



Thursday the 9th of February 2006

MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING TO BE REVIEWED IN GOVERNMENT INQUIRY

The National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters Council, today announced its intention to be a strong voice in the upcoming community broadcasting sector inquiry to be undertaken by the House of Representatives commencing 17 March 2006

NEMBC President Mr George Zangalis welcomed the inquiry noting it comes at a critical time in Australia's troubled history of race relations.

"The events at Cronulla last year showed us all that where ignorance and intolerance are allowed to remain unchecked, the potential for ethnic discord is ever present," he said.

He noted also a recent survey among schoolchildren, published in the Age last Monday, that showed an alarming level of ignorance and suspicion of people of Muslim background

"Over the last 10 years, this country has seen a slide back into old assimilationist models. Ethnic community broadcasting has been at the forefront of unity in diversity for over 30 years and is the living model of how cultures can be maintained and enriched while educating and informing the broader community."

"Multiculturalism was once a strong and viable bipartisan public policy in this country and had over 30 years, won the support of the majority of Australians. Now, more than ever, the role of community radio in providing a voice for marginalized groups, and remote communities needs to be recognized for the part it played in a stable and prosperous Australia," he said.

The NEMBC represents over 2000 ethnic community radio programmers broadcasting in over 100 languages from 100 stations all over the country. Mr Zangalis said he will urge the continued support for multiculturalism and engagement with newly developing broadcast technology.

"The sector needs the resources to thoroughly explore and develop alternative methods of getting the message out. It is now clear that we will be left behind unless the consequences of generational and technological change are understood and developed"

For further comment:

President NEMBC - Mr George Zangalis: 0417 319 705

Executive Officer: Tim Tolhurst – 0423 778 952