

# REFUGEE REFLECTIONS

Issue 3 : ( JUL - AUG 2015 )

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## Canterbury Refugee Council Annual General Meeting 2015

The Canterbury Refugee Council convened its Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 30 July 2015 in its office. The meeting was well attended and attracted members from different refugee communities. The meeting commenced with the Chairman's report as well as yearly reports from all divisions including finance, events, and specialist programmes run by the Council.

Chairperson Ahmed Tani in his report informed the Board the work being done to ensure that the Council's strategy remains aligned with the many changes being experienced in the Christchurch area as well as within the refugee communities. The report indicated that it had been a good year for the organisation, with the Council being able to successfully execute its agenda and plans. The Council is also being sought out on a regular basis, by the government and the city council for advice on several issues and areas of concerns.

The Financial Report including the annual auditor's report and the consolidated accounts was relayed by Thi Phan for the 2014 fiscal year. It was duly noted that all the payments were cleared and the Council owes no debt and all the financial documents are transparent and open. Other reports included the upcoming programmes and activities update by the Manager as well as the Summerz End Youth Festival report by the Youth Coordinator.

The new Executive Committee was elected for a term of three years. The conclusion to the AGM appears to be that progress has been made towards adopting the best practice methods in areas such as governing as well as operational. The Council with the collaborative support of other organisations is looking forward to another year of representing and advocating refugee interests at the regional, national, and international levels.

*If you are interested to read the report for the AGM visit our website at [www.canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz](http://www.canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz)*

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## Safety belts save lives, it's that simple

The New Zealand Police have a responsibility to keep New Zealand safe. Part of that role is ensuring that people are complying with the road rules, for their own and everyone else's safety.

The three most important things that will effect how bad a crash will be are the "Speed" the car is going, whether the driver is effected by "Alcohol and/or Drugs" and whether the people involved are wearing "Safety Belts". Today I will talk about Safety Belts.

The modern safety belt was the designed by Swedish inventor Nils Bohlin for Swedish manufacturer Volvo - who introduced it in 1959 as standard equipment. Safety Belts were named by the United Nations as one of biggest life savers of the 20th century. Compulsory wearing of safety belt for all people in cars became law in New Zealand in 1972.

About 98% of drivers in Canterbury wear their safety belts. However people new to New Zealand do not always realise how big a priority safety belt wearing is for the Police, particularly child wearing safety belts. It's a habit you simply must pick up quickly, it's a very important part of keeping you and your family safe.

## Acting Inspector Scott Richardson

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Though only 2% of people are not wearing their safety belts, about 33% of people who have died on Canterbury roads may have survived if they were wearing their safety belt. The simple act of wearing a safety belt reduces your chances of receiving a fatal injury in a crash by 61%.

Canterbury Police conduct traffic operations every day looking for traffic offenders. People, (whether drivers, front or backseat passengers) not wearing safety belts are a key focus area. Last year over 6,700 Canterbury people received tickets for this offence. The fine is \$150 to the person not wearing their safety belt. If the passenger is under 15, the \$150 fine goes to the driver, as it is their responsibility to ensure their passengers are correctly protected.

It is vitally important that children are in properly fitted and approved child seats. The type of child seat will change with the age and size of the child. If you are unsure on how to fit the seats correctly you can contact Plunket ([www.plunket.org.nz](http://www.plunket.org.nz)) for advice. More information on safety belts is also available online at [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz).

## Conversations over a Cup of Tea and Samosa

English language features prominently in the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy (NZRRS) and has always been given a prime importance by the stakeholders as well as the communities themselves. While there are heaps of English language courses and programmes on offer around the city, the Canterbury Refugee Council decided to do something different for the communities and from there arose the idea of organising English language chat sessions in an informal setting.

Along with the English Language Partner and PEETO, the Council hosted the first session on 22nd August. The session began with an introduction where everyone had to tell their names and a little bit about their home country to get the conversation started. Afterwards, the people were divided into small groups and were given a set of conversation-starter questions to ask each other. Every group had a volunteer to help people with the questions and encourage them to talk amongst themselves. Every group had people from different countries and all ages making it an eclectic mix of people.

Refreshments such as samosas, sandwiches, cookies as well as juices and tea were provided for the people to consume while they get to know each other making it a fun-filled casual event for everyone to enjoy and learn.



## Strengthening Refugee Voices: An Introduction

Strengthening Refugee Voices is an initiative established in 2007 by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to support all former refugee individuals and communities to help them integrate and resettle in New Zealand. The project is a part of MBIE's national/resettlement strategy to build the capacity of former refugee communities to have their voices heard at both the regional and national level. It is one of the goals of the New Zealand Settlement Strategy and aims to be a platform from where the refugee voices can be heard and issues and concerns discussed.

Canterbury Refugee Council (CRC) have been contracted to the MBIE to deliver the Canterbury aspect of the project. The project is managed by the Strengthening Refugee Voices Working Group which is made up of two representative from each community is chaired by Ahmed Tani who is also the chair for the Canterbury Refugee Council.



The working group supported by the CRC has been actively involved in representing former refugee communities at various regional and national platforms. The working group develops one year plan and meets every two months. If you wish to know more about the initiative please refer your enquires to [manager@canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz](mailto:manager@canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz)



## INZ Refugee and Protection Unit Meeting

Every six months the Canterbury Refugee Council facilitates the Immigration New Zealand Refugee and Protection Unit meetings with the refugee communities and stakeholders in refugee resettlement sector. These meetings are a part of the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy (NZRRS).

Andrew Lockhart, the manager of the Refugee Protection Unit, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment along with other representatives came down from Auckland and Wellington. The INZ Refugee and Protection meeting with the communities this year covered a range of topics; summary of the achievements of the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy work plan for 2014/2015; outlining the priorities for the third phase of implementation of the NZRRS for 2015/16; update on refugee quota programme and Refugee Family Support Category.

The meeting closed off with an interactive session giving the community members an opportunity to ask questions to the INZ representatives.



## Orientation Session for Family Reunification

On 8th of August the Council organised an interactive, engaging session for the new comers to Christchurch who came to New Zealand under the family reunification category. This is a part of the Council's programme for the people under Family Reunification category which runs intermittently throughout the year. The purpose of this programme is to welcome new refugee background residents to Christchurch and provide them with an opportunity to meet the representatives from different agencies as well as to get information about the services offered.

A wide range of topics is covered such as education, law and order, employment, health, housing, information on accessing different services, driving laws and so forth. The latest session held in August by the Council had speakers talking on education, employment opportunities including drafting CV as well as driving safely in New Zealand.

These sessions are heavily advertised in the communities to ensure maximum participation and refreshments are provided.

To participate in the next session as an attendee or on behalf of any organisation please email at [contact@canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz](mailto:contact@canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz)



## Nic's Farewell

In July we bid farewell to Nic Farra, our events coordinator. Nic joined the Council in 2014 and worked as the Event Coordinator for the Summerz End Youth Festival. His jovial nature and happy go lucky attitude would be missed by everyone in the office. The Council wishes him luck for his future endeavours and on his upcoming plan to study at the prestigious Shakespeare Institute in the UK. Break a leg Nic!

## Health and Well-being Workshop

Date: 19th

Time: 1:00 PM

Loation: 166 St Asaph Street

Central City

PH: (03) 377 2544

Email: [canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz](mailto:canterburyrefugeecouncil.org.nz)

## NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH 2015**

**5 PM TO 12:00 AM**

NORTH NEW BRIGHTON COMMUNITY CENTRE  
93 MARINE PARADE, NEW BRIGHTON

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