



Australian Government

Quality Teacher Programme

Asia Education Foundation

Report on the National Forum: 20-21 May 2007

Engaging Young Australians with Asia - The National Statement in Action

The 2007 National Forum involved 150 leading educators from across Australia. Its focus was on the take-up of the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* endorsed by all Education Ministers in 2005.

KEY MESSAGES

Intercultural understanding and communicating across cultures are an essential part of the current discussion about 21st century curriculum for all Australians. These skills and understandings stand alongside literacy, numeracy, subject discipline knowledge and use of technology. 'The danger is that the next divide in Australia will be between those students who have a global outlook and an international language and those who do not', said Tony Mackay in introducing the 2007 National Forum.

The Forum agreed: 'we are now at the tipping point'. There is a strong sense of readiness across Australia to embrace the goals of the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* as being firmly in the national interest. There is bi-partisan support that young people need to build skills and capacity to operate effectively in a globalised world. Cultural intelligence is identified as a core skill and a focus on the Asian region considered in Australia's best interests.

The Forum identified a unique moment in time when curriculum renewal is occurring in all states and territories. Led by education leaders and with cross-sectoral support, the *National*

Statement is currently being embedded in curriculum documents in all states and territories.

The Forum applauded this significant development in education policy but cautioned that attributes such as intercultural understanding and cultural intelligence will not be effectively included in school curriculum without significant investment. A depth of knowledge and skills are required by Australian teachers to be able to deliver on this and teacher professional learning remains a top priority.

The Forum showcased schools and teachers across Australia who have infused studies of Asia in their curriculum with depth and breadth. This has been driven by passionate, committed teachers, combined with visionary school leaders and supportive communities. The Forum agreed that it is a priority now to build awareness of the *Statement* among all school leaders.

One clear message to emerge over the two days was the need to set targets to clarify where we want to be in 5 years. And, in order to track progress, it is now timely to update data, last collected in 2002, on the infusion of studies of Asia in Australian schools.

The National Group of peak education associations committed to developing a Joint Communique, articulating the imperative that 21st century curriculum in Australia reflects intercultural skills, knowledge and understandings about Asia.



'I am interested in the technology industry as a career. I will most likely work in Japan as they are a leader in the technology race'.
Kyle Dmoch, Year 8, Randwick Boys High School, NSW



'We need to develop what 'globalisation' and 'internationalisation' actually mean in a curriculum sense. What skills are required to build respect, to build understanding?'
Dr Dahle Suggett, Deputy Secretary, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria



'If we are to be an effective economy, one of the prime ingredients will be language and cultural skills to be competent in our part of the world'.
Paul Kelly, Editor-at-Large, The Australian

'This Forum has made me want to get out there and help change Australia's future'.
Jacquelyn Codd, Mirani State High School, Queensland



'The lack of explicit requirement in any jurisdiction to include content on Asia in the classroom curriculum, was identified as a major factor inhibiting take-up'.

Report to AESOC, May 2007

Background to Forum

The *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* in Action Forum is an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) with funding from the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme. The *National Statement* has been developed to guide and support the development of policy and programmes on studies of Asia and Australia in our schools. It was endorsed by the Ministerial Council of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in November 2005. Forum delegates included representatives from government, independent and catholic sectors in all states and territories. Key stakeholder groups and national organizations attended including Parent, Teacher, Principal and Curriculum associations, Deans of Education and Asian Studies academics.

Asia Education Foundation



Asia Education Foundation

The Asia Education Foundation is a national organization that promotes and supports the engagement of young Australians with Asia. It is a joint activity of Asialink at The University of Melbourne and Curriculum Corporation, with core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training since 1992. The AEF works in partnership with education systems, schools, education agencies, teacher education institutions and professional associations.

Acknowledgements

The AEF National Forum acknowledges the leadership of Tony Mackay, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic Education and a member of the AEF Advisory Board. The Forum was implemented in partnership with AEF Advisers located in Departments of Education in each state and territory including Elizabeth Courtois (ACT), Lianne Singleton (NSW), Jennifer Ure (NT), Marcia Rouen (QLD), Lee Grafton (SA), Jan Kiernan (TAS), Lisa Hayman (VIC) and Lindy Stirling (WA).

Forum organization: Maureen Welch, Margaret Hibbins, Supreya Blyth, Allan Goedecke, Kurt Mullane. Forum Report: Written and Edited by Di Buckley and Kathe Kirby. Photography Patrick Boland and layout Parkhouse Pty Ltd

This report is available to download at www.asiaeducation.edu.au

Published by the Asia Education Foundation August 2007. This product is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training through the Asia Education Foundation under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme.

Disclaimer: The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

Take-up of National Statement: Report to AESOC, May 2007

The *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia* is seen in the context of equipping young Australians with knowledge, skills and understandings for a world in which the Asian region will increasingly play a central role. AEF Executive Director, Kathe Kirby, presented a report to track take-up prepared for the May 2007 meeting of the forum of Australian and New Zealand Chief Executive Officers responsible for school education (AESOC).

The overall response to the *National Statement* has been positive, with a focus in this period on awareness raising and embedding the intent of the *Statement* in current curriculum renewal. The Report drew from state, territory and national reports which tracked progress under the six interlinked elements identified in the *National Statement* as being necessary to support its take-up:

1. Teaching and learning
2. Curriculum resources
3. Teacher professional learning
4. Engaging parents and the community
5. Teacher education
6. Quality assurance

The most common factors **supporting** take-up include:

- the value of a dedicated state/territory AEF Adviser with pre-existing Access Asia school networks and advocates
- opportunities provided by current curriculum renewal cycles to embed the goals of the *National Statement* and the usefulness of the AEF's Asia Scope and Sequences to support this
- the importance of the AEF's Access Asia curriculum resources to support studies of Asia in the classroom
- the importance of teacher professional learning programmes to build and strengthen teacher capacity in this area
- the support of the nationally collaborative AEF
- the importance of Australian Government funding.

Common factors **inhibiting** take-up include lack of:

- an explicit requirement in any jurisdiction to include content on Asia in the classroom curriculum, especially in the context of a competitive and rapidly changing curriculum agenda
- funds to support teacher professional learning to deepen teacher knowledge and understandings of Asia and
- awareness by teachers of the *National Statement* and of the Access Asia curriculum resources.

VIEWPOINT

'We have to be careful that the current curriculum debate in Australia is not more inward looking than outward looking... we require a curriculum for the 21st century, not 1950'.

Andrew Blair, President, Australian Secondary Principals Association .



(l-r) Tom Croker, Immediate Past President, Australian Primary Principals Association, Andrew Blair, Pamela Barton, asia:nz Foundation

'... it is vital that the education of our young people provides them with the opportunities to develop the skills and attributes for life and work in a rapidly changing world. With China and India emerging as major players on the world economic stage, engaging our students with Asia is more important than ever before'.

Alison Sewell

Opening: Australia requires globally engaged citizens

Alison Sewell, representing The Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Education, Science and Training, opened the Forum and thanked participants for lending their significant support. 'Australia requires citizens who are globally engaged, comfortable with diversity and with the skills to operate effectively across cultures. We need to ensure that young Australians are prepared to engage with peoples from the Asian region and beyond', she said.

Sewell reported on a survey of parents undertaken by the AEF in association with the Australian Council of State School Organizations and the Australian Parents Council 'with 91% of parents agreeing that an important skill for all Australians to possess is an ability to communicate across cultures'. The survey highlights parents' expectations that their children will receive an education that prepares them for an increasingly internationalised workplace and society. 'The parents' expectation is shared by the Australian Government', said Sewell.

This is why the Australian Government is providing funding of almost \$7 million in the period 2005-2008 to the AEF for its work to develop and promote services and resources for schools so they are able to develop knowledge and understanding of Asia as well as intercultural skills and a sense of global responsibility.



Alison Sewell
Director, Values and Languages Education Section, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

Sewell noted the significant achievement for the AEF in developing the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* which was endorsed by all Ministers of Education in 2005. Last year's Forum took the opportunity to look at ways the *National Statement* could be implemented. This year's Forum takes stock of actions undertaken to date. Sewell made the point that 'translating policy documents into tangible outcomes in local settings requires shared commitment as well as a range of strategies'.



'I am motivated thanks to my teacher's motivation.'

Emma White, Year 11,
Mercy Catholic College, NSW

Emma attributes her understanding of the Asian region to the passion of her teacher, who has lived and worked in Asia. Indochina is a key component in the NSW HSC course covering the region's history from 1945 to the Vietnam War. In 2005 Mercy College year 12 students went to Vietnam to visit key historical sites. 'First hand experience of the countries studied at school allowed the students to see it from different perspectives', Emma said. 'Asia is studied throughout our school: Society and Culture does an in depth study of Bali; Legal Studies looks at Asia in relation to World Power and Order; there is music and dance of Asia and Studies of Religion undertakes an in-depth study of Buddhism.

Seven year-old Samuel demonstrated extensive Japanese language skills. 'We use Japanese all the time in our class. Our teacher gives directions in Japanese and we answer the phone by saying mushi mushi.' Children's Day is celebrated at Taren Point each year. 'This day is traditionally celebrated by boys in Japan', said Samuel. 'One of the traditions is to fly a kite with streamers in the air. The streamers are a symbol of perseverance and strength. I enjoy Japanese because it is fun and interesting'.



'Mina-san Konichi-wa'

Samuel Chapman, Year 2,
Taren Point Public School, NSW

VIEWPOINT



New Zealand has recently released the 'Preparing for our Future with Asia Report' which found that we do not have the level of knowledge and skills that it needs to take up the opportunities offered by the Asian region. The asia:nz Foundation, working in partnership with the New Zealand Ministry of Education, have just announced a programme targeted at school principals to raise awareness of this issue... We will also work to stimulate demand from parents, businesspeople and the media - urging them to call for Asia skills for our young people.

Pamela Barton, Director Education,
asia:nz Foundation

Schools must ask, 'How are your programs assisting students to live in a globalised world?'
Ngairé Tagney, Teacher, Moreton Bay College, Queensland

'The Australian corporate sector is increasingly seeking graduates with Asian language and cultural skills to represent them in the region.'

Jason Yat-sen Li

Working with China

Sydney born Jason Yat-sen Li currently works in Beijing. Addressing the Forum, he spoke of Australia's current and future relationship with China. Jason pointed out that Australia has to develop a more profound view of Asians and look beyond the caricatures so often presented in mainstream media. He observed that there is not one actor cast in a sustaining role as an Asian in any of our current TV shows.

Li said that a series of past events, like the rise of Hansonism, 'told our neighbours that our hearts were not with them' and that this was extremely damaging. In redressing this perception, he believes that Australia can play a special role in helping China fight future challenges, particularly in the areas of social infrastructure, health care and the environment.



JASON YAT-SEN LI
Australian marketing and communications strategist

Li listed five major areas of regional concern that need to be addressed and the importance of the role to be played by Australia in managing these issues:

- addressing global climate change without jeopardising economic progress
- securing water and energy needs
- handling the threat of militant Islamic groups without harming our multicultural fabric
- dealing with demographic changes, especially ageing populations and
- understanding the rise of India and China within the world economic order.

Li says that Asia-literate graduates will be the people most sought after. When asked why young people should study Asian languages and cultures, he cited the policy of the ANZ Bank whereby 'expat executives' were no longer sent to China; only effective Mandarin-literate communicators.

Japan experience essential for footballers

'The Tokyo experience was a test of each player in keeping focus when all around appeared chaotic and everyone was without local knowledge or language skills.'

John Quinn, Human Resources Coach at the Essendon Football Club, talked about his recent experiences in Japan when he escorted two groups of Essendon football club players to Tokyo and Kyoto. Quinn outlined the importance of exposing players to other cultures. He explained that his philosophy of coaching embraces the development of a player as a person as well as an elite athlete.

The synthesis of physical, mental and spiritual elements in Japan's national sport of karate was used as one example of achieving balance in life. The Tokyo experience was a test of each player in keeping focus when all around appeared chaotic and everyone



JOHN QUINN
Human Resources Coach, Essendon Football Club

was without local knowledge or language skills. It also underscored the need to be always prepared for different cultural lifestyles.

The group visited a remote monastery outside Kyoto where the monks train for 300 days each year and run a marathon every day in sandals across rugged terrain. John suggested that training at Essendon was relatively easy by comparison!

Quinn spoke about the importance of balance, honesty and integrity in lifestyle, particularly as role models for other young people. 'A football team is a mirror image of what is happening in society so that the behaviour of a team and its surrounding culture sends a message about what is acceptable behaviour'.

With no family connection to Asia, Kyle believes that hands-on activities have made it easy for him to embrace Asian cultures. His education is giving him a clear understanding of the economic shift to Asia. 'I am interested in the technology industry as a career. I will most likely work in Japan as they are a leader in the technology race.'



'I hope to work in Japan'
Kyle Dmoch, Year 8, Randwick Boys High School, NSW

VIEWPOINT

'Encouragement from home and school is critical when engaging with Asia or learning a language. Research has shown that of the factors that lead to positive learning, 30% is effective teaching, but 60% is shaped by the home environment.'

Judith Bundy, Australian Council of State School Organizations

'Australia cannot adopt a 'need to know' policy, noticing Indonesia only when Australians like Shapelle Corby or the Bali 9 are in trouble'.

Professor Tim Lindsey

'Indonesia matters enormously to Australia. What do we know about it?'



TIM LINDSEY
Professor of Asian Law,
The University of
Melbourne

The University of Melbourne's Professor Tim Lindsey asked which of the following views of the Australian/Indonesian relationship was correct? One - largely articulated by Canberra - is that it is better than ever; the other, that it is volatile, fragile and troubled. He concluded that both were accurate. Lindsey suggested that the bilateral relationship between the countries is largely managed by its supporters, but judged by its sceptics. While now relatively stable, there is still fluctuation between hostility and embrace.

Professor Lindsey stressed that Indonesia matters enormously to Australia. He urged school educators to help students understand the realities of our newly democratising, closest neighbour. Our relationship is key to regional security and yet many Australians 'still know next to nothing about Indonesia'.

'Indonesia is the third largest democracy in the world;

there are more Muslims in Indonesia than in the Middle East and more Christians than in Australia'. Lindsey noted that there are 17,000 Indonesian students in Australia, but relatively few Australians studying in Indonesia. He said that Indonesia's progress so far in the transition from autocratic Presidential power to US-style democracy should be applauded. In a relatively short space of time there has been a shift in power from the national legislature to provincial level. Moreover, the newly emerging democracy has had to cope with huge economic and natural disasters - including the tsunami and earthquakes - terrorism and the SARS and Avian flu epidemics.

'We need approaches to public analysis in Australia that do better in avoiding reductionism and stereotypes... put bluntly, we need more Asia-literate journalists', Lindsey urged. He cautioned the audience that 'Australia cannot adopt a 'need to know' policy, noticing Indonesia only when Australians like Shapelle Corby or the Bali 9 are in trouble... A gap of popular misunderstanding lies between our countries. Why - and what can be done, in Australia at least?'

One reason why Australians are getting their northern neighbours wrong is the dramatic decline in Asian studies nationwide. The problem had reached disastrous proportions. Only 15 full-time academics now work on Indonesia across Australia. Only 2.9% of tertiary students study Asia-related subjects and last year only 400 university students enrolled to study Indonesian.

Tim Lindsey's address was broadcast on ABC Radio National and can be downloaded on www.abc.net.au/rn/linguafranca/stories/2007.

Yellowfeather and Me

Georgina Naidu is best known for her role as Prani Gupta in the ABC's long running *Seachange* series. Born in Australia of Malay-Indian and Scottish parentage, Georgina is in a good position to know about intercultural understanding - it has been her life. Naidu developed her play *Yellowfeather and Me* on the themes of intercultural understanding. Growing up in Melbourne, Naidu's one image of being Indian in Australia were the Red Indians on the TV series *Daniel Boone*. So that's who she identified with as a child taking on the name, 'Yellowfeather'.

'Apart from one elective on Indonesia and cutting out pictures of people and pasting them on a map of China to represent China's high population', she learnt nothing about Asia at school. Australia might have come a long way in the past 50 years, 'but my education did not reflect this'.

Georgina relished playing Prani in *Seachange* as an opportunity to have an Indian woman as part of mainstream television. Not only did she play Prani, she also became the

'Australia might have come a long way in the past 50 years, but my education did not reflect this'.



GEORGINA NAIDU,
Australian actor

show's cultural adviser on all things Indian. This was a challenge - she had never visited India and knew little about it. Prior to *Seachange*, the roles Naidu was offered were all stereotypes of Indians. 'Lots of doctors and ticket inspectors', she said. Casting directors always saw in her an ethnic specific actor first, with limited opportunities, rather than judging her by her acting talent. 'I am still working at making the arts in Australia more truly representative of our culturally diverse society'.

VIEWPOINT
Tim Lindsey was inspirational and gave me a desire to understand Indonesia.
Paul Wilson, St Josephs Primary School, NSW

Hearing the story of Georgina Naidu inspired me to draw more on our community and bring the world into my classroom.
Jessica Feltham, CBC St Kilda, Victoria

VIEWPOINT
 As a result of this Forum, I will implement an integrated unit of work that embeds studies of Asia across the school at all levels.
 Dr Terry Quong, Millner Primary School, Northern Territory

'I plan to institute a school wide international forum bringing together staff involved in internationalising the curriculum'.
Rod Fraser

What do successful intercultural programs look like?

A Panel representing the university, school and organization sectors outlined intercultural initiatives.



Associate Professor **Tony Liddicoat** (University of South Australia) suggested that language learning is one of the prime tools of cultural intelligence. He stressed the need to approach language as always integrated with culture. 'Language reveals attitudes, values and practices and actually shows what is going on... it is cultural information that cannot be obtained elsewhere'.



Pauline O'Brien (Art teacher, Beaconsfield Primary School, WA), described her sense of being geographically connected with India, Indonesia and Bali in particular. Her school has initiated projects in Bali including the establishment of a medical clinic and the building of a classroom. To further her students' cultural understanding she looks for shared contemporary issues such as deforestation, shortage of water and the impact of tourism.



Rod Fraser (Principal, Ivanhoe Grammar School, Victoria) spoke of the value of internationalising the curriculum both within and beyond the classroom. His school has a range of activities based on service and the environment. While Ivanhoe is an Anglican school, such was the diverse mix of its students, that they had been able to work in the school community to advance cultural understanding through religion. Teacher travelling



David Brown (Curriculum Corporation) described Values Education pilots designed to further cultural values. One involved an interfaith program of Jewish, Muslim, Christian and secular schools where students celebrate the festive times of the different religions. Another involved six schools with a high ratio of nationalities building cultural intelligence through interschool visits and interactive websites. The third cluster had three small rural primary schools teaching Indonesian for 45 minutes per week, designed to help students understand difference.

scholarships, student self-funded trips to China and classroom relationships with aid agencies in Cambodia were important components in furthering cultural intelligence.

There are currently 2.8 million young people in Australia, compared to 850 million youths who live in the Asia Pacific.
Thuy Nguyen, NSW representative, Australian National Youth Roundtable

APEC: Strengthening our community. Building a sustainable future

Thuy Nguyen's passion is to empower young people to challenge, create and connect with one another in a changing global environment. 'As a young Australian, I am honoured to take part in an extraordinary cooperation amongst the Asia Pacific economies that began in 1989 with only 12 members', she said. Today APEC is a thriving family with 21 member economies, representing over 40% of the world population, 56% of global GDP and around 48% of world trade.

Since APEC is coming to town, it is an important time to

educate young Australians about its significance. With its clear structure and accurate information, *APEC: Strengthening our community. Building a sustainable future* will allow students to comprehend the roles and aims of APEC, its participants, historical development, challenges and its potential future.

APEC: Strengthening our community. Building a sustainable future resource and teacher professional learning programme is available to download from www.apeceducation.edu.au.



'The successful individual in the twenty-first century must be a genuinely global citizen... able to operate in different places with a cultural awareness'. **Paul Kelly**

Global trends

Distinguished journalist and author Paul Kelly expressed an optimistic view of Australia's future relationship with Asia. He believes there is growing recognition on both sides of politics that there needs to be a reassessment of our commitment to Asia and the teaching of Asian cultures and languages. 'Education is a driver of economic performance and productivity, providing a framework for more investment. If we are to be an effective economy, one of the prime ingredients will be language and cultural skills to be competent in our part of the world'.



PAUL KELLY
Editor-at-Large, The Australian
Newspaper

fundamental shifts in global power towards India and China (and the voice of emerging nations such as Brazil and Mexico) will result in increased nationalism. Therefore we need to produce both good local citizens and good global citizens. He described a comprehensively successful society as one which is unified, socially cohesive, diverse, and with the capacity to innovate.

'Engagement with Asia is an ongoing national project, but we are now at a new threshold of deeper engagement. We must abandon our arrogance and understand that

Kelly focussed on three major issues: Global trends; Australia's relations with Asia; and the impact of both on Australia's education sector. In geo-strategic terms he sees the bilateral relationship between the US and China as the most important relationship in the coming century, with no comparison in history. He believes the

Asia won't adapt to Australia: Australia has to adapt to Asia'. The sheer diversity of cultural and religious difference needs to be clearly understood if we are to be good regional citizens. 'Respect for religion is fundamental to how we interact in Asia'. Finally he talked of the importance of long-term commitment to Asia. 'We must be there through good and bad times and not be seen as a fair-weather friend'.



'My generation is Australia's future.'

Penny Chen, Year 10,
Presbyterian Ladies College, Victoria

In primary school I learned the basics of Indonesian language, discovered the location of China, found out there were other religions besides my own and was taught respectful manners for communicating with different cultures. Now, in secondary school, I can have a fairly fluent conversation in Indonesian, study the Chinese economy, and learn about Hinduism, Buddhism and the history of Asia. Last year I learned about immigration from Asia to Australia. This inspired me to enter the National History Challenge whose theme was 'Turning Points in Australian History.' My presentation was a documentary describing the stages of Asian immigration in Australia and the impact it made on Australia. I won first prize in the Asia and Australia category.

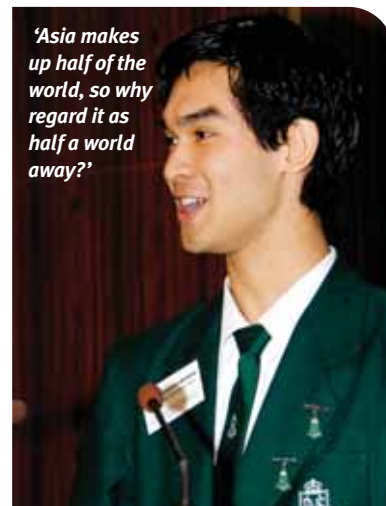


'This assignment changed my understanding of my family and ancestors'.

Aaresh Madon, Year 6,
St Ives Public School, NSW

'My ancestors lived in Iran thousands of years ago and moved to India because of religious persecution. A few decades ago most of my family moved to Australia where I was born, so I didn't know much about my past. This year, the Year Six HSIE subject was Asia. The best way to learn about any country is to get the children involved in real tasks. We each chose a country to be the Australian Ambassador for. We researched that country and I chose India because I wanted to learn more about the country that my ancestors lived in. A TOP SECRET file would arrive each week with our assignments in it. We pretended to hand it to the Prime Minister by leaving it on our teacher's desk. I have enjoyed learning about India and now I am inspired to learn about Iran'.

'Experience is the key word for the study of Asia. Teachers should be encouraged to take students on excursions to iconic Asian points of interests such as the Nan Tien Temple in Wollongong, or even China Town, which exists in almost every major city. I urge you to remember that Asia makes up half the world and is now an integral part of Australian culture, so why would you regard it as "half a world away"?'



'Asia makes up half of the world, so why regard it as half a world away?'

Beaver Ratapoom Garland, Year 12,
Randwick Boys High School, NSW

VIEWPOINT

...success comes back to passionate teachers engaging with education policy and running with it, making it happen.

Shelley Mackay, Cleveland District High School, Queensland

'Cultural intelligence is required for virtually any job these days'.

Dr Margaret Byrne

CQ: Cultural Intelligence

Dr Margaret Byrne, Principal Consultant, United Group Learning, spoke on the theme of intercultural understanding followed by a practical 'World Café' process to encourage dialogue between participants on ways to improve cultural awareness.

Dr Byrne analysed the concept of cultural intelligence in terms of what it is, why it matters and how it can be developed. She talked of the three major components being affective, cognitive and behavioural. She suggested that it is a field of its own, bringing a mixture of academic disciplines, personal beliefs and socio-economic factors. Byrne believes it is enormously important to design programs that are both evidence-based and practical. She used the analogy of a corporation not entering a new market without a well-researched business plan and strategy. Similarly there has to be a rigour and backbone to the teaching of cultural intelligence. 'It is a field within its own right, with its own research domain and methodologies. It should be the focus of educators at all levels, not just because we are a multicultural society, but also because we are a relatively small nation'.

One important element in the development of cultural intelligence is the ability to understand the architecture of prejudice and have the skills and tools to be able to deconstruct it. Being well-intentioned was not enough on its own: 'People are judged by the effect of their behaviour, not the quality of their



DR MARGARET BYRNE
Principal Consultant, United Group Learning

intentions', Byrne said. She suggested that Australians have an egalitarian ethos which can be an 'achilles heel' when offshore and interacting with people from more constrained cultures.

Byrne described effective cultural intelligence as having a repertoire of skills to make a more accurate diagnosis of what a person from another culture is really meaning. She suggested that reaching the 'sweet spot' of cultural intelligence

will not necessarily guarantee success but it will help bypass failure. 'We need to build cultural intelligence in our students at every level, step by step, because it is a life journey'. From her experience of working with executives in the corporate and public sector she pointed out how very hard it is to start from square one at age 50 and try to teach the complexity of cultural intelligence. 'It is vital for our students to be increasingly equipped with this attribute as cultural intelligence is required for virtually any job these days'.

A Course in Cultural Understanding

'In the context of cultural change, it is imperative that students are provided with new windows to explore values and to engage with the world in which they live'. NSW Board of Studies

The NSW Board of Studies has recently approved a course of study for Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10 students) called 'Cultural Understanding'. The course 'equips students, the citizens of the future, with the capacity to engage, in an appropriate and informed manner, with cultures within Australia and beyond. In addition to understanding one's own culture, the study of cultures requires knowledge that informs values and develops individual and community commitment to responsible action for a cohesive and just society... through the study of cultural understanding students will engage ideas, beliefs and practices across a wide range of cultures, with an emphasis on the cultures of Asia and the Pacific due

to Australia's geographic proximity to Asia and the Pacific, the increasing percentage of Australians with Asian-Pacific backgrounds, the economic growth of China and India, Australia's growing trade exchanges with the countries of Asia and Australia's emerging security and humanitarian interests in the Pacific'.

The core module is 'Understanding culture and diversity in today's world' with optional modules including Religion and Culture, The Media, Culture in Work and Workplace and Cultural Tourism. Sixty NSW schools have indicated interest in offering the course in 2008.

VIEWPOINT

Margaret Byrne has prompted me to take another look at curriculum standards and whether we address cultural intelligence with sufficient explicitness.

Helen Wildash, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

VIEWPOINT

A new national curriculum must embrace cultural understandings of Asia and improve the take-up of Asian languages - our national economic development depends on it.

Sue Mann, CEO, Curriculum Corporation



World Café

Newsflash 21 May, 2012:

'News media announce Australia has won a coveted UN award for its 5 year drive to build the cultural intelligence of its students'.

Margaret Byrne set up an interactive 'World Café': Forum delegates moved quickly around the room forming and reforming groups to develop responses to the newsflash. Group Tasks included:

- Round One:** Australia was judged to have the best cultural intelligence programmes, according to what 3-5 key indicators?
- Round Two:** How did Australia achieve this remarkable position? Heads of Education Departments agreed that they had been working on it since May 2007. What particular achievements might they have pointed to along the way?
- Round Three:** The UN Award Committee cited specific actions that had impressed them. They noted that Australian educators has worked together to identify and implement crucial changes to develop the intercultural skills of students at all levels. Identify these changes.
- Round Four:** Design an eye catching poster that captures the insights developed at your table.



VIEWPOINT

The Queensland team agreed that 'engaging with Asia is everyone's business' in education.

Queensland team

State, Territory and National Reports

State, Territory and National teams began discussions with accounts of practice from schools and education agencies. From these accounts, they drew out the strong levers supporting take-up of the *National Statement* and looked at evidence of implementation.

Across the country the key lever is current curriculum renewal. This has created an optimum time to embed the *Statement* in new curriculum frameworks. A key message to emerge is the power of the individual to bring about change: passionate, committed teachers in the classroom. The evidence

cited by states was the level of activity in schools. It is now 5 years since data was collected on this and it is time to take a check on this again.

All states and territories discussed future plans to support take-up. All will continue a focus on awareness raising and embedding studies of Asia in new curriculum. A focus on school leaders and whole-school approaches were common plus linking technology, studies of Asia across the curriculum and increasing depth of learning.

Australian Capital Territory

Curriculum renewal is providing the opportunity to embed the *Statement* in the new curriculum framework. A major priority for the ACT is to examine the draft Essential Learning Achievements to ensure that the goals of the *Statement* are explicitly embedded in them. Enthusiastic and passionate teachers are promoting the *Statement* at school level with the aim to integrate a studies of Asia focus across the school. The annual ACT conference is an awareness raising strategy with principals, executive staff and teachers attending. The conference will provide strategies for implementing the *National Statement* in schools and, post-conference, an audit and analysis of ACT schools will provide a clear picture of the take-up of the *Statement* in the Territory.

New South Wales

Cross-sector collaboration and the production of exemplary resources tailored to the NSW curriculum, have been two key external drivers of take-up. Internal drivers include the high motivation of teachers and the leadership of principals. This is significantly leveraged up in schools when parents and community become involved. Authentic hands-on experiences including visits, a focus on contemporary life and languages study, are all important. Future plans include the 2008 implementation in up to 60 schools of a new NSW Board of Studies Endorsed Course of Study for Years 9 & 10 on Cultural Understanding. A new resource on tiger conservation in India is ready to support Human Society and Environment in Years 7 - 9.

Northern Territory

Location is the biggest lever for the NT with a long history of engagement with Asia ranging from the Macassans to the Afghans and Chinese. The second lever is that the NT Curriculum Framework has formally embedded an Asia perspective for some years. The NT is focused now, through social literacy

and critical literacy, on studies of Asia being taught in a deep and meaningful way. A foundation of cultural links between indigenous and Asian interaction, already existing in our schools, will be built on. The NT Team plan to develop a whole school support skills package to assist planning for intercultural understandings and cultural intelligence to be embedded across the curriculum.

Queensland

Three key levers supported the uptake of the *National Statement*: the current curriculum reform providing opportunities to embed the goals of the *Statement*, the ability to build on the existing work in the studies of Asia and the support of the Minister and the Head of the Queensland Studies Authority. Implementation of the *Statement* is dependent on the six interlinked elements outlined in it. Queensland has a priority on targeting groups including principals, subject associations and system leaders to promote the *Statement*. Priorities include making connections with languages, values, civics and literacy programmes and building the knowledge of teachers through professional learning. The Queensland team agreed that 'engaging with Asia is everyone's business' in education.

South Australia

Leadership at system, district, school and classroom level has been the major lever of success in SA, with the *Statement's* six key elements providing a useful framework for moving ahead. Teacher passion, often catalysed by in-country experience and professional learning, has been pivotal – as has the adoption of the *Statement* as a state priority. The team agreed that adequate



VIEWPOINT

The jurisdiction's sessions were very useful in pulling success stories together and setting the scene for future planning.

Frank Cairns, Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia

funding underpins all effective long-term programmes. Evidence of success lies in the long-term commitment of many schools who have deeply embedded studies of Asia in their curriculum. Future plans include a focus on studies of Asia in the International Education strategy and a continued focus on embedding studies of Asia in current curriculum renewal. The SA team plans to engage leaders across the state.

Tasmania

The Department of Education's Students at the Centre Report resulted in changes aimed at delivering the best possible outcomes for students. Alongside initiatives focused on principals and schools, the curriculum is being refined and scope and sequence documents developed. These forward-looking curriculum documents provide excellent opportunities to focus on the broad knowledge, understandings, values and skills required to engage with Asia as identified in the *Asia Statement*. The *Asia Scope and Sequences* can identify specific ways to include Asian examples in the new Tasmanian Curriculum documentation for English-Literacy, Society and History and the Arts. The *National Statement* will be officially launched in three regional areas of the state. This major professional learning opportunity will strengthen the links between the Tasmanian Curriculum and the *Statement's* vision.

Victoria

The Victorian curriculum reform agenda of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) provides a key lever to focus schools on the *National Statement*. VELS strongly supports the implementation of studies of Asia across the Learning Domains of Humanities - History, Geography and Economics, The Arts, Civics and Citizenship, English and Interpersonal Development. Mapping of studies of Asia across these Domains is complete, highlighting the learning focus and standards to be addressed. Promotion of studies of Asia with school leaders is being facilitated through sponsorship of leaders to attend in-country study tours plus attendance at a Forum on 'Living, Learning and Working in the 21st Century'. A focus on how to engage students with Asia through ICT will feature with future development of web based units of work.

Western Australia

A core aspiration for the WA Curriculum Framework is to equip our students for their future. The *Asia Scope and Sequences*

have been useful in embedding studies of Asia in the new K-10 Syllabi (Early Childhood K-3, Middle Childhood 4-7, Early Adolescence 8-10). At the school level, passionate teachers are the key drivers. The syllabi support teachers in including the *Studies of Asia* when developing learning, teaching and assessment programmes. WA plans to re-establish the statewide Access Asia Advisory Group with cross-sectoral support and representation of core education stakeholders. This group will prioritise communication strategies to raise awareness of the *Statement*, explore the inclusion of cultural intelligence in the WA Charter for Teachers, focus on strategies to engage parents and community in professional learning on cultural intelligence and look at ways to utilise ICT's to internationalise the curriculum.

National

The most comprehensive group of national agencies to attend an AEF National Forum agreed that there is a strong sense of readiness across Australia to embrace the goals of the *Statement* as being in the national interest. There is a need for young people to build skills to communicate and operate effectively in a globalised world - with cultural intelligence as a core skill for the 21st century. This can be made possible at a moment in time when curriculum renewal is occurring in all states and territories and there are discussions around national curriculum.

The group committed to develop a Joint Communique articulating the imperative to ensure that 21st century curriculum in Australia reflects intercultural skills, knowledge and understandings about Asia. The Communique would identify targets to build demand from education stakeholders including parents, business and the community.

Five messages emerged from discussion:

- National agencies are a both a resource and a support. There is a large range of initiatives that these agencies are undertaking to support the uptake of the *National Statement* – from raising awareness, promoting the *Asia Scope and Sequences* and linking to other curriculum initiatives like literacy, values, civics and history.
- We need to continue to build demand through closer connections to business and the TAFE sector.
- It is timely to set targets now to clarify where we want to be in 5 years.
- We need to consider building up centres of excellence in schools and identify key points of travel on the journey.
- We need to gain traction in the current debate about a national curriculum. There is talk of 'global citizenship', 'intercultural understandings' and 'internationalising the curriculum' in this debate, but it is difficult to get firm purchase on what this might mean for curriculum.



Engaging young Australians with Asia in our schools *in action*

Each state and territory contributed accounts of practice to demonstrate embedding the goals of the National Statement in schools. A selection of these are outlined below.

Western Australia

The Association of Independent Schools, Western Australia (AISWA) has a goal to disseminate information about the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia* to educators in our sector who may not have heard of it, outlining the key messages and linking them to students' futures. We aim to provide these educators with concrete examples of how studies of Asia can be incorporated into their programmes. AISWA's 2007 State Conference, 'I am in your classroom; I am future's child' focused on the Engaging Asia and the Languages National Statements. *Clare Leong, Association of Independent Schools Western Australia*

Victoria

The Victorian Department of Education has invested in the creation of a web-based unit of work to support the Great Wall of China: dynasties, dragons and warriors exhibition at the Melbourne Museum. 'Given that our students are growing up in a technology-rich world, this unit engages them in learning activities which tap into their skills, interests and ways of being', says Access Asia Network Leader, Danielle Payne. For more information: www.bendigoschools.vic.edu.au/china/home.html. *Lisa Hayman, Studies of Asia Adviser, Department of Education*

expressions of what an Asia-engaged young Australian would know, understand and be able to do.

For example, Year 7 SOSE: 'Students know and understand that Australia's relationship with its Asian and Pacific neighbours is linked to events, e.g. the White Australia policy, arrival of 'boat people', East Timor's independence, free trade agreements and military alliances'. *Terry Gallagher, Principal Project Officer, Queensland Studies Authority*

Australian Capital Territory

As the host school for the Northside Primary Introductory English Centre, our school has more than 25% of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We have begun a process of curriculum renewal that aims to align with new developments in education including the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia* which our community considers reflects socio-cultural and geo-political realities. *Di Kosev, North Ainslie Primary School*



AEF Chair, Prof. Field Rickards, Dean of Education, The University of Melbourne

Tony Mackay, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic Education, AEF Board

Susan Mann, CEO, Curriculum Corporation, Deputy Chair, AEF Board

Judith Bundy, Australian Council of State School Organizations, AEF Board

Tasmania

Tasmania has formed a partnership with a school in Paudwar, an isolated region of Nepal. The value of education is well understood by the villagers and English is considered to be a key to the future and a priority in the curriculum. Visiting Tasmanian teachers have discovered a strong commonality with the teachers of Paudwar who share a commitment that all children have the right to learn regardless of geographic and economic restrictions. *Rosanne Thorp, Moriarty Primary School*

South Australia

Teachers in the Wallara District have had an active Studies of Asia network for over a decade. When the *National Statement* was released it was considered an opportune time for Wallara District leaders, who are part of the Local Leaders Executive Group, to take action. A District Inquiry Group was formed to enable leaders to engage in professional dialogue on this issue and ensure its inclusion in the District meeting agenda. Current practice within the District was linked to each of the six interlinked elements in the *Statement* and an audit of current practice was initiated to collect baseline data. *Steve Freeman, Principal, representing the Wallara District*

Queensland

The Queensland Studies Authority has responsibility for the development of the Queensland Assessment and Reporting Framework. Statements of Essential Learnings will be key products of the Framework and represent that part of the curriculum that will be common across all schools. The set of Studies of Society and Environment Essential Learnings (Draft 2) feature direct links to the broad

Northern Territory

Currently our school is developing its five-year plan for 2008-2012. In the past studies of Asia has been taught at the discretion of the classroom teacher as a part of Values, Beliefs and Cultural Diversity. It is a desired goal in our new plan to include an integration of studies of Asia within the curriculum scope and sequence across the school. To achieve this we need to meet the challenge of building our teachers' knowledge in an already crowded curriculum to move beyond the teaching of food and festivals and provide children with meaningful experiences. *Nina Dekroo, Sacred Heart Primary School*

New South Wales

The school's vision for our students is to develop 'confident and competent citizens in a changing world'. After attending the AEF's Linking Latitudes Vietnam I returned to school determined to develop a Year 8 Geography course focused on Global Citizenship. Staff and parents were impressed at the level of maturity of students frequently engaging in discussions about current international issues. After reading the *National Statement* we developed an International Studies course. The Board of Studies approved our plan and we now have a large class at Year 9 and 10 engaged in it. Our annual school trip to Cambodia has grown from 16 students to 65 this year. *Sarah Menassa, SCECGS Redlands*

This was the most professional conference I have ever attended. The data, stories and arguments presented serve as a moral compass of our times.
Sharon LaPere, St Ursula's College, Yeppoon