



SMECC

Rise higher.

AN EMPOWERED AND HARMONIOUS COMMUNITY



SUPPORTIVE MEANINGFUL ENGAGING COLLABORATIVE COMPASSIONATE

Annual Report 2024-25



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ian Japp
SMECC President (Chair)
Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities
Council Inc

It is once again my pleasure to present the 2025 President's Report.

The past 12 months have felt like a watershed for SMECC, with many of the plans and projects that had been discussed at board level for years finally becoming a reality. It feels as though we are no longer constrained by the past, and we approach the coming year with a renewed sense of positivity and purpose.

This optimism is a direct result of the quality, dedication, and hard work of our staff and volunteers, together with the guidance and commitment of my fellow board members. Recent highlights include the ongoing success of our vibrant Multicultural Festival, the opening of our Nourish Sunraysia Social Supermarket and Second Time Around Store, and the continued strength of our long-standing programs such as Settlement Services, Multicultural Storytime Playgroup, Driver Mentoring, Adult Education Classes, and Youth Groups. A special highlight this year has been a first for SMECC – the launch of our own YouTube recipe series and the publication of a Multicultural Cookbook.

Our CEO, Akesa Kei, has played an integral role in expanding our profile and has been forthright in her advocacy for the rights of our newest citizens at both State and Federal levels.

SMECC has joined two regional alliances – the Regional Food Security Alliance and the Regional Multicultural Alliance – enabling us to more effectively advocate for regional support and address the disparities that exist between metropolitan and regional communities.

Another major milestone was the adoption of our new Constitution, which modernises our governance structure. These changes make voting more democratic, allow for technological innovation, and provide greater clarity around board terms.

I extend my sincere thanks to our staff and volunteers, whose commitment consistently goes above and beyond. Their efforts ensure that SMECC remains a vital and responsive organisation.

It is an honour to serve as President, and I look forward to building on this momentum to ensure SMECC's continuing relevance and impact across our region.

Yours sincerely,
Ian Japp
President



CEO'S REPORT

Akesa Kei
SMECC CEO
Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities
Council Inc

It is an honour to present the CEO Report for Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council's 46th Annual General Meeting. These past three years have been a deeply rewarding journey of learning, listening, and leading alongside a remarkable team and community. Together, we have navigated a complex regional landscape, responding to local needs while remaining grounded in our purpose—to foster an empowered and harmonious community where multicultural communities thrive socially, economically, and culturally.

As I present my third CEO Report, I reflect proudly on the progress achieved throughout the last strategic period. The dedication and commitment of our Board and staff have ensured that our crucial settlement and community support services remain strong, valued, and responsive. Alignment with the Settlement Sector Quality Framework and ongoing collaboration with policymakers have strengthened our capacity to deliver best practice, wrap-around support across the region.

This year, our advocacy has continued to grow at local, state, and federal levels. Locally, the establishment of the SMECC Multicultural Advisory Committee has created a vital platform for multicultural leaders with lived and professional experience to guide inclusive, community-led approaches to settlement and participation.

At a state level, we were proud to formalise the Regional Multicultural Alliance Victoria Memorandum of Understanding, uniting seven regional ethnic communities' councils to strengthen our collective voice. Through this alliance—and our engagement with the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet—we continue to ensure regional perspectives inform state policy and funding priorities.

At the federal level, our advocacy reached new heights with our visit to Parliament House in Canberra, hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Richard Marles MP, where 13 key meetings were held to advance the case for sustained regional settlement investment.

As a result of these collective efforts, SMECC continues to deliver high-quality, community-informed services aligned with the Settlement Sector Quality Framework. Participation in our programs continues to grow, exemplified by the success of the 2025 Multicultural Festival, which welcomed more than twice the attendance of the previous year—a powerful testament to the region's unity in diversity.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the SMECC Board, staff, volunteers, and community for their continued dedication and passion. We remain proud of the diversity that defines North-West Victoria and of the community that continues to embrace multiculturalism as one of its greatest strengths.

Yours sincerely,
Akesa Kei
CEO



TREASURER'S REPORT

John De Luca
SMECC Treasurer
Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities
Council Inc

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for the financial year ending 30 June 2025. Once again, our financial statements have been audited by Crowe Audit Australia and provide a true and accurate picture of SMECC's financial position and performance.

This year, SMECC achieved a turnover of \$1,671,863 with an operating deficit of \$31,916. Our cash at bank at year's end was \$1,634,000, and net assets totalled \$2,965,215, reflecting a strong current ratio of 3.61.

Despite a 14% decline in revenue, primarily due to reduced grant funding and smaller project income, our team exercised strong financial discipline. Employee expenses were reduced by around \$350,000, and further efficiencies were achieved across program and occupancy costs. These efforts, combined with a positive cash flow from operations of \$253,061, ensured SMECC remains in a sound financial position.

A key point of note this year is the restatement of SMECC's 2024 financials. During the 2025 audit, it was identified that the building revaluations in 2024 we undertook, had not been correctly accounted for. This change in valuation related mainly to the Twelfth Street property, which was we were carrying an inflated value based on a 2022 assessment. Correcting this required a significant restatement of last year's accounts. The impact was substantial: the net loss for 2024 increased from \$174,078 to \$2,620,456.

While this adjustment dramatically changes the previously reported 2024 results, it is important to stress that it was a non-cash accounting correction. It does not affect SMECC's day-to-day operations, cash flow, or solvency. The restatement aligns our reporting with accounting standards and ensures complete transparency for our members and stakeholders. This adjustment ensures that SMECC now has a clean and accurate balance sheet moving forward.

Our balance sheet remains robust, with total assets of \$3.98M and total liabilities of \$1.01M. We hold no significant debt, have modest lease obligations, and continue to meet all tax, superannuation, and creditor obligations on time. Ramsay Court provides a reliable income of \$106,600 annually, and increasing unearned grants support continuity of programs into 2026.

Looking ahead, the Board has budgeted for a modest deficit in 2026, reflecting ongoing uncertainty in the funding environment. Our priorities remain focused on expanding non-government revenue streams, strengthening partnerships to sustain the Food Hub and Social Supermarket, and carefully monitoring all grants to ensure compliance and continued impact.

I wish to thank the SMECC finance and operations team, especially Maree Buckingham and Akesa Kei, for their dedication, accuracy, and discipline in managing our finances.

I also thank the Finance Committee and the SMECC Board for their trust and support.

Yours sincerely,
John De Luca
Treasurer

SUNRAYSIA MALLEE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL INC
ABN 37 282 486 762

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	876,400	536,753
Trade and other receivables	6	34,861	70,722
Financial assets	7	758,311	853,350
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,669,572	1,460,825
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	8	1,837,920	1,902,405
Right-of-use assets	9	469,299	489,616
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS		2,307,219	2,392,021
TOTAL ASSETS		3,976,791	3,852,846
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	10	79,079	117,830
Employee benefits	12	116,650	97,835
Lease liabilities	13	11,279	9,576
Contract liabilities	14	254,987	107,747
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		461,995	332,988
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	11	1,944	1,046
Employee benefits	12	16,764	14,839
Lease liabilities	13	530,873	506,842
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		549,581	522,727
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,011,576	855,715
NET ASSETS		2,965,215	2,997,131
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		2,965,215	2,997,131
TOTAL EQUITY		2,965,215	2,997,131

SUNRAYSIA MALLEE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL INC
ABN 37 282 486 762

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	2	1,671,863	1,945,905
Other income	3	103,679	170,639
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method		42,646	25,842
Cost of Sales		-	(11,791)
Administrative expenses		(286,631)	(276,623)
Depreciation	4	(106,632)	(184,048)
Finance Costs		(34,948)	(30,806)
Motor vehicle expenses		(31,737)	(28,016)
Occupancy expenses		(59,832)	(97,591)
Program Costs		(87,422)	(101,875)
Employee benefit expense		(1,232,372)	(1,579,073)
Travel expenses		(10,530)	(6,840)
Gain/(loss) on revaluation		-	(27,521)
Deficit before income tax expense		(31,916)	(201,598)
Income tax expense	1	-	-
Deficit after income tax expense attributable to members		(31,916)	(201,598)
Other comprehensive income		-	
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		-	(2,418,858)
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to members		(31,916)	(2,620,456)

Meet our Board



Ian Japp
President (Chair)



Charles Albanese
Vice President



Claire Kelly
Board Secretary



John Deluca
Treasurer



Bruce Myers
General Board member



Jane Robinson
General Board member

2024-25 Retired Board Members



**Xijin (Chris)
Zhong**



**Belinda
Clarke**



**Anadil
Nusrat**

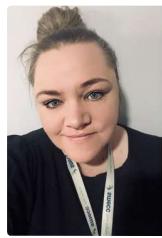


**Calvin
Henry**

Meet our Team



Akesa Kei
(Kingdom of Tonga)
Chief Executive
Officer



Maree Buckingham
(Australia)
Corporate Services
Manager



Patricia Fotheringham
(Australia)
Programs
Manager



Juvelina Guterres
(Timor Leste)
Community Engagement
Facilitator



Kunnika Powell
(Thailand)
Family Safety
Bi Cultural Support



Stephanie Smaller
(New Zealand)
Training & Skills
Facilitator



Walaa Sabri
(Iraq)
Settlement
Case Worker



Abida Elahi
(Pakistan)
Training & Skills
Facilitator



Jackson Mugenzi
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Driving
Mentor



Ruwacy Al dakhil
(Iraq)
Food Hub
Assistant



Mitchell Rayson
(Australia)
Food Hub
Coordinator



Angela Biak Nei Zing
(Myanmar)
Playgroup
Assistant



Detelina Arnold
(Bulgaria)
Training & Skills
Facilitator



Mele (Lucy) Taholo
(Kingdom of Tonga)
Community Engagement
Support



Phung (Ellina) Bui
(Vietnam)
Bi Cultural
Worker



Cindy Arum
(Indonesia)
Bi Cultural
Worker



David Nteziriyayo
(Democratic Republic of Congo)
Maintenance
Assistant

A Team Rich in Language and Lived Experience
Our team's diversity is one of SMECC's greatest strengths. Together, our multilingual staff bring not only professional expertise, but also a wealth of lived experience, helping us connect deeply with the communities we serve. Between us, we speak Tongan, Malay, Thai, French, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Swahili, Kirundi, Arabic, Bulgarian, Russian, English, Lao, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Tetum, and Portuguese—bridging cultures and building trust every day.

Settlement services

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)

This year, our SETS program provided targeted support to help newly arrived migrants and refugees successfully navigate their settlement journey in Australia. Through 361 tailored support sessions with 257 individuals, we assisted people with housing, employment, education, health, and community life, laying strong foundations for both economic and social participation.

We also delivered Twenty nine engaging workshops with 384 participants, building knowledge in key areas such as civic participation, health and wellbeing, rights and responsibilities, and pathways to employment. Topics included citizenship, mental health, healthy eating, refugee legal information, protection visas, and résumé writing.

By focusing on people's aspirations and capabilities, SETS empowers individuals to take confident steps towards independence, active community involvement, and a strong sense of belonging in their new home.

257
Individual
Clients
Supported

29
Workshops
helping 384
attendees

361
Client
support
Sessions



Federal

- Visit to parliament hosted by The Hon. Richard Marles, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and Minister for Defence
- Meeting with the Minister for Multicultural Affairs - The Hon. Dr. Anne Aly
- Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia
- Department of Home Affairs (DHA)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade DFAT

Advocacy

State

- Minister for Multicultural Affairs - Ingrid Stitt MP
- Victorian Premier - Jacinta Allan MP
- Regional Advisory Committee - Victorian Multicultural Commission
- Multicultural Review - George Lekakis
- Department of Premier and Cabinet



Local

- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Sunraysia Settlement Network
- Sunraysia Multicultural Response Group



MAC
Multicultural
Advisory
Committee
Formed



**Regional
Advisory
Forum**



**Taking the
fight to
Parliament**





**Launched
June 2025**

Citizenship Ceremonies



**Community
Engagement
2024-25**





**Fun Day with
Emergency
services
500+ attendees**



**10+
Community
Expo's**



Festival Entertainment

Sunraysia Multicultural Festival
2025



Official Opening
(MC - Pita Follaki)



Filipino Community
(Filipino Dance)



Acknowledgment of Country
(SMECC President - Ian Japp)



Khmer Temple Mildura
(Cultural khmer dancing)



National Anthem
(Theresa Kettering)



3TAIMANE
(Samoa Siava)



SMECC Playgroup
(Step2Go)



Kirabati Islands
(Kirabati Cultural Dancing)



Fonongatapu Vaka'uta
(Tongan Dance)



Si' Kae Ha
(Tongan Dance)



Cooke Island Dance Troupe
(Cooke Island Dance)



Sunraysia Indian Association
(Bharatanatyam)



Mildura Pipe Band
(Bagpipes/drums)



Sunraysia Irish Friends Ass.
(Irish Dancing)



Curly Vo
(Pop/Rock covers)



Cordilleraans in Sunraysia
(Cultural Barongtang)



Strike Force
(Kata & Vokkome)



Zelia Fatima Castro
(Timor Leste singer)



Christina Alex
(Indian Dance)

Festival Food Market

Sunraysia Multicultural Festival
2025



Elaines Kitchen
Dumplings - pork, chicken, vegetables
Steamed BBQ Pork buns



Nurul Zakaria
Chicken Briyani with rice
Chicken Curry
Butter Chicken
Lava Chocolate Cake
Pandan Dessert



400 Gradi
Meatballs
Gnocchi in Napoli Sauce



One More Thai
Cashew nut chicken rice
Panang Curry Chicken
Spring rolls, curry puffs, satay puffs dim sum



Kebab King
Turkish Kebabs



Two Black Sheep
Loaded Gourmet Baked
Potatoes
Arancini Balls (V)



Sasa Momo Cha
Nepalese Dumplings
Nepalese Dumplings



MDA Twisted Potato
Twisted Potato stick with flavours



CK Indian Food
Singapore Noodles
Chicken Curry
Lamb Curry



Donuts & Dogs
Jam Donuts
Nutella Donuts
Churros



Fast Freddy's
Loaded Fries
Chicken Schnitty
Steak burgers



Sushi Yasu
Hand Made Sushi Rolls



Nana Rosa's
Chicken Siomai
Pork Siomai
BBQ Skewers
(Pork & Chicken)



Fairy Floss Kingdom
Glow fairy floss
Fresh Popcorn

Festival Stall Market

Sunraysia Multicultural Festival
2025



SMECC
Information
Bilingual Books
First Aid Station



Happy Mumma
Creations
Custom Printing



Horizon Printing
3D Printing



Kids Space
Toys & Novelties



Vic Police
Information & Community
Engagement



Martha Choi
Handmade Jewellery
& Wares



Mallee Big Screen Hire
Proud sponsor of the 2025
Sunraysia Multicultural Festival



Rose Rogers
Free face painting
sponsored by SMECC



SMECC Crafts
Kids Arts & Crafts
Proudly supported by
SMECC's playgroup



Nepali Wares
Incense sticks, handmade
soap, handmade cards,
notebooks, key chains,
singing bowl, t shirts, tote
bags, carriages



Wish Toys
Glow in the darks & light
up toys



City Heart Big
outdoor Games
Fun & Games for all



11 Stall
holders

21
Performances
representing
18 Cultures

14 Food
Vendors

22 Volunteers
94 Volunteer
hours

Over
15,000
Attendees

2025
Sunraysia
Multicultural
Festival

In 2025, SMECC proudly hosted the Sunraysia Multicultural Festival—a vibrant celebration of the region's diversity, creativity, and community spirit. The event brought together over 15,000 attendees to enjoy a day of cultural performances, food, and shared experiences.

The festival showcased:

- 21 performances representing 18 cultures
- 14 food vendors offering authentic multicultural flavours
- 11 community and information stallholders
- The invaluable contribution of 22 volunteers, who collectively dedicated 94 hours to making the event a success

The atmosphere was electric, with music, dance, and cuisine creating a space where cultures could be experienced, appreciated, and celebrated. This flagship event reflects SMECC's commitment to fostering inclusion, connection, and pride in our community's multicultural identity.

Addressing Food Insecurity in Sunraysia – 2025 Snapshot

SMECC continues to play a vital role in tackling food insecurity across the Mallee, ensuring access to fresh, nutritious food. This year:

- 87,751 kg of food distributed—175,502 meals worth over \$658,132.50—reached households across the region.
- Nourish Sunraysia Social Supermarket launched June 3, offering affordable, dignified, and choice-based food access.
- Fortnightly cooking classes began, helping emergency relief recipients make the most of hamper items.
- 33 local partnerships and 34 donating farmers supplied local produce while reducing food waste.
- 21 school breakfast programs supported, helping children start the day nourished and ready to learn

**87,751 KGS
Food
Distributed**

**Valued at
more than
\$658,132**

**175,502
meals into
the
community**

**Social
Supermarket
Launched
June 25**



Building Community through Food Education and Engagement

Beyond food relief, SMECC invests in building food knowledge, cultural pride, and volunteerism through inclusive, community-led programs.

- 11 community members featured in our Nourish Sunraysia YouTube recipe series and recipe book, sharing stories and recipes that reflect the region's cultural diversity.
- 9 food security tours delivered, educating community members, service providers, and students on how local food systems operate and the importance of sustainable access.
- 2840 volunteer hours contributed, equating to over \$125,130 in social impact value, showing the strength and generosity of our community.
- Our programs continue to foster inclusion, learning and connection—empowering people to not only access food but to grow, prepare, and share it together.



SMECC Learning – WORLD CAFE



SMECC World Café

A key innovation was the expansion of our World Café model—an inclusive, informal learning environment bringing education into community spaces. The program welcomed 241 enrolments, provided 5,880 hours of engagement, and connected learners to 20+ partner agencies for sessions on health, education, employment, and settlement. With the regular support of 15+ volunteers, the World Café created a warm, welcoming space for learning and connection. Together with our partners, SMECC Learning continues to foster lifelong learning, strengthen community connections, and promote inclusion across the Mallee.

SMECC Learning – Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE)



**8
Dedicated
Facilitators**

**5,880
Hours of
World Café
engagement**

**Delivered in
Mildura,
Swan Hill &
Robinvale**

**241
Participants
Enrolled in
World Café**

**378
Enrollments
into 22
Programs**

**21,040
Hours of
Pre-accredited
training
Delivered**

SMECC Learning Hub

This year marked a proud milestone for SMECC Learning with our Inaugural Graduation Ceremony, celebrating the dedication, resilience, and achievements of our adult learners. Across our ACFE programs, we recorded 378 enrolments and delivered 21,040 hours of pre-accredited training, helping learners—many from multicultural and newly arrived backgrounds—develop skills in English language, digital literacy, employment readiness, and community participation. This success was supported by five dedicated volunteers who generously gave their time throughout the year.



Multicultural Storytime Playgroup

3000+
Participants

90+
Sessions



Partners
RDHS
Mildura Library
Montisory Childcare Centre
MRCC
Mallee Family Care

50+
Families

Our Multicultural Storytime Playgroup program continued to be a vibrant space where families from diverse backgrounds could connect, share cultures, and foster a love of reading and learning in their children.

In 2024-25, we delivered 90+ sessions across all sites, engaging an audience of more than 3,000 participants—equating to around 85 regular parents and children attending throughout the year. Sessions were held both at SMECC and in community venues, ensuring accessibility for families across the region. The program is proudly delivered in partnership with Mildura Library, Robinvale District Health Services (RDHS), Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC), and Montisory Childcare Centre. Together, we provide culturally inclusive stories, songs, and activities that help children develop language skills, social confidence, and cultural awareness, while giving parents opportunities to connect with services and one another.

The program's welcoming environment has become a trusted hub for new and established families, supporting both early learning and community connection.



Youth Leadership program



**11 Roadsafe Workshops with 165 Participants
720 Driving Mentor Sessions**

60 Homework Club Participants across Mildura & Robinvale

10 Youth Employment Workshops



Building Community through Youth Engagement

SMECC's Youth Programs offer safe, supportive spaces for young people from multicultural backgrounds to connect, learn, and develop future skills. This year saw strong participation in ongoing and new initiatives.

- Homework Club - Mildura: 22 participants received regular academic support and mentoring.
- Homework Club - Robinvale: 38 participants benefited from tailored learning support.
- Road Safe Youth Workshops: 11 participants learned safe driving practices and road rules.
- Employable Me Program: 10 participants built job readiness, resume, and interview skills.
- Youth Leadership Program (2025): 14 participants undertook leadership training and civic engagement activities.

These programs build practical skills, boost academic success, and connect young people with positive role models, fostering a strong sense of belonging in Sunraysia.



Volunteering at SMECC

2025 Volunteers of the Year



Allison
Parker

Nourish Sunraysia Social
Supermarket



Girleide De
Moraes Doctor

Nourish Sunraysia Social
Supermarket



(Penny) Wanpen
Psakongjit

Nourish Sunraysia Social
Supermarket/Playgroup

Volunteers work side by side with us at SMECC, sharing their time, skills, and passion to bring our programs to life. Their dedication is essential—without their hands-on support and teamwork, many of our services simply couldn't operate.

Together, we create welcoming spaces, deliver vital settlement support, and celebrate cultural diversity. Their partnership strengthens our community and drives meaningful impact every day.



MINUTES

AGM 23RD OCT 2024

Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council

Date: Wednesday, 23 October 2024

Time: 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm (AEDT)

Location: Default Location, 107-111 Twelfth Street, Mildura VIC, Australia

Board Members: Ian Japp (Chair), Anadil Nusrat, Belinda Clarke, Charles Albanese, Claire Kelly, John De Luca

Attendees: Akesa Kei, Maree Buckingham

Apologies: Bruce Myers

Guests: Non members: Martin Hawson, Omer Ntuzwenimana, Detelina Arnold, Rochelle Challen, Jackson Mugenzi, Mark Jenkins, Hakimeh Yavari, Lynette Rattray, Katherine Vandenerg, Josephine Xigamugo, Nat Mouwei, Wei Wei Chen, Neri, Lin, Priscilla leong Penny Phimphakaysone, Patricia Fotheringham Members: Seyed, Joselyn Ntahdmukie, Calvin Henry, Patricia D'Arango, Kunnika Powell, Emmie Dowling, Juelina Guterres, Michael Mack, Stephanie Smaller-Thomson, Xijin (Chris) Zhong, Desire Nshimirimana, Dong Lian Thlang Lian, Angela Biak Nei Zing, Zia Ibrahim

Notes: Guest Apologies:

Dr Anne Webster MP, Jade Benham, CR Helen Healy

1. Opening Meeting

1.1 Confirm Minutes of 2023 AGM

Decision Date: 23 Oct 2024

Mover: Claire Kelly

Seconder: John De Luca

Outcome: **Approved**

1.2 Interests Register- **as read**

1.3 Confirmation of Quorum

25 of 63 members present. Quorum not confirmed.

Decision Date: 23 Oct 2024

Outcome: **Not Approved**

2. Welcome & Acknowledgment of Country-**As read**

3. Management Reports

3.1 Presidents Report 2024

3.2 CEO Report 2024

3.3 Treasurers Report 2024

3.4 Annual Report 2023-24

Accept Annual report

Decision Date: 23 Oct 2024

Mover: Charles Albanese

Seconder: Pat D'Arango

Outcome: **Approved**

4. Announcement of Board of Management 2024-25

4.1 BOM introduction speeches

5. Open Floor to member Questions

5.1 Member Questions and Answers

Q&A Session:

Q1. Joselyne Ntahdmukie: Members used to be allowed to use SMECC facilities after hours; this has now stopped. Will this resume?

• Response (AK): Due to several factors, primarily security concerns as the premises also

serve as office space, SMECC facilities are only available for hire during business hours.

However, alternative premises on Orange Avenue are available for hire outside of business hours. This matter is under ongoing discussion, and the community will be updated if any changes are made.

Q2. Joselyne Ntahdmukie: Will SMECC decrease the price of membership, as it is considered too expensive?

• Response (IJ): A review of membership pricing was included in the planned constitutional review, which was postponed due to the lack of quorum. However, membership fees for 2024-25 have already been reduced to \$20 for individual members and \$60 for community groups.

Q3. Patricia D'Arango: a) When will the constitution changes progress? B) When will members receive the changes to review

• Response (IJ): a) A special meeting will be scheduled in the coming weeks either online or at SMECC, and members will be notified accordingly.

b) MB and IJ informed PD that communications were sent out to all members 30 days prior to the AGM for review via email. IJ advised members to check their spam/junk folders. (**Internal note:** any members who had joined and were awaiting membership approval would not have received this communication.)

Q4. Zia Ibrahim: What does SMECC need from community members?

• Response (CK & AK): CK informed the community that Communication is essential. We encourage community members to share their needs with us so that we can better target funding applications and create programs that address those needs effectively. AK requested that the community continues to remain active and engaged in activities and information sharing held by SMECC.

• Response (IJ): IJ stated that the Nationals were in opposition and multicultural affairs was not currently something being supported. He encouraged community members to write letters of support for multicultural funding and that SMECC could assist with a template if needed.

6. Special Resolutions

6.1 Constitution Changes

As the quorum requirement of 50% of members entitled to vote was not met, this matter was held over and not discussed. A special meeting will be organised at a later date to address the item

7. Close the meeting

Next AGM meeting: 22/10/2025

Acknowledgements



Mildura Rural City Council



Mallee **BigScreen** Hire



MSAU
MDVS



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