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## **Canberra Calling - Newsletter October 2021**



**Ambasáid na hÉireann Canberra**  
Embassy of Ireland Canberra



Tá an-áthas orm an deis seo a fháil chun me féin a chur in aithne oraibh chomh luath tar éis dom an Astráil a bhaint amach, agus díreach tar éis mo cháipéisí aitheantais curtha i láthair an Ard-Ghobharnóra.

[I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself so soon after arrival in Australia and having just presented credentials to the Governor General.]

At the outset, I want to recognise the immense contribution that Ambassador Ó Caollaí and Carmel have made over the past five years. I hope that I can build on Breandán's achievements and be a worthy representative of Ireland in Australia.

I come to Australia from Dublin, where I have been a Director in the Department's Asia Pacific Unit for the past 4 years. I have previously served as Deputy Permanent Representative in our Mission to the UN in New York; as Ambassador to Latvia; and as Deputy Head of Mission in Tokyo. I am accompanied here by my wife Patricia McCarthy, but our two children, now university students, remain at home.

As it happens, there is a full rotation of diplomatic staff taking place at the Embassy this year and you will find elsewhere a farewell note from Eamonn Robinson and Harriet Sexton Morel as well as an introductory message from our new Deputy Head of Mission, Daniel Lowe. (Harriet's replacement will arrive in the coming few weeks). The recent arrival of Rosie Keane as Consul General in Sydney also contributes to the renewal of the diplomatic team in Australia.

From talking with Breandán and following the work of the Mission, it is clear that the last 18 months or so have been particularly tough for many in the Irish community. I hope that the distribution of vaccines and the updated approach from government will enable us to begin to leave COVID behind us and to return to something like normal.

Challenges will remain of course, both in terms of public health, the economy and connectivity. However I am confident that both Australia and Ireland have the resources to make a full recovery and in some cases to improve on the pre-COVID situation. For my part, I am happy to do whatever I can to strengthen the connections between Ireland and Australia and with the Irish community in Australia.

Beyond COVID, this is a very interesting time to be in Australia and I look forward to working with all my colleagues at the embassy, with our colleagues at the Consulate General in Sydney, with our Honorary Consulate in Perth, with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Bord Bia in seeking to maximise the impact of Ireland here.

I am also looking forward to working with the many voluntary groups all across Australia who are working to support their communities and to promote Ireland's agenda here. I hope I can count on your cooperation as we all face the challenges ahead of us and seek out the opportunities that undoubtedly exist.

I also hope that I can represent you well in my broader dealings with the Australian authorities in each state and here in Canberra.

Beir bua  
Tim Mawe  
Ambassador of Ireland



### **Credentials Presentation**

On 13 October H.E. Ambassador Tim Mawe presented his credentials to H.E. Governor General David Hurley AC DSC (Retd). Ambassador Mawe & Patricia discussed issues of common interest with H.E. & Mrs Hurley.

**Farewell note from Harriet and Eamonn**

‘Tá sé in am dul abhaile’, a phrase much beloved by young children everywhere as it signalled the end of the school day in primary school. It is now time for both Eamonn and I to separately ‘téir abhaile’ and return home to Ireland. It has been both a pleasure and privilege to serve our citizens during our respective assignments here in Australia, the most Irish country outside of Ireland.

Ireland is extremely proud of our diaspora and the Irish influence in the political, social and cultural history of Australia has been well documented. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the changed reality that it has presented to the world has tested all of us, our resilience and our commitment to one another in a way that we would never have thought possible or necessary, and our community in Australia has responded to this challenge. Both Ireland and Australia have actively demonstrated the concept of ‘Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine’.



As the Irish diaspora takes shape throughout the world, it is also shaping a broader sense of Irishness. This diversity of the diaspora shapes our sense of Irishness by instructing us in the values of openness, tolerance and fairmindedness. It also brings home to us that Irishness is not simply territorial but includes the bond with Ireland felt by those who are not Irish born, who are citizens of other countries, but are proud of their Irish roots.

Both Eamonn and I would like to thank and acknowledge our respective spouses Sara and Keith, and our children who have journeyed with us on our Australian adventure ‘Down Under’. Our new colleagues Daniel (who has already arrived) and Cellena who will arrive shortly, are very much looking forward to working on behalf of all our citizens in Australia. To quote from ‘Steal away’, it is now time for both Eamonn and me to ‘steal away’.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir, slán abhaile agus fan sabháilte.

**Introduction from DHOM**

A chairde

I am delighted to have taken up the post of Deputy Head of Mission at Embassy Canberra, a role I have been enjoying since the end of August. I arrived with some of the worst timing possible, on the same day as Canberra went into lockdown so whilst my two weeks self-isolation had limited fear of missing out, I couldn’t be happier that the vaccination rollout has been a success and I am able to start getting to know the city I will call home for the next four years.

I arrived in Canberra from Dublin, where I spent the last two and a half years as Assistant Chief of Protocol. Until the pandemic I spent most of my time organising State and Official visits overseas by President Michael D Higgins as well as the inward visits of senior ministers to Ireland. A fast-paced and practical job, I truly enjoyed the mix of event management, cross-team co-ordination and occasionally being the first Irish face a visitor would see as they stepped off the plane. This new role will allow me to flex my policy muscles a bit more and whilst the exposure to world leaders was an amazing opportunity, I’ll be glad to see the back of 4am wake up calls to farewell VIPs at the airport.

Unlike most Irish diplomats, I grew up in London and only moved to Ireland as an adult. I’ve had my fair share of Derry Girls jokes about being the ‘Wee English Fella’ and have had to surreptitiously google what some people take to be common knowledge (The Late Late Toy Show was an early bit of research) but it does give me a good insight into being part of the diaspora. I hope my experiences will serve me well in my time here, a country where millions of people claim Irish heritage and thousands of citizens chose to make their home or enjoy an extended stay. I really look forward to getting out of the office and meeting all the organisations that serve our community so well. Hopefully I’ll make it to every state and territory in good time.



Immediately before joining The Department I was advising on international trade agreements with Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Samoa. I was lucky enough to spend some time in the region and developed a passion for the Pacific Islands. The Embassy’s responsibility for diplomatic relations with several Melanesian countries was another attraction to this role and I look forward to seeing more of the region when international travel begins to open up. In the meantime, I have plenty of Australia to explore, not least Canberra itself. I’ll be on the lookout for good concerts and sessions as I play both the trombone and mandolin, and I will be taking a keen interest in promoting the international reputation of Irish gin (as well as our other great food and drink exports) wherever I can.

Beir bua agus beannacht

Daniel Lowe  
Deputy Head of Mission

## Notes from the Irish Community Organisations

### Irish Support Agency (ISA) – Sydney



The Irish Support Agency, NSW was founded in 1995 to act as a safety net for those in crisis or distress. This has developed over the years to running programs to help promote mental health & wellbeing, social inclusion and a sense of connection in our community.

Traditionally a typical case might involve a workplace accident or unemployment, etc. but in recent years, we have witnessed a significant increase in the number of clients seeking our help for mental health issues whether that be anxiety/depression, psychoses, or addiction issues. This has been exacerbated by the challenges of the global pandemic.

For the broader community, there is incredible anxiety as people juggle all the pressures of living in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. No one has been untouched by this crisis, whether it's loss of work, social isolation, working from home, homeschooling, or missing out on life-defining moments with our loved ones. It has been a challenging time for everyone, particularly so, when we are so far removed from the traditional support network of friends and family.

While the agency established a COVID hardship fund\* which has been used to assist anyone needing emergency housing, struggling to pay rent/utilities, facing food insecurity, etc. much of the work of the Irish Support Agency remains the emotional support of people who are experiencing a crisis.

*This agency came to our aid at a time of crisis following my brother's accident at work in which he sustained serious injuries. The ISA was invaluable help and did great work with government agencies in order to facilitate family to fly from Ireland and be with my brother in intensive care. This wasn't straightforward due to Covid 19 restrictions but the reassurance, help, and assistance from the ISA were invaluable...as well as the aftercare and visits to the hospital. The service is professional, friendly, efficient and ultimately the team is caring, compassionate, and dedicated. I wish them every success they truly deserve. **Joanne Comiskey***

Our Seniors program has also been seriously impacted. Denied a vital outlet for social connection, our committee, volunteers and staff have been making regular phone calls to the Seniors to provide social support and welfare checks. We have also been able to offer initiatives to promote connectivity amongst our Seniors - Irish Music for Seniors classes delivered via Zoom and the purchase of IPADS / lessons to assist with the basic skills for connecting safely and keeping up to date with news, family and friends.

During the short reprieve between lockdowns, we were fortunate to be able to reconnect two of our long-running Senior Meet-up groups for a day exploring the Great Outdoors, day-tripping to Katoomba, home to the famous Three Sisters rock formation. We anticipate running a similar trip in the coming months to connect with Irish Seniors living in the Newcastle area. View some of our special memories [here](#).

The Irish Support Agency has always had a keen focus on supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of our community, regularly delivering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to our Irish community to equip them with the skills to identify and respond to someone who is struggling. Over the past 18 months, we also hosted free monthly wellbeing webinars, each exploring a different aspect of health and wellbeing to support the community. Each of these **Irish 30** webinars, guided by the latest evidence and facilitated by a (mostly Irish-born) expert, is available to view via our [website](#) or [YouTube](#) channel.

The ISA recently launched SOLAS<sup>^</sup>, a new counselling service open to all members of the Irish Australian community living in NSW.

Delivered by Irish-born qualified mental health practitioners, the program offers a unique opportunity to address the challenges of the Irish ex-pat community.

The uptake to date has far exceeded our expectations as people seek support during this unprecedented time.

In terms of Outreach events, we have had a super busy year with everything from our Monthly Book Club, a Comedy night, webinars to address everything from ATO Tax returns, Security for Seniors and Problem Gambling. *The greatest success of these is baile as baile*, meaning home away from home, which was designed in late 2020 to promote wellbeing and social connectivity, to ensure no one felt isolated across the festive season by offering a broad, vibrant and inclusive program of events in locations across Sydney and beyond. View some of our favourite baile as baile memories [here](#).

Across the Summer there were almost 70 different events and gatherings – a fantastic success on so many fronts. With many returning home to Ireland, and social networks **being noticeably fractured, the initiative has been extended to support that sense of community and keep the mood buoyant while we navigate the months ahead.** We're all in this together, in our home away from home.



**A New Era for the Celtic Club**  
**Patrick McGorry**

As President of The Celtic Club, I am committed to delivering a brighter, more engaged, and positive future. We have extraordinary potential and with the elections now concluded, we have an incoming Committee of Management who have the skillsets to help unlock that potential. To realise this goal, we must reimagine what the Celtic Club is to become for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will involve a balance between the needs of the current membership but creating space for a whole generation of younger members who will be looking for something different. So, we need to safeguard our heritage and build a whole new stage to that heritage. Another key goal is to become much more welcoming and transparent in our culture. We will work hard to heal internal divisions and also reach out to all other Irish Australian organisations in Victoria and nationally. The members have clearly indicated they are looking for positivity, trust and inclusion and we will do our best to deliver this and seek the support of everyone in the Club for this change.

There are so many positive signs that I have noticed that encourage me to believe that we are already moving in the right direction. We now have our finances under control and have returned to profitability. We have planned a reinvigorated events program for the post lockdown period, which celebrates our shared heritage and proud culture, but increasingly delivered in a way that can attract new members to the Club as well as the existing loyal membership and former members who may consider rejoining.

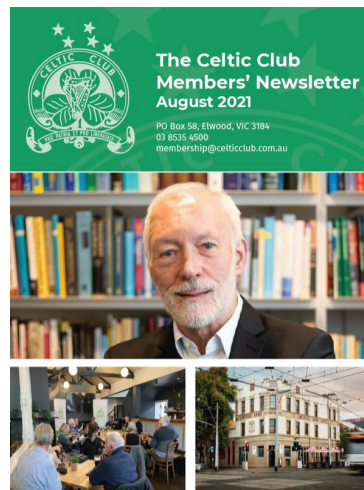
Celebrating our heritage and culture are core activities of the Club. Activities that bring us together to enjoy, to debate and to discover more about the culture to which we have such deep affinity.

We have made a strategic investment in The Limerick Arms and look forward to hosting many Celtic Club events there as part of our wider agenda. For those with a love of Irish music, we have commenced our fortnightly Friday afternoon music sessions at The Limerick, and we hope that these will restart very soon once the health directions permit.

We will also be bringing another new initiative, an Irish Film night, to The Limerick, which we are planning to turn into a most memorable occasion and look forward to sharing more details on this as restrictions ease.

Fáilte romhaibh!

Find out more about the new era at [here](#)



The advertisement for Passport Online features a dark red Irish passport on the left with 'ÉIRE IRELAND' and 'Pas Passport' visible. Next to it are two Australian passports. The background is light blue with a faint map of Ireland. At the bottom, there are stamps for Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA. The text reads 'PASSPORT ONLINE' in large bold letters, followed by 'Now expanded to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA.' and the website 'www.dfa.ie/passports'. The Irish Government logo and 'Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland' are at the bottom right.

**Passport Service**

All passport applications must now be made online.

Passport online is now open to ALL applicants, including those resident in Australia. This includes passport renewals, first time passport applicants and children. All applications must now be made online as paper applications are no longer being processed.

To apply please follow the link: [Passport Online - Department of Foreign Affairs \(dfa.ie\)](#)  
For passport inquiries please contact our office during office hours Monday to Friday through our WebChat service available on the Embassy's website:

[Australia - Department of Foreign Affairs \(dfa.ie\)](#)

### Crosscare Migrant Project Report launch

The newly arrived Ambassador Tim Mawe and Consul General Rosie Keane launched Crosscare Migrant Projects's report, 'Ní neart go cur le chéile - Irish emigrant experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic'. This virtual event included a video message from the Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy TD, and three panellists who discussed the Irish emigrant experience in Australia during the pandemic. Panel members included Anne Wayne, the Coordinator of the Claddagh Association based in Western Australia, the President of the Irish Australian Support Association of Queensland, Nicola Holly and Professor Patrick McGorry, a mental health specialist, of Orygen and the newly re-elected President of the Celtic Club in Melbourne.

The discussion was wide ranging and informative, with good audience participation and feedback. The Irish Support Agency in Sydney also made an important contribution. The panel discussed how Australia having initially managed to avoid most of the strict lockdowns (aside from Melbourne) in 2020, had now locked down most of the east coast of the country. Issues cited included feelings of homesickness, difficulties leaving Australia and mental health concerns. The panellists outlined the supports each had provided to their communities during the pandemic and how the pandemic had also been a time for the community to come together. The event saw participants from across Australia including New South Wales, Victoria, the ACT, Northern Territory, South Australia and Queensland.



### Samaritans

Samaritans provides a 24-hour freephone helpline service for people in Ireland who are in distress, struggling to cope and who are in need of emotional support, including those who are feeling suicidal.

That support is being offered to Irish people living in Australia following a partnership between Samaritans and the Government of Ireland Emigrant Support Programme.

No matter what someone's reason for calling is, Samaritans offers a space to explore how they are feeling, in their own time and their own way.

Samaritans has 1,800 dedicated volunteers based in 13 branches across Ireland supporting people through some of the darkest moments in their life.

Anyone suffering from emotional distress, or who needs a listening ear, can call Samaritans in Ireland anonymously 24 hours a day, seven days a week, on the numbers below. Callers may join a short queue when all volunteers are on calls, but will be transferred to a volunteer free of charge.

Whatever you're going through, Samaritans Ireland's volunteers in Ireland are here to listen.

Dial 1800570699 for free from Australia. Follow them on  @SamaritansIRL

**SAMARITANS**  
Day or night  
We're here  
when life's  
difficult

Call free day or night from Australia on  
**1800 570699\***

\*No international prefixes needed.  
Calls from an Australian mobile or landline are free.

samaritans.org  
A registered charity

## Global Ireland

### Ireland's Presidency of the UN Security Council in September 2021

Ireland held the Presidency of the Security Council in September 2021, the only time we will do so during our two-year term. The principal role of the Presidency is to manage the programme of scheduled Security Council business. However, the Presidency also provided an opportunity to advance some priority issues from Ireland's perspective.

The first signature meeting of Ireland's Council Presidency took place on 8 September. The annual Open Debate on peacekeeping operations focused the Council's attention on transitions from UN Peace Operations to a reconfigured UN presence designed to sustain peacebuilding gains. Security Council Resolution 2594 on peacekeeping transitions, drafted and negotiated by Ireland, was agreed unanimously on 9 September and was co-sponsored by 97 UN Member States. Minister Coveney presided over the adoption of this resolution.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney TD chaired a Council meeting on Afghanistan on 9 September, which discussed developments since the Taliban takeover, ahead of the extension of the mandate of the UN mission in the country (UNAMA) on 17 September. The Minister also chaired an informal meeting of the Council with the League of Arab States on 22 September.

The Taoiseach chaired a high-level meeting on the subject of Climate and Security on 23 September. During the meeting, the Taoiseach announced Ireland's intention, along with Niger, to convene discussions with all Council members, on a thematic resolution on Climate and Security. A resolution on the link between climate change and the maintenance of international peace and security would be a first for the Security Council and would allow the Council to better assess and address the effects of climate change in its work. Work has since been brought forward on this draft Resolution.



Ireland's Minister of State for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne chaired a third high-level meeting on 27 September to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is a long-standing foreign policy priority for Ireland, and the meeting provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of this key Treaty, CTBT and to renew collective efforts to pursue its entry into force and universalisation.

Scheduled Council business in September included important meetings on Libya, Yemen, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and the Middle East Peace Process.

In keeping with our commitment to facilitate civil society and grassroots voices being heard by the Council, Ireland arranged for a civil society briefer for each meeting in September and prioritised the participation of women peacebuilders. A total of seventeen civil society briefers spoke in Council meetings in September, sixteen of whom were women civil society briefers, more than any previous Presidency. Their contributions added an important perspective to discussions, and were appreciated by Council members.



### In Country Micro Project Scheme (ICMPS)

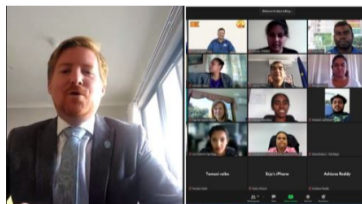
Ireland's policy for international development, *A Better World*, outlines our vision of a more equal, peaceful and sustainable world. The In Country Micro Project Scheme (ICMPS), which commenced in 1994, provides delegated sanction to a number of Embassies and Missions to fund projects that address the root causes of poverty and injustice such as the promotion of human rights, enhanced livelihood security, improved access to social services, and strengthened local capacity and ownership. In 2021, the Embassy was delighted to receive a 100% increase in our funding allocation, which has allowed the Embassy to support projects in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Additionally in recent years, Ireland has worked to deepen our relationship with our Pacific neighbours with the launch of Ireland's new *Strategy for Small Island Development States (SIDS)*.

Since the launch of the SIDS Fellowship Training Programme in 2020, four Pacific Islanders from Fiji and Solomon Islands have received scholarships to study at Masters Level at universities in Ireland.

Since our election to the UN Security Council, Ireland has continued to advocate for SIDS multilaterally, as we share many priorities and perspectives. Ireland has used its voice on the Security Council to amplify the region's engagement and influence, recognising that their priorities are ours also.

This is the second year that Irish Aid has partnered with "Case study - FRIEND" and this project will provide social assistance through enabling technical and livelihoods options for women who have been economically disadvantaged during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic or have lost their livelihoods due to unemployment.



### 50th anniversary of GAA in WA

#### **GAA in WA: A brief History**

It has been recorded that Gaelic Games was first played in Western Australia at the 1892 St Patricks Day Festival held in Fremantle. GAA continued to grow with Hurling Clubs being formed in Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie following the gold rushes of the late 19 and early 20th centuries. Hurling and Football matches were played at St Patricks Day festivals throughout the 1950's and 60's and on the 2nd of August 1970, the Gaelic Athletic Association of Western Australia was formed. Matches took place at Langley Park and the first President was Fr Padraig Kelly from Co Galway.

WA entered a football team into the Australasian Championships of 1973 and brought the cup back to Perth as Senior Football Champions in 1978. The 1970's also saw the establishment of the Kalamunda, St Finbarrs & Greenwood Football Clubs. The 1980's saw two more Australasian Football titles annexed in 1981 and 1987 and the Southern Districts, Thornlie Shamrocks and Goldfields Football Clubs were formed.

Underage development was given a boost with the formation of the Minor Board in 1992 with success following soon after when WA were crowned the Australasian Minor Football Champions of 1994. Ladies football took off in the 1990's with the famed Greenwood Ladies Football team sweeping all before them achieving the 10 in row State Championship titles from 1998. The Mazenod & Queens Park Clubs were also formed during this time.

The first decade of the 21st century was a very busy one with 4 Australasian Ladies Titles, 2 Minor Football Titles and 1 Senior Football Title all heading west to Perth. WA also provided players for the Australasian team that played in the first ever Ladies Football World Cup held in Dublin topped off by beating the North American Board team in the final. A new Club also joined the Ladies ranks in 2007, Coastal Breakers, while the official opening of the home of GAA WA, Tom Bateman Reserve in Gosnells took place in 2008.

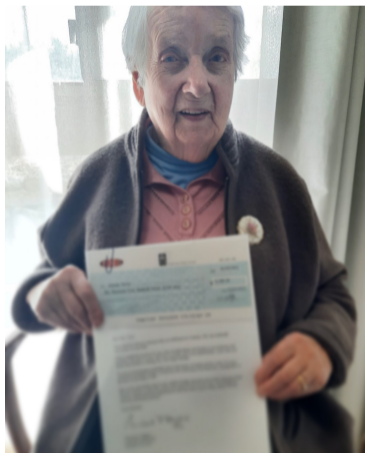


A Hurling sub-committee had been formed in 2006 but the game really took off with the formation of the Western Australia, Michael Cusack's, Imokilly, St Gabriels, Perth Shamrocks and Sarsfields Hurling Clubs in the 7 years between 2006 and 2013. Not to be outdone by the men, Western Swans & St Gabriel's Camogie Clubs were also formed.

Since 2009 WA has been crowned Australasian Camogie & Hurling Champions a combined 6 times. The Gaelic Games Junior Academy of WA was established in 2012 and has gone from success to success developing and promoting Gaelic Games to players aged 4 to 14.

The State provided players for the inaugural and subsequent GAA World Games from 2015 onwards and we made history in 2019 when we sent a U14 team to compete at Féile Peile na nÓg in Ireland, the first team to ever take part in Féile Peil from the southern hemisphere.

Through our Junior Academy, Minor Board, Clubs and Supporters GAA WA continues to promote, develop and lead the success of Gaelic Games in Australia and New Zealand, Long may it continue!



### Centenarian Bounty

The practice by which people who have reached their 100th birthday receive a gift from the State of €2,540 and a special message from the President of Ireland wishing them a happy birthday and congratulating them for their longevity, was begun in 1940 by President Douglas Hyde.

Our latest recipient of Centenarian Bounty is Hannah Tutty (née Driver) born in Co.Wicklow in 1921. Hannah lived in England for several years before she moved to Adelaide, South Australia. Go maire tú an dá chéad!

"We are all migrants in time" - Uachtarán na hÉireann Michael D. Higgins



**Useful Links/Resources**

**Department of Foreign Affairs**

[www.dfa.ie](http://www.dfa.ie)

**Embassy of Ireland, Canberra**

[www.dfa.ie/australia](http://www.dfa.ie/australia)

**Consulate General of Ireland Sydney**

[www.dfa.ie/sydney](http://www.dfa.ie/sydney)

**Honorary Consulate of Ireland Perth**

[www.consulateofirelandwa.com.au/](http://www.consulateofirelandwa.com.au/)

**Australian Department of Home Affairs**

[www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

**Support Agencies:**

***Brisbane:***

**Irish Australian Support Association of Qld Inc (IASAQ)**

Tel: +61 7 3391 1300  
Mobile: +61 432 087 328  
Email: [info@iasaq.com.au](mailto:info@iasaq.com.au)  
Web: <https://www.iasaq.com.au/>

***Melbourne:***

**Irish Australian Support and Resource Bureau**

Tel: +61 3 9482 3865  
Email: [info@iasrb.org](mailto:info@iasrb.org)  
Web: <https://www.iasrb.org/>

**Perth:**

**Claddagh Association**

Tel: +61 8 9249 9213  
Email: [admin@claddagh.org.au](mailto:admin@claddagh.org.au)  
Web: <https://claddagh.org.au/>

**Dublin:**

**Cross Care Migrant Project**

Tel: +353 (0)1 873 2844  
Email: [migrantproject@crosscare.ie](mailto:migrantproject@crosscare.ie)  
Web: <https://www.migrantproject.ie/>

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