



Lake Macquarie  
City Council



City of Lake Macquarie  
**Multicultural Plan 2016-2020**



# Statement in Favour of a Culturally and Religiously Diverse Lake Macquarie

*We, as the elected Council and prominent citizens and representatives of organisations in Lake Macquarie, affirm our commitment to:*

- maintaining our City as a culturally diverse, inclusive community, united by a commitment to democratic principles and fairness; and*
- the right of all our residents to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect.*

*We are committed to maintaining Lake Macquarie as a multicultural City. Lake Macquarie's ethnic, religious and cultural diversity is an integral part of our City's identity and is intrinsic to our City's vitality.*

*Multiculturalism is in the interest of all of our citizens and expresses our sense of fairness and inclusion. It enhances respect and support for cultural, religious and linguistic expression.*

*Migrants to Lake Macquarie, including our most recent arrivals, have brought much needed skills, labour and ideas to our City. They have given us much of the energy, ingenuity and enterprise that make Lake Macquarie what it is today.*

*Those who choose to call Lake Macquarie home have the right to practise and share their religious and cultural traditions free from discrimination. Citizens from all backgrounds should be given every opportunity to participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of Lake Macquarie.*

*We are committed to a just, inclusive and socially cohesive City where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Lake Macquarie offers and where services are responsive to the needs of residents from all backgrounds.*

*We will act to promote understanding and acceptance of people of all backgrounds and faiths. We reject all expressions of religious or racial intolerance and discrimination.*

*Adopted by Council on 25 May 2015*



# Mayoral message

Lake Macquarie City is founded and grounded in cultural diversity and acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Awabakal People. We offer our respect to cultural knowledge holders and community members of the land and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

Through my role as Mayor of Lake Macquarie, I regularly have the pleasure of welcoming people from all corners of the globe to Australia at our Citizenship Ceremonies and I am often struck by their optimism, friendliness, enthusiasm for embracing a new way of life and commitment to making a valuable contribution to our City and our country. These include people coming as skilled migrants, people coming in search of peace and safety, people coming to be re-united with family members and countless other stories, all people with a chapter to add to Lake Macquarie's story.

Council acknowledges the benefits multiculturalism has brought and continues to bring to the City. Those who choose to call Lake Macquarie home have the right to practise and share their religious and cultural traditions free from discrimination. Citizens from all backgrounds should be given every opportunity to participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of Lake Macquarie.

We are committed to a just, inclusive and socially cohesive City where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Lake Macquarie offers and where services are responsive to the needs of residents from all backgrounds.

The development of the Multicultural Plan supports the ongoing commitment by Council to further collaborate and strengthen relationships with community, service providers, organisations and stakeholder agencies for the benefit of our multicultural community and address identified community needs.

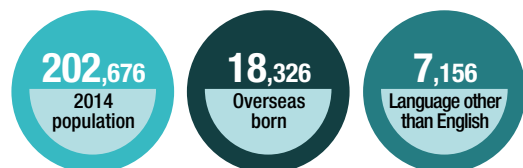
**Cr Jodie Harrison**  
Mayor



# A snapshot of our diverse community...

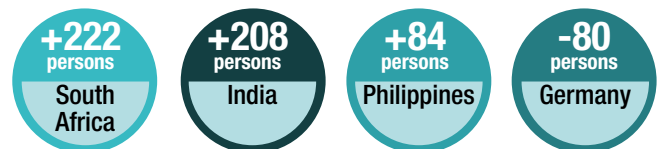
When using the term multicultural community, Council acknowledges that this community is not separate to the whole Lake Macquarie community but are members that are born overseas or are descendants of those born in a country other than Australia.

Lake Macquarie City is located in the Hunter region of New South Wales, about 110 kilometres north of Sydney. Lake Macquarie City is bounded by the City of Newcastle in the north, the Tasman Sea in the east, Wyong Shire in the south, and Cessnock City in the west.



- Overall, 9.7 per cent of the Lake Macquarie City population was born overseas, and 4.3 per cent were from a non-English speaking background
- The largest non-English speaking country of birth in Lake Macquarie City was Germany, where 0.5 per cent of the population, or 904 people, were born.
- The top five groups numerically from a Language other than English (LOTE) country of birth reported in 2011 Census in order are:
  - Germany (904);
  - South Africa (606);
  - Netherlands (593);
  - Philippines (477);
  - India (436);

The largest changes in countries of birth for the Lake Macquarie City population between 2006 and 2011, were for those born in:



Since 2011, the following new emerging communities have moved to our region:

- Afghan
- African
- Tibetan

Ancestry defines the cultural association and ethnic background of an individual going back three generations. Ancestry is a good measure of the total size of cultural groups in Lake Macquarie City regardless of where they were born or what language they speak. Ancestry from non-English speaking backgrounds ranked by size in Lake Macquarie:



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 (Usual residence data)



## Our partnerships and current activities

Lake Macquarie City Council is strongly committed to supporting our multicultural community. Council has, and will continue to deliver and support a range of activities, organisations and events important to the community.

- Harmony Day celebrations are held annually in partnership with key stakeholders.
- In 2015 Lake Mac Libraries launched the Migrant Stories of Lake Macquarie webpage <http://history.lakemac.com.au>
- Council hosted the 2014 International Children's Games and participates annually in the Games.
- In 2014, the North Lake Macquarie Multicultural Playgroup was established to provide a learning and social avenue for parents and children in Lake Macquarie City.

- Council encourages and supports multicultural service providers to participate in events and activities held by Council such as The Lake Mac Festival, You're Kidding Me Expo, Seniors Program and Youth Week activities.
- Council participates in a working group to hold the annual Hunter Multicultural Services Expo, which highlights services that are available for migrants and refugees.
- Local multicultural interagencies are attended to keep up-to-date about emerging issues/concerns in the sector and provide advice and assistance where possible.
- Has a nominated position (Councillor representative) on the Board of Northern Settlement Services Ltd.

In addition to those activities

- Council holds citizenship ceremonies every three months to welcome new citizens; and
- In 2015, Council adopted a Statement in Favour of a Culturally and Religiously Diverse Lake Macquarie.





# Action Plan

<b>Strategy</b> Embrace and promote Lake Macquarie's multicultural identity	<b>Action</b> Ensure images used in Council's marketing and communication materials reflect the diversity of our community	<b>Department</b> Communications	<b>Outcome</b> Diversity of stock photo collection
	<b>Action</b> Be culturally inclusive and consultative in developing the art gallery exhibition and public programs	<b>Department</b> Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery	<b>Outcome</b> Number of exhibitions held representing the multicultural community
	<b>Action</b> Promote the stories of our culturally diverse community	<b>Department</b> Lake Mac Libraries and Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Conversations with CALD* community members available on library website
		<b>Time Frame</b> December 2016	
		<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing	
		<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing	

<b>Strategy</b> Strengthen communication, engagement and participation	<b>Action</b> Develop a process to inform staff of availability of language aids and telephone interpreter service	<b>Department</b> Customer Service	<b>Outcome</b> Included in the induction of new customer service staff
	<b>Time Frame</b> June 2017		
	<b>Action</b> Provide information to services, organisations and the CALD* community regarding grants that may facilitate increased opportunities	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Number of grants given for multicultural activities
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		
	<b>Action</b> Encourage and support multicultural groups and organisations to access funding under Council's Community Funding Program	<b>Department</b> Community and Recreation Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Number of grants given to support multicultural activities
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		
	<b>Action</b> Ensure Council public workshops and programs are inclusive to the multicultural community through targeted promotion and surveying participants	<b>Department</b> Lake Mac Libraries, Leisure Services and Sustainability	<b>Outcome</b> Number of participants from multicultural backgrounds participating in Council public workshops and programs
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		
	<b>Action</b> Promotion of the NSW State Library Multicultural Collections through Council library service points and through multicultural organisations	<b>Department</b> Lake Mac Libraries	<b>Outcome</b> Number of loans per year
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		

<b>Strategy</b> Celebrate Lake Macquarie's cultural diversity with our communities	<b>Action</b> Celebrate cultural expression through the Harmony Day event in March in partnership with key stakeholders	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Audience attendance is measured
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		Number of stakeholders involved
	<b>Action</b> Identify opportunities to promote cultural celebrations in the City	<b>Department</b> Communications	<b>Outcome</b> Number of cultural celebrations promoted
	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing		

<b>Strategy</b> Build on partnerships	<b>Action</b> Participate and contribute to the multicultural networks in the area	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Attendance at interagency meetings each year	
	<b>Time Frame</b> December 2016	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Attendance at interagency meetings each year	
	<b>Action</b> Maintain regular contact with local multicultural community groups and service providers to ensure current and emerging needs are identified and addressed	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Attendance at interagency meetings each year
	<b>Action</b> Ongoing research of the needs and priorities of the CALD* community throughout the municipality	<b>Time Frame</b> Ongoing	<b>Department</b> Social and Community Planning	<b>Outcome</b> Multicultural Plan updated every four years

\*CALD- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

## Lake Macquarie City Council would like to thank the following organisations for their input and assistance in developing this plan:

- Northern Settlement Services
- Ethnic Communities Council Newcastle
- Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre
- Navitas
- Catholic Care
- STARTTS
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Family and Community Services
- Hunter TAFE
- NSW Police

## Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS)

If you need an interpreter to help you with information on Lake Macquarie City Council services, contact the Telephone Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450. They will be able to put you through to our Customer Service Centre on 02 4921 0333.

TIS is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.