MEDIA RELEASE

**NEMBC PROPOSES A NATIONAL NEWS SERVICE FOR CALD COMMUNITIES TO CONTAIN COVID-19**

The National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC) today announced it was seeking support and funding from Government and non-Government sources to establish a *Multicultural News Service* (MNS) for community radio.

The NEMBC is concerned that non-English speaking people during this coronavirus pandemic are not receiving the necessary news and health information that is important to containing this pandemic.

English is a second language for many households in Australia. According to the 2016 Australian Census, 20.8% of people spoke a language other than English at home. This is a significant part of the Australian population.

30% of the population (5,957,000) aged 15+ listen to community radio in a typical week. About 5% listen to community radio exclusively – that’s 948,000 people.

Over one third of listeners (39%) of people who regularly speak a language other than English in their household listen to community radio during a typical week.

The MNS is a daily bulletin produced as podcast in 16 different languages to be distributed to 311 programs across Australia. The news and information will be sourced from highly credible news services and compiled by an experienced news editor. The bulletins will also be distributed through Social Media and the NEMBC website.

This service will be a "living and breathing" one, with active local reporting as opposed to static information so that the communities are engaged in relevant, up-to-date and believable information.

This service has the potential to reach about 1.7 million non-English speaking people.

Russell Anderson, EO of the NEMBC said, “This is a very important initiative. The service would provide consistent and reliable messages and news for this audience – a place to go to in their language reaching an audience that is not serviced by other platforms.

The service would also provide language broadcasters relevant content around which to build their programs. This will alleviate the strain and stress that some of our community broadcasters are currently experiencing during this crisis. “

For further information, contact: Russell Anderson [Contact info]