

## **Draft Joint Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) for People Seeking Asylum**

We the undersigned representatives of local governments in Victoria issue the following statement:

We want the Australian Government to support local government with adequate resources to meet the needs of people seeking asylum who live in the community.

We strongly believe more effective collaboration and coordination is essential between Commonwealth, State and Local Governments and we seek the following commitments from the Australian Government:

**Commitment One:** We want the Australian Government to reverse the recent job assessment changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program and continue to provide income and case management support for people seeking asylum while they seek sustainable employment.

**Commitment Two:** We strongly call on the Australian Government to provide funding to enable accurate initial job readiness assessment by trained employment consultants who understand the unique and significant barriers that people seeking asylum face.

**Commitment Three:** We want the Australian Government to provide additional funding to enable asylum seekers to be registered as Stream B and C job seekers within the jobactive network of agencies to facilitate ongoing job readiness assessment and skilled employment consultant support.

**Commitment Four:** We strongly call on the Australian Government to provide more effective resourcing to reinforce the capacity of community service and voluntary organisations to assist people seeking asylum to live safely in local communities and receive emergency relief and material aid support until such time as their refugee status is determined.

**Commitment Five:** The Australian Government needs to provide adequate and proper resourcing to enable a centralised coordination point within local municipalities for the appropriate coordination of what will be limited resources.

### ***Accountability***

Additional resourcing will bring with it an obligation to ensure that Local Government allocates resources appropriately and resource areas of identified need.

**We commit** to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

**We commit** to evaluate the application of resources in people seeking asylum support programs by measuring service delivery against agreed objectives and targets. The evaluation process will include annual program reports and Inter-Governmental consultations to review program effectiveness and refine objectives and activities.