

A Research Report

Prepared for:

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Affairs**



**The anti-racism campaign:
Qualitative market research to
guide campaign development
Volume 1 - Findings and implications**

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1 Introduction

An anti-racism campaign was announced on 20 August 1996 by the Hon Philip Ruddock MP, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. He announced that the message of the campaign would be that racism is abhorrent and un-Australian. He further went on to say that

“As a unique and successful multicultural society, Australia has been fortunate to be comparatively free of the more virulent forms of racism ... (but that) we cannot afford to be complacent ... Increasing community awareness through community education is our best viable long-term approach.”

The research reported here is the first stage of a two-phase research program to be conducted on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) to inform the development of this anti-racism campaign. The first phase, conducted in November-December 1997, was a qualitative research project.

This document presents the main findings of the research, draws implications for a campaign and proposes that a broad strategy for an anti-racism campaign be tested in the next (quantitative) phase of research.

Volume 2 of the report presents the more technical aspects of the project: methodology (including recruitment of research participants), research phasing, verbatim comments from group participants, results of written responses collated from participants and appendices (including the research brief, research materials and written responses from research participants).

2 Research objectives

The broad aim of this research project was to explore and understand the subtleties and nature of racism in the Australia of the late 1990's, with a view to

mounting an effective mass media and/or education anti-racism campaign. The qualitative research reported here serves as the first step in the process of developing this understanding. (The next step will be a large national quantitative survey of the general community.)

The central message of this campaign, according to the Minister, fits a vision of Australia *“as a country whose people are united by the common cause of commitment to Australia.”* One of the objectives of the research reported here was also to test the validity of this central tenet of the campaign, to determine the extent to which this commitment is shared and whether it, along with any other shared values, can serve as the central unifying message that promotes tolerance and serves to diminish racist attitudes and behaviour.

The DIMA research brief (Appendix 1, Volume 2) also provided a list of broad and specific research objectives. These are paraphrased below.

General areas explored by qualitative research were:

- the identification of values shared by Australians, if any
- knowledge and understanding of the shared values
- the level of appreciation of these shared values
- awareness of personal and social benefits of shared values
- awareness of personal and social costs of racism
- knowledge and understanding of what racism is and the ways in which it is manifested.

Specific qualitative research objectives were:

- explore reactions to possible titles for the campaign
- develop a working definition of racism ... How do different Australians define it?

- test the broad message of the campaign (Racism is unacceptable in Australia) and other messages that emerge as powerful in shifting attitudes
- determine the likely causes of current racism
- explore the values that Australians share - do they exist, what are they, are they inclusive of all communities, what are the facilitators of and barriers to these shared values and do Australians feel united by them?
- report on the level and nature of racism directed at different community groups.

The qualitative research was also designed to assist in refining the questions and the approach for the next stage of research, a national quantitative survey of the community.

Broad details of the methodological approach employed are provided below. Full methodological details can be found in Volume 2 of this report.

3 Methodology

A focus group methodology was employed for this qualitative project. In Eureka's experience, a focus group of like-minded individuals who can tell that they are of similar opinion provides an ideal atmosphere in which attitudes and opinions can be expressed and explored honestly. This indeed proved to be the case in this project, particularly when it came to the expression of socially undesirable attitudes.

The 36 focus groups were homogenous both culturally and attitudinally. Candidates for recruitment first self-classified into one of four cultural groups:

- white Anglo-Saxon/Celtic (classified as “Anglos”),
- established migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (Established NESB),
- migrants recently arrived (in the last 5 years) from Asia (Recent NESB), and
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI).

Having self-classified into one of these groups, respondents were recruited according to how similar they were in tolerating a short “social distance” with respect to other cultures/races (see Volume 2, Section 2.2, for further explanation). Those indicating they were happy with a short social distance from “others” were deemed “positives” (12 such focus groups were conducted) and those exhibiting comfort with only long social distance were deemed “negatives” (24 focus groups). It was also necessary to conduct separate groups of younger and older people to ensure even greater homogeneity of attitudes and experiences.

A sample frame roughly proportional to the Australian population was employed, including groups in metropolitan and regional New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia.

The qualitative research was conducted in four stages. The first stage, Step 1, consisted of 12 groups of “positives” (the people most comfortable in dealing with people of other backgrounds). Step 2 consisted of 12 groups of “negatives.” Step 3 in the research process involved the development of a series of messages attempting to cover the values shared by some of the positives in Step 1 and the negatives in Step 2. Step 4 consisted of 12 groups of negatives and involved testing of the bridging messages developed in Step 3.

On average, eight participants attended each of the discussions.

Staff from DIMA and the Office of Government Information and Advertising (OGIA) observed a number of the focus groups.

The total sample is shown in the table overleaf.

Project Phase	Community Groups			
	Anglo	Established NESB	Recent NESB	ATSI
Step 1 - Positives 12 groups	6 groups 3 younger 3 older 2 Sydney 1 Albury 1 Melbourne 1 Brisbane 1 Townsville	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Sydney 1 Brisbane	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Sydney 1 Melbourne	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Albury 1 Townsville
Step 2 - Negatives 12 groups	8 groups 4 younger 4 older 2 Sydney 2 Adelaide 2 Bunbury 2 Dubbo	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Perth 1 Adelaide	1 group Younger Sydney	1 group Older Perth
Step 4- Negatives 12 groups	8 groups 4 younger 4 older 2 Melbourne 2 Shepparton 2 Warwick 1 Brisbane 1 Sydney	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Brisbane 1 Melbourne	1 group Younger Sydney	1 group Younger Sydney

“Younger” was defined as 18-39 years of age, “older” as 40-69 years of age.

A detailed discussion guide was used by the five research consultants working on this project. This discussion guide was identical for Steps 1

and 2 of the project (see Appendix 3, Volume 2). In these first two phases, the groups discussed issues such as:

- the positive characteristics of Australia;
- the negative characteristics of Australia;
- Australian values;
- whether Australia is currently divided;
- definitions of racism;
- examples of racist and non-racist behaviour;
- the causes of racism;
- the perceived subjects of racism and its effect on them;
- the perceived prevalence of racism;
- the “acceptability” of racism in Australia;
- the costs of racism;
- the government’s role in addressing racism (if any), and
- main messages for a possible campaign to reduce racism.

A brief, informal individual reaction “notepad” was also used in Step 1 and 2 focus groups but not in Step 4 (see Appendix 5, Volume 2). Participants were asked to complete sections of this notepad at various times during the discussion. The sentence completion task required respondents to write sentiments which either reflected their view, mimicked examples of racism they have witnessed, comments they had been the subject of or comments they could imagine being made by other people. A second exercise involved participants marking which of 35 statements they agreed with. As with the sentence completion task, this exercise was employed both to allow participants to note down their private thoughts and to act as a stimulus for further group discussion.

A separate discussion guide was employed in Step 4 of the project (see Appendix 4, Volume 2). In brief, the Step 4 discussion guide covered issues such as:

- the positive characteristics of Australia;
- the negative characteristics of Australia;
- Australian values;
- five messages relating to Australian values (rotated across groups);
- Australia's achievements;
- whether Australia has benefited from immigration, and if so, how;
- the public's input into government decision-making regarding immigration, and
- the expression of racism.

4 Findings

4.1 Definition and reported prevalence

The participants in our group discussions were relatively comfortable talking about racism. In fact, people found no difficulty in defining racism and providing examples. However, major differences were apparent when people tried to define racism. The group discussions revealed that the community currently defines racism in one of two ways. First, those who express the most negative and racist views toward other groups - predominantly made up of Anglo-Saxon people - are of the view that racism is an extreme act, such as physical violence against people of other races (genocide, behaviours shown by groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and National Action). By definition, they excluded themselves from the definition of what a racist is. That is, negatives generally said that racism is how other people behave, not them.

Second, the remaining group participants (positive Anglo-Saxons, most Aboriginals and most migrants) defined racism to include far less “extreme” and more “everyday” behaviours. These groups defined racism to include behaviour such as:

- name calling;
- derogatory comments from people in the street;
- making some customers wait longer for service in shops;
- showing unwarranted rudeness to people trying to make themselves understood in English;
- making sweeping negative generalisations on the basis of cultural, linguistic or religious differences;
- providing assistance (e.g., job applications and income assistance) in a begrudging and reluctant manner;

- discrimination when trying to rent or buy real estate;
- rougher treatment from - or being treated with suspicion by - the police;
- abuse on sporting fields;
- walking away from public places (e.g., parks, crossing the footpath) to avoid contact with certain people;
- conversing in a patronising or mocking way; and
- media references to the ethnic background of non-Caucasian offenders.

Each migrant and Aboriginal respondent we spoke to could personally relate stories about such experiences ... both in recent times and in the past. Some said they regularly experienced such racism, others less so. For example, established migrants who experienced it when they first came to Australia commented that they do not frequently experience it now. Furthermore, negative respondents in our focus groups readily reported being perpetrators of behaviour of which subjects of racism complained ... it was simply the case that the former did not see it as racism whereas the latter did.

In fact, racist attitudes were quite readily expressed publicly in the focus group context. The attitudes were most clearly expressed in groups as negative stereotypes of various migrant and religious groups. An issue of some concern, as noted above, is the fact that people with negative attitudes failed to see these “everyday” behaviours as symptomatic of racism. For them, such behaviour was acceptable when it could be “justified.” In this context, a stereotype could be used to explain why certain groups should be ignored. For example, a store owner said that *“Aborigines only come into the shop to cause trouble, not to buy stuff, so why serve them before a white person?”* Another justification for racist acts was the feeling that “the majority” was now being discriminated

against: *“Racism is now reversed, Aboriginals get handouts and us whites have to work!”* Many negative people also expressed the view that migrants receive too many government benefits and that this justifies any “nigging” remarks that may be made about them: *“Asians are handed a lot when they come here - they drive around in expensive cars,” “They get low interest rates, they get handouts” ... “so it’s alright to have a go at them, they deserve it!”*

The discussions also explored what the community perceives is not racism. Generally, the groups reported that friendly mutual banter about another’s culture was not racism ... provided the people involved knew each other well enough to know the other would not be offended and that they were only joking.

Clearly, the expression of racist attitudes in the community is a problem.¹ The qualitative research cannot be definitive as to precisely how widespread it is and how frequently people behave in this way. We do know that both perpetrators and subjects of racism feel that it is a common occurrence. A segment of Anglo-Saxons with positive attitudes suspects that it may all be a “media beat-up” and that the real level of incidence is much lower than the media makes us believe. Subjects also feel (and would like to believe) that, whilst it is common, only a minority of the community is responsible for the majority of the acts and that most people do not exhibit racism.

¹ A recent report in the *Parramatta Advertiser* (11 March 1998) demonstrates the unconstructive means with which some community leaders are still choosing to deal with complaints about racism. The report quoted the Mayor of Auburn (Australia’s most multicultural municipality) as stating that people should not complain about racist acts and that those migrants who did not like the way they were being treated should *“simply buy their ticket and go back to where they came from.”*

The next stage of research, the quantitative phase will provide a definitive answer on how most people define racism and the level of prevalence of such acts. We will achieve this by presenting the above two definitions of what racism is (extreme and everyday) and determining the number and profile of people who agree with each definition.

4.2 Subjects and stereotypes

The research found that the subjects of racism were usually visibly different groups. This was evidenced both in the racist remarks made by group participants and in the reports from subjects of racism. Most group participants acknowledged that the groups in Australia that are most likely to be the subjects of racist acts are:

- newly arrived migrants in general, but especially Asians (*"It used to be Greeks and Italians in the 1950's, now it's Asians"*)
- Muslims (especially *"... Arabs at the time of the Iraqi war"*)
- Lebanese, and
- Aboriginals.

In general, the participants in most of the urban groups emphasised that Asians and Aboriginals are the main targets for racism. The subjects and the basis on which racist attitudes towards them were expressed are outlined below. It should be noted that these views were expressed by a large segment of people with whom we spoke, not just those selected on the basis of their negative attitudes. However, the extent to which these views are *representative* of how the community feels will not be clear until the quantitative research is completed. What the qualitative research indicates is that this is the *range* of feelings that currently exist. The quantitative research will need to determine how many people in the community feel this way. This will be achieved by presenting some of the

sentiments outlined below to respondents in the quantitative survey and asking whether or not they agree with the statements.

In the qualitative research, Asians were perceived to be:

- living in ghettos;
- racist;
- involved in crime and responsible for the recent “*crime waves*”;
- causing most of the drug problems in society;
- anti-Christian;
- abusing the welfare system;
- lacking commitment to Australia, and
- undermining the job security and work conditions of Australians.

Examples of direct quotes from group respondents regarding “Asians” are provided below.

- *“Asians treat us like trash, walk all over us. They think we’re lazy. They think we’re dirt.”*
- *“The Asians who came out in the Gold rush, they’ve assimilated ... but now ... they are all fighting each other ... they hate Australians. They’re violent people.”*
- *“Vietnamese live off the social security system.”*
- *“Asians aren’t clean...they are not screened for diseases”*
- *“The rich ones have either exploited their own people, are drug dealers or they are corrupt.”*
- *“They’ve no community spirit, no generosity.”*

Likewise, Muslims and Lebanese were (interchangeably) stereotyped as:

- being violent by nature;

- causing a lot of violent crime in the community;
- wanting to “Muslimise” Australia;
- all being into welfare/worker’s compensation abuse, and
- mistreating women.

Again, direct quotes can illustrate these stereotypes:

- *“...Lebanese back... a slipped disk they get whilst coming off the plane when they land in Australia.”*
- *“Lebanese and Chinese...too many of them, they’re buying the country out.”* (an ATSI respondent)
Aborigines were perceived as:

- being treated *“better than whites”*;
- alcoholics (*“their metabolism just can’t handle it”*)
- inherently lazy;
- causing a lot of crime and forcing police to declare “no-go zones” in some city suburbs;
- being given too many material things by the welfare system, things which they do not know how to use or appreciate (if living a traditional lifestyle), and
- inherently racist themselves against white people.

Direct quotes from group participants follow.

- *“Aborigines (live) down the street ... only one house with Aborigines, about 20 living in it and they are responsible for all the crime.”*
- *“Go to Redfern station ... you’re taking your life into your own hands. After 6 pm the police are scared.”*

- *“It’s the bloody Wik thing. Aborigines are a bottomless pit, keep pouring money in and it goes nowhere.”*
- *“They were here for 40,000 years and they did nothing. They should feel lucky that the people who came here were white.”*
- *“They’re 2% of the population and they get billions spent on them.”*
- *“...It makes me bitter to see the country towns Aborigines have destroyed eg Wilcannia ... shops are all boarded up. All that’s left is Aborigines collecting social security and waiting for the pub to open.”*

The next stage of research, the quantitative phase, will determine what proportion of the community supports each of these negative stereotypes and whether any other groups are subjects of racist acts. We will achieve this by presenting the respondents with a list of groups in the community and asking whether each group is subject to racism and by repeating some of the negative statements above and asking which ones respondents agree with.

4.3 Perceived costs of racism

Given some of the attitudes expressed above and the reported prevalence of acts perceived as racist, is the community aware of the costs of racism?

Many participants, especially the perpetrators, were unaware of any tangible costs of racism. Most negatives were hard-pressed to name any costs to individuals or to the community of what they saw, by definition, as harmless acts. However, a few said that the costs are:

- people being pushed to live in “ghettos” and enclaves to protect themselves;
- the best person not being employed for the job;
- Australia’s reputation can suffer internationally;
- negative consequences for Australia’s trade and tourism; and

- disharmony in workplaces, resulting in reduced productivity and financial loss.

On the other hand, the subjects of racism perceived a wide range of costs, especially at the emotional level:

- emotional costs - a sense of disappointment in Australia and Australians because it is not always the country they believed it to be;
- sometimes a sense of alienation from the mainstream or from the community after they have been subjected to racist abuse;
- cultural costs - questioning their commitment to preserve their culture and cultural identity;
- economic costs - not getting the job they deserve due to systemic racism;
- national costs - a possible economic backlash, especially from Asia, if reports of racist attacks continue; also, importantly,
- a feeling that the nation is ignoring or jeopardising its potential both by not fully utilising the talents of migrant groups and by not realising the economic benefits of multiculturalism and “cosmopolitanism” as Australia begins to trade in an increasingly competitive world market.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders also suggested that racism could break down their cultural ties by causing their young to alienate themselves from their communities because they do not wish to be identified as individuals from an ATSI background.

The quantitative phase of research will provide a community-wide indicator of which of these costs are perceived as significant ... and which not. The quantitative research will achieve this by presenting the above lists of costs to a sample of 2,000 respondents and determining the number and profile of people who agree that each of these costs of racism are real and substantial.

4.4 Perceived causes

A number of reasons were provided by respondents as to why other people are racist. Again, positives and negatives offered varied responses to this question. The main reasons for racism, according to the positive group participants, are:

- ignorance - some people are simply uneducated and ignorant;
- fear of competition - for jobs, money, housing and school/ university places; and
- fear of the unknown - fear of people who look and behave different, whose religion is different and so on.

Importantly, the negatives (people whose remarks during the focus groups revealed them to be the most racist) offered other explanations for why “others” were racists. These explanations were far more specific than those outlined above and amounted to justification for racist behaviour. For this group, these “reasons” for being racist included:

- migrants changing Australia’s culture rather than accepting it (*“When they bring their own value systems and not integrate, that breeds intolerance”*; *“Our culture is changing to adapt to migrants, is it any wonder we’re angry?”*; *“We’re too nice, laid-back, not protecting what we have ... and once in a while you strike out”*)
- the lack of commitment of migrants to Australia (*“It’s because they aren’t real Australians and never want to be”*; *“They’re just interested in a quick buck and then they’ll leave again”*);
- Asians causing crime and bringing drugs into the country (*“Of course you call them names ... they bring drugs into the country and hook our kids onto heroin”*);

- migrants not learning English (*“It’s an insult ... them not learning your language even though they’re in your country, so what if we insult them back?”*), and
- the “fact” that some groups (migrants and Aboriginals) receive more welfare than other Australians.

What becomes apparent in the rationales offered for racist acts is the clear link between a perceived loss of Australia’s culture (language, ways of life) and racist behaviour. Negative respondents were making a clear link between their feelings and even expressions of racism and the perception that recent migrants in particular were not assimilating and were, instead, changing forever the nature of Australian culture.

Therefore, the most interesting point about the reasons proffered for racist acts is the difference between those given by positives (the non/least racist) and people who had expressed the most negative attitudes. Positives usually focused on ignorance, fear and xenophobia as explanations because these offered insights as to how racist attitudes are developed. Participants with racist attitudes, on the other hand, used this question to offer a rationale for what were clearly *their* views. Hence they blamed the subjects of racism: “they” are not committed to Australia, “they” cause crime and bring drugs into the country, change Australia’s culture rather than accepting it, “they” refuse to learn English, “they” live off taxpayers’ money and so on. Clearly, what the negative respondents revealed here is an underlying set of grievances and excuses that drive their current expression of racist attitudes and negative feelings toward migrant groups, especially the new migrant groups.

This link between racism and the perception that non-assimilation is undermining Australia’s culture and national identity was even more apparent when we discussed directly the Australian national identity,

national values and unique features of the country. The tenor of these discussions is explored in the next section.

The quantitative stage of research will provide a more robust test of what the perceived causes of racism are. This will be achieved by presenting the above causes and explanations of racism to respondents in the quantitative survey and determining the number and profile of people who agree with each cause and/or explanation.

4.5 Good/Bad things about Australia

To address one of the pivotal research objectives (the existence of shared community values and usefulness of these to an anti-racism campaign), respondents were asked a number of questions about Australia, its good and bad attributes, its values and what makes it unique.

When asked to name the main **good things** about Australia, comments from group respondents generally focused on the geographical and climatic features of the country. Respondents described Australia as characterised by a vast landscape, beautiful natural features and an ideal climate.

After these initial comments, a few people did mention non-material/lifestyle features:

- casual lifestyle;
- laid back atmosphere;
- friendliness (“*You can have a conversation with a stranger easily*”);
- reputation as a land of opportunity (“*...you can get ahead if you work hard*”; “*...don’t see a lot of poverty*”); and

- multiculturalism (“...huge variety of nationalities, all live reasonably peacefully”; “Everyone gets along well, can’t experience that anywhere else”).

Some responded that Australia is a good country because it does not experience riots and civil wars (“no police or military holding machine guns”). This point was more frequently expressed by established and recent migrants than by Anglo-Saxons and ATSI. A small proportion of participants also mentioned that Australia is a free, democratic country, featuring unique Australian values such as “mateship” and helping others in crisis. These social values were mentioned far less frequently than the physical characteristics of the nation.

When describing the main **bad things** about Australia, some of the most frequently mentioned issues were:

- too many cultures in one country (“I’m sick of multiculturalism”; “I object to government supporting groups that have split the community eg giving money to ethnic radio”);
- conflict between different groups (“race is an excuse to cause trouble, to form youth gangs”);
- increasing crime rate (“It’s not safe to walk late at night anymore”)
- welfare state/abuse of welfare (“If you are a worker in this country, it is no good. If you are a bludger, you get everything.”; “If you are honest and hardworking you won’t get ahead the way the system is.”);
- perceived inequalities in standards applied to different people (“Minority groups are getting too much”; “...(Over) representation of minorities”);
- lack of patriotism;
- politicians are not trustworthy and there are too many levels of government (“over-governed”, “one politician for every 11 people”);

- high taxation; and
- high unemployment.

It is significant that three of the negative features of Australia raised spontaneously by group participants were, or were perceived to be, race-related: multiculturalism/immigration, a (perceived) increase in the crime rate and widespread dependence on, and abuse of, the social welfare system.

In fact, the most frequently mentioned “bad thing” about Australia was in relation to migration and multiculturalism. Negative Anglo-Saxons in particular focused on immigration, voicing sentiments such as: *“It used to be a good country, the best place to live ... but these new migrants have changed it so much that I don’t recognise it anymore.”* This group complained about how the fundamentally Anglo-Saxon, Christian nature of Australia is being undermined by new migrants who are neither ... and refuse to assimilate. For example: *“Feelings against Asians are worse, they’re more noticeable, Europeans have blended in ... Asians don’t attempt to blend in.”*

There was a strong feeling amongst this group that the Australian culture is being undermined by “ethnic” cultures who are no longer persuaded to assimilate. Quotes that encapsulate this feeling follow.

- *“People struggle to identify with Australia because, what does it mean now? We have to try and maintain the specific culture that is Australia like they’re maintaining theirs.”*
- *“Before we’ve had an opportunity to develop an Australian culture, we’ve had a lot of countries bombard us with their culture.”*
- *“All this tolerance is fundamentally destructive to our society as an entity. The countries who are intolerant, their culture is strong, it’s intact*

and will continue on eg China. Here, when we encourage all these groups the very fabric of our society is being destroyed. We're getting a very diluted world culture rather than a strong Australian culture".

- *"Our culture's been weakened. They can destroy it if we let them have their own cultural practises too much."*

Another major negative theme related to rising crime rates: *"You've always got to have your door locked"*. For most, this perceived crime wave could be put down to increasing pressures of modern life, increasing population size, etc. However, for the vocal, negative Anglo-Saxons and for some established migrants, this "wave" was said to be due to drug problems. In turn, these problems were said to be due to Asian migrants', in particular Vietnamese, involvement in the drug trade.

Hence, migrants were largely blamed for the problem of increasing crime.

This is exemplified in the following quotes:

- *"It's a range of nationalities... all with their little crime wars and it's just escalating."*
- *"A lot of those European countries, they've been brought up to act or retaliate first...stab someone, then think about it."*
- *"At Cabramatta, Asians try to sell you drugs at the station."*
- *"Asians wouldn't be game to have the coke, heroin, etc. they have in their own country because they would be hung. Here it's easy for them ...the penalties aren't harsh enough."*

Finally, whilst participants acknowledged that many people of all backgrounds are unrightfully gaining financial assistance, migrants and Aboriginals were perceived to be particularly burdening the welfare and taxation systems. For example:

- *"90% of Asians live off the dole".*

- *“The whole Lakemba area...none of them (Muslims) will work”*
- *“Pauline Hanson was first to publicly identify ‘reverse racism’... She caught the imagination of people who see Aboriginals as ‘over-compensated’.”*

The discussion of what is “bad” about Australia therefore turned very easily to race issues and to immigration. It should be noted that this took place at the beginning of group discussions. This was one of the first questions posed in the discussion and took place well before we turned to a direct exploration of racism and related issues. The research therefore showed that, at the end of 1997, racism and negative attitudes toward migrants were highly salient for the segment of the community with whom we spoke.

Furthermore, when discussion towards the end of the focus group turned deliberately to the migration program, group participants readily offered a range of views about how Australia’s immigration should operate. The views varied in extremity but the general consensus was that Australia’s intake of migrants should be slowed down and the screening of migrants should be more tightly controlled so migrants are not a “burden” on the country. Below, we offer a selection of quotes that exemplify the types of comments made.

- *“Screen people before they come to the country ... work, health, political background, criminal background. Spread people out around the country.”*
- *“...half the immigrants are not assessed in how they benefit Australia.”*
- *“If they come here, they should have a job to go to.”*
- *“...got to stop letting all the Asians come. Put some sort of limit on it.” (an ATSI participant)*

- *“Send back people who end up in courts.”*
- *“...if they commit a crime they should be sent back.”*
- *“If they come in they have to come to a job, those who come and work a few months and then go on the dole, it’s a joke or people who get married just so they can live here.”*
- *“Immigration is out of control.”*
- *“We don’t want it to become crowded. we’re happy for people to come here but it has to be controlled.”*
- *“Don’t stop it altogether but slow it down.”*
- *“...politicians should put the brakes on Asian migration.”*
- *“Immigration department should hear message, should regulate ... too many Asians.”*
- *“I think we should stop immigration forever, we’ve got enough. They should be allowed to visit but that’s all.”*
- *“Even their (government’s) immigration figures are being doctored.”*
- *“Legislation (is needed), rules for immigrants coming into the country, age limits, control numbers, health tests, set criteria. A stricter set of guidelines.”*

The quantitative survey to follow will measure the level of support for the view that the above lists of good and bad things about Australia encapsulate community feelings about the country. Again, we will achieve this by presenting the above lists of the good and the bad to 2,000 respondents and determining the number and profile of people who agree with each descriptor of Australia.

4.6 Australian values

Following exploration of good/bad things about Australia, discussion was then turned to exploration of shared Australian values. Only a minority of people with whom we spoke felt that most Australians could still be *genuinely* characterised as people who held the traditional values of mateship, equality, “she’ll be right” and “fair go.” In fact, most group participants from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds were hard-pressed to answer this question and found themselves struggling to come to agreement as to which Australian values still truly held in the late 1990's.

Only a minority could readily list a set of values and say that they truly believed that these values still held. Therefore, when discussion turned to what could be the **benefits** of these shared values, the reply was usually silence. Exceptions were mentions of a more cohesive society, more trust of others, a more caring society and less reliance on formal support networks ... because we help out one another.

Values articulated by the minority (who said that they truly believed that the values still held) included:

- *“mateship”* (though even this is *“not as good as it was”*)
- *“honesty”*
- *“helping the underdog”*
- *“being down to earth”*
- *“a healthy cynicism, not frightened to express our views”*
- *“not dobbing in a mate”*
- *“she’ll be right”*
- *“pulling together in times of crisis (eg floods, bushfires)”*,
- *“fairness”,* and
- *“equality”*.

Participants' comments indicated that, for most, these values are no longer solid, reliable or definitive. For some, the feeling is so strong that they question whether, as a community, we share *any* values. The feeling that real shared Australian values are hard to identify is exemplified in the following quotes.

- *“Australia is a real plastic country now, we are no longer happy with the simple things ... How are we different from America now?”*
- *“(there is) no Australian culture, we’re being subsumed by multiculturalism”*
- *“‘Fair go’ is a myth. I don’t believe we have equality either.”*
- *“Nowadays people have to concentrate on surviving themselves, we don’t have time to worry about other people or mateship.”*

Aboriginals, in particular, often said that they do not see themselves as having values in common with the broader community. They believed that their values are not “Australian” values, emphasising that they were more committed to their own family and extended family than Australians were and that this is a core value of their culture. In fact, this group spoke of “Australians” when describing other groups in the community, thereby defining themselves as other than Australian.

The perception that the Australian identity is no longer clearly defined was also apparent when discussion turned to an attempt to **define an Australian**. Regardless of background, people were struggling to define who or what an Australian is in the late 1990's. In a physical sense, there was overwhelming recognition that a bronzed Aussie no longer represents “us”. People said that this description no longer holds true because of the number and variety of non-Anglo faces that they see on a daily basis. However, in place of this archetypal figure, nothing has arisen to provide a current definition of what an Australian looks like.

The difficulty in describing Australian values was also apparent in the fact that both Anglos and non-Anglos tended to describe the **unique features** of Australia and Australians by focusing on geographic and climatic features. As mentioned above, quality of life and lifestyle issues were also mentioned, but values were far less readily used to describe Australia or Australians compared with climatic and geographic features.

As we were discussing the concept of Australian values, national identity and unique features of Australia, it became clear that most group participants placed the blame for a loss of values and a clear national identity on three factors: the history of immigration, the current emphasis on valuing “other” cultures and multiculturalism itself. These three factors were perceived to be changing what was once a strong Australian identity built on a set of recognisable values. Again, migrants and negative attitudes toward them were spontaneously raised in the group discussions, this time to be blamed for a perceived loss of values.

Most group participants from Anglo backgrounds said that recent migrants were to blame for this current uncertainty because they refused to assimilate ... unlike Greek and Italian migrants who were seen as strongly assimilationist. Hence resentment toward these new migrant groups was readily expressed for this reason, as exemplified in the following quotes:

- *“We have an identity problem ... now that people are no longer expected to conform to our values and way of life.”*
- *“Asians stick to their own values and culture.”*
- *“We have to abide by their rules, I cannot speak to the man before he speaks to me.”* (a female respondent)
- *“How can we say that we all dig in and unite at times of crisis, you’d never find an Asian in a voluntary bush fire brigade”*

- *“Do we even unite over sport? Migrants support their own country when it’s playing soccer against Australia.”*
- *“We’re losing our culture”*
- *“Our culture is changing to adapt to migrants”*
- *“We’re too nice, laid-back, not protecting what we have and we’ll soon lose that unique way of life.”*
- *“When they bring their own value systems and not integrate that breeds intolerance”*
- *“Multiculturalism has threatened the loss of our values.”*
- *“...they have to socialise, get to know Australians, fit in with our ways...you can fit in if you look different, if you make an effort.”*
- *“Tell people they must be part of a society.”*
- *“We shouldn’t have to change our lifestyle for them.”*
- *“If we went to their country we’d have to follow their traditions, so in ours they should follow ours, BBQ etc.”*
- *“People should conform and not expect us to conform to them ... we’re the majority.”*

These negative comments about new migrants were juxtaposed with positive remarks about Greeks and Italians who were seen to be assimilationist:

- *“A lot are nice people. They make you feel welcome, strong, community minded Italians. They are happy to mingle. They work hard. They are generous, not like the Asians.”*
- *“Greeks and Italians integrated eventually. Culturally they’re closer to us, Christian values. Takes a long time but eventually...they fit in, without changing us.”*

Whilst most group participants directly blamed new migrants and multiculturalism for the perceived loss of values, it was clear from the

context in which the comments were made that the causes of this confused national identity are many. The tenor of discussions indicates that four other causes were clearly important:

- *economic stress* - a perception that “things” in general are changing too fast and that life is getting harder;
- *work stress* - reduced job security and longer working hours;
- *the Republic debate* - constitutionally, there is (or was) an uncertainty about where Australia is going as a nation;
- *welfare abuse* - resentment that the “fair go” is being abused and that people are taking advantage of the sense of social justice.

Finally, some respondents commented that confusion about Australia’s values and national identity is to be expected given that “no one” had consciously set out to build or protect a national ethos in a conscious and deliberate way. The adult population included in the research reported no awareness of any systematic education to make explicit the values that Australians should share. A few mentioned the “***I am, you are, we are Australian***” campaign with support for its sentiments. However, Australia’s efforts to date in this regard were compared unfavourably with the conscious ethos-building of countries such as the United States. Of course, in Australia “no one” has been charged with this task in a significant way, with the exception of Australia Day Council’s annual efforts.

The next stage of research, the quantitative phase, will provide a robust and statistically reliable measure of which values, if any, Australians believe they share. This will be achieved by directly questioning respondents on this issue. Provision will also need to be made for a question to probe respondents further for the perceived cause (or causes)

if they indicate that such values do not exist or no longer hold true for most Australians.

4.7 Unifying messages/themes

Following Steps 1 and 2 of the research (respectively 12 focus groups comprising positives and 12 comprising negatives), Eureka generated five unifying themes or messages for an anti-racism campaign. In Step 4 of the research (12 focus groups of negatives), participants were asked to evaluate these five messages as to whether they were unifying and/or reflected on shared values that could bridge gaps in the community and promote an anti-racist community spirit. The reactions to the messages are discussed below.

Message 1: Australia is a society/country in which people are generally tolerant towards one another ... that's one thing we all share

Most respondents believed that, in general, Australia *is* a society in which people are generally tolerant towards one another. This belief was largely based on the perception that Australians are more tolerant than people from other countries because we experience no race riots and fewer “ethnic” troubles. However, most people now believe that the word “tolerance” itself means “putting up with” rather than fully accepting individuals. In their words, tolerance is:

- *“Not provoking trouble ... it’s not very positive.”*
- *“Something you are told to have, not a choice.”*
- *“Putting up rather than accepting others for who they are.”*
- *“Put up with it because you can’t do anything about it.”*
- *“Hold your tongue.”*

Tolerance was contrasted with a term that respondents viewed far more positively - acceptance. This was because:

- *“Acceptance is to embrace.”*
- *“It’s not forced on you like tolerance.”*
- *“Acceptance is not begrudging or patronising like tolerance.”*
(ATSI respondent)
- *“Acceptance ... it’s voluntary and unconditional, whereas tolerance means that you can barely put up with me.”*

Further verbatim comments from group respondents pertaining directly to the message of tolerance follow.

- *“No, we don’t share that at all.”*
- *“Acceptance is a better word than tolerance.”*
- *“We’re fooling ourselves to say we’re not racist.”*
- *“We probably should be looking for acceptance rather than just tolerating.”* (Recent Asian migrant)
- *“There **is** prejudice in this country eg Cambodians don’t like Vietnamese.”*
- *“Tolerance is not here.”*
- *“Racism is here but people are tolerant otherwise we would have a civil war.”*
- *“Most of us are pretty tolerant but we’re being pushed to the limit now, our tolerance is being tested.”*
- *“A lot of people aren’t very tolerant.”*
- *“Compared to a lot of places, Australians are incredibly tolerant eg in America there’s a lot more road rage.”*
- *“In other countries they have to tolerate more.”*
- *“We should be looking for people to accept other races, not just tolerate them.”* (an ATSI participant)

Given the current negative connotation of tolerance, this message may have only limited success as a unifying theme. (This point is further expounded in Section 5.2, pages 52-54.) However, discussion of the message of tolerance clearly revealed a more powerful (and possibly more unifying) value: **acceptance**. This value is shared by most of the positives. Furthermore, the group discussions also showed that acceptance had a positive effect on the negatives. When positioned as a two-way value (i.e., “us” accepting “them” and vice versa), acceptance serves to temper some of the most virulent complaints about migrants not accepting the Australian way of life ... and it simultaneously promotes a more positive attitude amongst the negatives toward the subjects of racism.

- *“Sure, if they accept me I’ll accept them.” (a recent Asian migrant)*
- *“If they were ready to show that they accept us without conditions, that’d be the start of a good relationship. As it is, they (Asians) want it all and give nothing back to the community.”*
- *“I’d love to accept them. But how, if they don’t accept us or the Australian way of life ... or even our language ... They got to show acceptance first.”*
- *“More than anything, I wish to be accepted ... by my neighbour, by my boss ... by the Australian community. This is important to me and very very important for my children.” (a recent Asian migrant)*

The quantitative stage of research will test the power of acceptance as a unifying message and determine which segments of negatives it can (and which it cannot) persuade to view new migrants and other visibly different groups in a more positive light. That is, we will need to determine how many people believe in acceptance, how many believe it is shared and what proportion can be persuaded to adopt it as a unifying value.

Message 2: Australia is a society/country to which we are all committed

The results indicated that Australians believe that everyone living here should be committed to the country. It was often mentioned in the discussions that newly arrived migrants do not feel committed to Australia.

In particular, some felt that recently arrived Asian migrants have not yet proved their loyalty and are still committed to their country of origin. The distinction between established migrant groups and Asians on this issue was startling. Many respondents believed that established migrants were committed to Australia because they chose to live here but questioned whether this would be the case for Asians: *“Are they here for the long term?”* Most Anglo-Saxons believed that migrants could demonstrate their commitment to Australia by becoming Australian citizens, learning English and by working (rather than *“sponging off the welfare system”*).

Direct quotes from group participants illustrating their reactions to this as a unifying theme follow.

- *“Asian businessmen are not committed.”*
- *“Asians are not committed, they stay together, don’t mingle.”* (an established NESB participant)
- *“That’s the truth, but no-one will leave their culture behind to be committed to Australia, especially new migrants.”*
- *“Many people haven’t contributed anything to the country... go straight to social security, not committed to Australia yet.”*
- *“...would like them to show commitment by learning language.”*
- *“Some people are truly committed, Asians are a minority... most of the Australian population is committed.”*
- *“I don’t think some are committed. Some haven’t lived in Australia for a while although they are citizens. They come here, go home with citizenship.”*

- *“(this) message should go to immigrants, potential immigrants.”*
- *“Most people who come here want to be here and therefore they are very committed from the beginning.”* (recent Asian migrant)
- *“Not everyone, no-one buys Australian Made, no-one goes out of their way to do that.”*
- *“Some foreigners work here, make money then go home”* (an ATSI participant)
- *“Only the Aboriginals are committed to the land, to Australia. They don’t feel it so much now, it’s fading.”* (an ATSI participant)

So, most people believe that the majority are committed but feel that some groups are not. Most respondents believed that a message emphasising commitment to Australia should only be targeted at newly arrived migrants. Given this, employing commitment as a unifying theme would only have the negative effect of appearing to assuage the misconceptions of negative groups in society. We do not recommend that this theme be further tested in the quantitative research.

Message 3: We all believe that Australia is the best country in the world ... and that unifies us

The results of the focus group discussions indicated that most people had a profound belief that Australia is one of the best countries, if not the best country, in the world. The reasons offered for this belief were few and only included mentions of Australia’s freedom of choice, freedom of speech and democracy. Importantly, very few people described Australia as the best country in the world primarily *because* it accepts people from different backgrounds or because these groups live together in relative harmony without riots or racial wars. (Such social harmony was a point more frequently raised by established migrants and older Anglo-Saxons.)

Furthermore, the negative group respondents also turned this message into an anti-migrant issue, as exemplified by the following quote: *“Yeah it is (the best country in the world), and that’s why they’re all coming here ... they know they’re onto a good thing.”* Thus, acceptance of migrants and offering a refuge to those in need were not spontaneously offered as reasons for pride in the country. And even though the majority of group participants believed that Australia is one of the best countries in the world, they did not feel that this belief necessarily unifies Australians:

- *“It’s the best country in the world but that doesn’t unify us”, and*
- *“If there was a war then we would be unified, but now people are against each other. You become unified by external threats, the fact that the country is beautiful doesn’t unify us.”*

Given that founding this belief (or message) on any issues to do with peaceful coexistence or “harmonious absorption” of migrants would be extremely difficult, we do not recommend it as a messages worthy of further testing in the quantitative research.

Message 4: All of us - regardless of where we originally came from - have the same dreams and hopes for our children ... that unifies us

Most participants agreed with this statement. They believed that parents generally desire happiness for their children. However, Anglo- Australians and Aboriginals were quick to mention that Asians do not appear to have the same dreams for their children as everyone else. They emphasised that Asian migrants were more concerned with having educated, financially successful children, whereas “we” seek a balance between emotional and economic success in “our” children. The stereotype here is that an Asian migrant has dreams and hopes in this regard that start and end in the economic/materialistic sphere, that is, their only hope for their

child is to be a good student, get good marks, go to the University of their choice and get the highest paid job. (Our discussions with recent migrants from Asia showed that this indeed was a gross oversimplification and stereotype of their hopes and dreams for their children in Australia.) Non-Asian groups say that, on the other hand, their hopes and dreams for their own children go beyond this: they want a “successful” child but they also want their offspring to have a good balance between emotional happiness and material success. Again, trying to argue this point rationally had little impact on people whose attitudes and beliefs were so negatively skewed and so dependent on a gross racial stereotype.

Furthermore, there was no agreement that even if we do have the same dreams for our children that this commonality unifies the nation. This message could potentially be a very divisive “unifying” theme and should not be pursued. We therefore do not recommend that it be further tested in the quantitative research.

Direct respondent quotes showing the ambivalent reaction to this message follow.

- *“We all want the best for our kids... to have more opportunities than us, to achieve more, to do what they want.”* (recent Asian migrant)
- *“Parents of a Muslim will want something different from parents of a Catholic.”*
- *“...don’t know what Asians want for their children because they keep to themselves and don’t let others in.”*
- *“What do we want for kids? Depends from race to race.”* (ATSI)
- *“We don’t know what they want. We can only say for our own personal situations.”*

- *“People with the same original background have the same hopes and dreams for their children, people from different parts eg Asia, Africa have different (higher) aspirations.”*
- *“There are some ideals people hold for their children, some basic ones, but for most people there are a variety of influences.”*
- *“This makes us similar but doesn’t unify us.”*

Message 5: Australia is a society/country which is often united by sport ... that is something that we share

The results indicated that sport is, of course, an important part of Australian culture. Respondents agreed that sport is important to most Australians. Of the five messages tested, this message gained most support from participants. Respondents agreed that sport forms a bond between people. However, many respondents were annoyed that migrants often fail to support Australia in international events and instead supported their country of origin. Furthermore, not all sports were perceived to be unifying and inclusive of Australians from all backgrounds.

While sport has the potential to unify, it generally has to obey two rules in order to be a strong unifying force:

- Australia must win, and
- it must be a team sport.

Some of the group participants’ reactions to this message included:

- *“Everyone gets behind sport.”*
- *“Team sports unify us.”*
- *“Any sport unifies us.”*
- *“We have nothing else in common, only sport.”*
- *“We’re known as a sporting country.”*

- *“A lot of people have criticised Aboriginals for years but everyone’s proud of Kathy Freeman ... see her as one of our own. All that’s forgotten when she’s out on that race track.”*
- *“The children of immigrants root for Australia. The young ones say they are Australian... don’t see themselves as Italian or whatever.”*
- *“There’s probably a lot of people who don’t like sport in Australia.”*
- *“Everybody has the opportunity to be involved, it’s not too expensive, it’s a way you can meet people.”*
- *“It’s a unifying force on a small scale. The unity starts by joining a team and then this grows.”*

The recent World Cup Soccer qualifying match in Melbourne (between Australia and Iran) was often referred to as a demonstration that some people have greater loyalty/commitment to their country of origin than to Australia. However, most feel that at the Sydney 2000 Olympics Australia will be more unified *“The Olympics will bring us all together more too.”* Overall, the reaction to this unifying theme was mixed. It is therefore worth testing further at the quantitative phase of research, along with the message of acceptance.

Other messages

Additional potentially unifying messages were also tested in the qualitative research. For example “unity in diversity.” Generally, these were ineffective because they largely relied on a rational approach, were perceived as too complex or because they lacked credibility. For example, it is clear that the “accusations” currently levelled against Asian migrants (non-assimilationist, lack of commitment to Australia, high crime rates) were once targeted at Greeks and Italians. It would have been possible to design a message emphasising that “it takes time” to adopt to a culture and that, decades from now, these groups will be as “Australian” as Greeks and Italians are now seen to be.

However, the emotional nature of racism means that these arguments are very readily dismissed. So, those with negative views counter-argue that Greeks/Italians are “*more like us anyway*” or that “*they are at least Christian.*” Furthermore, we cannot sway emotion by appealing to the future because people can readily deflect a message about things that have not, as they see it, yet happened. Their counterargument may merely be that this will **not** happened and that Asians will **not** prove to be as integrating/Australian as other migrants. In any event, this is probably not a desirable or positive enough message because it merely panders to the racist assimilation viewpoint without providing any uplifting messages for potential subjects of racism.

“Racism is unacceptable/un-Australian” was also initially suggested as an appropriate umbrella message for the campaign. Reactions from focus group participants indicated that they perceived this message to be far too “in your face” and too direct. They felt that this message would just polarise existing prejudices (with strong support from non-racists and strong rejection from racists).

Our position would be that an indirect route should be taken to this message, in preference to a direct, head-on approach. We want “Racism is unacceptable/un-Australian” to be a take-out message, an underlying implication of the campaign. As a direct message, however, it would be too threatening. Most Australians, of all races, with whom we spoke admitted to an occasional racist thought or feeling. They would strongly resent the direct implication that by this thought they themselves became un-Australian. We therefore see some potential for backlash against a campaign that took the more direct approach to “ostracise” people with negative thoughts. The most likely result would be an immediate dismissal

or deflection of the campaign message and, consequently, a question mark against the credibility of other campaign elements.

5 A broad strategy

5.1 Implications for anti-racism campaign

The findings indicate that two messages are suitable for further testing in the quantitative research: a value we may label as “acceptance” and the unifying power of sport. These two themes or messages may, under the right circumstances, have the power to shift community attitudes, focus the community on the positive values that some share and build a more widespread belief in the existence of positive values that will decrease the level of racism in the community (e.g., equality, mateship, fair go).

The other major research finding from this initial qualitative phase is that there is current community uncertainty about the values and beliefs which are quintessentially Australian. But how does this uncertainty relate to racism and to an anti-racism campaign? Our contention here is two-fold. First, a number of current “stressors” are causing the current level of racism: uncertainty about values, economic stress, work-related stress (high unemployment, increased work hours), the Republic v Monarchy debate, etc. Second, addressing at least one of these directly (i.e., more clearly defining the national values) will be an effective means of reducing the prevalence of current racism. A discussion of how the other “stressors” can be addressed is obviously beyond the scope of this consultancy.

That is, we view the current uncertainty surrounding values and national identity as both a problem and a solution. The first point (problem) is

explained further below. The second point (solution) forms the thrust of the broad campaign strategy we recommend be tested in the quantitative research (to be expounded in the next section of the report).

The perception that the Australian identity is currently confused and that we no longer share some of the core values which we once firmly held is directly related to the current negative attitudes and the outright racism expressed toward some migrant groups. This is apparent in the verbatim quotes outlined in Section 4.5 (“bad things about Australia”) and Section 4.6 (“Australian values”).

In many ways, this causal relationship is to be expected: People who feel that life is moving too fast and that “times are getting harder” generally react negatively to yet more change. In particular, the statements made by group respondents indicated that the “dramatic increase” in migration from Asia is a major change that has made it more difficult to be certain about Australia’s identity. This change has, in turn, made them question the level of our adherence to the values that were once “core” to that identity ... and, at the same time, has made it harder to predict what Australians (and Australia) might “look” like in 20 or 30 years. This change in the migration program, perceived to have been taking place over the last decade, is seen to be the “final straw” that truly confuses Australia’s already uncertain national identity and value system.

The link between the increasing uncertainty about national identity and values and racist attitudes is best expressed in the words of two Anglo-Saxon participants. Though they have been quoted earlier they are worthy of repetition because they encapsulate the feelings of a large segment of the respondents. Put simply, these two participants were able to express succinctly what a lot of others were struggling to say:

- *“All this tolerance is fundamentally destructive to our society as an entity. The countries who are intolerant, their culture is strong, it’s intact and will continue. For example, look at China. Here, when we encourage all these groups, the very fabric of our society is being destroyed. We’re getting a very diluted world culture, rather than a strong Australian culture”* (Male, aged 40 plus, Brisbane)

- *“Before we had an opportunity to develop an Australian culture, we’ve had a lot of other countries bombard us with their cultures and ways of life”* (Female, aged under 40, Melbourne)

This critical link was therefore explicitly made by some Anglo-Saxon participants in the focus groups. For the remainder, the link was implicit in the fact that their anger and resentment toward new migrant groups (especially those from Asia) was largely based on a feeling that these groups were not interested in (and, in fact, actively resisting) becoming “Australian.” The perception is therefore that failure by migrants to assimilate to the Australian “type” is causing confusion about national identity ... and eroding long-held national values. These groups are also perceived as having little loyalty to Australia, only coming here because it will benefit them (*“They know a good thing when they see it... no wonder they’re all coming here.”*). This leads to Anglo-Saxon resentment toward newly arrived migrants.

The relevance of these public sentiments for an anti-racism campaign lies in the fact that a large segment of Anglo-Saxons and even established migrants blame new migrants (especially “Asians”) for the lack of shared values and for the current inability to conclusively define an Australian identity. This feeling is driving some of the current expressions of racism.

This finding lies at the heart of Eureka's recommendation for using the quantitative research, in part, to test a specific communication strategy. This strategy would involve defining the core Australian values (and the national identity through these values) by showing how visibly different groups uphold these values ... **and** are therefore Australian **and** that they help to strengthen those values ... and that they should not be attacked both because this would be un-Australian and because they are Australian!

Furthermore, there is a possibility that, unaddressed, the uncertainty about a set of national values could be employed by the more racist elements of society to propagate racist acts and support an anti-multicultural definition of Australian identity. This danger is apparent in the fact that the most vocal racists in the focus groups advocated the definition based on the following dictum: **To be Australian, one must assimilate.** This is the definition they would like to see enforced and accepted by the community. Therein lies another reason to address the issue and to take control of the definition rather than allow other elements to impose their own.

Fundamentally, then, the research findings support DIMA's broad thrust and draft campaign strategy. That is, a campaign is required, the objectives set for the campaign can be achieved and the strategy should be based on shared values. The research has found that, in the social climate of the late 1990's, defining and emphasising values (including acceptance) may indeed be the key to changing negative attitudes and reducing the prevalence of racist behaviour. By explicitly defining an Australian national identity (and doing so in a way that includes acceptance of visibly different groups as a value), the campaign will both remove some of the resentment against recently arrived migrant groups and facilitate the process of their acceptance into the community. The possible strategy for developing this campaign is discussed further below.

Before a broad draft communication strategy is discussed, two points need to be made. First, the specific objectives of this qualitative phase of research were clear. We have reported on the relevant findings in Section 4 as per the DIMA brief. However, given the findings, we have “gone beyond the brief” and also drafted broad directions for the campaign ... directions that can be tested in the quantitative research.

Second, the focus of this research was on racism and the expression of negative attitudes toward people from other cultures. However, the focus has had to become broader, given the current attitudinal climate. Of necessity, the research has had to become concerned with the issue of defining the national identity and confirmation (and communication) of national values. The focus of the research broadened both because we found that expression of racist and intolerant sentiments was directly related to concern over the perceived loss of national identity and values) ... and because the most effective way to achieve the objectives of an anti-racism campaign was found to be a definition of Australian values to include acceptance of visibly different groups. The opportunity, as outlined below, is therefore to address the problem of uncertainty about national values, to define these to include acceptance and to go some way toward solving the problem of racism.

5.2 Defining Australian values

Given the current confusion about Australian values and identity, we therefore propose that the following broad strategy be tested in the quantitative research to measure its impact on reducing the level of expressed racism in the community:

- define the values that Australians hold;

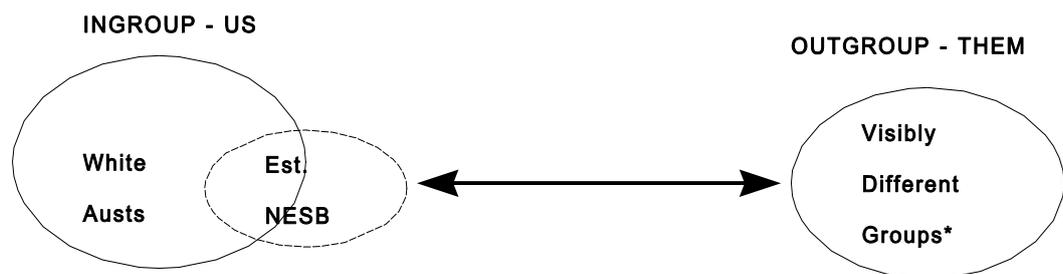
- define “an Australian” as anyone holding these values; and
- show how visibly different people uphold these values (i.e, are Australian).

That is, the task is to define Australians by what they believe ... not by their race, skin colour or religious belief. This will shift debate away from race and towards values. By communicating the core Australian values (and the national identity through these values) and by showing how visibly different groups uphold these values (and are therefore Australian by definition), it may be possible to significantly reduce the current level of expressed racism. This hypothesis will be tested in the quantitative research (as further discussed in Section 7 below).

It became clear through the group discussions that long-established migrant groups (Greeks, Italians, etc.) are now readily seen as “like us,” as part of the “ingroup” whilst people who are visibly different in appearance and/or religious beliefs (e.g., recent arrivals from Asia and people of the Islamic faith) are still defined as part of the “outgroup.” The process of accepting established migrant groups took approximately four decades and involved assimilation, integration and now multiculturalism ... and it took years of putting up with racist behaviour and taunts. (Some established migrants reported to us that a substantial loss of pride and dignity was also involved in what they now saw as forced assimilation.) Our hypothesis is that the primary task of the anti-racism campaign should be to make this whole process more speedy and less painful for new migrants, especially those who are visibly different and/or religiously “different.” For them, assimilation in the usual sense of the term is impossible (even if it were desirable) because their appearance is different. It could be argued that the whole assimilation experience of established migrant groups was a “natural,” if slow, experience and that, as a result, they have now come to be accepted. The task of the

communication strategy is to create a perceptual shift that would speed up this process of acceptance for new migrant groups and do so in a way that will minimise their exposure to and experience of racist behaviour. At the same time, and just as importantly, the strategy will effectively reassure these groups that holding certain values is the key to being truly accepted as Australian.

The perceptual shift that has to be made and the gap between visibly different groups and the rest of the community that has to be bridged are illustrated in the following figure.



A GAP THAT NEEDS TO BE BRIDGED
AND QUICKLY

* including different religious beliefs

By convincing the current “ingroup” that the definition of membership is based on values ... and adherence to these values (rather than race or creed), and that part of this definition is that members of the ingroup are **accepting** of visibly different groups, we may be able to redefine who can be member of the ingroup. That is, our hypothesis is that the current outgroup will be redefined into the ingroup, if we can successfully shift perceptions about how the ingroup is constituted.

The “model” for how this redefinition of the ingroup could be achieved is as follows:

- this is what we (ingroup) believe as Australians ...
- therefore, this is the way we, as Australians, should treat one another (ingroup members)...
- this is the way I should treat others (outgroup) ...
- this is the way I should expect to be treated by others, and implicitly ...
- behaving in any other way toward others would be *un-Australian* (i.e., would ostracise me from the ingroup).

If this model could be successfully communicated, we may be successful in reducing the level of both expressed racism and of underlying racist attitudes ... at both individual and group level.

5.3 Core values to communicate

What values *should* the campaign strategy communicate in order to achieve a redefinition of the ingroup? The qualitative research cannot be definitive in this regard. Quantitative research is needed to determine which values can most productively be used in an anti-racism campaign. Only a large quantitative sample of Australians can determine which values can work most effectively in redefining Australians to include visibly different groups. Clearly, all the positive values such as equality, “mateship” and fair go *could* be useful in an anti-racism campaign. However, some values may be more useful than others ... and emphasising some values may even prove to be counterproductive to an anti-racism campaign. These issues will not be completely clear until the broad strategy is tested in the quantitative research and the precise mix of values that achieve a perceptual shift in the ingroup is determined.

The qualitative research has indicated, however, that one important value, for the purposes of an anti-racism campaign, could be acceptance. This hypothesis too will need to be tested in the quantitative research. In the research to date, acceptance had the most dramatic effect on reducing expressed racism *and* on the underlying unexpressed attitudes.

The qualitative research has indicated that few people uphold the positive values at the moment, including acceptance. (Exactly how many uphold it will not be clear until the quantitative research is conducted.) The communication task may therefore be a difficult one. An easier task may be to communicate tolerance. Certainly, more people believe that we are a tolerant nation than an accepting one. However, crystallising and confirming tolerance as a true Australian value is likely only to impact on the likelihood of expressing racist viewpoints, without significantly shifting either the underlying negative attitudes or the non-verbal expressions of racism which cause distress to its subjects. Obviously, if we can achieve both (via acceptance), then we should strive to do so. If we can only achieve the former (reducing expressed racism) via this communication strategy, then the question is whether acceptance or tolerance would more effectively and credibly achieve this task. The quantitative research will test the parameters of what the campaign can achieve (with reference to the size of the problem) and allow a test of the relative merits of “tolerance” versus “acceptance.”

The qualitative research did also point to two possible disadvantages of using tolerance as a positive value. **First**, in some sections of the community, tolerance has come to acquire a negative meaning. While most people recognise tolerance as a worthy goal, something that we should be striving for, the question is what does it mean to Australians in the late 1990's? As outlined earlier, for those holding more racist views,

tolerance has come to mean *“put up and shut up”* (sic). They express the view that tolerance is now being forced on them and they equate it largely with political correctness. This feeling is reflected in the following quotes:

- *“A lot of people are too scared to say what they think. It’s not politically correct. Got to be careful about how far you go and what you do.”*
- *“...have to be careful what you say because of legal issues.”*
- *“There’s too much restriction on what can be said or heard.”*
- *“It’s political correctness gone crazy ... you can’t call someone ‘black’ for example.”*
- *“Legislation doesn’t allow you to (say what you feel) ... you have to conceal your true feelings.”*

Essentially, the feeling from this segment is that they now have to ignore something/someone who irritates them and put up with it rather than voicing their views. Some see this largely as the legacy of the Keating Government and the legislative steps taken to (as they see it) limit their freedom of speech.

This feeling that tolerance is being forced on them via legislation is resented. This perceived forcing is seen as variously unnecessary, insulting, paternalistic and even un-Australian because, they say, “we” are tolerant by nature ... and have a right to voice our views. Given the current negative connotation surrounding tolerance for some, it may not be as effective in communication terms as acceptance in building a more cohesive society because the latter word has not yet acquired a negative meaning amongst a segment of the community.

Second, from talking to both perpetrators and subjects of racism, it became clear that tolerance is a low standard. Tolerance seems to mean

not being outrightly rude or aggressive: at best a forced courtesy, at worst disdain and condescension. Subjects of racism are well aware when they are being merely tolerated. They report feeling that they are an unwelcome annoyance. Given this possible connotation, tolerance is again unlikely to provide the basis for a more cohesive society ... from the point of view both of subjects and of perpetrators of racism.

Again, the issue of the relative *effectiveness* and *credibility* of messages of acceptance and tolerance amongst different community segments will need to be tested in the quantitative research.

In addition to these possible cornerstone values, other beliefs that flow from and support these values could be used as supporting arguments in defining Australians and core Australian values. These supporting values are:

- “fair go”
- equality
- “mateship”
- helping those in need
- living in harmony
- social justice.

All of these values were believed to be held to some extent by different segments in the community. While some believed they were held, others questioned whether they are still held. Therefore, one task for the quantitative research will be to determine which of these values have adequate credibility (i.e, are believed to be held), which will be more (and which less) effective in shifting racist attitudes and which can most appropriately support acceptance (or tolerance) in redefining the Australian ingroup.

5.4 A celebratory context

In communicating the core values, the anti-racism campaign should be emotional and highly positive. The communication should not consist of a cold, objective listing of the core values. Instead, it should celebrate the values in a highly positive way ... rejoice about the core values. An underlying theme of the campaign should therefore be an emotional appeal of pride in Australia and pride in being Australian ... because of the highly positive values on which the country could be said to be based and by which Australians should be defined.

The recommendation for this underlying celebratory theme is based on three factors:

- the need to take an emotional rather than a rational approach, as explained above,
- an expressed community need for such celebration (as explained below), and
- the fact that such a theme would make the audience more receptive to other campaign messages.

The research showed that the community is in search of “feel good” messages. Times are perceived to be hard, so people look for information or news that may provide a positive slant on their life and their community ... things to feel good about. (People also expect the future to be even harder. This was evident both in this research and in the earlier research conducted for DIMA by Irving Saulwick.)

In this context, openness to celebratory news is even more evident. As a result, discussion about Australia generally turned to a call for more “chest

beating”, that is, for a greater willingness to boast about Australia and our achievements as a nation. The community will accept good news in the form of a greater pride in Australia. There is a realisation that the Australian tradition of downplaying one’s achievements, the “quiet achiever” ethic and the tall poppy syndrome of cutting the successful down to size are no longer positive attributes. The campaign tactic should therefore be to promote the core Australian values, especially acceptance, as the main reason we should celebrate our achievements as a nation: We should celebrate and feel good about our values ... and the way we have lived out our beliefs.

Whilst in no way supporting fervent nationalism along the American model (a model universally scorned), the community does feel that we could “turn up the nationalism a notch or two.” The community feels this is likely to occur in any event with the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

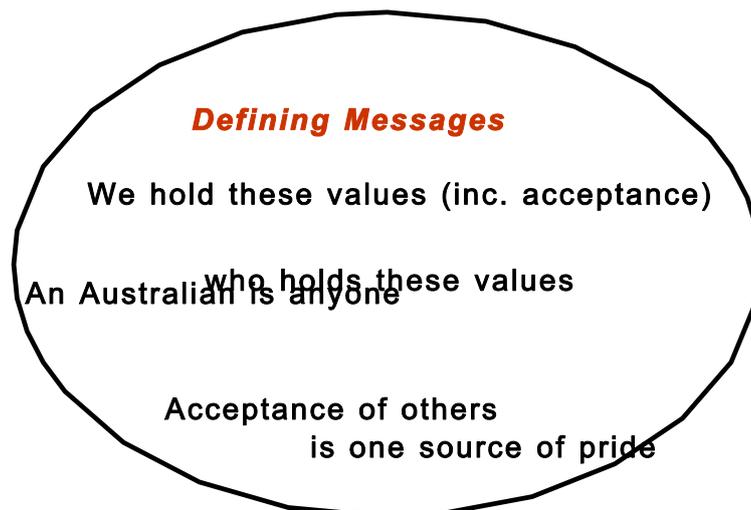
Some supporting quotes for this contention follow:

- *“We should be more proud of our country!”*
- *“How many of you people here would remember standing up and saluting the flag on a Monday morning, all lined up? What do they do now? How do we celebrate our nation now? I wish there was more of it.”*
- *“My daughter came home on Remembrance Day and I said, ‘Did you have your 2 minutes’ silence?’ and she said ‘What’s that?’ and I found that really hard to believe. We don’t seem to celebrate our achievements like we used to.”*
- *“We’ve got a lot to be proud of and the world should hear it ... and I think they will when they come here for the Olympics.”*
- *“I wish someone would just come out and list all the great things we’ve done ... make us feel proud to be Australians again. I’m sick of*

feeling guilty for being a true blue, what with all this Wik stuff and being rammed down my throat how we were bad to the Aborigines.”

Therefore, the mass media and the community education strands of the anti-racism campaign could adopt the context of an overall feel good message about pride in Australia and a celebration of Australia’s values. This context could be an emotional “coating” that will help the campaign communicate with the more intolerant segments of the community. In other words, this positive appeal to Australian pride will both fulfil a community need and increase the acceptability of the overall campaign message amongst the potentially less receptive target audiences. The following figure summarises the overall recommendation for a proposed broad campaign strategy that can be tested in the quantitative research.

UNDERLYING THEME/CONTEXT
An emotional appeal: Pride in Australia,
Proud to be an Australian



5.5 Mass media and/or education?

Given the proposed broad campaign strategy, what will need to be the balance between mass media and community education ... and even within community education, what should be the relative emphasis between different target audiences (young people vs media vs the workplace etc.)? The qualitative research cannot be conclusive about whether both mass media and community education activities will need to be mounted to achieve the objectives set for the broad campaign ... or indeed whether *either* mass media or community education alone could achieve the task set for the campaign. The inconclusiveness at this stage is due to the nature of qualitative research - it can identify a problem and possible solutions, but it cannot be definitive about the size of the problem or indeed about the likely success of the solutions. Quantitative research is needed to provide this degree of certainty.

It is only once the quantitative research data are available and the size and nature of the problem of racism is fully known, and the broad strategy is tested, that we will be in a position to debate the relative merits of mass media versus a community education approach.

The results of the quantitative research will inform the discussion about what can be achieved via mass media in the short and long-term and what can feasibly be achieved via community education in the long term. By more tightly defining the target audience and providing a definitive picture of where the communication task will be easiest, the quantitative research will provide data on which more precise decisions of emphasis can be made.

5.6 Campaign title

Focus group discussions in Steps 1 and 2 revealed that most respondents believed that the title and main message of an anti-racism campaign should be subtle, non-threatening, positive and apolitical. Most felt that subtlety was the key. In this context, both negative and positive respondents (of most backgrounds) praised efforts such as the ***“I am, you are, we are Australian”*** campaign. The positive reaction was due to the fact that they found the campaign to be uplifting, positive and an attempt to define what an Australian is. Amidst current confusion about who/what an Australian is, it was seen by some to be an acceptable first step in the definitional process. That is, it was seen as a campaign that started to “tidy up” what it means to be an Australian in the 1990's.

Of course, the (severe) limitation of this campaign was that it focused purely on the “look” of an Australian. Whilst such an approach could expand the definition to include visibly different people (given the right level of support), it is limiting because it fails to articulate which values and positive set of behaviours go hand in hand with the definition of an Australian.

Following the qualitative phase of research, we are of the opinion that “Anti-Racism Campaign” should remain the title for the overall strategy

within DIMA and in communication with the campaign's key stakeholders. This would be useful both in keeping the campaign focused on the end objective and in reassuring various interest groups and stakeholders that this *is* the objective even if the means we may choose to that end appear indirect. Of course, the issue of what the mass media and community education campaigns should be called (i.e., for direct public consumption) is quite a separate one. On this issue, the qualitative research has been more useful in determining what the campaign title should *not* be than in providing a definitive answer on what it should.

First, the research showed that *Anti-Racism* would be both too negative and too explicit as a title for a mass media or community education campaign. As a title, it also provides anyone who does not see themselves as racist with a clear "way out": i.e., "*I'm not a racist, so that message is not meant for me.*"

Second, we cannot yet refer to *Australians* in the title because the current definition of that term excludes visibly different groups and would be seen to be more about re-affirming the ingroup than expanding it to include new groups.

Third, *diversity* is taken to imply division and stresses the differences in the community. It would be difficult to mount a unifying campaign that included diversity in the title, especially given the current perception amongst some that promoting adherence to diverse cultures through multiculturalism has contributed to a confusion about Australia's national identity.

The qualitative research and subsequent analysis of the group reactions to different campaign titles have generated some possibilities that are worthy of consideration by DIMA for inclusion in further testing at the quantitative stage of research. The title needs to be focused both on the overall

strategy of defining values/beliefs and on celebrating Australia's achievements. The titles suggested for inclusion in the quantitative research are:

- What we (all) believe
- (This is) Who we are
- Living in harmony
- Living our beliefs
- Pride of place/Proud of place.

Eureka is not a creative consultancy and our task has not been to generate an all-encompassing name for a campaign that is still evolving. These "draft" titles will, however, be useful in so far as reactions to them from the community in quantitative research will provide further leads about the language that we can (and cannot) use in devising and naming the campaign for public consumption.

Some verbatim comments from focus group participants on the issue of a campaign title follow.

- *"...needs to be a positive message, don't make people feel bad."*
- *"If it is done, it must be done carefully otherwise it could seriously backfire...and it must be subtle, not too in-your-face".*
- *"If it's too confronting, you'd just switch off."*
- *"It's got to be two-way and balanced."*

6 Conclusion

The qualitative research has demonstrated a clear need for an anti-racism campaign. At the same time, a (testable) hypothesis has arisen: the community's need to reaffirm core Australian values and to celebrate Australia's achievements provides an opportunity to develop a campaign that could define the core values to the benefit of harmonious community relations for decades to come. It is our expectation that, by defining Australian values and ensuring that these values include acceptance of other races/colours/creeds, the proposed draft communication strategy could set the tone for how Australians define themselves, how they relate to one another ... and how they act.

Instilling the community with a greater sense of security that the positive core values/beliefs exist and are being upheld by all Australians, could create an atmosphere which is less likely to result in racist behaviour. Making some sections of the community feel more secure about the core values could have the effect of reducing some of the community fears about new migrants and their perceived "unassimilationist" attitudes, fears that drive some expressions of racism and intolerance.

These hypotheses, however, require rigorous testing.

7 Quantitative research

The qualitative research reported here provided a broad understanding and appreciation of the issue of racism in Australia today. This has resulted in a set of findings and development of a testable broad strategy. Further testing of the strategy is critical. The testing is dependent on quantitative research which will provide data that will both determine the extent to which the qualitative findings are generalisable to the community and explore the more technical parameters of the strategy (as outlined below).

The quantitative research will need to determine the following:

- what proportion of the community holds racist viewpoints?
- what proportion expresses these?
- what proportion acts on these views?
- what is the profile of this segment of the community (i.e., age, gender, socio-economic status)?
- what proportion of the community does not hold racist views?
- what is the profile of this segment of the community (i.e., age, gender, socio-economic status)?
- which segments of the community are worth targeting (i.e., who are the “winnables”)?
- what is the size of the winnable segment?
- what proportion of those with negative attitude can we convince to expand the “in group” definition?
- what proportion can we convince to adopt acceptance as a value?
- which existing values have the ability to unite most Australians?
- ■ which existing values are believed to include visibly or religiously different groups?
- which Australian achievements should we emphasise in an anti-racism campaign and which not?

- who would be the most credible and appropriate source of the campaign and of the messages (DIMA, the Government, NMAC, etc..)?

In answering these and other questions, the quantitative research will test the results of the qualitative research and provide information that will maximise the success of any future communication strategy.

A Report

Prepared for:

**Multicultural Affairs Branch
Department of Immigration and Multicultural
Affairs**



**The anti-racism campaign:
Qualitative market research to
guide campaign development
Volume 2 - Methodology, discussion
content,
notepad results and appendices**

Project 2028

March

1998

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1 Introduction

This report presents in more detail the technical and methodological parameters of the qualitative research conducted by Eureka for the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) in November - December 1997. As well, this volume contains a detailed summary of the group discussions and the results of the two written exercises conducted with research participants (exercises designed to stimulate discussion). The technical/methodological details and the results of the two written exercises were not presented in detail in Volume 1 because the objective was to keep that report as concise and as strategic as possible. This companion piece to the main report also includes the appendices referred to in Volume 1.

It should be noted that the notepad results presented here played only a minor role in the overall analysis of the research findings. The major interpretive analysis was dependent on (and strategic implications were drawn from) the content (verbal and non-verbal) of the group discussions.

2 Research approach

2.1 Methodology

As indicated in the DIMA research brief (Appendix 1), the first stage of a research project designed to test and develop an anti-racism communication strategy required a large-scale national **qualitative** research phase. Ordinarily, for a project of this scale, Eureka would recommend a mix of qualitative methodologies: (a) one-on-one in-depth interviews to understand the individual, psychological factors that underlie a given set of behaviours and attitudes and (b) focus groups to explore the social factors that contribute to an individual's reactions to the issue at hand.

In this instance, however, we saw individual interviews as inappropriate ... and likely to lead to misleading conclusions. Racism is not a topic people will readily or openly talk about one-on-one ... unless the interviewer is their best friend! A one-on-one interview on this topic would turn into a very rational and objective discussion about the problem of racism in Australia and what can be done about it. Such a situation would not allow an interviewee to feel comfortable enough to express the most "unacceptable" attitudes and feelings towards the subjects of racism.

In our experience, a group of like-minded individuals ... who can tell that they are of similar opinion when it comes to socially undesirable attitudes ... provides an ideal atmosphere within which negative attitudes can be vented and explored. This indeed proved to be the case in this qualitative project.

Focus groups conducted in this project were homogenous on three levels - culturally, linguistically and attitudinally. This situation provided a comfortable and safe environment in which even relatively extreme attitudes were readily expressed. In such a group context, the interviewer/facilitator was only one of 8-9 others. The need to rationalise one's attitudes to an objective interviewer was effectively moderated by the presence of a group of like-minded others. The result was an honest and thorough exploration of the central issues underlying racist views.

2.2 Recruitment

Candidates for recruitment first self-classified into one of four cultural groups:

- Anglo-Saxons,
- established migrant groups from non-English speaking countries,
- recent arrivals from Asia, and
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.

Group participants were recruited on the basis of their attitudes, rather than by any assumptions (either Eureka's or DIMA's) about who the subjects and perpetrators of racism are.

The negative attitudes were measured indirectly through a lengthy recruitment questionnaire (see Appendix 2 for a full script of the recruitment questionnaire) that contained unrelated questions about people's attitudes to a number of topical issues. Embedded within these was a seven-point "social distance" scale.

The social distance scale is a widely accepted means of measuring attitudes toward “outgroups.” It is a widely used and validated scale in academic research on ethnocentrism and racism¹. It poses seven YES/NO questions regarding one’s willingness to have contact with a person from a different cultural/linguistic background, with that contact ranging from being accepted as a visitor to Australia to marrying into one’s family.

Having answered these questions, groups of respondents were recruited according to how similar they were in the level of expressed social distance from other groups. “Positives” were deemed to be those low on social distance with regard to other groups. Those exhibiting high social distance were deemed “negatives.”

Recruitment on the basis of an objective, scientifically validated scale, rather than on the basis of any *presumed* racist attitudes or racist disposition, allowed for a more powerful exploration of racism in the Australian community.

2.3 Project phasing

As previously outlined, one benefit of qualitative research is that it is a perfect environment for developing hypotheses about the issue under discussion. However, a project that treats all stakeholders equally and where all focus groups cover exactly the same issues does not allow for cross-checking of hypotheses derived in one group across other groups. So, how do we know whether or not one segment of the community

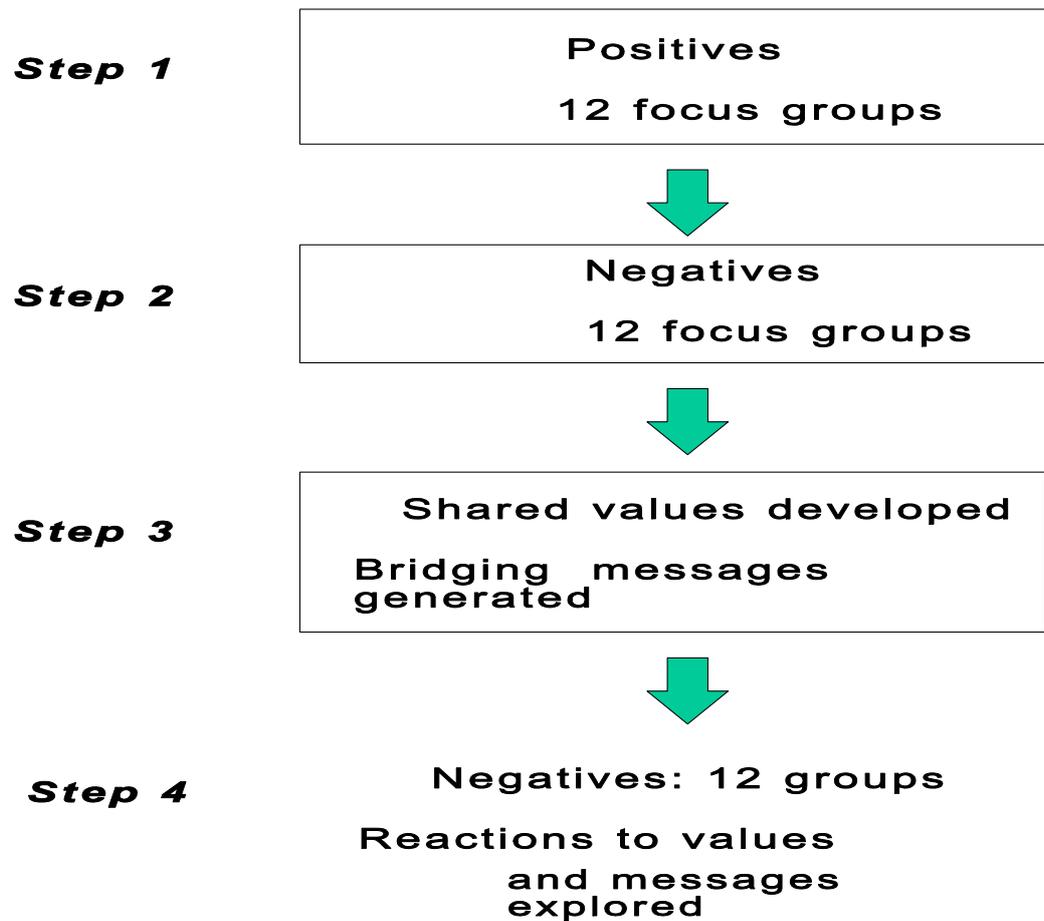
¹ McAllister, I. & Moore, R. (1988) *Ethnic prejudice in Australian Society: Patterns, intensity and explanations*. Office of Multicultural Affairs (July 1989)

shares the views and principles of other groups? The answer is we do not know until we ask them.

This is why an iterative learning approach to project staging was used in this instance. Each stage of research served to develop hypotheses which were then tested in a subsequent phase.

This iterative approach was preferred to the alternative of conducting 30 or more focus groups in an entirely open-ended manner and hoping that commonalities and themes would emerge from the groups by the end of the process. The approach meant that we learned from each and every group we spoke to.

Therefore, three successive stages of qualitative research were undertaken, as shown in the following chart.



First, we spoke with the “positives”, people most comfortable in dealing with “others.” We explored their shared values, how other cultures fit into their view of Australia, their definition of racism, the importance of contact with other races in shaping their world view and their perceptions of which groups in society are most subjected to racism. Twelve such group discussions were conducted.

Second, having developed an appreciation of the “positive” world view, we spoke to 12 focus groups of “negatives” to understand ... and compare/contrast ... their world view. These were people scoring high on social distance and therefore most likely to be racist in their attitudes and behaviour. We explored the same issues with them as with the “positives”.

Having explored each segment separately, a thorough understanding of the perspective of each towards the problem of racism, and of their shared values, was attained. The third step in the research process was then to develop a series of messages that cover the values shared by the “positives” and the “negatives”, that is, messages that build bridges between the two “sides” and messages that bring the “negatives” closer to where the “positives” are attitudinally.

Step 4 in the qualitative research was to conduct twelve further focus groups with the “negatives” to test and explore reactions to the messages developed in Step 3. This was the hypothesis testing stage, where we explored the learnings from Steps 1 and 2 and determined which values inherent in the “positives” were favourably reacted to by the “negatives” and, hence, what messages of acceptance and understanding we could *credibly* build amongst the negatives.

2.4 Group structure

As well as attitudinally, the focus groups were homogenous with regard to gross culturo-linguistic background. We conducted separate groups consisting of: Anglo-Saxon people (Anglos); established non-English speaking background migrants (NESB established); recently arrived migrants from Asia (NESB recent); and people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) background.

The 36 focus groups included 292 individuals. The table below summarises the percentage of the sample from each cultural background with whom we spoke.

Background	% of Sample
------------	-------------

	(N = 292)
Anglo	63
NESB established	16
NESB recent	14
ATSI	7

With regard to the location of focus groups, a sample frame roughly proportional to the Australian population was employed. Focus groups were conducted in the following states and locations:

- **Queensland**
 - Brisbane
 - Warwick
 - Townsville

- **Western Australia**
 - Perth
 - Bunbury

- **Victoria**
 - Melbourne
 - Shepparton

- **New South Wales**
 - Sydney (City and Parramatta)
 - Dubbo
 - Albury

It was also necessary to conduct separate groups of younger and older people at the qualitative stage to ensure even greater homogeneity of attitudes and experiences.

The table below summaries the age of the participants in the focus groups.

Age	% of sample (N = 292)
18-24	11
25-34	24
35-54	51
55 and over	14

Each focus group consisted of participants of both genders. An effort was made in all instances to ensure equal gender representation in each group. In the end, 46% of group participants were males and 54% females.

The following table presents the complete group structure used in this three-phased qualitative project.

Project Phase	Community Groups			
	Anglo	NESB - Established	NESB - Recent	ATSI
Step 1 - Positives 12 groups	6 groups 3 younger 3 older 2 Sydney 1 Albury 1 Melbourne 1 Brisbane 1 Townsville	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Sydney 1 Brisbane	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Sydney 1 Melbourne	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Albury 1 Townsville
Step 2 - Negatives 12 groups	8 groups 4 younger 4 older 2 Sydney 2 Adelaide 2 Bunbury 2 Dubbo	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Perth 1 Adelaide	1 group Younger Sydney	1 group Older Perth
Step 4- Negatives 12 groups	8 groups 4 younger 4 older 2 Melbourne 2 Shepparton 2 Warwick 1 Brisbane 1 Sydney	2 groups 1 younger 1 older 1 Brisbane 1 Melbourne	1 group Younger Sydney	1 group Younger Sydney

“Younger” was defined as 18-39 years of age, “older” as 40-69 years of age.

2.5 Conduct of groups

2.5.1 Discussion guides

A detailed discussion guide was used by the five research consultants working on this project. This discussion guide was identical for Steps 1 and 2 of the project (see Appendix 3). The guides provided a list of topics that each group was required to discuss and was employed to ensure standardisation across group moderators conducting the groups at different locations. In these first two phases, the groups discussed issues such as:

- the positive characteristics of Australia;
- the negative characteristics of Australia;
- Australian values;
- whether Australia is currently divided;
- definitions of racism;
- examples of racist and non-racist behaviour;
- the causes of racism;
- the perceived subjects of racism and its effect on them;
- the perceived prevalence of racism;
- the “acceptability” of racism in Australia;
- the costs of racism;
- the government’s role in addressing racism (if any), and
- main messages for a possible campaign to reduce racism.

A separate discussion guide was employed in Step 4 of the project (see Appendix 4). The Step 4 focus group discussions required participants to evaluate various messages relating to Australian values. In brief, it covered issues such as:

- the positive characteristics of Australia;
- the negative characteristics of Australia;
- Australian values
- five messages relating to Australian values (rotated across groups):
 - ◆ Australia is a society/country in which people are generally tolerant towards one another... that's one thing we all share
 - ◆ Australia is a society/country to which we are all committed
 - ◆ We all believe that Australia is the best country in the world and that unifies us
 - ◆ All of us, regardless of where we originally came from, have the same dreams and hopes for our children...and that unifies us
 - ◆ Australia is a society/country which is often unified by sport... that we share
- Australia's achievements;
- whether Australia has benefited from immigration, and if so, how;
- the public's input into government decision-making regarding immigration, and
- the ability to express racist views.

2.5.2 Personal notepads

A brief, informal individual reaction "notepad" was also used in Step 1 and 2 focus groups but not in Step 4 (see Appendix 5). Sentence

completion was employed as a qualitative exercise in the personal notepad. Respondents were asked to complete the sentence “*I’m not racist, but ...*”. People completed this exercise by writing sentiments which either reflected their view, mimicked examples of racism they have witnessed, been the subject of or could imagine occurring. We then openly discussed their answers and explored the ways in which “acceptable” racist attitudes were expressed. As the expression is currently often used as a way of masking racist comments, the technique proved to be a powerful tool for exposing both the underlying causes of (and acceptable rationalisations for) racist views.

In addition, the notepad presented a list of 35 statements. Four examples of statements follow.

- *In the current economic climate, the number of Asian migrants is causing friction.*
- *These days, as a white Australian, I often feel discriminated against.*
- *I really enjoy meeting people from other cultures.*
- *Immigration is very good for the Australian economy.*

Group participants were asked to circle the statements with which they agreed (and not to circle those with which they disagreed or about which they were ambivalent). As with the sentence completion task, this exercise was employed both to allow participants to note down their private thoughts and to act as a stimulus for further group discussion.

3 Summary of discussions

To provide a full picture of what took place during the group discussions, we present below the reactions from group respondents to the questions posed by Eureka facilitators. Where appropriate, direct quotes have been used to illustrate responses from focus group participants ... often the views encapsulated the feelings of the group as a whole. By necessity, these are not “raw data” because nothing can be a substitute for watching and being in the group as discussion is taking place. The psychological dynamics of the focus group, the non-verbal communication and even uncomfortable silences can convey considerable meaning to a skilled moderator. These aspects of a focus group cannot be conveyed on paper. However, we have attempted below to paint as much as possible a picture of what took place during the group discussions.

3.1 Initial group discussions

Step 1 and 2 discussion groups focused on five issues: feelings about Australia, shared values, divisions within Australia, racism (its prevalence, forms and causes) and a possible title for an anti-racism campaign. A number of questions were posed by group facilitators (as shown in Appendix 3) to engage respondents in the discussion. Below we list the questions posed and summarise the reactions from group respondents to each of the questions.

Pretend that I’m a visitor to Australia and I know little about it, please describe Australia to me. What are the main good things about Australia? What are the main bad things about Australia?

Given the broad nature of this question, it was surprising to find that the positive comments generally focused on the geographical and climatic features of Australia. Respondents described Australia as characterised by a vast landscape, beautiful natural features and an ideal climate.

After such initial comments, many people did mention Australia's:

- casual lifestyle;
- laid back atmosphere;
- friendliness (*"You can have a conversation with a stranger easily"*);
- reputation as a land of opportunity (*"...you can get ahead if you work hard"*, *"...don't see a lot of poverty"*); and
- multiculturalism (*"...huge variety of nationalities, all live reasonably peacefully"*, *"everyone gets along well, can't experience that anywhere else"*).

Some responded that Australia is a good country because it does not experience riots and civil wars (*"no police or military holding machine guns"*). This point was more frequently expressed by established and recent migrants than by Anglos and ATSI. Some participants also mentioned that Australia is a free, democratic country, with Australian values including "mateship" and helping others during a crisis. These social values were mentioned far less frequently than the physical characteristics of the nation.

When describing the main bad things about Australia, respondents mentioned the following:

- too many cultures in one country (*eg., "I'm sick of multiculturalism"*; *"I object to government supporting groups that have split the community eg giving money to ethnic radio"*);
- conflict between different groups (*"race is an excuse to cause trouble, to form youth gangs"*);
- increasing crime rate;

- welfare state/abuse of welfare (*"If you are a worker in this country, it is no good. If you are a bludger, you get everything."*; *"If you are honest and hardworking you won't get ahead the way the system is."*)
- perceived inequalities in standards applied to different people (*"minority groups are getting too much"*, *"...(over) representation of minorities"*);
- complacency/apathy (*"It'll be right' can go too far"*);
- we are too insular (*"don't look overseas"*);
- lack of patriotism;
- overseas owned companies with profits going overseas;
- politicians not trustworthy and there are too many levels of government (*"over-governed"*, *"one politician for every 11 people"*);
- high taxation;
- unemployment;
- increasing materialism;
- lack of discipline in schools, and
- deterioration of the family structure because both parents have to work.

Three of the issues raised spontaneously by group participants were, or were perceived to be, race-related: multiculturalism/ immigration, a (perceived) increase in the crime rate and widespread dependence on, and abuse of, the social welfare system.

In fact, the most frequently mentioned "bad thing" about Australia was in relation to migrants and multiculturalism. Many perceive that there are too many different groups within the one country. It was also frequently mentioned that these groups constantly *"stick together"* and that this is a bad thing. Negative Anglo-Saxons in particular focused on immigration, voicing sentiments such as: *"It used to be a good country, the best place*

to live ... but these new migrants have changed it so much that I don't recognise it anymore." This group complained about how the fundamentally Anglo-Saxon, Christian nature of Australia is being undermined by new migrants who are neither ... and refuse to assimilate. (For example *"Feelings against Asians are worse, they're more noticeable, Europeans have blended in ... Asians don't attempt to blend in."*).

There was a strong feeling amongst this group that the Australian culture is being undermined by *"ethnic"* cultures who are no longer persuaded or even *"told"* to assimilate. For most of this group, the feeling that this was an underlying problem in Australia meant that they could not see many current positives about the country. Quotes that encapsulate this feeling follow.

- *"People struggle to identify with Australia because what does it mean now? We have to try and maintain the specific culture that is Australia."*
- *"Before we've had an opportunity to develop an Australian culture, we've had a lot of countries bombard us with their culture."*
- *"All this tolerance is fundamentally destructive to our society as an entity. The countries who are intolerant, their culture is strong, it's intact and will continue on eg China. Here, when we encourage all these groups the very fabric of our society is being destroyed. We're getting a very diluted world culture rather than a strong Australian culture"*.
- *"Our culture's been weakened. They can destroy it if we let them have their own cultural practises too much."*

Another major negative theme related to rising crime rates: *"It's not safe to walk late at night anymore," "You've always got to have your door*

locked". For most, this perceived crime wave could be put down to increasing pressures of modern life, increasing population size, etc. However, for the vocal negative Anglo-Saxon group and some established migrants, this "wave" was said to be due to drug problems. In turn, these problems were said to be due to Asian migrants', in particular Vietnamese, involvement in the drug trade.

Furthermore, migrants were largely blamed for the problem of increasing crime. This is exemplified in the following quotes:

- *"It's a range of nationalities... all with their little crime wars and it's just escalating"*.
- *"A lot of those European countries, they've been brought up to act or retaliate first stab someone, then think about it."*

Whilst participants acknowledged that many people of all backgrounds are unrightfully gaining financial assistance, migrants and Aboriginals were perceived to be particularly burdening the welfare and taxation systems. For example:

- *"Vietnamese living off the social security system"*
- *"90% of Asians live off the dole".*
- *"The whole Lakemba area...none of them (Muslims) will work"*
- *"Pauline Hanson was first to publicly identify 'reverse racism'... She caught the imagination of people who see Aboriginals as 'over-compensated.'"*
- *"Makes me bitter... I've seen country towns that Aboriginals have destroyed eg Wilcannia, shops are all boarded up. All that's left, Aborigines collecting social security and waiting for the pub to open."*
- *"They're (Aboriginals) 2% of the population and they get billions spent on them."*

Comments from a segment of more vocal and racist respondents revealed, time and again, a clear pattern of anti-Asian feelings based on the perception that this group, in particular, is failing to adhere to the traditional Australian character and that this failure is undermining the cohesiveness of the Australian culture.

What does it mean to be an Australian? How are Australians different from people living in other countries? What are Australian values?

A minority of people with whom we spoke felt that Australians could still be generally characterised as people with a “*she’ll be right*” attitude and as open, friendly and generous. However, the majority of focus group participants from Anglo-Saxon/Celtic backgrounds were hard-pressed to answer this question. Many felt that the Australian values and identity were not as clearly defined as a generation ago and that the history of immigration, the current emphasis on valuing “other” cultures, multiculturalism and other factors were changing what was once a strong Australian identity. The sense was that this change is on-going and that we are far from settling into a new and permanent identity. Most group participants from Anglo backgrounds said that recent migrants were to blame for this current uncertainty because they are least assimilationist ... unlike Greek and Italian migrants who were seen as strongly assimilationist. Hence resentment toward these new migrant groups was readily expressed, as exemplified in the following quote: “*In their countries they wouldn’t let you set up whole areas of Aussies. They would make you learn the language etc, make you spread out.*” Other quotes that exemplify participant comments on this topic are provided below.

- *"We have an identity problem"*
- *"We're losing our culture"*
- *"Our culture is changing to adapt to migrants"*
- *"We're too nice, laid-back, not protecting what we have."*
- *"When they bring their own value systems and not integrate that breeds intolerance"*
- *"If they come to our country they should embrace our lifestyle not try to change us!"*
- *"When they come, they should embrace the people, the culture."*
- *"People don't learn the language. The Government isn't forceful enough. They give them special services so they don't need to learn the language."*
- *"The Government is too nice."*
- *"Multiculturalism has threatened the loss of our values."*
- *"The immigration policy has been thrust upon us, wool pulled over our eyes by politicians."*
- *"Politicians pander to these minority groups."*
- *"...used to be majority rule, now it's minority rule, silent majority. The government cow-tows to them."*
- *"...they have to socialise, get to know Australians, fit in with our ways you can fit in if you look different, if you make an effort."*
- *"Tell people they must be part of a society."*
- *"A lot of cultures don't make an effort to fit in."*
- *"We shouldn't have to change our lifestyle for them."*
- *"They should speak the language. We should be giving jobs to our people...and we are called racist!"*
- *"If we went to their country we'd have to follow their traditions, so in ours they should follow ours, BBQ etc."*
- *"People should conform."*
- *"People should be able to speak English so that it is easier for them to fit in and so that it is easier for them to fit in and so people understand them and are less racist." (recent Asian migrant)*

- *“There are people who come here and make no effort to learn the language or learn about the culture etc. People will accept you much more if you make an effort to fit in.”*

These negative comments about new migrants were juxtaposed with positive remarks about Greeks and Italians who were seen to be assimilationist:

- *“A lot are nice people. They make you feel welcome, strong, community minded Italians. They are happy to mingle. They work hard. They are generous, not like the Asians.”*
- *“Greeks and Italians integrated eventually. Culturally they’re closer to us, Christian values. Takes a long time but eventually...they fit in”.*

Regardless of background, people were struggling to define who or what an Australian is in the late 1990's. In a physical sense, there was overwhelming recognition that a bronzed Aussie no longer represents “us”. People say that this is an outdated archetype because they see so many non-Anglo faces in the street on a daily basis. However, people say that, in place of this archetypal figure, nothing has arisen to provide a current definition of what an Australian is.

Even more importantly, people struggle to define and agree conclusively on a set of values representing an Australian. While some can reel off a ready set of values, there is widespread recognition they are more historical than current. The feeling in the community is that the values are no longer solid, reliable or definitive. For some, the feeling is so strong that they question whether, as a community, we share *any* values.

Values that could be articulated included:

- *“mateship” though this is “not as good as it was”*
- *“honesty”*
- *“helping the underdog”*
- *“down to earth”*
- *“healthy cynicism, not frightened to express our views”*
- *“don’t dob a mate in”*
- *“she’ll be right mate” attitude (now seen as a negative)*
- *“people pull together in tragedies (eg floods, bushfires)”,
“tragedies are a time when we come together, Thredbo etc.”*
- *“fairness”, and*
- *“equality”.*

However, the fact that real shared Australian values are hard to identify is exemplified in the following quotes.

- *“Australia is a real plastic country now, we are no longer happy with the simple things...”*
- *“ (there is) no Australian culture”*
- *“‘fair go’ is a myth don’t believe we have equality either.”*
- *“Nowadays people have to concentrate on surviving themselves, we don’t have time to worry about other people.”*

Aboriginals, in particular, often said that they do not see themselves as having values in common with the broader community. This group say that they care more for their elderly and have a greater sense of connection and commitment to their extended family than do Anglo Australians.

What values do we share? That is, what are the values that unite us?

As outlined above, people struggled to define and agree on a set of values representing an Australian. However, people do agree that Australians do unite over two issues:

- helping others in response to a tragedy (e.g., fires, floods, mass-murders)
- sport - at a national level.

Even here, some Anglo-Saxons questioned the loyalties of migrants and whether they were united with other Australians. For example, some suspected that *“you’d never find an Asian in a voluntary bush fire brigade”* and others observed that *“migrants support their own country when it’s playing soccer against Australia.”*

Furthermore, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders believed that their values are not “Australian” values. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders emphasised that they were more committed to their own family and extended family than Australians were and that this is a core value of their culture. In fact, this group spoke of “Australians” when describing other groups in the community, thereby defining themselves as other than Australian.

Is Australia one country at the moment? If not, what divides us?

Most people felt that Australia did not feel as one country at the end of 1997. Respondents felt that a number of different issues divide

Australians. The most common response from Anglo-Saxon respondents was the division caused by the “failure” of different migrant groups to assimilate. Other suggestions that were made by participants regarding what divided Australia were:

- the Republic/Monarchy debate;
- Pauline Hanson; and
- the Wik debate and Aboriginal reconciliation.

What level of contact (in Australia) do you have with those of other cultures? How do “other” cultures fit in to the definition of Australia?

Most of participants in the group discussions had a great deal of contact with migrants both through work and within their neighbourhood. They also emphasised that their children had a lot of contact with migrants at school. The degree of contact with other nationalities was higher in metropolitan than in rural areas.

When asked how “other” cultures fit in to the definition of Australia, Anglo-Saxon respondents believed that *“eventually migrants will be able to fit in”*. However, they felt that “fitting in” takes time. Whilst some expressed understanding for people living with others who speak their own language, they emphasised that if migrants live in ghettos, they will not fit into the Australian culture.

The answers to this question reveal continuing support for assimilation amongst the Anglo-Saxon groups with which we spoke. The assumption on which answers from most Anglo-Saxon group participants were based was that new migrants should fit into the current Australian culture, accept it and not change its character. However, the answers people

gave also showed that most realised that this was now more their hope than a current reality. They realise that multiculturalism has irrevocably changed the “face” of Australia ... but not completely to their liking.

What is racism?

The participants were relatively comfortable talking about racism. Amongst negatives, we saw little evidence of discomfort in expressing negative attitudes towards other groups in the community. People also found no difficulty in defining racism and providing examples.

The results of the discussions showed that **positives** believe racism to include:

- intolerance;
- treating others as inferior;
- discrimination; and
- being rude to others because of their race, colour or religious background.

Intolerance and treating others as inferior were the most common definitions of racism provided by positive respondents.

“Negative” Anglo-Saxons expressed most racist views towards other groups. Their view was that racism is, in fact, an extreme act, such as physical violence against people of other races. They therefore excluded themselves from being a racist. However, Anglo-Saxons with positive attitudes towards other races, most Aboriginals and most migrants defined racism differently. For them, racism involves far less “extreme” and more “everyday” behaviours.

The subjects of racism in the focus groups reported varying incidence of personal experience of these everyday acts of racism. These groups define racism to include behaviour such as:

- ignoring customers waiting for service in shops;
- showing sheer rudeness to people trying to make themselves understood in English;
- giving “dirty looks” at people of a certain race or those who associate with them;
- providing job search and income assistance in a grudging, reluctant manner;
- name calling and derogatory comments;
- telling racially based jokes;
- moving from public places (eg parks) to avoid contact with people of certain races;
- media references to the heritage of any non-Anglo suspects/offenders;
- rougher treatment and being treated with increased suspicion from the police; and
- discrimination against job/housing applicants on the basis of race.

Subjects of racism report that racism is usually expressed non-verbally: it is not so much what is said overtly, but how they are treated in comparison with people who are not visibly different.

An issue of some concern is the fact that people with negative attitudes failed to see these “everyday” behaviours as symptomatic of racism. For them, such behaviour was acceptable when it could be “justified.” So, a stereotype could be used to explain why certain groups should be ignored (e.g., *“Aborigines only come into the shop to cause trouble, not to*

buy stuff, so why serve them before a white person?”). Alternatively, their judgement of what constitutes racism may be rationalised by their belief in assimilation (“If someone is trying hard to fit in and I don’t accept them, then that is racism”).

Similarly, many felt to varying degrees that they are now being discriminated against: *“Racism is now reversed, Aboriginals get handouts, Whites work”*. Similar comments were made in regard to the laws and punishment of Aboriginals relative to Anglo-Australians. Many also expressed the view that migrants receive too many government benefits: *“Asians are handed a lot when they come here - they drive around in expensive cars”* and *“They get low interest rates, they get handouts”*.

The discussions also explored what is **not** racism. Generally, the groups reported that friendly mutual banter about another’s culture was not racism **provided** the people involved knew each other well enough to know the other would not be offended and was only joking.

What would you call “extreme” racism? And what is “everyday” racist behaviour?

Physical violence and groups such as the Ku Klux Klan were perceived as examples of extreme racism by all groups. (In other words, for “negatives” all racism is extreme and therefore not something they would engage in.) Everyday racism was suggested to be silent treatment, ignoring people and comments expressed with clear malice.

What are some examples of racism that you can think of? Have you ever experienced racism?

The subjects of racism in our focus groups were reporting varying levels of personal experience of everyday acts of racism. Some said they regularly experienced such racism, others less so (for example, established migrants who experienced it when they first came to Australia sometimes commented that they do not frequently experience it now). Each migrant and Aboriginal respondent we spoke to could personally relate stories about such experiences ... in both recent times and in the past. Furthermore, negative respondents in our focus groups readily reported being perpetrators of behaviour of which subjects of racism complained ... it was simply the case that the former did not see it as racism whereas the latter did.

In fact, racist attitudes were quite readily expressed publicly in the focus group context. The attitudes were most clearly expressed in groups as negative stereotypes of various migrant and religious groups. Some examples follow.

Asians were perceived to:

- live in ghettos;
- be themselves racist;
- be involved in crime and responsible for the recent “*crime waves*”;
- cause most of the drug problems in society;
- be anti-Christian;
- abuse the welfare system;
- be uncommitted to Australia, and
- undermine the job security and work conditions of Australians.

Examples of direct quotes from group respondents regarding “Asians” are provided below.

- *“Asians treat us like trash, walk all over us. They think we’re lazy. They think we’re dirt.”*
- *“The Asians who came out in the Gold rush, they’ve assimilated ... but now, it’s too quick, too many nationalities. They are all fighting each other too. Not only do they hate Australians but they hate each other - other Asians. They’re violent people.”*
- *“Vietnamese live off the social security system.”*
- *“90% of Asians live off the dole.”*
- *“Asians aren’t clean...they are not screened for diseases. Why can they come in so easily?”*
- *“At Cabramatta, Asians try to sell you drugs at the station.”*
- *“...will make a quick buck and go back to their homeland.”*
- *“The Asians wouldn’t be game to have the coke, heroin etc they have in their own country because they would be hung. Here it is easy for them the penalties aren’t harsh enough.”*
- *“When you look at the overall figures, the amount of Asians is not that great compared to others but the amount of Asian crime is enormous.”*
- *“Asians work more cheaply. They are lowering the standard of living.”*
- *“The rich ones have either exploited their own people, are drug dealers or they are corrupt.”*
- *“They’ve no community spirit, no generosity.”*
- *“Asians take over suburbs.”*
- *“Areas like Cabramatta and Chinatown they shouldn’t be allowed be allowed to all go to one area. If they want to just be together they should stay where they came from.”*
- *“Once you could have said Australia is a great country but now, in the city you can’t walk the streets at night ... because of migrants it’s been brought into the country. It’s no particular type of migrant. The law system they just laugh at it, Asians particularly.”*
- *“They also bring all these diseases as well.”*

Likewise, Muslims and Lebanese were stereotyped as:

- being violent by nature;
- causing a lot of violent crime in the community;
- wanting to “Muslimise” Australia (one participant reported that they’re “*known*” to bribe local councils to allow the building of mosques);
- all being into welfare/worker’s compensation abuse, and
- mistreating women.

Again, some direct quotes from group respondents regarding Muslims and Lebanese people follow.

- *“They’ve no intention of integrating. The real problem are Muslims.”*
- *“The whole Lakemba area...none of them will work.”*
- *“...Lebanese back... a slipped disk they get whilst coming off the plane when they land in Australia.”*
- *“Lebanese and Chinese too many of them, they’re buying the country out.”* (an ATSI respondent)
- *“We’ve got a gang from the school, at night they just want to bash someone up. There’s a Koori gang and a Turk gang. I won’t let my son walk down the street at night here in Shepparton.”*

Aborigines were perceived as:

- being treated “*better than whites*”;
- inherently lazy;
- alcoholics by nature;
- causing a lot of crime and forcing police to declare “no-go zones” in some city suburbs;

- being given too many material things by the welfare system, things which they do not know how to use or appreciate (if living a traditional lifestyle); and
- inherently racist themselves against white people.

Direct quotes from group participants follow.

- *"Their...kids get \$6 a day to go to school, mine don't"*
- *"The problem is, a lot of Aboriginals now aren't doing it (making land claims, claiming Aboriginal heritage) for the right reasons. They're more after the money..."*
- *"I had my cat murdered by Aborigines down the street ... only one house with Aborigines, about 20 living in it and they are responsible for all the crime."*
- *"Aborigines are very racist towards us. They hassle you for money and cigarettes borders on intimidation."*
- *"Go to Redfern station ... you're taking your life into your own hands. After 6pm the police are scared."*
- *"Certain areas are as bad as America not much difference."*
- *"Aborigines are real Aussies but they hate us and they hate Asians."*
- *"It's the bloody Wik thing. Aborigines are a bottomless pit, keep pouring money in and it goes nowhere."*
- *"With Aborigines, if we gave them everything they wanted then they would want something else."*
- *"They were here for 40,000 years and they did nothing. They should feel lucky that the people who came here were white."*

- *“alcohol makes the Aborigines do it. They don’t send their kids to school no education, no chance”.*

Why are some people racist?

A number of reasons were provided by respondents as to why people are racist. The main reasons, according to the group participants, were:

- ignorance - some people are simply uneducated and ignorant;
- fear of competition - for jobs, money, housing and school/ university places, and
- fear of the unknown - of people who look and behave different, whose religion is different and so on.

Importantly, people whose remarks during the focus groups revealed them to be the most racist often said that they could understand why “others” were racists ... because there was some “explanation” for their behaviour. For this group, these “reasons” for being racist included:

- the lack of commitment of migrants to Australia;
- Asians causing crime and bringing drugs into the country;
- the fact that migrants change Australia’s culture rather than accepting it;
- the fact that some migrants do not learn English, and
- these groups (migrants and Aborigines) receive more welfare than other Australians.

Therefore, the most interesting point about the reasons proffered for racist acts is the difference between those given by positives (the non/least racist) and people who had expressed the most negative attitudes. Positives usually preferred the first three reasons listed above.

These offered an insight as to how they thought racist attitudes were developed. On the other hand, participants with racist attitudes used this question to offer a rationale for what were clearly *their* views. Hence they blame the subjects of racism: “they’re” not committed to Australia, “they” cause crime and bring drugs into the country, change Australia’s culture rather than accepting it, they refuse to learn English, they live off taxpayers’ money and so on. Clearly, what the negative respondents revealed here is an underlying set of grievances and excuses that drive their current expression of racist attitudes and negative feelings toward migrant groups, especially the new migrant groups.

Which groups or individuals are the most likely to be subjects of racism in Australia?

The group participants acknowledged that the groups in Australia that are most likely to be the subjects of racist acts are:

- newly arrived migrants, especially Asians (*“It used to be Greeks and Italians in the 1950's, now it's Asians”*)
- Muslims (*“Arabs at the time of the Iraqi war”*)
- Lebanese, and
- Aboriginals (*“Some Whites hate Blacks and vice versa”* - an ATSI participant).

Furthermore, direct prejudice was openly expressed against these groups by focus group participants during our discussions and these groups themselves readily acknowledged that they were the subjects of racist acts.

In general, the participants in most of the urban groups emphasised that Asians and Aboriginals were the main targets of racism. The fact that people were able to clearly articulate who these groups were ... and that

there was so much consensus about this ... is another indicator that we may expect the quantitative research to reveal at least a moderate level of incidence of racist acts. That is, the fact that people readily agree about who the subjects of racism are indicates that a problem exists and is one which most people have some experience of, either first-hand or as witnesses.

What, if any, are the costs of racism?

Many participants, especially the perpetrators, were unaware of any tangible costs of racism. Some participants could see that the costs of racism are: the formation of ethnic “ghettos” where migrants try to insulate themselves from racism, the deterioration of Australia’s international reputation for friendliness, and, consequently, a decrease in Australia’s trade and tourism and disharmony in the workplace resulting in reduced productivity and financial loss.

On the other hand, the subjects of racism perceived a wide range of costs, especially at the emotional level. They expressed a sense of disappointment in Australia (and Australians) because it sometimes failed to be the country they believed it to be (or could be). Another cost is a sense of alienation from the mainstream, especially after they have been subjected to racist abuse. They were also keenly aware of how multiculturalism could benefit Australia economically and how reports in international newspapers about increasing racism could damage those economic fortunes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders suggested that racism could break down their cultural ties by causing their young to alienate themselves from their communities because they did not want to be identified as being of ATSI background.

If our objective is to reduce the level of racism in Australia, what should be the main message of this campaign...and its title?

Focus group discussions in Steps 1 and 2 revealed that most respondents believed that the message of an anti-racism campaign should be subtle, non-threatening, positive and apolitical. Most felt that subtlety was the key. In this context, both negative and positive respondents (of most backgrounds) praised efforts such as the ***“I am, you are, we are Australian”*** campaign ... because they found it to be uplifting, positive and an attempt to define what an Australian is. Amidst current confusion about who/what an Australian is, it was seen by some to be an acceptable first step in the definitional process. That is, it was seen as a campaign that started to “tidy up” what it means to be an Australian in the 1990's.

Some verbatim comments from focus group participants on this issue follow.

- *“...needs to be a positive message, don't make people feel bad.”*
- *“Nobody gets more than anyone else, all Australians (should) get the same.”*
- *“Advertise that we are all human, regardless of what race, creed”*
- *“Treat everyone on their merits, don't judge others”*
- *“Show people... surrounded by other cultures and that this has enriched their life”, and*
- *“If it is done, it must be done carefully otherwise it could seriously backfire and it must be subtle, not too in-your-face”.*

Some of the campaign titles to which some segments of respondents reacted positively were:

- One Nation, Many Cultures;
- Fair Go For All, and
- Strength in Diversity.

The research also showed that *Anti-Racism* would be both too negative and explicit as a title for a mass media or even education campaign because it invites anyone who does not see themselves as racist to ignore the message. Similarly, *diversity* was reacted to negatively because it is taken to imply division and stresses the differences rather than the similarities of various cultures.

3.2 Message-testing group discussions

3.2.1 Unifying themes

In Step 4 of the research, participants were asked to evaluate various messages generated from Steps 1 and 2 of the research. These messages were possible unifying themes for an anti-racism campaign. The reactions to the messages are discussed below.

Message 1: *Australia is a society/country in which people are generally tolerant towards one another ... that's one thing we all share*

Most respondents believed that, in general, Australia is a society in which people are generally tolerant towards one another. This belief was largely based on the perception that Australians are more tolerant than people from other countries because we experience no race riots and fewer “ethnic” troubles. However, they believed that the word “tolerance” itself now means “putting up with” rather than fully accepting individuals.

In their words, tolerance is:

- *“not provoking trouble...it’s not very positive.”*
- *“something you are told to have, not a choice.”*
- *“putting up rather than accepting others for who they are.”*
- *“put up with it because you can’t do anything about it.”*
- *“hold your tongue”, whilst*
- *“Acceptance is to embrace”.*

Given the current negative connotation of this term, this message may have only limited success as a unifying theme. Some of verbatim comments from group respondents reacting to the message follow.

- *“No, we don’t all share that.”*
- *“People are not tolerant. If someone makes a mistake, they are quick to be chastised.”*
- *“Acceptance is a better word than tolerance.”*
- *“We’re fooling ourselves to say we’re not racist.”*
- *“We probably should be looking for acceptance rather than just tolerating.” (recent Asian migrant)*
- *“(there is) prejudice in this country eg Cambodians don’t like Vietnamese.”*
- *“Tolerance is not here.”*
- *“Racism is here but people are tolerant otherwise we would have a civil war.”*
- *“Most of us are pretty tolerant but we’re being pushed to the limit now, our tolerance is being tested.”*
- *“A lot of people aren’t very tolerant.”*
- *“Compared to a lot of places, Australians are incredibly tolerant eg in America there’s a lot more road rage.”*
- *“In other countries they have to tolerate more.”*
- *“We should be looking for people to accept other races, not just*

tolerate them." (an ATSI participant)

Message 2: *Australia is a society/country to which we are all committed*

The results indicated that Australians believe that everyone living here should be committed to the country. It was often mentioned in the discussions that newly arrived migrants do not feel committed to Australia. In particular, some felt that recently arrived Asian migrants have not yet proved their loyalty and are still committed to their country of origin. The distinction between established migrant groups and Asians on this issue was startling. Many respondents believed that established migrants were committed to Australia because they chose to live here but questioned whether this would be the case for Asians: "*Are they here for the long term?*" Most Anglo-Saxons believed that migrants could demonstrate their commitment to Australia by becoming Australian citizens, learning English and by working (rather than "*sponging off the welfare system*").

Direct quotes from group participants illustrating their reactions to this as a unifying theme include:

- "*Asian businessmen are not committed.*"
- "*Asians are not committed, they stay together, don't mingle.*" (an established NESB participant)
- "*In two generations, Asians would be committed.*"
- "*That's the truth, but no-one will leave their culture behind to be committed to Australia, especially new migrants.*"
- "*Many people haven't contributed anything to the country go straight to social security, not committed to Australia yet.*"
- "*...would like them to show commitment by learning language.*"
- "*Only some migrants who have been here for a while are committed to*

the country, committed to bettering themselves.”

- *“Some people are truly committed, Asians are a minority... most of the Australian population is committed.”*
- *“Changing slowly, people are becoming more committed.”*
- *“A lot of migrants are committed to Australia.”*
- *“I don’t think some are committed. Some haven’t lived in Australia for a while although they are citizens. They come here, go home with citizenship.”*
- *“I think Australian born people are quite committed.”*
- *“Ethnic people are very proud of their culture but also very proud to be Australian.”*
- *“(this) message should go to immigrants, potential immigrants.”*
- *“People who came here are more committed to the country
Australians born here don’t need to think about commitment, it is natural.”* (an established NESB participant)
- *“Most people who come here want to be here and therefore they are very committed from the beginning.”* (recent Asian migrant)
- *“Not everyone, no-one buys Australian Made, no-one goes out of their way to do that.”*
- *“Some foreigners work here, make money then go home”* (an ATSI participant)
- *“Only the Aboriginals are committed to the land, to Australia. They don’t feel it so much now, it’s fading.”* (an ATSI participant)
- *“Replace citizenship with a pledge eg be loyal to Australia ... not apply for benefits ... pledge that migrants won’t be a drain on social security”*
- *“The second generation are a lot better (more committed). The kids are brought up here, they mix well.”*

So, most people believe that the majority are committed but feel that some groups are not. Examples of those not committed to Australia, as cited by group respondents, include:

- people who just want to get what they can from the country and take money back overseas (e.g., “Drug lords”, Asian businessmen);
- migrants who make no effort to “fit in” ie not learning English, not getting a job and going on welfare, not mixing with Australians, living in segregated areas;
- migrants who do not take up citizenship even though they have lived here a long time “They want the best of both worlds”;
- people (of all backgrounds) who do not try to get (and keep) a job (i.e. those who are a drain on Australian taxpayers);
- politicians involved in travel expense rorts, and
- French people who did not support the boycott on French products during nuclear testing in the Pacific.

Most respondents believed that a message emphasising commitment to Australia should only be targeted at newly arrived migrants. Given this perception, employing this as a unifying theme would only have the negative effect of appearing to assuage the misconceptions of negative groups in society.

Message 3: *We all believe that Australia is the best country in the world ... and that unifies us*

The results of the discussions indicated that most people had a profound belief that Australia is one of the best countries, if not the best country, in the world. The reasons for this belief included Australia’s:

- freedom of choice;
- freedom of speech, and
- democracy.

Few people described Australia as the best country in the world primarily *because* it accepts people from different backgrounds and they live together in relative harmony without riots or racial wars. Such social harmony was a point more frequently raised by established migrants and older Anglo-Saxons.

Unfortunately, the negatives could even turn this message into an anti-migrant issue, as exemplified by the following quote: *“Yeah it is (the best country in the world), and that’s why they’re all coming here they know they’re onto a good thing.”*

In fact, recent migrants disagreed, saying that Australia was the lucky country but now it is slowly going downhill. And ... even though the majority of group participants believed that Australia is the best country in the world, they did not feel that this belief necessarily unifies Australians:

- *“It’s the best country in the world but that doesn’t unify us”, and*
- *“If there was a war then we would be unified, but now people are against each other. You become unified by external threats, the fact that the country is beautiful doesn’t unify us.”*

Message 4: *All of us - regardless of where we originally came from - have the same dreams and hopes for our children ... that unifies us*

Most participants agreed with this statement. They believed that parents generally desire happiness for their children. However, Anglo-Australians often mentioned that Asians do not appear to have the same dreams for their children as everyone else. They emphasised that Asian migrants were more concerned with having educated, financially successful children and that “we” seek a balance between emotional and

economic success for “our” children. Overall, there was no agreement that even if we do have the same dreams for our children that this commonality unifies the nation. This message could potentially be a very divisive “unifying” theme and should not be pursued. Direct respondent quotes showing the ambivalent reaction to this message follow.

- *“But you’d rarely find a parent who doesn’t love their kids. Their whole dream is centred around their child.”*
- *“We all want the best for our kids to have more opportunities than us, to achieve more, to do what they want.”* (recent Asian migrant)
- *“Parents of a Muslim will want something different from parents of a Catholic.”*
- *“...don’t know what Asians want for their children because they keep to themselves and don’t let others in.”*
- *“What do we want for kids? Depends from race to race.”* (ATSI)
- *“We don’t know what they want. We can only say for our own personal situations.”*
- *“People with the same original background have the same hopes and dreams for their children, people from different parts eg Asia, Africa have different (higher) aspirations.”*
- *“There are some ideals people hold for their children, some basic ones, but for most people there are a variety of influences”, and*
- *“This makes us similar but doesn’t unify us.”*

Message 5: *Australia is a society/country which is often united by sport ... sport is something that we share*

The results indicated that sport definitely is an important part of Australian culture. Respondents agreed that sport is important to most Australians.

Of the five messages tested, this message gained most support from participants. Respondents agreed that sport forms a bond between people. However, many respondents were annoyed that migrants often fail to support Australia in international events and instead supported their country of origin. Furthermore, not all sports were perceived to be unifying and inclusive of Australians from all backgrounds.

While sport has the potential to unify, it generally has to obey two rules in order to be a strong unifying force:

- Australia must win, and
- it must be a team sport.

Some of the group participants' reactions to this message included:

- *"Everyone gets behind sport."*
- *"Team sports unify us."*
- *"Any sport unifies us."*
- *"We have nothing else in common, only sport."*
- *"We're known as a sporting country."*
- *"A lot of people have criticised Aboriginals for years but everyone's proud of Kathy Freeman ... see her as one of our own. All that's forgotten when she's out on that race track."*
- *"The children of immigrants root for Australia. The young ones say they are Australian don't see themselves as Italian or whatever."*
- *"There's probably a lot of people who don't like sport in Australia."*

- *“Everybody has the opportunity to be involved, it’s not too expensive, it’s a way you can meet people.”*
- *“It’s a unifying force on a small scale. The unity starts by joining a team and then this grows.”*

The recent World Cup Soccer qualifying match in Melbourne (between Australia and Iran) was often referred to as a demonstration that some people have greater loyalty/commitment to their native country than to Australia. However, at the Olympics, most perceive that Australia will be more unified: *“The Olympics will bring us all together more too.”*

3.2.2 Other issues

A number of other general issues were also discussed in Step 4 of the research. The results of these discussions are presented below.

As a country, what can we look back on with pride and satisfaction? What are our achievements as a nation?

The results indicated that Australians are proud that Australia is a peaceful nation. They are proud of the fact that no civil wars or serious unrest has taken place in Australia. The respondents also indicated that they were proud of Australia because of its rapid growth as a country (mentioning for example, achievements such as the Snowy River Scheme), leadership in many fields *“drama, education, medicine, the arts...”* and major sporting achievements: *“The America’s Cup”*. A minority expressed ambivalence about Australia’s past in terms of White treatment of Aboriginals: *“It’s hard to look back and be proud because of the Aboriginals. I think everyone in Australia would like to sort that out. We seem to have destroyed a whole race of people”* (an Anglo respondent). Despite such sentiments, acceptance of migrants and offering a refuge to those in need were not spontaneously offered as reasons for pride in the country.

Australia was once made up of people largely of Anglo origins, are we better off now that we have people from a broad range of backgrounds? What has immigration added to this country?

The results of the discussions revealed that people do believe that immigration has added something to the country. Respondents believed that immigration brought to Australia diversity and variety.

Some commented that immigration has made Australia an interesting country to live in, more cosmopolitan and more part of the larger world. However, the most frequently mentioned response from the participants was that immigration has provided Australia with a variety of **food**. For most, this was the one and only benefit of decades of immigration. Time and again, people felt it important to stress that, without immigration we would not have Chinese, Italian and Lebanese restaurants.

The variety of comments made by group participants in response to this question is illustrated in the following direct quotes:

- *“Multiculturalism has been pushed down our throat too much...”*
- *“Australia has gained through multiculturalism...do business throughout the world.”*
- *“better off because of food”*
- *“we’ve got a lot more skills”*
- *“...(we learn) tolerance for other cultures because we interact with other cultures”, and*
- *“...art, language, furniture, architecture”.*

Some participants, particularly older Anglos and established NESB’s perceived that whilst Australia’s immigration during the 1950’s-70’s benefited Australia (bringing in hard workers when we needed them), recent immigration is burdening rather than benefiting the country. For example, *“...the wrong type of immigrants are coming here. When we*

came, we came to work. There were no government handouts then, many people were sponsored". These views about recent migrants are also reflected in responses to the next question.

If the government was to say that ordinary people are now being heard and taken seriously to immigration, how would that make you feel? What would be your reaction? How would that make you feel toward government in general? What evidence would you need to know that you were being listened to?

Many were sceptical that the government would listen and, more importantly, act on their views expressing reactions such as: *"I'd Laugh"*. They did however, offer a range of views about how Australia's immigration should operate. These views varied in extremity but the general consensus was that Australia's intake of migrants should be slowed down and the screening of migrants should be more tightly controlled so migrants are not a burden on the country. Below, we offer a selection of quotes that exemplify the types of comments made.

- *"Screen people before they come to the country... work, health, political background, criminal background. Spread people out around the country."*
- *"half the immigrants are not assessed in how they benefit Australia."*
- *"If they come here, they should have a job to go to."*
- *"...got to stop letting all the Asians come. Put some sort of limit on it."*
(an ATSI participant)
- *"...got to learn English if you want to be in Australia, have a family and live here...more for their own sake."*
- *"Send back people who end up in courts."*
- *"...if they commit a crime they should be sent back."*
- *"If there was no immigration, there'd be less on the dole."*

- *"If they come in they have to come to a job, those who come and work a few months and then go on the dole, it's a joke or people who get married just so they can live here."*
- *"Immigration is out of control."*
- *"We don't want it to become crowded we're happy for people to come here but it has to be controlled."*
- *"don't stop it altogether but slow it down."*
- *"...politicians should put the brakes on Asian migration."*
- *"Immigration department should hear message, should regulate too many Asians."*
- *"should not be proud of immigration as it was imposed on us."*
- *"(I've got) no problem with Asian migration, but a problem with Asian migration as a focus."*
- *"When they come here they should be punished in the same way as their own country we should bring in capital punishment."*
- *"I think we should stop immigration forever, we've got enough. They should be allowed to visit but that's all."*
- *"Even their (government) immigration figures are being doctored."*
- *"Only way they can show that they are listening to me is by legislation, rules for immigrants coming into country, age limits, control numbers, health tests, set criteria. A stricter set of guidelines."*
- *"...government should not give money to communities for their functions"*
- *"The government disadvantages the Australian born ... they don't give benefits to them".*

Do you think that we say or show everyone how we feel about them? Why/why not? What if anything, do we keep to ourselves? Which groups of people do we keep our feelings from?

Of course by this stage of the discussion, participants approached this question in the context of immigration and multiculturalism. Generally, people with whom we spoke felt that debate on these issues is difficult and that these days, like tolerance, restrictions are imposed on them by outside forces such as legislation, the possibility of being perceived as racist and by fear of reprisal.

Whilst some felt that the recent wave of racism had been fuelled by media reports and should be addressed by the government, others perceived that such views existed and were widespread previously but had not been expressed:

- *“... The government has a role in portraying Australia overseas provide balance to Pauline Hanson reports.”*
- *“Pauline Hanson said what everybody felt.”* (an established NESB participant)
- *“Pauline Hanson, she’s got a lot of truth....she’s speaking for the typical Aussie saying what other politicians are too scared to say.”*
- *“People don’t air their views about immigration enough because they’re scared of being called ‘racist’.”*
- *“Australia used to be well known for freedom of speech, now we can’t have a say anymore eg with Kooris. Kids feel they have to be careful around Kooris and ethnics because they’re scared of getting in a fight. Everyone should be treated the same.”*
- *“In the past, Australia used to be a friendly country now you have to be careful about discrimination, careful not to offend people, it’s harder to talk to just anyone you could offend a group in society and get bashed.”*
- *“I’d like to tell the whole world about what I think but I can’t ... I don’t have a say. I want to tell the government we should all be treated equal, everyone given the same benefits or help.”*

- *“A lot of people are too scared to say what they think. It’s not politically correct. Got to be careful about how far you go and what you do.”*
- *“Pauline Hanson is saying one thing and other people are twisting it which is upsetting. All she is really saying is we should limit the numbers of people coming in.”*
- *“have to be careful what you say because of legal issues.”*
- *“There’s too much restriction on what can be said or heard.”*
- *“It’s political correctness gone crazy you can’t call someone ‘black’ for example.”*
- *“No, legislation doesn’t allow you to you have to conceal your true feelings.”*

4 Notepad results

4.1 Sentence completion - ***“Look, I’m not racist but...”***

The sentence completion exercise was a task that allowed respondents to:

- express what they believed,

- communicate what they thought racism was,
- write what they had heard being said by others in the community, and/or
- convey what they themselves experienced.

The “negative” groups were more likely to use the sentence completion task to express their attitudes and feelings towards migrants, Aborigines and multiculturalism. Positive Anglos, NESB and ATSI groups were likely to use the exercise to express what they had experienced in the community.

The results of the sentence completion exercise (see Appendix 6 for full written comments from respondents) revealed that both the “positive” and “negative” groups completed the sentence with similar comments. However, the comments from negative groups were harsher and conveyed more anger, reflecting the views they expressed verbally during the discussions.

Both the positive and negative groups completed the sentence with phrases suggesting that some in society perceive that:

- migrants and Aborigines cause crime;
- migrants stay within their own communities and do not try to become Australian;
- the government helps Aborigines and migrants too much
- there are too many migrants in this country and they take jobs away from Australians.

The additional comments from the “negative” groups were more severe and extreme. The phrases of the negative groups indicated that they perceive that some people think:

- migrants who commit crime should be sent back to their country of origin;
- white Australians are not treated as equal to Aboriginals;
- migrants are given preferential treatment by the government;
- white Anglo-Saxon Australians are treated like a minority in their own country;
- migrants are taking over the country - they own all the businesses and using foreign languages in signage;
- immigration should be slower and more controlled, if not stopped.

The established NESB groups completed the sentence with similar comments as the Anglo groups. However, their comments were not as severe. The negative comments made by NESB established groups were mainly targeting Aboriginals and Asian migrants, whilst the Anglo groups expressed negative comments towards Aboriginals and most migrants, especially Asians.

The most severe and negative comments were made by Anglo groups who completed the sentences in a manner that indicated that they were aware of negative attitudes towards Aboriginals, migrants and even the concept of multiculturalism. Comments such as *“Look I’m not racist but I don’t like Asians, send them all home”* were often noted down in this section of the notepad (see Appendix 6 for more examples).

4.2 Reactions to attitudinal statements

The notepad was also used to ask participants their opinions about various issues relating to migrants (established and recently-arrived), Aboriginals and cultural diversity. The responses from the total sample of 195 people involved in Step 1 and 2 focus groups are tabulated below.

In reading the tables that follow, it is important to keep in mind that the data collected in this phase of the qualitative project represent only 195 people. This does not provide a robust sample on which assumptions may be made about how the community is thinking about the specific issues included in the 35 statements. The tables below are presented merely to give the reader a feel for the issues discussed during the groups and to show how a segment of the community is currently reacting to issues relevant to the development of an anti-racism campaign. The quantitative research to follow will repeat these statements and establish a robust benchmark of current community sentiments.

Looking at the first table below, it is evident that confusion exists about how to define an Australian and how migrants fit into this definition.

Statement	% Agree
An Australian is anyone committed to Australia, it doesn't matter where you were born	80
To be truly Australian, you have to share the customs and traditions of this country	60
To be a true Australian, you have to be able to speak English	57

So, commitment, sharing of customs/traditions and English speaking ability were all identified as defining features of a “true Australian,” in each case according to a majority of the community. It is interesting that so many of those who supported the statement identifying an Australian as “anyone committed to Australia” also supported qualifying statements about what constitutes a true Australian.

This support, bordering on contradictory, would not be so confused if the Australian identity was defined and articulated more clearly, as is argued in the broad communication strategy.

At the same time, more than half of the group participants expressed positive attitudes (as shown in agreement with the six statements in the table below), meaning that some positive attitudes were to be found even amongst the negatives (making up as they did half of the group participants).

Statement	% Agree
I really enjoy meeting people from different cultures	71
There's no inferior and superior races, we're all equal	64
People from other cultures make Australia a better place to live	62
Multiculturalism will help make Australia a better country	61
I don't mind going to a shopping centre where I see signs in different languages, it's all part of living in Australia	56
All Australians should be able to live according to the traditions of their culture, whatever that may be	50

On the other hand, about half (or more) of the group participants supported negative views about migrants and Aborigines.

Statement	% Agree
Migrants are alright if they leave their disputes behind them	59
What I really hate is when migrants all live together and form ethnic ghettos	49
Aborigines should be made to work for what they get	49

Statement	% Agree
from the government	
Migrants should not expect help from government, they should establish themselves in Australia on their own	46

A third (or close to a third) of group participants agreed with some of the more extreme sentiments expressed in the statements, as shown in the following table.

Statement	% Agree
In the current economic climate, the number of Asian migrants is causing friction	37
I'm really worried that we'll end up like other countries - with race riots and religious wars - because a lot of migrants just won't assimilate	36
There are too many Asian migrants nowadays	36
Some migrant groups, like Asians and Muslims, have strange ways and just don't fit in	33
I'm worried that my children (or grandchildren) won't have a job because of all this immigration	33
If an Aboriginal moved in next door, property values in my area would fall overnight	32
Migrants increase crime rates in Australia	31
These days, Asian migrants are taking jobs from Australian-born people	28

On a positive note, only a minority (but still one in seven) agreed with the two most extreme statements, pertaining to racial inferiority and disease, as shown below.

Statement	% Agree
------------------	----------------

Statement	% Agree
Let's face it, some races are just inferior to others	15
Migrants bring all sorts of diseases with them to Australia	13

Analysis of how the 12 groups of “positives” and the 12 groups of “negatives” reacted to these statements showed that their opinions differed dramatically in almost all cases ... and in the predictable direction. While obvious, these findings served to validate the methodological approach of separating group participants according to their score on the social distance scale. The scale successfully segmented the community according to a number of attitudes related to racism and ethnocentrism.

Appendix 1
DIMA Brief

Appendix 2
Recruitment Questionnaire

Appendix 3
Discussion Guide for Step 1 and Step 2

Appendix 4
Discussion guide for Step 4

Appendix 5
Step 1 & 2 Notepad

Appendix 6
Sentence completion responses

RECRUITMENT INSTRUCTIONS

EUREKA PROJECT 2028 (DIMA)

- 36 groups in total
- Recruit 10 for 8 in Sydney and Melbourne, 9 for 8 elsewhere
- In each group - equal gender mix
- Question 7: “Positives” are defined as answering **YES** to **at least 5 questions** for **every** group that they are asked about. Include the Yes’s already typed into the questionnaire when counting the Yes’s in the White Australian and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander columns.

Hence, “Positives” are people who show a certain degree of tolerance of **all** the groups they are asked about.

- Question 7: “Negatives” are defined as answering **NO** to **at least 4 questions** for any **one** group of people that they are asked about.

Hence, “Negatives” are people who express a certain degree of discrimination against **one or more** of the groups they are asked about.

- For “Marry into your family”, ‘family’ is defined as immediate or extended family.

RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.A Today, we'd like to ask you about a number of public opinion issues. First off, do you think the amount of violence on television is increasing, decreasing or staying the same?

Increasing	Continue
Decreasing	Continue
Staying the same	Continue

Q.B Could you tell me if you personally think Australia should become a republic?

Yes	Continue
No	Continue

Q.1 Next, could you tell me, do you consider yourself to be an Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander?

Yes	CLASSIFY AS ATSI , SKIP TO Q.7
No	Continue

Q.2 Do you consider yourself to be either a white Anglo-Saxon or a white Anglo-Celtic person?

Yes	CLASSIFY AS ANGLO , SKIP TO Q.7
No	Continue

Q.3 And which **one** of the following statements describes you...?
(READ OUT)

Born in Australia	Terminate
Born in another English-speaking country	Terminate
Born in Asia	SKIP TO Q5
Born in another non-English speaking country	Continue

Q.4 Did you come to Australia for the first time before 1994?

Yes	CLASSIFY AS NESB ESTABLISHED , SKIP TO Q7
No	Terminate

Q5. And which country were you born in?

Burma	Malaysia	Continue
Cambodia/Kampuchea	People's Republic of China	
Hong Kong	The Philippines	
Indonesia	Taiwan	
Korea	Thailand	
Laos	Vietnam	
Other		Terminate

Q.6 In what year did you **first** come to Australia?

Before or during 1993	Terminate
1994-1996	CLASSIFY AS NESB RECENT , Continue
1997	Terminate

Q.7 Next, I'd like you to think about three different groups of people (READ OUT, ACCORDING TO RESPONDENT TYPE)

IF ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (YES to Q1):	<i>White Australians, Asian migrants and other migrants</i>
IF ANGLO-SAXON/CELTIC (YES TO Q2):	<i>Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, Asian migrants and other migrants</i>
IF NESB RECENT (ASIAN) (YES TO Q6):	<i>White Australians, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and other migrants, for example people from the Mediterranean (IF QUERIED: e.g. Greece and Italy), the Middle East and Africa</i>
IF NESB ESTABLISHED (YES TO Q4):	<i>White Australians, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and Asian migrants</i>

Thinking about these three groups of people one at a time, **would you be happy to have...** (READ OUT 3 COLUMNS PER RESPONDENT)

	a white Australian		an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander		an Asian migrant		another migrant	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Accepted as a visitor to Australia	—		—					
Become an Australian citizen	—		—					
Mingle with you at a social event such as a barbecue								
Employed at your place of work (or study)								
As a next door neighbour								
Become a close personal friend								
Marry into your family								

(CLASSIFY AS **POSITIVE** IF "YES" TO 5 OR MORE IN ALL 3 COLUMNS, CLASSIFY AS **NEGATIVE** IF "NO" TO 4 OR MORE IN ANY ONE COLUMN, OTHERWISE TERMINATE)

Q.8 Thanks for all that. Now, do you personally believe that the benefits of the Sydney 2000 Olympics to Australia will outweigh the costs?

Yes	Continue
No	Continue

Q.9 In the past six months, have you...?

Bought a television set	Continue
Gone to the movies	Continue
Connected to Pay TV	Continue

Q.10 And finally, how old are you?

Under 18	Terminate
18-25	Continue
26-35	Continue
36-39	Continue
40-49	Continue
50-69	Continue
70 or over	Terminate

Q.11 Gender

Male	Continue
Female	Continue

GROUP SCHEDULE & SPECIFICATIONS

NOTE - TIMES & SPECS HAVE BEEN ALTERED ON STATE BY STATE

LISTS

POSITIVES

Group	Date	Time	Location	Positive/ Negative	Background	Age
1	24/11	6 pm	Sydney	Positive	Anglo	under 40
2	25/11	8 pm	Brisbane	Positive	Anglo	under 40
3	26/11	8 pm	Albury- Wodonga	Positive	Anglo	under 40
4	24/11	8 pm	Melbourne	Positive	Anglo	40 and over
5	24/11	6 pm	Townsville	Positive	Anglo	40 and over
6	26/11	6 pm	Parramatta	Positive	Anglo	40 and over
7	24/11	8 pm	Sydney	Positive	NESB established	under 50
8	25/11	6 pm	Brisbane	Positive	NESB established	40 and over
9	26/11	8 pm	Parramatta	Positive	NESB recent	under 40
10	24/11	6 pm	Melbourne	Positive	NESB recent	35 and over
11	24/11	8 pm	Townsville	Positive	ATSI	under 40

12	26/11	6 pm	Albury- Wodonga	Positive	ATSI	40 and over
NEGATIVES						
Group	Date	Time	Location	Positive/ Negative	Background	Age
13	2/12	6 pm	Parramatta	Negative	Anglo	under 40
14	1/12	8 pm	Adelaide	Negative	Anglo	under 40
15	1/12	8 pm	Dubbo	Negative	Anglo	under 40
16	1/12	6 pm	Dubbo	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
17	3/12	6 pm	Sydney	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
18	1/12	6 pm	Adelaide	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
19	2/12	8 pm	Bunbury	Negative	Anglo	under 40
20	2/12	6 pm	Bunbury	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
21	1/12	6 pm	Perth	Negative	NESB established	under 50
22	2/12	10 am	Adelaide	Negative	NESB established	40 and over
23	3/12	8 pm	Sydney	Negative	NESB recent	under

						40
24	1/12	8 pm	Perth	Negative	ATSI	over 40
NEGATIVES						
Group	Date	Time	Location	Positive/ Negative	Background	Age
25	10/12	8 pm	Melbourne	Negative	Anglo	under 40
26	11/12	8 pm	Shepparton	Negative	Anglo	under 40
27	11/12	8 pm	Roma	Negative	Anglo	under 40
28	10/12	6 pm	Brisbane	Negative	Anglo	under 40
29	10/12	6 pm	Melbourne	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
30	11/12	6 pm	Shepparton	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
31	11/12	6 pm	Roma	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
32	10/12	6 pm	Sydney	Negative	Anglo	40 and over
33	10/12	8 pm	Brisbane	Negative	NESB established	under 50
34	11/12	9 am	Melbourne	Negative	NESB established	40 and over

35	11/12	6 pm	Parramatta	Negative	NESB recent	under 40
36	10/12	8 pm	Sydney	Negative	ATSI	under 40

*Recruiter in that state to advise regarding an appropriate rural location*

In Sydney - use Sydney Research Facility when possible

In Parramatta - use WSMR when possible

In Brisbane - use River City for recruitment and venues

In Dubbo - use Cascades Motor Inn as the venue

In Adelaide - no preferences

In Perth - no preferences

PROJECT 2028 - DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Introduction to Market Research/Qualitative Research (*been before?*)
 - **Group rules:** one person speaks at a time/feel free to disagree.
 - Audio-taping - all comments kept confidential
 - Session will take about an hour and a half - should be very interesting.
 - Know what it is about?
 - Hand-out \$ and notepads.
 - **Topic:** your thoughts on some current issues affecting Australian society.
 - Complete page 1 of notepad.
-
- **One at a time:** pretend that I'm a visitor to Australia and I know little about it, please describe Australia to me.
 - As a group: What are the main good things about Australia?
 - As a group: What are the main bad things about Australia?

 - In 1997, what does it mean to be an Australian? Define what that is.
 - How are Australians different from people living in other countries?

 - What are Australian values?
 - What values do we share? That is, what are the values that unite us?
 - What do we get out of these shared values, what are their benefits?

 - **Is** Australia one country at the moment? If not, what divides us?
 - What level of contact (in Australia) do you have with those of other cultures?
 - How do "other" cultures fit in to the definition of Australia?

 - Complete page 2 of notepad ("*I'm not a racist, but ...*") and discuss.
 - What is racism? (prompt for verbal, physical, heard/unheard by victim, systemic?)

- What are some examples of racism that you can think of. Have **you** ever experienced racism?
- What would you call “extreme” racism? And what is “everyday” racist behaviour?
- What is **not** racist behaviour?
- Why are some people racist?
- What kind of a person is racist? Describe them as fully as you can.
- Which groups or individuals are the most likely to be subjects of racism in Australia?
- What kind of effect might this racism have on these groups/individuals?
- How widespread is racism in Australia?
- Would you say that, in the Australia of today, racism is unacceptable?
- Is any form of racism acceptable?
- What, if any, are the costs of racism?

- Fill in pages 3-4 of notepad (Cafeteria Selection List).

- What could/should the government do to address racism in Australia?

- If our objective is to reduce the level of racism in Australia, what should be the main message of this campaign ... and its title? If unmentioned, prompt for:
 - Anti-racism
 - Unity in diversity
 - One nation, many cultures
 - The contributions of many
 - Fair go for all
 - Pride in diversity
 - Tolerance

WIND UP: Final thoughts. Purpose of research.

Thanks for participation.

PROJECT 2028 - DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Introduction to Market Research/Qualitative Research (*been before?*)
 - **Group rules:** one person speaks at a time/feel free to disagree.
 - Audio-taping - all comments kept confidential
 - Session will take about an hour and a half - should be very interesting.
 - Know what it is about?
 - Hand-out \$
 - **Topic:** your thoughts on some current issues affecting Australian society.
-

- **One at a time:** pretend that I'm a visitor to Australia and I know little about it, please describe Australia to me.

- As a group: What are the main good things about Australia?
- As a group: What are the main bad things about Australia?

- What are Australian values?
- What values do we share? That is, what are the values that unite us?

Test each message (ROTATE ORDER)

A. *Australia is a society/country in which people are generally tolerant towards one another ...*

that's one thing we all share:

- ◆ Is this message accepted/believed?
- ◆ What does it mean to the participants?
- ◆ Do you think this statement is true? Are we tolerant? Is this something worth striving for?
- ◆ Who needs to hear this message? Everyone or just some people?
- ◆ Do all/most or only some people in Australia believe in being tolerant?
- ◆ What is the difference between tolerance and acceptance?
- ◆ How do we usually demonstrate tolerance toward others?
- ◆ How would we need to change to become more tolerant?

B. *Australia is a society/country to which we are all committed:*

- ◆ Is this message accepted/believed?
- ◆ What is it that we are committed to? What does it mean?
- ◆ Is it a necessary aim or goal?
- ◆ Who needs to hear this message? Everyone or just some people?
- ◆ Do all or most or only some people in Australia feel truly committed to Australia?
Does being born here matter?
- ◆ How should/could people demonstrate that commitment to Australia?

C. *We all believe that Australia is the best country in the world ... and that unifies us:*

- ◆ Is this message accepted/believed?
- ◆ Why do we believe this?
- ◆ If not mentioned, prompt for harmonious absorption of migrants to date and peaceful co-existence.
- ◆ What does it mean to the participants?
- ◆ Who needs to hear this message? Everyone or just some people?
- ◆ Do all or most or only some people in Australia believe that Australia is the best country in the world?
- ◆ How do we demonstrate that belief?

D. *All of us - regardless of where we originally came from - have the same dreams and hopes for our children ... that unifies us:*

- ◆ Is this message accepted/believed?
- ◆ What are these dreams? What do they mean to the participants?
- ◆ Who needs to hear this message? Everyone or just some people?
- ◆ Do all or most people have the same dreams for their children?
- ◆ How do we demonstrate that we share the same dreams/hopes for them?

- E. Australia is a society/country which is often united by sport ... that we share:
- ◆ Is this message accepted/believed?
 - ◆ What does it mean to the participants?
 - ◆ Do all or most or only some people in Australia become unified through sporting events?

GENERAL ISSUES

- As a country, what can we look back on with pride and satisfaction? What are our achievements as a nation? If not mentioned, prompt for immigration, peaceful absorption.
- Australia was once made up of people largely of Anglo origins, are we better off now that we have people from a broad range of backgrounds? What has immigration added to this country?
- If the government was to say that ordinary people are now being heard and taken seriously when it comes to immigration, how would that make you feel? What would be your reaction? How would that make you feel toward government in general? What evidence would you need to know that you were being listened to?
- Finally, do you think that we say or show everyone how we feel about them? Why/Why not? What, if anything, do we keep to ourselves? Which groups or people do we keep our feelings from?

Purpose of research

Thanks for participation.

Group No: _____

YOUR PERSONAL NOTEPAD



Project 2028

PAGE 1

Just to make sure we have spoken to a good cross-section of people, we need a few details about you before we start.

Sex

Male

Female

Your age

18-24

25-34

35-54

55 and over

Suburb/Town in which you live? _____

Number of dependent children, if any? _____

****PLEASE STOP HERE****

PAGE 2

What might these two people be saying to one another? Please fill in the thought bubbles below. Just write in the first thing that comes to mind.

****PLEASE STOP HERE****

PAGE 3

On this page and the next you will find a list of things other people have said. You may agree or disagree with some of these statements.

To tell us what you think about these issues, please just **CIRCLE THE NUMBER of the statements** with which you **AGREE**. (If you're unsure about a statement or don't agree with it, please do not circle it.)

1. Migrants are alright if they leave their disputes behind them.
2. People from other cultures make Australia a better place to live.
3. To be truly Australian, you have to share the customs and traditions of this country.
4. Immigration is very good for the Australian economy.
5. Migrants increase crime rates in Australia.
6. To be a true Australian, you have to be able to speak English.
7. Migrants are just hard working people who struggle for everything they get.
8. Migrants bring all sorts of diseases with them to Australia.
9. What I really hate is when migrants all live together and form ethnic ghettos.
10. I don't mind going to a shopping centre where I see signs in different languages, it's all part of living in Australia.
11. These days, Asian migrants are taking jobs from Australian-born people.
12. Migrants get preferential treatment from the government.
13. I'm just not comfortable with people from other cultures.
14. Multiculturalism will help make Australia a better country.
15. An Australian is anyone committed to Australia, it doesn't matter where you were born.
16. I really enjoy meeting people from different cultures.
17. All Australians should be able to live according to the traditions of their culture, whatever that culture may be.
18. Not enough money is spent on supporting migrants who come

to Australia.

19. I'm worried that my children (or grandchildren) won't have a job because of all this immigration.
20. Some migrant groups, like Asians and Muslims, have strange ways and just don't fit in.
21. Aborigines are entitled to more government support than the rest of us because they are disadvantaged in so many ways.
22. I'm really worried that we'll end up like other countries - with race riots and religious wars - because a lot of migrants just won't assimilate.
23. Let's face it, some races are just inferior to others.
24. I'm sick of being told we should feel guilty about things that happened in the past.
25. Migrants create employment.
26. Migrants are less likely to be involved in crime than Australian-born people.
27. It seems like most migrants are just not committed to Australia.
28. There's no inferior and superior races, we're all equal.
29. If an Aboriginal moved in next door, property values in my area would fall overnight.
30. There are too many Asian migrants nowadays.
31. Personally, I feel that too much money is being spent on welfare for migrants. What about looking after ordinary

Australians?

32. In the current economic climate, the number of Asian migrants is causing friction.
33. These days, as a white Australian, I often feel discriminated against.
34. Aborigines should be made to work for what they get from the government.
35. Migrants should not expect help from government, they should establish themselves in Australia on their own.

When reading the following comments, it is important to bear in mind that the sentence completion exercise was a task that allowed respondents to either:

- express what they believed,
- communicate what they thought racism was,
- write what they had heard being said by others in the community, and/or
- convey what they themselves had experienced.

Hence, it should not be assumed that the views expressed are necessarily held by participants. That said, many of the sentiments listed below were expressed verbally by participants during the discussions.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- I feel that immigrants should try to accept our way of life.
- Why do we keep letting these foreigners into Australia.
- I think many races try to dominate Australians with the culture of their own country.
- I feel the immigrants should learn more of and participate in the Australian culture.
- Why don't immigrants mix with Australians.
- I would rather they lived somewhere else.
- I don't like the idea of my daughter marrying an Asian.
- This is my country not yours.
- I feel everyone should be treated equally.
- I think that they get enough out of us.
- I prefer to be with my own kind.
- You people have it too easy with government handouts and you don't appreciate what you are given.
- I don't want my daughter to marry a coloured person.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- Those Aborigines wouldn't work to save themselves.
- The Aborigines are being helped a bit too much.
- I think the Chinese should be clean.

- Surely we have spent enough money on the Aboriginals and they still can't manage to look after the houses they are given.
- Things have to be balanced. Everybody has to contribute and not just out the other side. They have to be dealt especially on both sides.
- I think we have enough problems without letting more in.
- Don't you think there are too many Asians being let in to Australia?
- I don't want my daughter to marry an Asian or black person.
- I wish they would stop handing out huge sums of money to Aborigines.
- I don't really want my daughter marrying into a Chinese family - too many problems.
- I think that they are taking our childrens jobs away and filling our universities.
- I don't want them marrying into my family or living next door.
- I think that the Aborigines have rights in excess of the rest of the population.
- There are too many Asians coming to Australia.
- I don't like it when you talk your language around me.
- There are too many government benefits going to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders When I look around every second face is an Asian; there's too many.
- Black people get everything handed to them and they just don't deserve it.
- I don't think it is fair that the Abos are allowed to get the special entry through university.
- I do see myself as being different to those black men over there.
- Why should they get all these things free and have their own services. White people have to use whatever is available.
- I think that the Blacks get everything handed to them.
- I do feel that the indigenous people could be more responsible instead of accepting government handouts all the time.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- Do we have to invite the Asian family from down the road.
- I do think that foreigners should learn to respect the ways of Australians.
- Maybe this Pauline Hanson bird's got a point. I mean she' certainly getting people stirred up and dividing the nation, isn't she.
- Adopt our culture.
- I want Australia (as it has always been), you keep to your side and I'll keep to mine.
- Even things out and not keep giving to one group more than others.

- There are some people I just can't get on with because I don't understand their culture.
- You people have too many benefits that are not available to my people.
- Why can't they adopt our ways and work for a living and earn their money like the rest of us?
- Why should they receive more benefits than us?
- I can have good future in Australia.
- People come here and just go straight on welfare.
- I don't think I could have a foreigner in my family.
- There is a increase in Asian crime etc. and violence.
- I think that these shouldn't be any more Asian migration.
- You should really try and become more Australian.
- They really are not like us.
- Why should Aboriginals get more for sending their kids to school?
- I hear about the growing Asian crime in this country (cities), is it media hype or is it a real problem?
- The Asians are taking over.
- A lot of crime in the inner cities is due to Blacks.
- They don't speak English and they stick to themselves.
- I don't like how they congregate and change areas, influence, adverse impacts.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- Minority groups get too much for nothing. Foreign investors will own too much one day.
- I can't see why when they come to a new country some fail to learn our language they are not back in whatever country they come from. They should try and learn English and stick to that!
- There are too many groups. They have their own shops. They are rude, there is a high % of immigration for Asians and they do not mix and they get a lot of benefits.
- Do you deserve preferential treatment, a free ride, a helping hand so to speak, housing, welfare, education...?
- Having more people from other countries will put us into the situation that we have to take care of them.
- I don't really like to mix with other nationalities like Lebanese or Aborigines, Asians.

- I just don't like the people who come from outside Australia who have a bad record.
- I like Australia very much. My country is the best in my heart. My country is my country. Australia is my second country.
- My country is my country. They can't come here and stay and take things for granted.
- I don't like to see too many Asians around. They're taking too many jobs.
- I like talk to my country's people. I like to be friendly with my country's people.
- I don't want to get involved with them. It is very difficult to communicate with them and sometimes it seems like they do something very stupid.
- I don't like the coloured people.
- You can tell how happy I am and friendly.
- If the rate of immigration exceeds the rate that a country can assimilate the new population then such problems as job creation, ghettos, clusters of different nationalities are being formed.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- There seems to be a lot of Asians in the streets these days - you hardly see an Aussie face.
- I think there are too many Asians.
- I really think these wogs are given too much of a fair go.
- I think there should be less people from Asia coming to Australia.
- I think they're letting in too many Asians into the country now.
- There are too many that are against us and our own way of life. People don't try enough to understand one another and that is the cause of racism.
- There are too many Asians living here.
- Why can't all these immigrants learn English before they come and live in Australia.
- I am sick of the communities being set up ie Asian, Arab etc. increase in crime from these people as well as Aborigines - government to blame.
- There's too many immigrants and they stick with there own race, become ghettos.
- 'Stop' immigration. Let's clean our own country before they clean us out.
- I think there are too many Asians who aren't willing to learn the language and fit into our society. I feel that we are being made to pay for the treatment the Aborigines were subjected to 200 years ago, and we shouldn't. What happened to them was wrong, but we can't change it by throwing money at them.

- I feel Asian immigration is just too high a percentage of all migrants coming into Australia.
- Too much money is spent on immigration for Asian & Muslim groups and the Aboriginal problem; which is growing and not becoming resolved.
- There are too many migrant groups coming into the country in large numbers and not assimilating.
- The government should get their act together and stop immigration.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- I'm against ethnic groups coming in on mass (with the endorsement of the government), taking the full benefits available, but never having any intention of having any allegiance to the country.
- Aborigines get preferential treatment. Asians seem to be at the pool of all crime, drugs, assaults, money laundering.
- I don't like other country people stay in here.
- I don't like your people come to Australia don't find work, and always thinking to get money from the government, unemployment benefit pay.
- The way what I'm doing not bad.
- They know our language that will be better.
- They took away the things that should belong to us.
- We can lose our chance to look for a job. So many immigrants now.
- I don't like so many Asians.
- They have to learn English.
- I think things should be equal for everyone.
- Why did you decide to come to live in Australia?
- I think you should have to speak the same language.
- Some of these English people I'm with today obviously are ...and it makes me very sad and uncomfortable.
- People could assume I am with comments I make.
- I do think Australia should look after Australians before other nationalities.
- I think too many people are coming in which is creating an employment problem and racism amongst different races.
- I wish you would talk in English while out shopping with me.

- I hate Japs taking over our country.
- I don't think that white Australians get a fair go against Aborigines and ethnic people.
- I think there should be some limitations to how many migrants are allowed into Australia.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- I think that there are a lot of things that can make you feel racist to Aborigines when you think of what extra hidden money they can get due to their colour.
- I just think that everyone should be able to talk English - and everybody should be treated equally.
- I object to the way all the overseas cultures are inflicting their society's onto us.
- I don't like them anyway I just don't want anybody to know.
- There enough migrants in Australia.
- There is too many Asian chaps in Australia.
- The government has made a torn between us.
- How come they can get a new car and they don't work? We should all be equal.
- I would be concerned if a family of Aborigines moved in next door to me - after all we've all heard of the problem of visiting relatives.
- Why should these migrants come here and take so much out of the country without trying to assimilate?
- I don't want that black family to move next door.
- I would have to admit that I would be disturbed if an aboriginal family moved in next door.
- I do believe Aborigines receive far too much social security and assistance from the government.
- I don't agree with these Asians coming in and buying up our buildings and land.
- I don't like Asians, send them all home.
- My view is that the population has exploded far beyond the reach of introducing to Australia people from the Asian countries.
- We have too many overseas people at the moment.
- I don't like Asians.
- But I think we have too many of them.
- I wish we didn't have so many of them.
- I think they live the way we do and try to learn our language.

- I like everyone to work for a living.

Look, I'm not racist but...

- I don't agree that Aboriginal people should be paid to go to school and we don't.
- I think the Aboriginals get things handed to them more than anyone else.
- I think there is a problem of segregation between different groups of people.
- I feel that people should be treated equally and not given handouts because of their skin colour.
- Everybody should be treated equally.
- I think that all get out and work for a living.
- I don't like to be in any minority groups.
- Aborigines get too many handouts.
- The number of people immigrating needs to be looked at and where they are coming from. It seems that people from one continent can enter the country whilst others can't.
- There is too many Asians.
- Look at the amount of people and business being purchased by Asians and dividends and profits are going offshore and not helping our economy.
- I believe that we have opened our doors far too wide towards the Asian people.
- Your ethnic music is driving me crazy, can you please change it?
- When they push you aside to pick up strawberries on 'special' - and pick up the box, I'd just like them to go home.
- I wouldn't live next door to Aborigines.
- I think our country is being run by too many Asian businesses. Everywhere you go there is one run by them.
- I wish they would speak English
- Don't you think that this Multiculturalism is starting to get out of hand, unemployment, social security, it's costing us a fortune!
- They make it too easy to get into this country, especially if you're Asian, or from the Middle East
- I think Ethnic's should be slowed down and thinned out but if crime is committed you and your family should be sent home

Look, I'm not racist but...

- Australia's culture is being disfragmented because multi-racial immigration has generated a multicultural giant which is weakening Australian unity and culture
- This country needs National Services to whip these migrants into line. The schools are too soft, let the army sort them out.
- Speaking English would be a main priority. No gang wars. No knives. Would make this country better to have a certain amount of money before coming in. No welfare payments for 2 years.
- The immigrants should not be staying in Australia only visiting as we have bad unemployment and crime. Too many immigrants own businesses. Not enough Aussies. We feel its slowly dragging us downhill.
- You abide by my culture and my country standards and we will be a happier country.
- They can't even talk English, they don't wear underarm deodorant, they cause a lot of crime and can come across dangerous and sleazy.
- Then I'm not saying that race isn't an important issue.
- Don't you hate the fact that the Japanese seem to be taking over major business opportunities?
- We should never have let the Asians in.
- I don't want them living next to me.
- I don't want foreigners living next door.
- I can't see myself getting on well with people from other nationalities.
- That black man lets his children run around with hardly any clothes on and they're not in bed before 10.30.
- I can't stand the Asians who come here to live.
- Don't you think that new Australians should live by Australian laws?
- I just don't like new Australians.
- Immigration without infrastructure is madness, and that multiculturalism is comparable to the facade of democracy.
- Don't you think we are crazy to let migrants into the country?

Look, I'm not racist but...

- I will not live next door to any wogs.
- I don't like living next to Aboriginals because they don't look after their houses, they are lazy and they let their kids go wild.
- Those Asians better not make a mess of this land.

- I have a right to say what I think.
- Have you heard about...
- Don't you think that the colour of his skin is a bit dark?
- You don't look Australian to me.
- Some people, some nationalities, they tend to be so biased and prejudiced in treating me because I'm coloured and can't speak fluently their language.
- Provide those migrants do not make any trouble.
- I do not think the kind of 'herb' you bring here from your hometown really has a market in Australia.
- I don't like to be part of your group.
- There's something about the Indians. You know, they're fairly cunning.
- They tend to only mix among themselves. So it is very difficult to know them.
- I am white.
- You do look different.