

## Immigration Minister eases pain of Religious Visas

By: Surinder Jain.

Hindu Council had approached the immigration minister Mr David Coleman to help solve the problems faced by Hindu temples in obtaining visas for priests and religious workers. The Minister along with Commissioner Ms Lesley Dalton, Community Liaison officers Ms Gillian Craven, Ms Laura Beylerian arranged for Hindu temple representatives to discuss their problems with a subject matter expert Wesley Campbell. The meeting was also attended by Chris Moujalli from the Minister's office.



Hindu Council was represented by National Vice President Surinder Jain and representatives from Brahma Kumaris, Hare Krishna, ISSO Swaminarayan, BAPS, Ayyappa Temple, Sri Om Foundation and Sri Venkateswara temple.

The meeting was very fruitful as temples could understand various visa options available to them and got clarifications on many of the rules. This was also a good opportunity for the department to understand how Hindu temples and roles of religious workers is different from other established churches.

Both sides expressed their satisfaction with the talks.

After the success of this meeting, Hindu Council Victoria chapter is planning to organize a similar session for temples in Victoria.

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