

**CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE MIGRANTS —
SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS**

Statement by Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests) [9.03 am]: I am pleased to inform the house of a successful program delivering small business development workshops for Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Delivered by the Small Business Development Corporation, with funding and support from the Office of Multicultural Interests, the workshops have once again highlighted that migrants are enterprising, ambitious, resourceful and innovative.

More than 164 people participated in nine workshops held in Girrawheen, Cockburn and Gosnells between September and November last year. Covering the key topics of starting a business, how to write a business plan and understanding business financials, the workshops aimed to increase migrants' awareness and connections with the SBDC's small business development services offered by the Western Australian government. A one-page flyer providing an overview of the SBDC's services was developed and translated into Vietnamese, Mandarin and Indonesian, and is available on the SBDC's website.

Beyond the immediate benefits for the attendees, the program has widened the corporation's network with culturally diverse groups and resulted in more workshops, including three to be held in the Girrawheen Hub in April, May and June this year.

A recent survey by CGU Insurance, which is part of the giant Insurance Australia Group, notes that migrants who arrived either as refugees, skilled migrants or through the family stream own one-in-three Australian small businesses. It reinforces how the drive, determination and hard work of refugees and migrants make our cultural diversity one of our greatest assets. The survey found that migrant-owned businesses are, on average, generating higher revenue and are more focused on growing their business than are non-migrant businesses. As a result, they are making a significant contribution to the Australian economy. On average, migrant business owners work longer hours while at the same time placing a high priority on contributing to the communities they live and work in. Twenty-five per cent of migrant business owners are training young people compared with 19 per cent of non-migrant business owners, and 33 per cent of migrant business owners are planning new hires compared with 25 per cent of non-migrant business owners. Clearly, it is in our interest to nurture the potential in our recently arrived migrant communities.

I commend the SBDC and OMI for this initiative. I am sure that it will lead to bright futures for many of these individuals and a strong, positive contribution to our state's economy, as well as further opportunities to advance culturally diverse enterprise.