined based on circumstances.

In addition, the Pilot focused on promoting rural property purchase as an attractive aspect of living and working in Ararat. The range of housing supply was distributed on a regular basis to those that had shown an interest in the program. In addition, informational videos explaining purchasing and renting properties were developed and translated into Karen. The information videos also included detail on financing and conveyancing in the property purchase process. The videos were interview in style and included input from a local real estate and legal firm as well as a community bank. These were distributed through social media and local Karen networks.



Not Asking For Too Much

Arriving in Ararat on a hot Friday afternoon, the ARCC team greeted a new family with a local faith leader. A basket of food and toys for the children were placed in the house before they arrived, and the house had been set up with a fridge, kitchen table and couch as had been requested. The families only additional request had been a rice cooker.

The family had arrived with friends and their personal goods. It soon became apparent that the family did not have all the goods needed to settle well. The family did not want to ask for too much. The Pilot funding was subsequently able to provide a range of good quality new items to assist in their long term settlement in Ararat.

OUTCOMES

Meeting the Pilot's Objectives

The Pilot and New Settlement Program had the following key objectives:

- boost regional migration to meet the workforce needs of local industry
- deliver a successful resettlement program that connects migrants with education, vocational training, employment and housing
- build critical mass of the population in Ararat and Northern Grampians via in-migration of workers and their families to secure long-term viability and prosperity.

The program was expected to result in the following outcomes:

- evidence workers have been provided with pre-employment education;
- evidence of resettlement and employment;
- evidence people are in employment six (6) months after initial engagement; and
- evidence people are in employment 12 months after initial engagement.

What we achieved

The Pilot attracted **87** expressions of interest over its life cycle resulting in:

46 new settlers including family members and children resettling in Ararat over the course of the Pilot, and **23 new workers** (August 2023).

It was estimated in April 2023, with the inclusion of pending candidates the Pilot would have attracted 20 new workers and 43 new settlers.

The extension of time provided by RDV, enabled these additional candidates, to be employed and resettled in Ararat.

This demonstrates the success of the nimble and agile approach of the RDV funding model.

New Settler and Employment Outcomes August 2023

Employment and settlement	Total over the Pilot	Current Numbers
Workers	23	19
Settlers	46	40

Source: Pilot Employment Register

- The average length of employment across all workers is 6.5 months.
- Four candidates commenced working and living in Ararat, with one farm worker and his family returning to Werribee within five months due to family reasons. He does, however, continue to undertake seasonal work with the same employer.
- Two younger candidates also returned to metropolitan Melbourne (25 and 17 year old siblings) to take up different employment. One of the siblings was employed for 10 months and the other for 3 months.
- The scope of time in employment is shown below and demonstrates the Pilot has delivered on its objectives of sustaining employment over a 6 and 12 month time period.

Length of Employment and Resettlement

Length of employment	Employee numbers
12+ months	4
6+ months	6
Under 6 months	13
Total Employees over 16 months	23

Source: Pilot Employment Register



Of the 23 new workers, 13 received training specific to their role or potential role, and this is shown below.

Training Type	Number of employees
Welding	6
Agriculture	1
Time Management	1
Microsoft Excel	1
Heavy Vehicle	1
Forklifting	1
Manual Vehicle License	2
Barista / Food Handling	1
Total	13

Source: Pilot Employment Register



Profile of New Settlers

- The Pilot attracted a younger cohort than expected with a median age of 30.5, and an age range from 17 to 50.
- New settlers include families and younger, more mobile settlers.
- The Pilot has attracted 6 new settler families, with children.
- Four families have children enrolled in local early childhood and primary schools.
- There are 8 children enrolled in local schools.
- Those with families have tended to remain local and not return to former communities on weekends. Rather there is evidence of families making trips to visit Ararat.
- There is evidence among the new settlers a desire to build the Karen community for improved support particularly around child care arrangements and network support.
- Only one of the new settlers is SETS eligible migrants, with the average time of residency in Australia 11 years.
- Evidence of new settlers still requiring support due to language barrier is apparent including difficulty in talking to schools about daily routines, the length of term breaks and documentation to assist their children in school and kindergarten.

Schools and Navigating A New Community

I am a bit worry for next year when one of my sons will start going to prep and I don't know where to get the form for the enrolment and how to ask for this and this will be one of the issues especially for the language barrier.

(Source: Transcribed interview with new settler)

OUTCOMES

- Research strongly indicates that even after a period of time in Australia, or a new country, barriers are still evident particularly around language and access to service provision including health, education and community inclusiveness (Abood et. al., 2021).
- New settlers have highlighted the importance of migrant English and home work support for themselves and their children.
- Enjoying the rural community is a highlight for many new settlers, and Ararat’s lakes and gardens have become a focal point for community connectiveness.
- The Community Garden is viewed as important for the new settlers with each one of the 13 having had some level of engagement with the Gardens.

Why People Didn’t Pursue the Program

The Pilot attracted a relatively high level of interest (87) and exploring why people didn’t make the choice to take up living and working in Ararat, the evidence suggests that key factors include:

- Other employment opportunities were taken by approximately 20 candidates which better matched their preferences and life choice.

Living in Ararat

“ In the weekend, we both have no work so sometimes we go to the lakes. We go to Lake Fynes, fishing and hiking. ”

(Source: Transcribed interview with new settler)

- The capacity to match existing pay rates was a consideration for several candidates.
- Maintaining geographic connection to family and faith based connections also featured strongly;
- Uncertainty around Ararat as a community, particularly healthcare provision and support for children in schools. In response, a series of health and education information videos were developed to help in understanding Ararat’s capacity to support long term, safe settlement.



KEY LEARNINGS

What worked

Promoting the Lived Experience

- Familiarisation tours and making new settlers aware of what a host community looks and feels like, including workplaces, community services and leadership is a pivotal component of resettlement programs.
- The function of a settlement service role is critical and this requires a lived experience of both being a migrant and a new settler in the community. However, none of the new settlers are eligible for support from Federal government settlement support programs due to their time of residency in Australia.

- Building trust takes time and commitment as is much about understanding among migrant needs, and the extent of support that is required, as well as working with the host community around expectations and what cultural safety looks and feels like from the lived experience.
- Working with faith based leaders as ambassadors and support agents provides a way of inclusion in the community, particularly for people from the communities of Burma, where connection to faith is a significant aspect of their cultural beliefs and ways of living.
- Ongoing community engagement is needed – it is not a one off event but a journey for both the established host community and new settlers.

Understanding Our New Settlers – First Bus Tour

Our first bus tour saw 16 potential new settlers arrive in Ararat to experience a range of workplaces and the extent of rural living across the municipality. A welcome event with engagement from business and community leaders was held, small welcome gifts were presented representing the potential for new life and visits to workplaces commenced. It was beautiful, bright Autumn day and the logistics of making the day a success for all was planned well in advance. However, it coincided with the decommissioning of a naval vessel named after Ararat. As the tour ventured across Ararat there was an increasing presence of military personnel. Discussion started to emerge from the new settlers as to what was going on, and the ARCC team endeavored to find out the exact nature of the



military presence. While the team sought advice, there was increasing recognition that this was less than ideal and highlighted the need to be better aware of cultural sensitivity to military and how this presented a different experience for those on the bus. A key learning early in the Pilot for all our team.

Employment Interface

Critical learnings emerged across the employment interface of the Pilot and these include:

- The willingness of employers to participate in migrant resettlement is essential to making long term settlement possible.
- Ararat employers have welcomed the program and have provided ongoing support to the Pilot and the team throughout the project.

- Careful consideration of the possible match between available jobs and the skills, qualifications and career aspirations of migrant settlers is required to ensure employment facilitates successful settlement.
- The Pilot provided a systemic way for migrant workers to link up with rural employers and provided an integrated support mechanism to facilitate secondary migration away from metropolitan cities.

KEY LEARNINGS

- Employers are critical in identifying and communicating workforce requirements, investing in training and work experience opportunities, and linking local job vacancies to longer-term career pathways with industry.
- Sponsorship of skilled and temporary migrant workers is an opportunity to attract migrants from metropolitan areas.
- Employers played various roles including particularly in rural locations, as hosts and cultural ambassadors with leading by example, is a significant aspect of the Pilot
- While business concerns with workforce productivity and retention are significant, the Pilot showed ethical concern for workers' wellbeing featured well across Ararat workplaces.
- Feedback from employers is positive and for Gason, the placement of 3 workers in the welding section has provided a lift to output and filled their workforce for the first time in several years. The employees are recognised as making a valuable contribution, and their work ethic and approach to team work is commended by the employer.

The Microwave – Working as a Team

For people from the communities of Burma working and sharing meals together becomes an important part of the daily routine.

For one worker, his location right next door to his workplace, was considered a major advantage, not having to commute to work as well as providing an ideal lunch time break for him and his Karen workmates.

His workmates became so comfortable with this as part of a normal workday, a request for a microwave in the home of the worker was made. This was accommodated with Pilot funding.

- Providing employers cultural context for the communal way in which the Karen work was also important. Developing understanding of the leadership role one worker may take on is important, as well as having bilingual support in the workplace.

Employment Program

- A systematic approach to delivering a workforce capacity program through new migrant settlement, requires a well-conceived employment service which brings together expertise in job placement as well as understanding of the needs of a CALD workforce.
- Working with the Wyndham CEC employment team provided this capacity and the value of this cannot be under-estimated.
- It provided a flexible model, backed up full support from the ARCC team, as well as expertise in onboarding and accessing training.
- The Wyndham CEC and ARCC employment team worked across geography and workplaces.
- The Wyndham CEC employment program support enabled:
 - o each worker to be mentored over 6 months;
 - o funded PPE relevant to the work situation (for one firm this enabled support for welding specific/ fabrication PPE);
 - o ongoing employer and employment engagement;
 - o assistance with understanding workplace policies including OHS and induction procedures;
 - o bilingual support for interviews and induction including translating written documents when required.
- Maintaining a relationship between employment and settlement outcomes is critical to the ongoing resettlement program.
- Employers and employees both require support in developing and maintaining a culturally safe workplace. The Wyndham CEC employment program has demonstrated capacity as being effective and efficient way to achieve this.

Community Interface

Critical to ARCC's instigation of the new migrant resettlement program in partnership Wyndham CEC, is a commitment and appreciation of the benefits of cultural diversity and inclusion. The concept of welcoming new arrivals is also recognised as critically important. ARCC is a rural Welcoming City and has been part of this global initiative since 2015. This program recognises the role of Councils in encouraging and supporting culturally safe settlement, and this extends to working with all stakeholders in the community in a way which embraces the benefits of diversity.

As way of mobilising the Pilot as a long term program across rural and regional localities, key learnings include:

- Engagement with the community at all levels takes time so harnessing the ambassadorial role of community leaders, particularly CALD community leaders, and service clubs is significant.
- Advocacy and new migrant voluntary organisations are equally important in building inclusivity and for Ararat, the Rural Australians for Refugees have shown great support for the Pilot's new settlers. This includes mentoring several younger new arrivals including housing them and linking them to other support groups. They have also donated camping equipment to new settlers so they can experience the outdoor living benefits of the municipality.
- A sense of 'Welcome' cannot be under estimated in providing a positive resettlement experience. This includes welcoming letters from Council indicating how to reach out to settlement and other support services.
- There are also significant connections to sporting clubs however, this is an area the Pilot did not activate and could be seen to be limited in this way. The potential is there to build engagement, particularly for Ararat as it finalises the redevelopment of its rural sport and recreation facility, Gordon Street, which we be able to host a range of sports.
- There is a high degree of self-determination among the new settlers and finding their own way of living in their new home is clearly evident. For example, starting with just a few new settlers, the Ararat Community Garden has become a meeting place, and this follows a pattern similar in other localities that have established resettlement programs such

as Nhill. Not only has this built up the Garden's membership base, but it has also added vibrancy and productivity to the space.

- Building a sense of community and belonging for people from the communities of Burma is a collective value. Social networks extend beyond immediate kin and there is a strong commitment to support each other on the basis of belonging to the communities of Burma.
- Encouraging a critical mass of new settlers will not only provide kinship networks but will enable other service to grow alongside this, for example, CALD support in local schools.

Rural Community Experiences – The Pitch Festival

Like many rural communities, service and supporting clubs are a vital part of making life work on a daily basis. Ararat is home to the Pitch, an art and music based Festival which attracts over 18,000 attendees each year. For some a music event for others an exploration of lifestyle, but regardless it provides much colour, music and excitement.

Ararat Lions Club and the Moyston Football Clubs provide food for festival goers and workers, and this provides to them the capacity to fund a range of local charities and services. Three of our new settlers volunteered to help both with the Lions and Football Club BBQs and explore a different side of Ararat as a rural community. They helped over three days, and as part of their volunteering where able to experience the Festival.

“I loved the Community BBQ but I wouldn't go back for the music, just the community atmosphere. I'll be doing it again next year.”

“So much fun, but I smelled of onions, we had to buy some retro and vintage clothes to go and look around the Festival.”

KEY LEARNINGS

Project Governance and Nature of the Project Brief

Ensuring the delivery of the Pilot required effective project management across its lifecycle. This included establishing internal governance arrangements, managing partnership relationships and reporting to RDV. Key learnings include:

- Establishing and maintaining a reporting process including monthly meetings with RDV and the partners and provided a way of ongoing discussion and identifying the Pilot's progress.
- The openness of the project brief allowed sufficient flexibility to explore and navigate the operational aspects of the Pilot. This enabled situations to be assessed with due diligence and in line with expected outcomes, but equally enabled a range of avenues to explore, particularly in the requirements of new settlers and workplace engagement.
- In this way, the Pilot was driven by outcomes but had capacity to truly explore varied ways of achieving these.
- The extension of the Pilot's time frame by 9 months as supported by RDV was significant and enabled the earlier short term successes to be progressed from 7 new settlers in October 2022 to 46 new settlers in August 2023.
- Engagement with RDV throughout the Pilot enabled ways of engaging with other supporting Agencies including the Department of Education and Workplace Training Authority.

Housing

The ability to provide suitable housing for new settlers is critical for any resettlement program. Housing availability and shortages of affordable, rental supply is evident across both metropolitan, and regional and rural Australia. Ararat is no different, however, the ARCC settlement team established relationships with real estate agents immediately and this outreach provided direct benefits. Key learnings include:

- A clear housing policy is fundamental and this needs to identify and respond to issues already present in the housing market.
- Transitional housing is important and having a point of arrival while workplaces are settled into is key requirement of a resettlement program.

Management of the transitional housing can be problematic and while rules and guidelines are established, careful monitoring of the house and new settler experiences are important.

- Often issues or areas of concern may not be brought to the attention of settlement support, until they truly are an issue.
- The concept of cultural safety is also an area which needs to be well considered in housing new settlers. Some geographic areas may be more beneficial than others and linking into services particularly schools and zoning is a consideration.
- The Pilot has enabled the housing of all settlers to date and engaging and working with rental and housing providers is significant. Greater work could have been done in building an understanding of the Karen, particularly how the Pilot differs from the shorter term labour mobility schemes. This was identified as key messaging in our communication strategy and is an area for ongoing focus.
- ARCC's housing policy detailed the process for securing homes for new settlers, and this included taking the initial tenancy, providing a bond and rent assistance. After a period of settlement, a transfer of lease to the new settler was requested.
- The need to engage more broadly with housing providers on the aims of the Pilot and its vision of culturally, safe settlement was identified as area for improvement.
- Affordable housing over the Pilot emerged as a key attractor for new settlers. This was evidenced by the fact that 7 new settlers have express interest in purchasing property and this was among the top reasons for their resettlement. For others there are longer term plans to relocate to buy property. For example, an experienced welder is intending to relocate to Ararat once he has sufficient security to purchase a property. He has already undertaken a work trial at Gason and his CV has been retained by Gason human resources.
- Rental prices and options to purchase quality housing stock with large blocks are important for many from the communities of Burma.
- The preferred price point for a rental is estimated at \$1300 per month as this allows the capacity to build capital to buy a home.

Communities of Faith

What do you do when the transitional house is suspected of being haunted? This question is one which the team hadn't considered as part of the project planning, however when it was presented to the team, it was not ignored or dismissed. Concerns of unusual activity at the Pilot's transitional house, housing several new settlers, emerged over a series of weeks, with a small number of reported incidents leading to 'we don't feel safe here.'

Pragmatic responses were to change all the housing locks and check for security issues. Rehousing of two of the settlers happened quite quickly. And at the same time, the team sought advice from local faith based leaders who without question, volunteered blessing of the home. The team subsequently requested blessings of all the houses which were part of the Program, and this recognised the importance of faith and engaging with communities of faith in a manner which is supportive and embracing of beliefs.

English language training as a pathway to community engagement

- Improving English language capacity enables the ability to navigate living and working in countries where English is the prevalent language.
- The inclusion of the English language training, while it initially struggled, has become a highlight of the program and Pilot. Feedback from participants indicates the focus on conversational English and understanding ways of living and working in Australia is enjoyable and valuable.
- The ability of ARCC to continue in partnership in delivering English language support is a significant opportunity for a rural locality.
- Having a locally based and flexible ESL teacher is a rarity and asset in moving this program forward.
- Developing other models of English language delivery is also an option including volunteer based programs.
- The classes have also provided a way of new settlers engaging with other new and temporary settlers, particularly the labour mobility scheme workers. As example, a volleyball program has commenced using mobile nets purchased through the Pilot as part of a successful Caneball event. Initially starting with 6 players, the volleyball program has now extended to 30 players and a permanent home for the program is now being investigated.
- The classes have been well placed in the local library and demonstrate the engagement of community, with one local, Mrs Schulz providing a range of cakes and sweets with a traditional Australian flavour for each class. This has become both a highlight and way of understanding rural Australian culture.
- Building the capacity of Ararat's Learn Local is also an area for focus. Working with Wyndham CEC in a mentoring role could assist in supporting local staff and volunteers in the delivery of the programs including workplace conversational English.

Adaptability in the Workplace

One worker who is fluent in four languages but lacks confidence in English, utilised a translation method from Thai language to English using a phone app. In this way, he was able to communicate with fellow workers who were only able to communicate in English. While he sought back up from his fellow Karen workmate, his innovative approach took pressure off his colleague so when able he could help but when not, he knew his colleague had a backup communication method.

WHERE WE STRUGGLED

Employment

- The Pilot struggled to gain traction in several areas of employment particularly workforce capacity building in the agriculture sector.
- While opportunities for work were clearly identified, interest in agriculture was limited to two workers. Bus tours encouraged interest however, overall there was little flow on effect. As a result, jobs available at, for example, a local Egg Farm and a farm managers role were unable to be filled over the life course of the Pilot.
- Capacity to deliver employment in the health services was limited however, two certificated Health Services candidates are currently looking for suitable roles.
- Permanent employment is significant in workers making the decision to take up roles, as are pay rates and pay parity.
- The time to work through a job placement was also underestimated.
- On average, from expression of interest to job placement typically took between 8 to 12 weeks.
- The Pilot took greater time than expected to gain employees in meat processing.
- There was interest from high skilled workers including those just about to finish degrees in Psychology, Mental Health Nursing and PhD students. Roles for these candidates could not be matched with the need for job permanency also featuring in this cohort.

Ararat Meat Exports

It took 15 months to secure an employee for Ararat Meat Exports. However, upon the first worker speaking about her positive re-settlement experience including an engaging workplace with regular breaks and music, there has been a flow of interest. Communicating leadership and work style of the Karen was important for employers to understand how one worker can provide a good measure to others. Affordable housing and a view to purchase property plus short commute times were also communicated as benefits of resettlement.

Engaging with Government Agencies

- While outreach was made to engage on funding programs that could assist in new settlement, as well as at the employer interface, including skills training the existing range of Government programs were unable to assist due to criteria and focus (for example, accredited training, the cessation of Jobs Victoria's jobs subsidies). Engagement with regional Agencies including Jobs Victoria and the Department of Education was initiated, however, this did not provide great traction in moving the Pilot forward.
- Initial engagement focused on connecting into Programs that could assist over the long term of the resettlement program including subsidies, grants and enabling funding for:
 - o Embedded workplace English Programs
 - o CALD support in local schools
 - o CALD workplace based training
 - o Job subsidies for employers
 - o Funding for innovation in the workplace
- Engagement with the Victorian Workplace Skills Authority was instigated through RDV, and there was clear interest in the Pilot and support for its outcomes. There was however, recognition that workplace based training funding options are currently limited with most funding programs focusing on accredited training

Existing Settlement Services for Ararat

- An emerging theme across the Pilot, was the fragmentation of the existing settlement support services for Ararat. The Ballarat Community Health program serves a large geographic area and Ararat is serviced on a needs be basis by regional SETs support.
- Given the intention and interest in building diversity in Ararat's, and the known need for continuing support for both SETs eligible and longer term migrants, a strategic and focused approach is required.
- The Pilot would not have achieved its objectives utilising the existing SETs service provision.
- The Pilot has highlighted the need to develop an adaptive model which responds well to the needs of a growing CALD community

ARARAT POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

- The Pilot has provided the opportunity to assess and explore ways of providing culturally safe settlement for new settlers, and this extends to the workplaces.
- There are certain challenges of rural settlement and the Pilot has highlighted that an adaptive framework provides the best way forward to ensuring the “promise” of safe, engaged settlement is adopted.
- Driving this adaptive framework, is a focus on building community commitment through informed cultural awareness including encouraging understanding of the settlement dynamics.
- The Pilot also highlights that the presence of previously-settled migrant communities in regional towns can be an ‘anchor’ for new arrivals.
- Faith based and community services and clubs also provide significant anchor points and a ‘bridge’ between the new arrivals and their host community.
- The Pilot has also demonstrated that community inclusiveness built by the new settlers’ self determination and choice is equally important.
- The lived experience of the migrant journey is a critical factor in understanding what it is like to be a new arrival and this brings the capacity to communicate between the host community and new settlers.
- Connecting to a well managed, funded and operationalised employment program is equally important

Moving Forward - Options for Settlement Support

Three principles underlying the suggested rural resettlement model framework:

- Expert lived experience of resettlement supported through settlement support function
- Community engagement driven by leadership
- Well placed employment is a benefit to all

Key elements and service provision

Lived Experience and Settlement Support

A draft model for discussion has been developed and is based on Wyndham CEC settlement support through an out-reach co-ordinator role based in Ararat. Key functions include:

- understanding and communicating the lived experience of a new settler in Ararat
- encouraging new settlers to experience Ararat either through familiarisation tours or one on one visits to the municipality
- working with the employment team to assist in understanding job needs and preferences
- securing short-term and long term accommodation
- accessing health services
- navigating the geography of their new community
- sourcing specialist services where required
- enrolling in school, where needed, and English language classes
- establishing social support networks and fostering community engagement

Longer term function

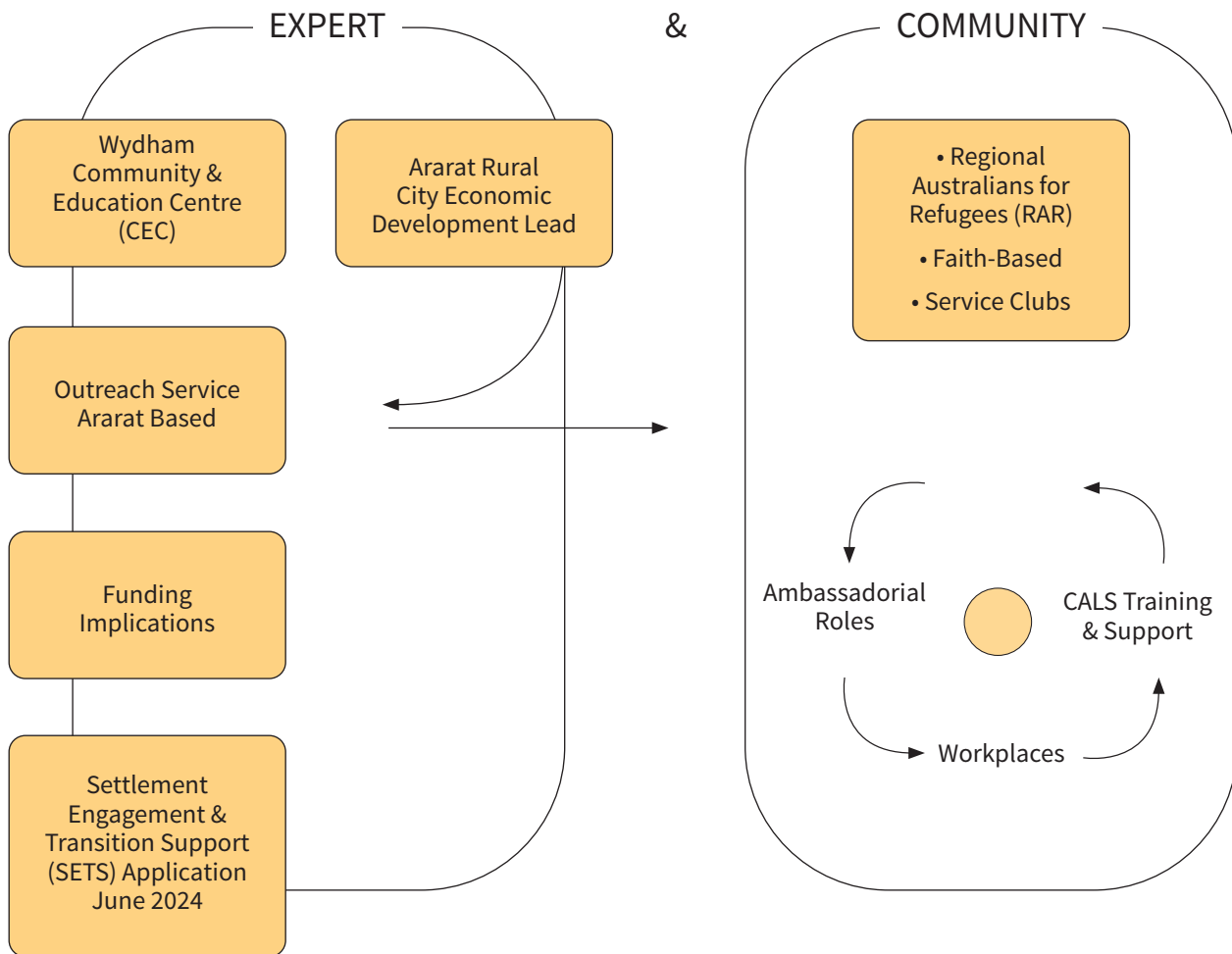
- Understanding culture – what is cultural safety
- Understanding Australian systems, customs and society
- Understanding new arrivals systems, customs and society
- Navigating pathways for economic participation in Australia

Community

- The model recognises the role community based support plays in the migrant journey.
- Aimed at building a community of inclusiveness working with employers and community leaders to engage and

DRAFT – RURAL RESETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR PARTNERSHIP DISCUSSION

Rural Settlement Framework



Employment Program

- The Pilot has highlighted that building workforce capacity is well activated by a focused employment program.
- Similarly to settlement support, an employment program requires the capacity to understand and communicate lived experienced of the new migrant journey.

- The Pilot has through drawing on Wyndham CEC West@Work program provided a functional, operationalised model to work both employers and employees. In tandem with the settlement program, continuation of this employment program is also required to ensure long term settlement is achieved.
- approaches which can be activated when encouraging CALD employment.

New Settler's Experience

“ With this time moving to Ararat, we’ve received abundance support, prior to this I didn’t think that I will received this much of support, and now the support. Sometimes my wife received with transportation to go to shops sometime. It’s just nice. ”

(Source: Transcribed interview with a new settler)

BENEFIT ASSESSMENT / VALUE FOR MONEY

This section highlights the estimated impact of the RDV spend of \$931,000 over a period of 20 months. Key outcomes are:

- The Pilot has filled 23 jobs, generated an estimated direct effect of \$18.7 million.
- An estimated 19 indirect jobs have been generated as part of the consumption and supply chain impact.

Table 2: Jobs by Industry

Industry	Employment
Meat processing	8
Farming	2
Manufacturing	6
IT	1
Construction / gardening	2
Early education	1
Disability support	1
Administration	2
Direct jobs	23
Indirect jobs*	19
Total jobs	42
Total output effect*	\$18.7m

Source: Remplan analysis August 2023

Pilot Costs and Outcomes

- The Pilot has also demonstrated cost efficiency and value for money.
- The Pilot funding provided homes for new settlers and where necessary, covered relocation costs.
- The resettlement costs typically covered by the Pilot included initial rental costs (Bond plus one months rent), in addition to providing basic housing goods such as a fridge, washing machine, new beds, table and chairs, plus couches.
- Where available they were sourced locally.
 - o The average cost of filling a job is estimated at \$3,100 per employee (excluding Program salaries and on-costs)
 - o The average per household cost of resettlement is estimated at \$4,200 (excluding Program salaries and on-costs)
 - o Overall, the Program and Pilot including salaries and on-costs, have delivered safe and successful settlement at a total cost of \$20,240 per settler.

Table 3: Average Spend Per Settler and Worker

Program	Estimated Cost
Average relocation cost*	\$4,169
Cost per Employee	\$3,112
Total cost per settler (including Program salaries)**	\$14,130

Source: ARCC Tracking Details August 2023

Note: * Cost per case including relocation and housing costs

** This includes total funding for the New Settlement Program (\$650,000) including provision for all salaries and on-costs, training and community engagement. Excludes Pilot funding of \$281,000.



MAP OF ARARAT



KEY EMPLOYERS

Gason

- In February 1946, Frank Gason founded a small, family owned and operated motor trimming business at Ararat in Western Victoria.
- Gason designs and manufactures world-class broadacre farm machinery, industrial and wood heating products. Gason distribute and support all products via an extensive dealer network across Australia.
- Gason offer a wide range of industrial services such as laser cutting, powder coating, welding and assembly supplying customers in major capital cities and other regional areas.
- Gason has an extensive network of dealers across Australia provide sales and support for agriculture equipment and specialist wood heating ranges.
- A fourth generation of Gasons are now working in the business as part of a strong management team, continuing to apply Frank's original guiding principles that made the company synonymous with quality.

Website: <https://gason.com.au/>

AME Systems

- From the beginning in 1977 this small manufacturing enterprise was established in Ararat. In 2015 it was restructured to a new company AME Systems (VIC) Pty Ltd.
- It is a leading Australian, privately owned designer and manufacturer of quality electrical wiring harnesses and assemblies.
- AME systems is a multi-million dollar business employing more than 250 highly skilled and staff at both Ararat and Melbourne plants.
- They specialise in customised electrical solutions for heavy transport, military, medical and special purpose vehicles, and machinery, offering full service and support form design to delivery, and after markets sales.
- AME Systems collaborate with 190 large and small client requirements serviced on annual basis, both locally and internationally.

Website: <https://amesystems.com.au/history-electrical-wiring-harness/>

Ararat Meat Exports

- Ararat Meat Abattoir is located in Ararat 200 km west of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
- All products processed at the abattoir are exported to markets around the world including North America, Asia and the Middle East.
- It is HALAL accredited facility has been processing over one million livestock annually for over 30 years.
- Ararat Meat Exports are the specialists in the export of quality mutton, lamb and goat.
- Livestock is purchased from markets and the majority of sheep are purchased directly from farmers. The company has sheep buyers available for appraisal of livestock in the Ararat district, Victoria, Tasmania, Southern New South Wales and Eastern South Australia.
- The facility operates under a stringent quality assurance program incorporating HACCP standards that are audited by the Australian Governments Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry.
- There are approximately about 200 workers.

Website: <https://araratmeatexports.com/>

Braebrook Pastoral Company Pty. Ltd.

- Piggery and sheep farm.



ARARAT PROJECT - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

All sections marked with an Asterix * are compulsory

Candidate details

* Date: ____ / ____ / ____

First Name: _____ Surname: * _____

Phone: * _____ E-mail: * _____

Address: * _____

Main language spoken at home? _____ Other languages spoken? _____

Level of English? _____ What is your cultural background? _____

Date of Birth? _____ Gender? Not disclosed

Country of birth? _____ Year of arrival in Australia? _____

Highest level of education? _____

Project Information

How did you hear about the RelocationP roject? _____

What interests you in living and working in a rural Community like Ararat? * _____

Have you taken part in either the bus tour to Ararat or an on line information session? Yes No

Have you discussed with your family the idea of relocating to Ararat? Yes No

Are you currently working? * Yes No If yes, how many hours per week do you work? * _____

What type of work do you currently do? _____

What type of work would you like to do in Ararat? * _____

Do you have a Driver's license? Yes No If yes, what license do you hold? _____

When would you be ready to relocate to Ararat?

Immediately Next 3 months Next 6 months Next 12 months

Who would you like to live with if you relocate? * _____

Would your family be moving to Ararat with you?* Yes No

How many people (including yourself) would be moving? * _____

Family members details

First name	Last Name	Phone	Relationship eg father/sister	DOB	Jobseeker? Y/N	Type of work? e.g. admin

Do you have a current resume? Yes No

If yes, please email to Ko Yeh ktalor@ararat.vic.gov.au

NEW ARRIVAL SETTLEMENT PROGRAM – GRAMPIANS PILOT

ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL PROJECT COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN



PROJECT SUMMARY

Item	Detail
Project Name	New Arrival Settlement Program – Grampians Pilot
Project Details	<p>Our Vision:</p> <p>The development of an organic, relational model for worker resettlement programs, through the direct partnerships between Ararat Rural City Council and Wyndham Community and Education Centre (WCEC) in the first instance. To meet the needs of our local businesses in the hope that this pilot can assist in meeting the skill shortages that it currently being experienced across a broad number and types of businesses that is providing a community that is culturally accepting, welcoming and safe for new migrants to settle.</p> <p>Introduction:</p> <p>This project will develop a more organic, relational model for worker resettlement programs, through a direct partnership between Ararat Rural City Council (ARCC) and Wyndham Community and Education Centre (WCEC). This partnership will implement a model that involves WCEC working directly with local employers, ARCC, and their existing new arrival clients to provide pre-employment education and training relevant to employment needs in Ararat. Once the pilot model is proven, there will be a transition to application in Northern Grampian Shire-leveraging the established relationships and building on a proven model.</p> <p>Background:</p> <p>Finding the right fit is more than getting people to Ararat for a job. It is about welcoming and investing in people who want to make Ararat their home. It's also creating an environment that is welcoming and culturally safe for Karen people.</p> <p>Council is partnering with Wyndham Community and Education Centre and the Victorian Government to help us enhance and improve the settlement experience so every newcomer feels welcomed and can reach their full potential.</p> <p>Services like English language training, employment, and settlement support will be readily accessible and in reach for our new migrants.</p> <p>Ararat Rural City is committed to supporting people from all backgrounds to create a welcoming and cohesive rural city where all members, including migrants and refugee communities, can participate in all areas of community life. Council is a member of Welcoming Cities.</p>
Project Purpose	<p>The project has the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost regional migration to meet the workforce needs of local industry • Deliver a successful resettlement program that connects migrants and education, vocational training, employment and housing • Builds the critical mass of the population in Ararat and Northern Grampians via immigration or works and their families to secure long-term viability and prosperity.
Project Start Date	January 2022
Project Finish Date	August 2023

PROJECT SUMMARY

Method:

Communication and Engagement opportunities will run in conjunction with the various stages and processes during the life of the project. The project will welcome opportunities that arise in the areas of social media and other new innovative ways to communicate with the community, key stakeholders and new prospective settlers. Key focus will be on the aims and objectives of the project and how the pilot progresses to long term sustainability.

There will be three tiers of communication and engagement that will be undertaken, one with the key stakeholders and community leaders of Ararat and district and secondly the new settlers who are seeking employment, housing and a new life in Ararat from various areas across Werribee and suburbs in Melbourne and thirdly with community groups, volunteers and the general community to inform, consult and collaborate throughout the project.

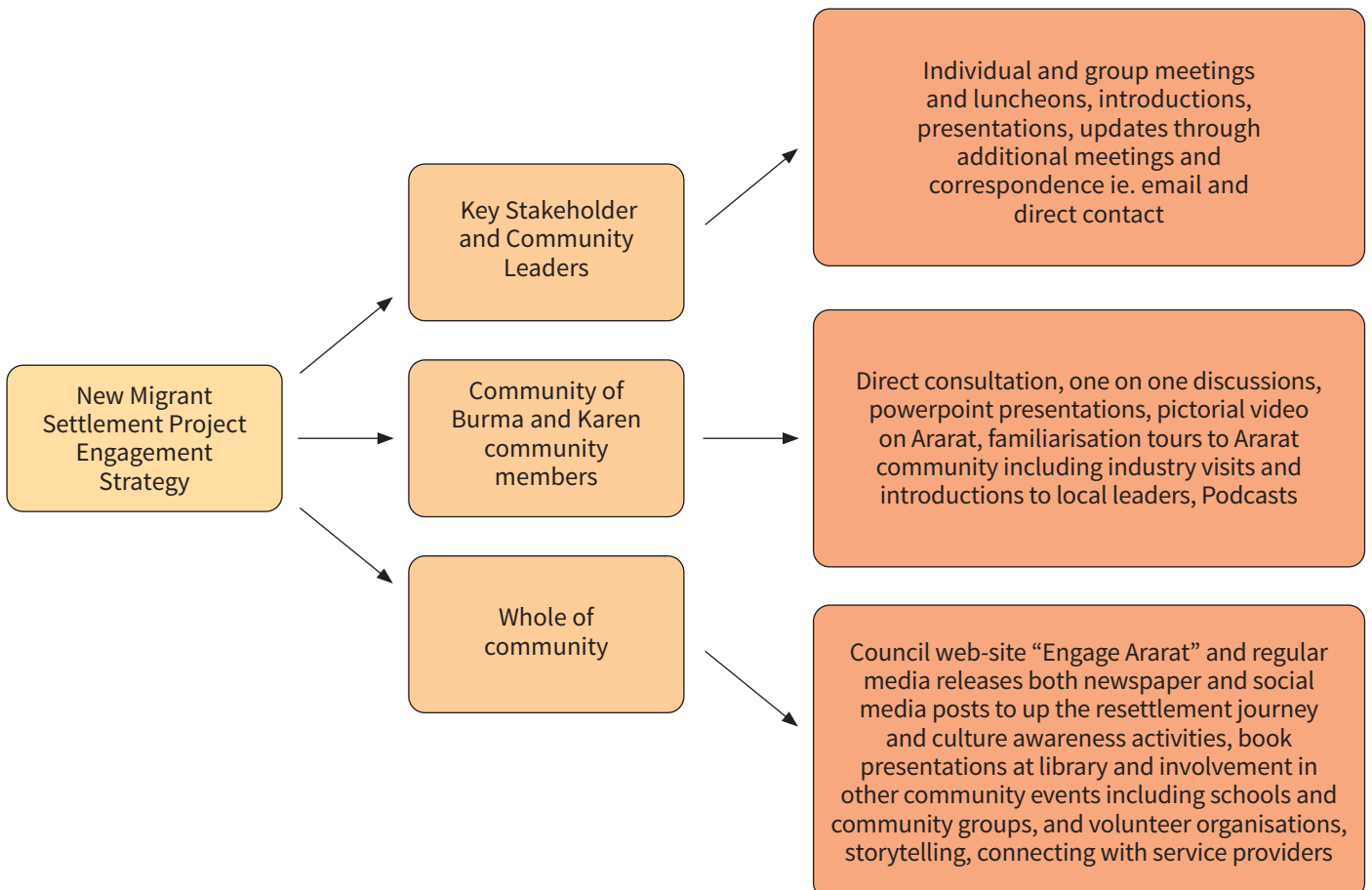
This will include a series of meetings, presentations with key business leaders, community leaders, and service providers to ensure that the vision and objectives of the project are communicated

and inclusive of input and involvement from the whole of community. A marketing video of Ararat to showcase the community and all it has to offer in regard to living, working and recreational opportunities and the geography of the area and pictures of the natural landscape and podcasting to groups from the community of Burma.

A pictorial record of various activities involving individuals and stakeholders that are true to the project and have played a major role during the project will be produced and assist with the storytelling of this project.

Engagement Objectives:

- a) Ensure stakeholders and community are informed about the project aims and objectives
- b) Ensure stakeholders community have the opportunity to ask questions and provide their view
- c) Ensure ideas and/or concerns that they community are considered
- d) Ensure all stakeholders are aware of the project and have an opportunity to participate.



PROJECT ENGAGEMENT PLAN TO BRING THE COMMUNITY ALONG

This engagement plan is in two sections which indicates the various engagement types that are required with bringing the community along and also engaging with our new settlers who have shown interest in and or starting their transition to life in Ararat.

		Responsible	Who
New Migrant Settlement Project Engagement Plan	Key stakeholders, community leaders and the broader community	CEO	Key Industry Leaders
		Team Leader	
		Project Co-ordinator	Key Community and Faith Leaders, Ararat Lions, Ararat Rotary Club, RAR
		Project Community Liaison Officer	Community Groups eg. Neighborhood House, sporting groups, volunteer groups, VFF, PPS
			Service Providers and Real Estate Agents
			Education and Health
			General community
		Responsible	Who
New Settlers in the metropolitan area – from the Community of Burma	Project Coordinator	Current new migrants from the Community of Burma wishing to move to a rural community to make it their home or just enquiring	
	Team Leader	Individuals and families that have submitted an expression of Interest for a particular job vacancy	
	Settlement Team – Wyndham	Wyndham CEC settlement team	
	Business Liaison Officers – Wyndham	Employees Jobs Victoria	
	Community Liaison Officer – Ararat	Photo journalist	

How	Method	When
Stakeholder list developed and communication through direct consultation	Meetings, introductions, presentations, updates through additional meetings and correspondence ie. email and direct contact	Start of the project and regular monthly updates on project
Direct Consultation	Meetings, presentations	Regular updates, monthly
Direct Consultation and incidental consultation through relevant connections	Meetings and presentations, articles in relevant newsletters	Regular updates through the life of the project
Direct Consultation	Meetings and presentations, email	Regular updates through the life of the project
Direct Consultation	Meeting and presentations, email	Regular updates through the life of the project
Media releases and social media posts, storytelling and	Council website “Engage Ararat” and regular media releases both newspaper and social media posts to up the resettlement journey and culture awareness activities, book presentations at library and involvement in other community events Planned community cultural event	Regular updates in line with project milestones and news stories and updates at regular intervals as the project progresses November/December
How	Method	When
Direct Consultation, presentations to various groups of interest including youth groups, by Project Co-Ordinator and individual enquiries as they present	Presentations using powerpoint, posters, video presentations, podcasts with language interpretation, bus familiarisation tours, Council’s website information	Regular – fortnightly for months of April, May and monthly for the life of the project - presentations for the project to increase uptake of new settlement opportunities
Direct consultation, one on one discussions, presentations, familiarisation tours to Ararat community including industry visits and introductions to local leaders	Phone communication, email communication, interviews both via zoom or face to face and site visits to Ararat	Ongoing
Direct Consultation, email, phone, site visits	Regular Teams meetings	Weekly teams’ meetings
Direct Consultation	Meetings, phone calls and emails as well as site visits	As opportunities arise, regular communication with employees
Direct consultation and update on progress of project and storytelling opportunities (case study)	Digital storytelling, case study	As opportunities present

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Example: Proforma to evaluate each engagement opportunity to assist with reporting.

Item	Details/Actions
Purpose of the Engagement	Luncheon inviting Key leaders in local industry
Key Stakeholders	By email invitation and follow up phone call
Target Audience	Key leaders in local industry (as per stakeholder list)
Engagement Design	Luncheon meeting and presentation
Method	Town Hall
Venues	12.30 to 1.30
Times	Ararat
Locations	CEO and project team members to present to Key industry leaders
Resources	
Engagement Findings	All stakeholders were interested and fully engaged with the project. Follow through with regular project progress reports
Outcomes of Engagement	Identified skill shortages for various jobs and areas of work. List to be provided.
Other relevant Information	Skill shortages identified directed to Business Liaison Group in Wyndham to follow up with local employers with Position Descriptions and follow through with recruitment process. Monitor outcomes through shared spreadsheet.



COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communication Goal	Communication Tool	Audience	Frequency
To inform, consult and gain input from local business leaders on the Work force pilot project and New Migrant Settlement Project and educate on the needs of the migrants from the Community of Burma	In person meetings CEO and project team members a luncheons, on-line surveys, media releases, information sessions, and one to one meetings regarding specific job vacancies	Key potential Employers, industry, health, agricultural and education	Regular basis
To engage with interested migrants from the Community of Burma	Regular familiarisation tours to Ararat and district Presentations from Project Coordinator based in Ararat, powerpoint, poster, postcards, podcasts	Interested migrants from Wyndham community and surrounding suburbs who are interested in relocating to live and work in the Ararat district	Tours – as required Once per month
To engage with local community leaders, service providers, schools etc. to provide settlement supports by involvement in community activities	In person, meetings, local newsletters, pictorial stories	Churches, Real Estate Offices, Service Providers, Community Groups ie. Lions, Rotary	Scheduled regularly and follow ups
To engage to the broader community	Council Website - Engage/ Presentations /video presentations/ story telling/socials/newspaper/key locations ie. Library, fitness centre local cinema, events	Whole of Community	Weekly reviews and updates
Development of community network committee?	Meetings and activities	Community	Bi-monthly
To involve the community	Various small events around food, music, sport, on-line forums	Target groups and the broader community	Quarterly

TIMELINES FOR ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION - ACTION LIST

	Tool	Responsible	Audience
JANUARY	Media release	CEO	Community
FEBRUARY	Development of Council web page (Engage Ararat)	CEO and Project Team	Community
MARCH			
APRIL	Meetings, luncheon with key Business Leaders	CEO, Project Lead, Project Co-ordinator	
MAY	Pod Cast (SBS) x 2 Press Release Meetings, luncheon with key Community Leaders 6 May – Familiarisation tour Interview with Say Plo Say, first new resident that has been employed and taken up training	Project Coordinator Team	Karen and Community of Burma
JUNE	14 June – Familiarisation Tour - Nhill Community Garden Project Media Release Web page update Develop marketing tools, postcards, banner designs Start planning for event, develop event planning group, planning for bus tour,	CEO and project team	Karen / Community of Nhill
JULY	Media release Bus familiarisation Tour		
AUGUST	Media release Engagement with local School Principals through their cluster meetings		
OCTOBER	Media release		
NOVEMBER	Media release Survey to key stakeholders for reporting Event – celebration of the Community of Burma and other CALD community members	Collaboration between CALD groups, Wyndham Settlement Team	Whole of community, including schools
DECEMBER	Celebration of successes		

Frequency	Topic	Comments
	Introduction to the project/funding success	
Update regularly as changes occur	Key information on the project, introductions and	
Regular, to be determined by demand	Project and familiarisation tour	
One off to see if further visitation will be required	To speak with the Karen community leaders who first arrived in Nhill to discuss what was missing when they first arrived and how time has now passed and how inclusion into the community has development and evolved	
One off event	Food, Music, Dance, Art/Craft, Poetry	

REFERENCES:

Steps to Settlement Success - A toolkit for Rural and Regional Communities

http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MigrationToolkit_v6.pdf

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Decade of Humanitarian Settlement in South Australia A Case Study of the Burmese Community 2007 – 2017

Researched and written by Romy Wasserman & Helen Barrie, Hugo Centre for Migration and Population Research, University of Adelaide

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<https://welcomingcities.org.au>

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CULTUREVERSE

WORKFORCE PILOT AND
NEW SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLAN

to work in conjunction with the

ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN



WORKFORCE PILOT AND NEW SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

Methodology

Strategic: Communication Plan

Research

Key Message Workshop Insights

Channel Analysis

Objectives

Target Audiences

Key Message Chart

Recommendations: Tactics and Channels

Appendices

Appendix A - Telling the Story of the Workforce Pilot and New Settlement Program Workshop Participant Listing

Appendix B - Telling the Story of the Workforce Pilot and New Settlement Program Workshop Discussion Guide



TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Transitional Housing Policy

Intention

- Provide short term accommodation to house potential new settlers in the first 3 months of relocation.
- Assist settlers in providing longer term accommodation
- Provide a maximum of 3 months accommodation allowing for job suitability to be confirmed.

Process

1. Established communication with private rental providers (ie. local estate firms) advising of program and accommodation requirements.
2. A policy of applying for houses that do not have significant interest from others but provide safe, clean and affordable options for new settlers has been followed. This has been communicated to rental providers and the question is asked on each potential property.
3. Two short term transitional homes have been established – fully furnished enabling short term stays (up to 3-month stay maximum). These will remain as longer-term transitional facilities.
4. Tenants in the transition houses are invoiced by ARCC at an agreed rate including rent and utilities after one month's residency.

5. Assistance is provided to assist new settlers transition to the private rental market including ARCC securing initial lease. Alternatively, ARCC will assist in the rental application.
6. ARCC transitions the rental to tenants after 3 months and this is advised to rental providers during the application process. That is, after a three-month period, the lease is transferred into tenants' names and the lease agreement becomes the responsibility of tenants.
7. Financial assistance is provided in establishing longer term accommodation including relocation, furniture and bond + minimum one month rent.
8. Utilities have been secured under ARCC account.
9. After 3 months, all non-permanent transitional houses require tenants to set up their own utility services (gas, water, electricity).
10. WIFI is not provided by ARCC at any of the houses
11. ARCC is actively promoting property purchases and has provided a video on how to purchase property in Ararat. This is a bilingual resource with information from real estate agents, a bank, legal aspects etc.
12. Each house will receive a spiritual blessing prior to occupancy.

Transitional Housing Co-operative Living Guidelines

Keep communal areas as clean as possible

- If you use something, clean it and put it away
- If you spill something clean it up straight away
- Do the dishes daily and put the dishes away or have a roster for who does the dishes
- Do not clutter the benchtops and table, put things away in cupboards so they can be kept clean
- Keep the inside of the fridge clean and remove any old food
- Keep the bathroom and toilet areas clean

There are no pets permitted in the transitional houses.

Report any breakages in the house to settlement services.

Be respectful of others work routines for example, keep noise levels down for those who may need to sleep.

Make sure rubbish bins are taken out weekly.

Turn off any heating if not at home as this could lead to a house fire and keep all clothing away from heaters.

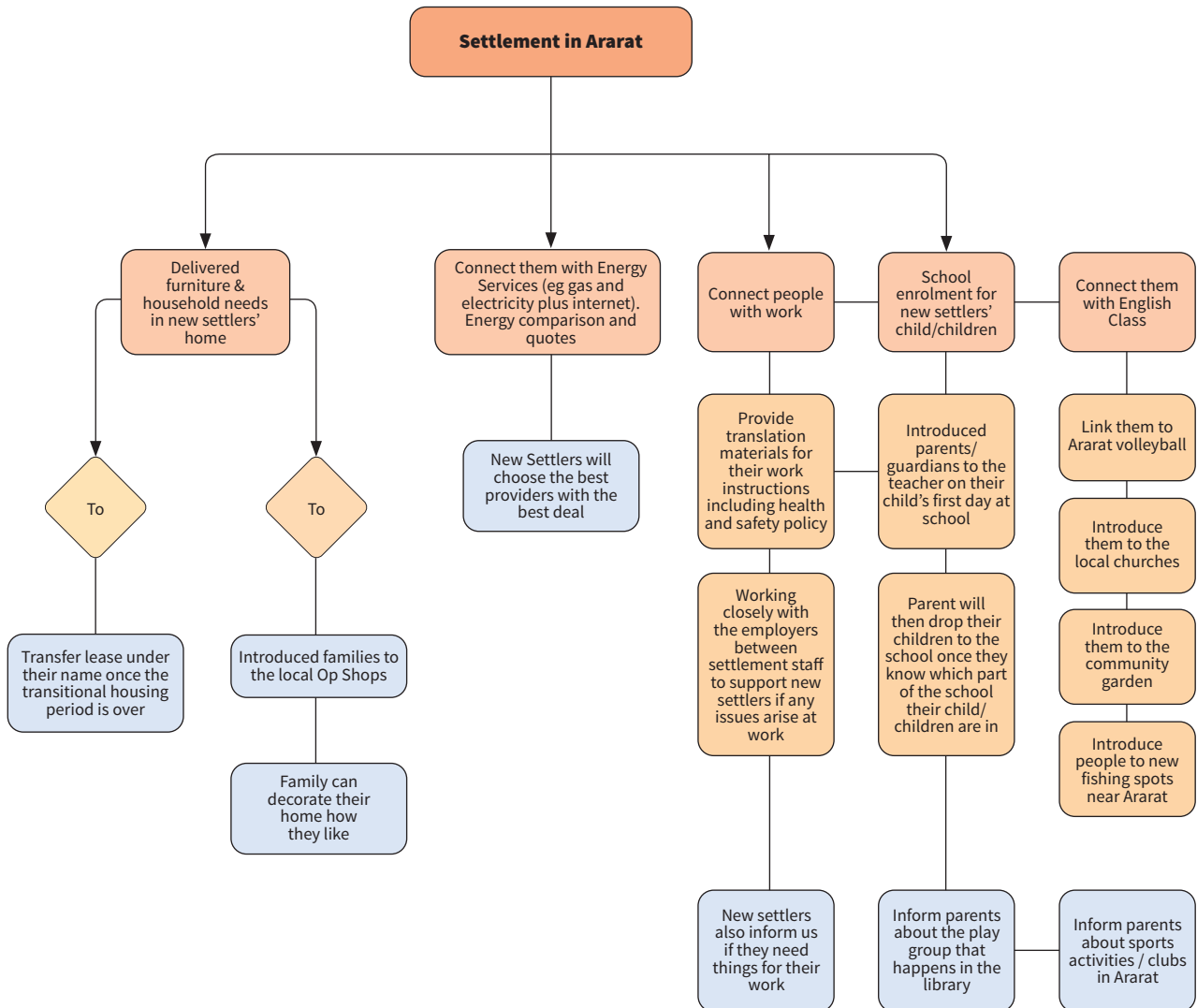
Keep all outside areas clear of rubbish and keep the garden tidy.

Prior to paid cleaner coming on the fourth Tuesday of each month

- Clean up clutter in common areas, especially on the floors, so that they can wash and vacuum areas
- Do not leave pots and pans on the stove after using as it cannot be cleaned.
- Clean up dishes and put away so that sink can be cleaned, plus table and benchtops.
- Keep clutter off the floor
- Your bedroom is your space, so keep the door closed (heaters off when not there).

And most of all, enjoy your **shared** housing.

SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROCESS



SETTLEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PROCESS

KEY FUNCTIONS AND TASKS

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the WCEC Employment Team, the WCEC Settlement Team, and Ararat Council Staff, while working collaboratively on the Ararat Karen Relocation project.

Audience:

WCEC staff within the Employment and Settlement Teams.

Relevant Links:

<https://engage.ararat.vic.gov.au/workforce-pilot-and-new-settlement-program> .

Project Overview:

Ararat is experiencing a workforce shortage and more workers are needed to fill available roles. The State Government's new settlement program, Regional Workforce Pilot, is a tailored program focused on job matching potential Karen settlers with local employers who struggle to fill existing roles and are looking to grow a diverse and inclusive workforce. The new settlers will fill gaps in the local labour market. Ararat Council hope to start welcoming the first group of Karen migrants from Wyndham to the community by mid-year. The project is funded through Regional Development Victoria.

Wyndham CECs Role:

WCECs involvement in the relocation project will be in the completion of the following activities:

#	Activity	Responsible
1	Identification of potential job seekers/ interested participants	Settlement Team
2	Assessment and registration of eligible job seekers into JVES (Resumes, interview skills etc)	Employment Team
3	Identification and assessment of potential employers and vacant positions	Employment Team Ararat Council Team
4	Matching jobseekers to vacant positions Completing all required JVES employment documentation	Employment Team
5	Coordinating and supporting resettlement of employee's and their family members to Ararat e.g., housing support, school info, English classes, interpreter assistance, health care, transportation, sporting & community clubs, community garden, relocation grants support, etc.	Ararat Council Team Settlement Team
6	Supporting employees with Post Placement Support (PPS) for 6 months, e.g. PPE requirements, uniforms, training, employment issues etc.	Employment Team
7	Supporting employers with PPS for 6 months	Employment Team

PROSPECTIVE CLIENT - EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROCESS

ARCC Provides clients with initial introduction to Ararat & the relocation project and assesses potential interest. If interest is shown, then collects contact information, completes table and forwards information via email to the Employment Team.

WCEC Receives email details of potential clients, adds to EOI sheet.
Contacts clients in EOI sheet, completes “Ararat Candidate Form” and assesses their eligibility for JVES and suitability for relocation program.

WCED If client eligible and interested in project, then registered for JVES.
Assess and arrange pre employment supports as required. If client is job ready, cross match client with current vacancies sheet, and refer to suitable roles.

WCEC If placed in employment, support with JVES employment documentation required, maintain consistent relationship with client for first 6 months post employment and provide supports as required.

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER – EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROCESS

Ararat Team - Provides prospective employers with initial introduction to the relocation project and assesses potential interest. If interest is shown, then collects contact information, and Position Descriptions if available and forwards information via email to the Employment Team.

WCEC Receives email details of potential Employers, adds to Employers sheet and saves PDs to file.
Contacts clients in Employer sheet, completes initial assessment and discusses vacancy, roles, conditions, requirements etc.

WCEC Upon agreement, and availability of PD, vacancy added to sheet.
Cross match vacancy with current client caseload sheet, and refer suitable candidates to the roles.

WCEC If a client is placed in employment with the employer, maintain consistent relationship with employer for first 6 months post placement and provide supports as required.

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Rosbrook, B., & Schweitzer, R. D. (2010). The meaning of home for Karen and Chin refugees from Burma: An interpretative phenomenological approach. *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling*, 12(2), 159-172





Ararat Rural City

CONTACT

Should you have any queries regarding this handbook or attachments please contact the Ararat Rural City Council on 03 5355 0200 or council@ararat.vic.gov.au

