

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: AWE2130

Ethnic Affairs Commission – New South Wales

(1976 -)

Born 1 January, 1976, Sydney New South Wales Australia

Occupation Government Agency

Summary

On June 2, 1976 the newly elected Australian Labor party Premier, Neville Wran, announced his cabinet's decision to establish an Ethnic Affairs Commission. Under the Ethnic Affairs Act, 1976 (Act No. 76, 1976) (3) the Ethnic Affairs Commission's initial work involved the research and investigation of ethnic affairs with special emphasis on promoting the integration of different ethnic groups. The constitution and functions of a Commission to implement policy decisions in this area was also examined.

The Ethnic Affairs Commission interacted with a number of new government bodies all concerned with equal opportunity issues in society. These included the Anti-Discrimination Board which came into operation in June 1977 to address racial discrimination, the Review of New South Wales Government Administration which dealt with recruitment, promotion and equality of opportunity and the Women's Coordination Unit of the Premier's Department which had responsibility for creating opportunities for migrant women.

In 1978 the Ethnic Affairs Commission submitted its report, *Participation*, which outlined a concept of multiculturalism that went beyond preserving cultural heritage to a society where minority groups would achieve total participation in the New South Wales social and political system.

To implement this philosophy of equal opportunity *Participation* recommended that a Commission should be established as a strong and stable body to ensure that all elements of the New South Wales Government Administration come to regard ethnic affairs as part of their ordinary, day to day attitudes and thinking.

A new Ethnic Affairs Commission was established as a permanent government authority on 1 December 1979. It was established under the terms of the Ethnic Affairs Commission Act, Act No. 23, 1979. (7)

Published resources

Book

The Other Australia: Experiences of Migration, Murphy, Brian, 1993

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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