

Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC)

Meeting Communique 5

07 February 2024

The Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC) met on Wednesday, 07 February 2024.

Members in attendance:

- Craig Shield (DCSSDS)
- Karen Grice (TELLS, QLD)
- Lisa Ward (ECCQ)
- Shane Klintworth (MCCGC)
- Tariro Mutongwizo (QCOSS)
- Anita Veivers (Centacare FNQ)
- Andrea Obeyesekere (Centacare FNQ)
- Liz Gordon (QPASTT)
- Chitra Herft (DoHA)
- Zoe Williams (DoHA)
- Karina Sommers (DoHA)
- Gabby Weiss (Refugee Health Network QLD)
- Christine Castley (Multicultural Australia)
- Rose Dash (Multicultural Australia)

Guest Speakers:

- Huy Truong (Thrive Refugee Enterprise)
- Daniel Segura (Thrive Refugee Enterprise)

Summary of Discussions and Outcomes from the QSSC Meeting – 07 Feb 2024

Key themes discussed at the meeting:

- **Economic participation in settlement:** QSSC meeting retained focus on economic participation and continued discussions from previous meetings, on supporting economic participation of humanitarian entrants. QSSC invited Huy Truong and Daniel Segura from *Thrive Refugee Enterprise*. Huy Truong is leading *pro bono* work, examining the challenges and opportunities for the economic participation of refugees. At the QSSC, Huy shared experiences from his involvement in the Settlement Advisory Council and work with current and previous governments – as well as personal reasons for involvement in this work (through a life of entrepreneurship, business and starting *Thrive*, to supporting refugees into small business through mentorship and financial supports).

- Huy Truong's presentation included the importance of economic self-reliance, contribution and economic participation and our need to hold conversations about how refugees in Australia can contribute (economically). Current evidence and data points to the time it takes to get refugees into the workforce and into *quality* jobs and persistent underemployment for those employed. This is also compounded for certain cohorts that may not have completed schooling or face challenges to English language learning (e.g., with a lack of familiarity with classroom learning or care responsibilities). Settlement services can coordinate a range of services, linkages, and referrals – however, a gap exists in relation to a coordination function and role, around employment and economic participation for refugees (through settlement services).
 - QSSC will retain focus and discussions on supporting economic participation for humanitarian entrants.
- **Refugee Settlement and Integration Framework:** QSSC discussed implications from the recently released Outcomes Framework that sets out a vision and focus of successful settlement and integration for refugees and humanitarian entrants to Australia. QSSC heard of the work in progress, to confirm indicators to be measured under different domains (for example, labour force participation, access to GPs, etc.) QSSC sought opportunity to discuss and evaluate outcomes measurement and map it against the broader settlement sector (to understand tracking and measurement of outcomes and progress over time - at both contract/service and population levels).
- **Humanitarian Settlement Outlook for 2024:** as at 31 Jan 2024, there have been a total 1,612 humanitarian arrivals into Queensland. The 2023-24 Estimated Planning Levels (EPL) have been shared with settlement providers (noting that EPLs are numbers referred to a settlement region and may not equate to arrivals to the region). There is a decision to increase the humanitarian settlement numbers into Australia to 20,000 from this FY and next.
 - QSSC discussions sought clarity around Departmental decision-making on humanitarian settlement locations, arrival numbers and humanitarian entrant placement/settlement in particular regions.
- **QSSC and regional LACs:** the QSSC continues to receive updates from regional networks (Local Area Collaboratives) and will retain a watching brief on key issues and themes in settlement raised through these networks.
- **QSSC consideration and action for 2024:** there is an emerging focus at QSSC on settlement planning processes, employment, and health issues.
 - The next QSSC meeting will focus on understanding Humanitarian Settlement planning (the decision-making behind humanitarian settlement locations, numbers, and placement) – particular to the Queensland context.