

The Victorian Sister Cities Forum Report Queens Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne Wednesday 18 July 2018

INTRODUCTION

The President of Sister Cities Australia, Mr Bill Wilson, would like to commend this report to you on the inaugural Victorian Sister Cities Forum held in Melbourne on July 18, 2018. The report details the program, summarises the presentations (including links to provided PowerPoint files), and also provides a list of registered delegates.

Mr Wilson would like to acknowledge the hard work, time and effort put in by SCA Executive Member Christina Despoteris for bringing this forum together and achieving such a positive result.

This is the first of what is hoped will be a series of forums held to discuss salient topics and showcase relevant case studies that will be useful to cities looking to enhance or expand existing relationships, or look to create new relationships that will be successful and sustainable. Further details on future forums will be provided by SCA when they are available.

Thank you for your continued interest and dedication to sister cities and I encourage you to continue to support SCA as we look to provide on-going assistance to our current members and future members.

SUMMARY

The following summary was provided by Christina Despoteris, Executive Member of Sister Cities Australia and Co-ordinator of the Victorian Forum.



"The Victorian Sister Cities Forum was a great success. Over 110 delegates attended with no less than eighteen presenters. As you all know the program was extensive covering many topics associated with sister city relationships.

A big thank you must go to The Hon Bruce Atkinson MLC President of the Legislative Council and the Victorian Parliament for hosting the event.

As the coordinator and presenter on the day, I wish to sincerely thank all the speakers and delegates for attending and making the inaugural Victorian Forum such a success.

Both Dr Hass Dellal AO Executive Director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation and Chairman of SBS Board of Directors;



and Dr Vasilis Sarafidis Associate Professor Econometrics and Business Statistics at Monash University excelled with amazing presentations.

The Cities of Melbourne, Greater Dandenong, Greater Bendigo, Frankston, Hobsons Bay, the Rural City of Mildura as well as Buloke Shire, in turn, expanded on the various models of sister city relationships including the economic development, cultural, community and much more.

Mr Kazuyoshi Matsunaga Consul-General of Japan in Melbourne also presented an interesting paper. A session on the origins of sister cities and one on the sister-schools model was also presented as well as a Q&A session. The Australia China Business Council launched "Sister City Bridge - A Report" on the day."

PROGRAM

8.30 am Registration

9.00 am Introduction – MC, Christina Despoteris

9.03 am Welcome Addresses

The Hon Bruce Atkinson MLC, President of the Legislative Council Bill Wilson, President of Sister Cities Australia

- **9.13** am Origins of Sister Cities Mr David Edginton, Public Affairs Officer. United States Consul General
- 9.20 am The importance and changing nature of sister cities, how to make the most of these, why have them.



Part A: The Cultural Assets of Sister City Relationships - Dr Bulent (Hass) Dellal AO, Executive Director, Australian Multicultural Foundation Chairman, Special Broadcasting Service (SBS)

(9.50 am) Part B: The Economic Benefits of Sister City Relationships - Dr Vasilis Sarafidis, Associate Professor Econometrics & Business Statistics, Monash University

10.20 am International Relations/Cooperation: The Diversity of Sister-City Relationships and Associated Challenges - Kazuyoshi Matsunaga, Consul-General of Japan in Melbourne

10.35 am Morning Tea

10.55 am **Q&A**: Local Government Collaboration - Cr Mary Lalios, President, Municipal Association of Victoria; Cr Angela Altair, Mayor, Hobson Bay City Council; Cr David Pollard, Mayor, Buloke Shire Council

11.20 am Case Study 1 – City of Melbourne, Melbourne's Business and Civic Successes with its International Partners - D'Arcy Butler, Business Development Officer, International and Civic Services





11.40 am Case Study 2 – City of Greater Dandenong, Local Opportunities for Economic Relationships, How and Why? -Paul Kearsley, Group Manager, Greater Dandenong Business

12.00 pm Case Study 3 – City of Frankston, The Community Based Model - Cr Colin Hampton, Mayor, City of Frankston & Peter Patterson, Chairperson, Frankston Susono Friendship Association

- 12.20 pm Case Study 4 Study Mildura Cr Mark Eckel, Mayor, Mildura Rural City Council
- **12.30 pm Case Study 5 Creating Value, Sister City Engagement and Activation** Ningning Zhang, Chair, Bendigo Sister Cities Committee
- **12.40 pm Case Study 6 Sister-Schools Model** Dr Vivianne Nikou, Principal, Alphington Grammar School
- **12.50 pm Sister City Bridge A Report** James Scullin, Project Manager, Australia China Business Council
- 1.00 pm Q&A and Summing Up Bill Wilson, President, Sister Cities Australia
- 1.30 pm Conclusion of Forum

SYNOPSES OF PRESENTATIONS

(If available, links to the presentations are provided – where full details can be found.)

Welcome Addresses

The Hon Bruce Atkinson MLC spoke about media and community perceptions that sister city relationships were too much about overseas travel to nice locations, focussing on all the wrong reasons. This Forum is a start, a platform to build on, to begin to change those perceptions. Parliament should show leadership in this regard, seek new ideas and better promote sister city relationships. Today (the Forum) is a time to look back and look forward and to start to share ideas.

An outline of the four Sister State relationships that fall under the auspices of the State Government was given, and the speaker believed that Parliament can do better, and can also encourage Industry to investigate opportunities in those areas. This forum is just the start, he stated, and there needs to be more forums and discussions to make the programs work and to add 'economic sense' to them, and to let the media know it can work, and look at ways to change current perceptions.

Mr Bill Wilson extended an invitation to participate in the Forum and to make sure networking took place. He also spoke a little about the SCA committee and its voluntary nature and encouraged support and membership of SCA to allow it to continue. In order to placate the media the 'junket' sister city visit has to be a thing of the past. The media only focusses on the 0.1% and ignores the 99.9% of the



great outcomes from visits and exchanges. Sister cities opens up a whole new world. It is all about people meeting people — it is hard to replace a smile and a handshake!

Origins of Sister Cities

Mr David Edginton regaled how the National League of Cities became Sister Cities International, initially formed in 1956 by President Eisenhauer. The main premise was that citizens can represent the country way better than any government can. The first linked cities were Seattle and Kobe, and also St Paul MN, and Nagasaki. Sister Cities International promotes town to town, city to city and state to state relationships, and is supported in that by the US Government. It is the key driver for people to people diplomacy. In relationships "there is no 'us and them' there is only 'us and us'".

The importance and changing nature of sister cities, how to make the most of these, why have them.

Part A: The Cultural Assets of Sister City Relationships

Dr Bulent (Hass) Dellal AO said that Australia is much richer for the relationships and exchanges and they are very important to maintain. Maybe there is a need to get 'back to basics' and start to build more tolerance to each other at all levels of the community. It is an opportunity for straddling cultures at a local, people level. It is also the beginning to create strong relationships to overcome animosity, breakdown barriers, and start dialogue. He additionally stated that sister city relationships need to be at the grass roots level to succeed and flourish.

What are some of the key outcomes of sister cities today? Schools – study or exchange programs allow young people to experience different cultures first hand. Cultural exchange leads to business opportunities by building acceptance and respect. The use of technology – virtual sister city relationships, use new ideas to develop new opportunities and connect more people. How can we expand the concept and awareness of sister cities? Story telling using all available facilities!

Dr Dellal was also interviewed by SBS radio after his address and you can hear the content by clicking <u>HERE</u>.

Part B: The Economic Benefits of Sister City Relationships

Dr Vasilis Sarafidis talked about The Age of Urbanisation and how people are moving in large numbers into the cities. Urban centres drive economic growth and sister city relationships can enhance the growth opportunities. He then gave some statistics on the type and distribution of relationships within Australia and highlighted Victoria. He also outlines some of the economic benefits and how to go about trying to achieve them

The link to Dr Sarafidis's presentation is <u>HERE</u>.



<u>International Relations/Cooperation: The Diversity of Sister-City Relationships and Associated</u>
Challenges



Mr Kazuyoshi Matsunaga outlined the key statistics of sister city relationships between Japan and Australia. In 1955 Nagasaki and St Paul, MN, linked to try and overcome the perceptions from World War 2. Sister cities should have different aims covering both economic and cultural goals. He stated that "Sister city relationships are a starting point of interaction with a particular country, which leads to further innovative relationships across the country, not just within the sister cities.". The role of CLAIR was explained and how they can assist with sister city relationships with Japan.

The link to Mr Matsunaga's presentation is **HERE**.

Q&A: Local Government Collaboration

The panel discussion showcased an intra-Victorian relationship between Hobsons Bay and Buloke Shire by exploring: who each partner is and where they are; how the relationship was formed; the relationships they have with each other; the activities they engage in; and, the benefits that are derived from the relationship. Hobsons Bay is more urban, while Buloke is very rural; a Friendship Alliance was signed in 2004, the Sister City relationship in 2006; activities include – bowls, reciprocal visits, camera club exchanges, products exhibitions, and links between various community groups; benefits identified were – staff exchanges, sharing of policies and procedures, support in times of need, teaching each other's students about different lifestyles.

The link to Cr Pollard's presentation is **HERE**.

<u>Case Study 1 – City of Melbourne, Melbourne's Business and Civic Successes with its International Partners</u>

Mr D'Arcy Butler looked at the six sister city relationships that Melbourne has and explored them from a number of different angles. Melbourne also has a number of other relationships that fall under the categories of either Strategic or Business Partners. Mr Butler looked at a changing approach to relationship from a sectoral one to a more market driven one, linked to a number of business missions over the past 2 or 3 years. Melbourne is involved in many projects, several of which are currently ongoing. It is important to find the RIGHT sister cities that meet local traits and culture. Another key to success for Melbourne has been close ties with relevant State and Federal government agencies.

The link to Mr Butler's presentation is HERE.

<u>Case Study 2 – City of Greater Dandenong, Local Opportunities for Economic Relationships, How and Why?</u>

Mr Paul Kearsley spoke about the relationship between Greater Dandenong and Xuzhou, China and how it has become more economically focussed. The objectives of this approached were given and they were then followed by the outcomes from the formation of the Greater Dandenong Business Group. This group's main aim is to feed off of the sister city relationship and to use the linkages to foster new business opportunities. These opportunities are also shared with other cities and shires in the region who follow their lead and use their business model. The final remarks were about the fact that they no longer use 'Sister City' but 'International Relations' – has a broader scope, but uses the same principles with an economic focus – cultural comes second.

The link to Mr Kearsley's presentation is **HERE**.

<u>Case Study 3 – City of Frankston, The Community Based Model</u>

Cr Colin Hampton introduced the Case Study and then handed over to **Peter Patterson** who gave a very detailed overview of how the Frankston – Susono relationship is managed and the governance structure employed. It has been managed since inception in 1982 by community lead, but council



supported – secretariat only, committees in both cities and run by volunteers. Mr Patterson outlined the role of the committee, what makes the committee work successfully, how they have managed to last so long, the activities they engage in, their successes, what the council provides in way of support, activities in 2018, and what is planned into the future.

The link to Cr Hampton and Mr Patterson's presentation is **HERE**.

Case Study 4 – Study Mildura

Cr Mark Eckel noted that Study Mildura was sold in China in March 2018. It is a collaborative arrangement between Sunraysia TAFE and Latrobe University providing tertiary courses in China through their facilities there. This has come about because of long term (over ten years) of student exchanges. There is also a possibility for Dali (their Chinese sister city) students to gain scholarships to study in Mildura. The key tenets of the program are to: develop collaborative educational links; provide training and work placements; and stimulate growth in overseas student numbers.

The link to Cr Eckel's presentation is HERE.

Case Study 5 - Creating Value, Sister City Engagement and Activation

Ms Ningning Zhang detailed the work of her Bendigo sister city committee and shared their vision, values and active sister city relationships. A large number of achievements were itemised, along with a list of MOUs that the committee had signed to ensure continuation of some activities. There is a drive to better engage with China and a model to do so was presented in some detail regarding the three pillars of Relationships, Engagement and Activation.

The link to Ms Zhang's presentation is **HERE**.

Case Study 6 - Sister-Schools Model

Dr Vivianne Nikou, in a very passionate speech, extolled the virtues of schools' relationships and how they foster openness, cultural awareness, self-belief, a sense of community and global contribution to sustainability. Their Global Gateways Program sets out to achieve those aims with Year 9 and 10 students, although the foundations are laid much earlier in their school curriculum. There are a variety of projects being undertaken within Australia, in Greece and in China. There are formal procedures to set-up a project, encourage face-to-face contact, overcome challenges and deliver the benefits. It is all about 'Bringing Youth Together and Cross-cultural Understanding'.

The link to Dr Nikou's presentation is **HERE**.

Sister City Bridge – A Report

Mr James Scullin set out to answer some key questions about sister city relationships – How many? How active? How are they utilised? How can they be better leveraged? The focus was on those relationships between Victorian cities and towns, and their counterparts in China. A survey was conducted to get data on relationships – status, activities, sectors involved, challenges and external support. Mr Scullin also presented some general commentary on the view of sister city relationships from the Chinese perspective along with some recommendations for growing utilisation of relationships.

The link to Mr Scullin's presentation is HERE.

Q&A and Summing Up

Mr Bill Wilson thanked all attendees, presenters and organisers of the Forum along with acknowledging the support from the Victorian parliament before formally closing the event.



LIST OF REGISTERED DELEGATES

Mr Anthony Plummer, Manager International, Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Cr Pam Clarke, Mayor, Horsham Rural City

Ms Tamara van Noort, Investment and Trade Officer, Regional Development Victoria (DEDJTR)

Mr Martin Szakal, Managing Director, Global City Connect

Cr Jennifer Anderson, Mayor, Macedons Ranges Shire Council

Mr Gareth Smith, General Manager, Colac Otway Shire

Mr Terry Callant, Governance Manager, Bayside City Council

Mr Nick Oats, Program Director International, Local Infrastructure DELWP

Ms Kate Roffey, Director, City Economy, Innovation & Liveabiliyy

Cr Colin Ross, Mayor, Cardinia Shire Council

Mr Trent Smyth, Consul, Consulate of Malawi

Ms Virginia Birrell, Chief Executive Officer, Australia China Business Council Victoria

Mr Prasanna Gamage, Consul-General, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Ms Dana Levickis, Honourary Consul-General, Republic of Lithuania

Mr Andrew Fernyhough, Honourary Consul, Consulate of Kazkhstan

Mr Ernesto Antonio Duenas, Consul-General, Consulate General of El Salvador

Ms Rita Vago, Trade Commissioner, Hungarian Consulate Melbourne

Dr George J Luk, Consul-General, Consulate General of Poland

Dr Shea X Fan, Lecturer School of Management, RMIT University

Cr Paul Klisaris, Mayor, City of Monash

Ms Fiona Patten MLC, Member of Parliament, Northern Metropolitan Region

Mr Steve Cook, Principal, Albert Park College

Ms Spica A Tutuhatunewa, Consul-General, Consulate General of Indonesia

Cr Ken Clarke, Mayor, Rural City of Wangaratta

Mr Brendan McGrath, Chief Executive Officer, Rural City of Wangaratta

Mr David Edginton, Public Affairs Officer, Consulate General of the USA

Mr Mohamed Fakhry, Consul-General, Arab Republic of Egypt

Mr Bruce Connolly, Manager Economic Development, Latrobe City Council

Mr Jie Liu, Int, Engagement & Investment Officer, Latrobe City Council

Dr Aron D'Souza, Honourary Consul, Consulate of the Republic of Moldova

Ms Karen Litchfield, Manager Governance, Tamworth Regional Council

Ms Katie Alchin, Events Officer, Tamworth Regional Council

Mr Saeed Al Qmezi, Consul-General, Consulate General of the UAE

Mr Rakesh Malhotra, Acting Consul-General, Consulate General of India

Cr Philip Le Liu, Councillor, City of Melbourne

Mrs Jan Teasdale, Executive Member, Sister Cities Australia

Mr Mike Jakins, Executive Member, Sister Cities Australia

Mrs Sim Hayward, Executive Member, Sister Cities Australia

Mr Jim Claven, Secretary, Lemnos Galipoli Commemorative Committee

Mr Matt Onishi, Director, Hyogo Prefectural Govt Cultural Centre

Ms Melissa Luyke, Deputy Director, Hyogo Prefectural Govt Cultural Centre

Mr Simon Hast, Secretary, Frankston Susono Friendship Association

Ms Rae Kingsbury, Honourary Consul, Timor - Leste

Mr Anthony Nicolaci, Manager Economic

Development, Greater Shepparton City Council

Mr Michael Roux, Honourary Consul-General, The Republic of Rwanda

Ms Georgia Botsiou, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Greece

Ms Susanne Newton, Councillor, City of Darebin

M +61 (0) 439 363 149

E william.wilson@sistercitiesaustralia.com PO Box 914, Rockingham, WA, 6168



Mr Gross Gross, Councillor, City of Port Phillip Mr Dubravko Belavić, Consul-General, Croatian Consulate General

Cr John Sipek, Mayor, City of Moonee Valley Mr Linton Lethlean OAM LLB, Honourary Consul-General, Consulate General of the Republic of Maldives

Cr Alex del Porto, Councillor, Bayside City Council Cr Marcus Pearl, Councillor, City of Port Phillip Cr Andrea Surace, Councillor, City of Moonee Valley Cr Cynthia Watson, Councillor, City of Boroondara Mr Ziad Itani, Consul-General, Consulate General of Lebanon

Mr Su-Chang Cho, Chief of Korean LGC of Oceania, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea

Ms Young Cha, Seniour Manager LGC of Oceania, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea

M Tate Ryan, Program Leader Eco Dev & Place Mgmt, Logan City Council

M Patty Hsiao, Bus Dev Exe (Snr) - Global Connections, Logan City Council

Mr Jason Sandhar, Bus Dev Exe – International Relations, Logan City Council

Ms Pisani Pisani, Consul-General of Malta, Consulate General of Malta

Mr Craig Ondarchie, Member of Parliament, State Member for the Nth Metro Region

Dr Charlie Huang, Senior Lecturer School of Management, RMIT University

Cr Georgina Papafotiou, Councillor, City of Brimbank

Cr Bruce Lancashire, Councillor, City of Brimbank

Cr John Hedditch, Councillor, City of Brimbank

Cr Cuc Lam, Mayor, Maribyrnong City Council

Cr Adrian Weston, Mayor, Campaspe Shire Council

Cr Annie Vickers, Councillor, Campaspe Shire Council

Mr James Scullin, Project Manager, ACBC China Path Podcast

Cr John Mortimore, Mayor, Knox City Council

Cr Susan Salter, Mayor, Borough of Queenscliff

Cr Ross Ebbels, Councillor, Borough of Queenscliff

Mr Westmoreland Palon, Consul-General, Consulate General of Malaysia

Mr Hirotomo Akaiwa, Director, CLAIR Sydney

Mr Joe Fujishima, Assistant Director, CLAIR Sydney Mr David Cross, Chair, Frankston Environmental Friends Network

Cr An Aaron, Councillor, Wyndham City Council Cr Henry Barlow, Councillor, Wyndham City Council Cr Walter Villagonzalo, Councillor, Wyndham City Council

Mr Greg McCallum JP, Project Coordinator International Links & Sister Cities, Blacktown City Council

Miss Radmila Stojmirovska, Acting Consul-General, Con Gen of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Ms Jane Zhang, ISU Marketing Manager Int Students Unit, Sunraysia Institute

Ms Irina Bruk, Honourary Consul-General, Consulate General of the Russian Federation

Cr Margaret O'Rourke, Mayor, City of Greater Bendigo

Mr Denis Jewell, President, Mildura/Upland Sister City Association Inc

Mrs Julie Jewell, Member, Mildura/Upland Sister City Association Inc

Mr Ian Cook, Member, Mildura/Upland Sister City Association Inc

Ms Kaori Sayers

Ms Joy Martin, President, Hobsons Bay International Friendship Association

Mr John Whittington, Member, Hobsons Bay International Friendship Association

Ms Elizabeth Maasen., Member, Hobsons Bay International Friendship Association

Ms Rebecca Hicks, Projects Officer Veterans Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet

Cr Tony Athanasopoulos, Mayor, City of Glen Eira

Ms Kate Gahye Kim, Political and Economic Officer, Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea

Mr Keelen Jones, Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea.

Cr Brian Gibson, Mayor, Gannawarra Shire Council Mr Michael Carrafa, Greater Shepparton City Council Ms Sarah Hardwick, Acting Economic Development Officer, Greater Shepparton City Council



Mr Richard Udovenya, Honourary Consul, Republic of Mozmbigue

Mr Peter McMullin, Honourary Consul, Consulate of Georgia

Mrs Denise Eckel

Jessie Belcher, Senior Policy Advisor Int Engagement, Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Ms Leah Torly, Policy Officer Regional Planning/ Governance, Regional Development Victoria (DEDJTR)

Zhao Jian, Consul-General, Consulate General of Peole's Republic of China

Zhou Yujiang, Consul, Consulate General of Peole's Republic of China

Hemraz Bhoolah, Intercultural Empl Program Project Officer, City of Ballarat

Mr Shota Tohara, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Japan

Ms Nilusha Dilmini, Consul, Consulate General of Sri Lanka

Mr Mohammed Abuyousef, Consul Assistant, Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates

Mr Panos Apostolou, Presenter, SBS Radio Cr Sam Iskander, New South Wales