

VANISH news bulletin

Subsidiary of VANISH Voice

May 2014

Dear Members and Friends

Welcome to the cooler Autumn months. I trust your Mother's Day was as reflective and healing as was possible for you. All members of the adoption community were in our thoughts and especially all mothers.

I begin this Bulletin with news of the changes to intercountry adoption announced this month by Prime Minister Abbott. You will recall that VANISH lobbied hard to preserve the safeguards that currently exist under the Hague Convention. The outcome is not what we would have liked but we will continue to lobby for appropriate safeguards and processes and focus on what happens in Victoria. It is clear that the pro adoption lobby led by Deborra-Lee Furness and the Adoption Awareness Week Committee is working closely with Prime Minister Abbott to ensure intercountry adoption increases in Australia. Many letters have been sent to various papers but few have been published. Media has preferred to focus on the benefits of adoption but members have had small successes in raising differing viewpoints for discussion.

NEWS ITEM

From the Office of the Prime Minister

REFORM AND ACTION ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

The Commonwealth Government is committed to adoption reform to enable more people to find families. A new report has identified significant barriers facing Australian families wanting to adopt from overseas. Inconsistent rules, costs and the lengthy wait to adopt currently deter many people from even starting the adoption process.

Last Friday, COAG agreed to a national system for intercountry adoption. The Commonwealth will work vigorously with the States and Territories to have a new system operating by early 2015.

The report into intercountry adoption also recommended establishing new country programmes to help more Australian families to adopt. A new intercountry adoption programme between Australia and South Africa is now in place. South Africa has a strong commitment to finding families within its borders to care for children in need. Where, for whatever reason, a South African family cannot be found, Australian families will be able to help provide permanent loving homes to South African children. Many of these children will have health needs, and would benefit from the caring environment that Australian families can provide.

The Government will introduce amendments to the Australian Citizenship Act so that obtaining Australian citizenship can happen in a child's country of origin. As well, we will fix the problems associated with the visa system. It is too complicated at the moment and processing times are too long. For too long children who legitimately need a safe and loving home and Australians who dream of providing this home have been hindered by red tape and confusion.

The Government is pleased to be able to undertake real action to bring families together.

To access the report visit:

http://www.dpmc.gov.au/publications/docs/idc_report_intercountry_adoption.pdf

To find out more about the new intercountry adoption programme visit: <http://www.ag.gov.au/FamiliesAndMarriage/IntercountryAdoption/Pages/default.aspxAdoption>

These are the Australian Government's adoption statistics, published in December 2013: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/adoptions/4th March, 2014>

NATIONAL ADOPTION AWARENESS WEEK

Acknowledgements from NAAW

Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced immediate changes to the processing for children adopted from Ethiopia, Taiwan and South Korea to allow the Australian system to recognise these adoptions in a more efficient time frame.

Deborra-lee Furness:

"I congratulate the Prime Minister on this announcement today, and I am particularly happy for the many families who will be directly affected by this immediate action. We have been calling for change for a long time, and I am absolutely thrilled to see the Prime Minister's office committing to real action."

Prime Minister Tony Abbott met with NAAW Board Members Catherine McDonnell, John O'Neill and Helen McCabe with Attorney-General George Brandis in the PM's sitting room.

Chair of NAAW Board, John O'Neill: "we welcome this important administrative change which will finalise the legal creation of families without many months of formal paperwork. I know from my own experience how lengthy the process has been, and I am certain that this reform will have an immensely positive affect on a number of Australian families, and more importantly, vulnerable children."

We are proud to announce we will be liaising with State and Commonwealth governments in relation to this initiative and expect to work with and inform the COAG process.

Coleen Clare
Manager, VANISH Inc
13 May 2014



Separation and Adoption - Past Practices and New Services ALBURY/WODONGA

Information Session

VANISH (Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self Help) representatives invite mothers, fathers, adopted people, adoptive parents, siblings, family, friends, counsellors and other interested parties to come along and hear about changes affecting people who have experienced **separation from a child and/or adoption**. The session will cover:

- Recent research into the impact of separation and adoption
- Amended legislation regarding search and contact
- Relationship challenges
- Support services
- A new Albury/Wodonga Support Group

When: Tuesday 20th May 2014
Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm
Location: Glenecho Neighbourhood House
949 Burrows Road, Glenroy, Albury

Or for anyone who is unable to attend but would like to meet and collect information and have a chat....

Drop-In Session

When: 20th May 2014
Time: 6.30pm to 8pm
Location: The Wattle Room
Commercial Club
618 Dean Street, Albury

For more information call on 03 9328 8611 or 1300 826 474 or email groups@vanish.org.au or visit www.vanish.org.au

RARE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AT VANISH –

An excellent Receptionist and highly competent multi skilled Office Administrator is sought for 4 days a week for VANISH, a small community organisation. Best practice skills are required together with experience and knowledge of the adoption community.

For full Position Description and Key Selection Criteria
email info@vanish.org.au or phone 9328 8611

An overview of the position -

Key Objectives of the Reception/Administrative Officer position:

- To promote best practice first point of contact including promoting the philosophy of self help.
- To competently manage administration and reception duties
- To participate in team projects.

Tasks:

Reception and General Office tasks:

- Screen, respond to and refer telephone calls and visitors to ensure service user satisfaction
- Accurately prepare correspondence and reports
- Maintain up-to-date statistics, records and files both manual and electronic
- Record and maintain the mail system daily
- Ensure that stationery and general goods are restocked
- General office maintenance including security
- Photocopying.

Bookkeeping:

- Maintain and report petty cash
- Accurately manage and prepare invoices for payment and other basic bookkeeping tasks
- Manage and reconcile credit card expenditure
- Maintain accurate records of expenditure made on behalf of service user and invoice accordingly
- Receipt, record, prepare and organise banking.

Specialised:

- Record and maintain membership register
- Maintain up-to-date library resources, records and borrowing systems
- Organisation of functions and meetings including Annual General Meeting
- Preparation of publications such as Annual General Report and newsletters and news bulletins
- Assist with completion, management and mail out of newsletter and special projects
- Assist with website and Facebook maintenance
- Other duties as requested by the Manager.

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Conditions:

- The position is part-time (4 days a week) with conditions in accordance with the SCHADS Award and VANISH policies.
- A performance review will be undertaken annually.
- A three month probationary period will apply.
- A letter of application addressing the key selection criteria and curriculum vitae should be sent to Manager, VANISH Inc, P O Box 112, Carlton South. 3053 (Please mark your mail CONFIDENTIAL) or email to info@vanish.org.au
Subject: Attn Manager

Applications close - Monday, 19 May 2014 at 4.00pm.