



*The Hon. M. Iemma, MP
Premier, Treasurer and
Minister for Citizenship*



*The Hon. M. Orkopoulos, MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and
Minister Assisting the Premier on
Citizenship*



The Hon M. Iemma, MP
Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Citizenship
Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

31 October 2005

My Dear Premier

I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of the Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW for the year ended 30 June 2005 for presentation to Parliament.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985*, and includes a statement of affairs pursuant to the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*.

The achievements highlighted in this report were made possible by the commitment of the Commission staff. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their dedication throughout the year.

Yours sincerely

Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM
Chairperson
Community Relations Commission
For a multicultural NSW



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VISION, MISSION and VALUES

VISION

Be the recognised leader and facilitator of the equal participation of all communities within a harmonious, cohesive and multicultural New South Wales.

MISSION

Through continuous improvement, innovative and efficient management be the central reference point providing leadership and partnership to the Government, the communities and the private sector enabling maximum benefit from our cultural diversity to all the people of New South Wales.

VALUES

The Commission values:

- **recognising the professionalism of our people by creating a work environment in which openness, honesty, integrity, team work, safety, learning and communication are highly valued.**
- **focussing on the needs and aspirations of the general community, particularly the multicultural community of New South Wales.**
- **integrity and honesty in the way we operate.**
- **community participation and contribution.**
- **willingness to learn and enable learning.**
- **accountability and consistency in everything we do.**



CHAIRPERSON'S OVERVIEW of 2004-05

During 2004-05 the Commission consolidated its progress with important community projects and made technological advances that enhance services for its customers.

The Commission's on-line presence expanded considerably with the growth of CommuniLink website hosting for community organisations and with the enhancement of its electronic booking system of interpreters.

Meanwhile community projects moved forward in a significant way. One of these supports the Pacific communities in New South Wales to help make it a cohesive identity when it can address from a stronger base the issues that it has identified. Another relates to the Canterbury-Bankstown district, where the Commission is engaging the area's communities to strengthen positive community relations. The youth partnership program with Arabic-speaking communities continued its engagement with Arabic young people and their families and saw the successful conclusion of the Youth Liaison Teams where the participants graduated with valuable qualifications.

These and the many other projects of the Commission are described in the text of this report.

Challenges arose during the year which attracted the attention of the Commission. Perhaps the most significant centres on the local effects of the global phenomena of terrorism. While such actions are intolerable, unthinking people have unfairly associated innocent citizens with these acts. The Commission, in a cooperative effort with the communities affected, has taken measures to redress this. In this process, the support of the Premier and the Minister for Citizenship is acknowledged.

During this reporting year the Commission consulted with the NSW community at two day-long symposiums. The July 2004 symposium was built on a theme of understanding the importance of preparing the youth of today to manage the future of multiculturalism from their perspective. As well as being placed on the Commission's website, the outcomes of the symposium were distributed to government and community agencies to provide them with material with which to reinforce their multicultural policies. Some of the issues of significance that arose at the symposium, which the Commission included in its business planning, concerned the emerging communities, including the African communities, the importance of youth leadership, rural and regional issues, and funding issues.

The second of the two symposiums occurred in June 2005. The multicultural scene had changed dramatically in the twelve months, so much so that a theme of this symposium reflected the Commission's views on the importance of interfaith dialogue and the importance of respect for the religious beliefs found in our Australian community.

The Government is in continuing dialogue with community groups on these types of issues and the Commission is well aware of the commitment to this country by its people who comprise a rich diversity of ethnicities and religious backgrounds.

This issue was of major significance during the year and I continue an analysis of this and quote from my address at the symposium. I made the point at the symposium that “we must accept that our religious beliefs will not converge or merge, that we must respect the right of each other to hold those exclusive disparate beliefs and that we must find out how to live our lives in the commonality of Australian citizenship”. That means ensuring all laws are understood and respected by everyone in the community and are embraced by all, because it is our common respect for the laws of this country that gives us our most important point of commonality. Therefore, the way to safeguard our community harmony as a multi-faith society is not to expend our energies searching for common beliefs but to strengthen our unity as fellow Australians, accepting and respecting ethnic and religious differences.

It was on this theme that in May 2005 the Commission participated in planning and staging a major inter-faith dialogue gathering of Christians and Muslims at the Orion Theatre at Campsie. A packed theatre heard addresses from prominent Christian and Muslim speakers followed by a lively question and answer session that tackled serious issues of misunderstanding between the two faiths.

As well as the symposiums, another key source of advice to the Commission is from its ten Regional Advisory Councils. Their role is especially important in rural and regional areas where community links are not as strong as those in major urban areas. An achievement in a rural area is therefore of significance to a rural community and the Commission is pleased that its Regional Advisory Councils have, in the reporting year, made significant contributions to their communities. As examples I quote the arrangements for interpreting via video conferencing at Lightning Ridge and the highlighting of multicultural youth issues at Griffith which were initiated by the Griffith RAC; the consultations with community and government organisations in the Central West to explain Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements issues to enhance service delivery in a multicultural environment; better awareness of issues affecting refugees by relevant service providers and government agencies in the Illawarra; discussions on the impact of the Pacific Highway project on the Punjabi Sikh community that has a temple at Woolgoolga; cross border issues such as a joint project by NSW and Victoria on access to aged services by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in Albury and Wodonga.

The Commission accepted a proposal of the Northern Regional Advisory Council to host a community consultation and that is in the final phase of its planning stage.

Furthermore, the role of the Commission’s RACs is an important conduit for information on regional settlement to be passed on to the NSW Government’s Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee. This committee was established as the sole agency that represents the State’s policies on immigration and settlement to the Commonwealth and State governments.

The Commission is justifiably proud of its achievements with and for the community in the reporting year.

CommuniLink which commenced in July 2004 provides the culturally diverse communities of New South Wales an opportunity to set up their own website free of charge and interact with other communities over the internet. The CommuniLink project will bring together the entire community around a common service. The broadcast of messages can be delivered from one single point reaching all communities, in particular the culturally diverse community. For instance, government agencies will be able to broadcast information, especially in cases of emergency, disasters and crises, in community languages.

In October the Commission worked with the Protocol Division of the Premier's Department to stage the first ever Government-organised Iftar dinner. Iftar is the ceremonial breaking of the fast following the end of Ramadan. The Premier, Bob Carr, hosted the dinner which was attended by senior clergy of various religions along with many lay people of different religious backgrounds.

Also in October the Commission presented a major marketing seminar entitled *Multicultural Advertising and Branding*. It offered one hundred participants advanced strategies for reaching multicultural markets. Speakers from professional and business backgrounds covered new techniques in marketing and best-practise case studies. This seminar is part of the Commission's annual program of promoting the benefits of marketing to broader communities and utilising the cultural and linguistic skills in the community to boost business and find new overseas markets.

Popular cultural events sponsored by the Commission are the street festivals organised by local councils. In the past year, the Commission partnered with Hornsby and Waverly Councils with their festivals that promote community cohesion and unity.

On 8 December 2004 the Commission in conjunction with its Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table project co-hosted a leadership conference at the Bankstown Town Hall. Together with the Bankstown Multicultural Services and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women's Leadership project, the conference discussed issues around the subject of youth leadership.

A major achievement of the Pacific community was to finalise and ratify a constitution by its community's leaders. This followed extensive consultations in major centres of New South Wales. An interim council created the Pacific Youth Committee, which in turn organised the Pasifika Youth Day 2004 at the State Sports Centre at Homebush on 27 November. This event not only explored possible educational and employment opportunities for Pacific young people, but also showcased the cultural identity of Pacific communities.

Soccer NSW invited the Chairperson to convene a three person panel of inquiry to investigate crowd disturbances at a soccer match at Bonnyrigg in March 2005. I was joined by former Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Ms Irene Moss and Mr Kevin Waller, former NSW Magistrate and State Coroner. A report on the disturbances together with recommendations were produced by the Commission and handed over to Soccer NSW for implementation.

In 2004 the Commission in partnership with City Nations produced a multicultural calendar that gives information about the cultural and religious festivals and events that occur throughout the year. The calendar has many practical applications including helping managers learn the dates when their employees may wish to take leave to participate in their religious days.

The Community Harmony Crisis Management Plan (COMPLAN) was developed by the Commission with various stakeholders. COMPLAN sets out the protocols and procedures to be followed in the event of an incident which may have an impact on community relations. It is attracting national interest.

MediaLink is the Commission's media review business. It has generated interest from other jurisdictions and the general community. This service summarises media reports in the community language press enabling on-line access to communities' views on current affairs.

The Commission is pleased to be working with the Japanese community in its development of programs for its cultural exchange celebrations planned for 2006. While the Japanese community consists of many expatriates, there is a growing bond between New South Wales and Japan, particularly as many young adults who have lived and worked in Japan return with a strong sense of the living culture of that nation.

In its activities the Commission acknowledges the support during the reporting period of the former Premier and Minister for Citizenship, the Hon. R. J. Carr and the Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship, the Hon. John Hatzistergos. I thank the Deputy Chairperson, Mr Michael Marx AM, and my fellow Commissioners for their support and advice throughout the year. The Departmental Liaison Officer, Mr Sassoon Grigorian, played a key role in enhancing communication between the Commission and the Minister's Office. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the members of the ten regional advisory councils along with their Chairpersons and the Grants Advisory Committee for their contribution to the Commission. The dedication and work of the Commission's staff has made 2004-05 another productive year for the Commission. I am grateful for their efforts and continue to count on their contributions as the Commission faces the issues in the field of multiculturalism.



Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM
Chairperson
Community Relations Commission
For a multicultural NSW



PRINCIPLES OF MULTICULTURALISM

Part 1 Section 3(1) of the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000 enacts the following principles of multiculturalism:

- (1) *Parliament recognises that the people of New South Wales are of different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds, who, either individually or in community with other members of their respective groups, are free to profess, practise and maintain their own linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic heritage. It does so by supporting and promoting the following principles of multiculturalism:*
 - (a) **Principle 1** – *All individuals in New South Wales should have the greatest possible opportunity to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life in which they may legally participate.*
 - (b) **Principle 2** – *All individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the common language.*
 - (c) **Principle 3** – *All individuals should have the greatest possible opportunity to make use of and participate in relevant activities and programs provided or administered by the Government of New South Wales.*
 - (d) **Principle 4** – *All institutions of New South Wales should recognise the linguistic and cultural assets in the population of New South Wales as a valuable resource and promote this resource to maximise the development of the State.*
- (2) *Parliament also recognises that those principles are based on citizenship. The expression **citizenship** is not limited to formal Australian citizenship, but refers to the rights and responsibilities of all people in a multicultural society in which there is:*
 - (a) *a recognition of the importance of shared values within a democratic framework governed by the rule of law, and*
 - (b) *a unifying commitment to Australia, its interests and future.*

The principles of multiculturalism are to be construed accordingly.
- (3) *The principles of multiculturalism are the policy of the State.*
- (4) *Accordingly, each public authority must observe the principles of multiculturalism in conducting its affairs.*
- (5) *It is the duty of the chief executive officer of each public authority to implement the provisions of this section within the area of his or her administration.*



OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS of the COMMISSION

The Community Relations Commission of New South Wales was established as a statutory body on 13 of March, 2001 under the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*. The objectives of the Commission are in Part 3 section 12 and the functions of the Commission are in Part 3 section 13.

The objectives of the Commission are:

- participation of the people of New South Wales in community life and the public decision making process so that they can exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations
- access to government and community services that is equitable and that has regard to the linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic diversity of the people of New South Wales
- the promotion of a cohesive and harmonious multicultural society with mutual respect for and understanding of cultural diversity
- the enrichment of all sections of society through the benefits of cultural diversity
- the promotion of the principles of multiculturalism and the advantages of a multicultural society
- the promotion of social justice, community development and community initiatives for ethnic communities in New South Wales.

The functions of the Commission are:

- to undertake systematic and wide ranging consultation with people and groups with respect to its objectives
- to advise and make recommendations to the Minister to promote any of its objectives
- to investigate and report to the Minister on any matter relating to its objectives that the Commission considers appropriate or that the Minister refers to the Commission for investigation and report
- to arrange and participate in forums to promote its objectives
- to facilitate cooperative arrangements involving governmental, business, educational and community groups or bodies to promote its objectives
- to enter into agreements with public authorities in connection with their functions to promote the objectives of the Commission (including, but not limited to, the objective relating to access to government services)

- to assist, and assess the effectiveness of, public authorities in observing the principles of multiculturalism in the conduct of their affairs, particularly in connection with the delivery of government services
- to assist in resolving issues associated with cultural diversity
- to provide interpreter (whether within or outside New South Wales) or other services approved by the Minister
- to advise the Minister on the most effective use of funds appropriated by Parliament for programs related to its objectives (including funds for the provision of resources to community groups that promote the objectives of the Commission)
- to support community initiatives that promote the objectives of the Commission
- to encourage eligible people to become Australian citizens
- to advise and make recommendations to the Anti-Discrimination Board on matters relating to discrimination and racial vilification
- such other functions as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this or any other Act.



UNITY IN ADVERSITY – Affirmation

We the leaders of New South Wales’ many religious faiths, leaders of the major political parties in New South Wales Parliament and representatives of the Consular Corps in New South Wales join at this time of adversity in affirming and celebrating the spirit of tolerance and goodwill at the heart of Australian society.

We acknowledge the commitment of the New South Wales Parliament to the diversity of the Australian community. We condemn all acts of terrorism. We embrace in our hearts the victims and families of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, the long-suffering Afghan people, those of Afghan descent who live among us and all victims of terror and oppression in this time of conflict.

In the name of our respective faiths and in accordance with the principles we each uphold, we dedicate ourselves to act generously, humanely, and with compassion in fulfilling our proud citizenship of Australia and our role as concerned members of the world community.

This Affirmation was proposed by the Premier Bob Carr and signed by religious leaders including Archbishop George Pell, Archbishop Peter Jensen, Protopresbyter Steven Scoutas, His Eminence Tadjedine Al Hilaly, Most Venerable Thich Phuoc Hue and Rabbi Raymond Apple at the Unity in Adversity Assembly on 15 November 2001 at Government House.



MEMBERS of the COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

as at 30 June 2005



*Commissioners from left to right:
standing: Michael Marx, AM (Deputy Chairperson); Michael Christodoulou; Margaret Kama; Ned Marunic, OAM; Henry Pan, OAM.
seated: Benny Peng; Marta Aquino; Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM (Chairperson); Ezel Jupiter.*

Mr Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer

Appointed 27 February 1989. Appointment expires 14 September 2008.

President, Anti-Discrimination Board

Member, Police and Ethnic Communities' Advisory Council

Chair, Carnivale Ltd

Member, Migration Heritage Centre Advisory Committee (Power House Museum)

Member, Human Services Chief Executive Officers Group

Member, Arabic Youth Partnership Implementation Committee

Secretary, CityWatch Council (Cabramatta)

Member, Police and Community Training Management Committee

Member, Standing Committee of Criminal Justice System Chief Executive Officers

Member, Geographical Names Board of NSW

Member, Australian Medical Council Appeals Committee

Member, Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

Mr Michael Marx, AM, Deputy Chairperson

Partner, Chalmers Marx Lawyers.

Appointed 22 December 1999. Appointment expires 21 December 2005.

Community involvement:

Trustee, Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust

Trustee, Fund for Jewish Higher Education

Past President and life member, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies

Past President and board member, Waverley Action for Youth Services

Ms Marta Aquino

CEO, Residential Gardens for the Spanish Speaking Frail Aged Inc.

Appointed 15 November 2000. Appointment expires 14 November 2006.

Community involvement:

CEO, Residential Gardens for the Spanish Speaking Frail Aged Inc

Member, Fairfield City Museum and Gallery Advisory Board

Member, Aged Care Liaison Committee

Member, Western Area CEO Network

Chair, Fundraising Committee, Aged Care Project for the Spanish Community

Member, Integral Energy Customer Consultative Committee

Member, Management Committee, STARTTS

Chairperson, Central West Regional Advisory Council

Chairperson, Albury Regional Advisory Council

Chairperson, Northern Regional Advisory Council

Mr Nedjelko Maruncic, OAM

Company Director.

Appointed 11 October 2000. Appointment expires 23 October 2005.

Community involvement:

Vice President, Australian Croatian Community Council

Vice President, Jadran Hajduk Club Limited

Mr Henry Pan, OAM

Managing Director, Dynamic Manpower Development Pty Ltd
Appointed 3 May 2000. Appointment expires 3 May 2006.

Community involvement:

- Foundation Chairman, CASS Group of Organisations
- Member, NSW Administrative Decisions Tribunal
- Member, NSW Co-operatives Council
- Member, NSW Community Languages Schools Board
- Member, Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Member, Australian Acoustical Society
- Member, Institution of Engineers Australia
- Member, Canterbury Multicultural Aged and Disability Support Service Management Committee
- Chairperson, Illawarra Regional Advisory Council

Ms Ezel Jupiter

Team Leader, Centrelink Multicultural Services.
Appointed 17 October 2001. Appointment expires 16 October 2007.

Community involvement:

- Secretary of the NSW Turkish Welfare Association
- Member, Management Committee, STARTTS
- Actively involved in refugee settlement, rural and regional development issues
- Chairperson, New England Regional Advisory Council
- Hornsby-Central Coast Regional Advisory Council

Ms Margaret Kama

Full-time student studying Medical Science at Sydney University.
Appointed 3 March 2004. Appointment expires 2 March 2006.

Community involvement:

- Youth leader, Youth at Prayer and Play
- Member, Medical Society
- Member, Science Society
- Member, Youth Justice Advisory Council
- Member, Pacific Youth Network Committee

Member, Multicultural Youth Network
 State Representative on Pacific Council
 Chairperson, Griffith Regional Advisory Council
 Chairperson, Macarthur-Liverpool Regional Advisory Council.

Mr Benny Peng

Part-time student studying commerce and accounting at Macquarie University.
 Appointed 3 March 2004. Appointment expires 8 March 2006.

Community involvement

Member, Chinese Student Society
 Secretary, Australia Wu Shu Tai Chi Council
 Chairperson, Nepean-Blacktown Regional Advisory Council

Mr Michael Christodoulou, DO

Chiropractor and Osteopath
 Appointed 2 March 2005. Appointment expires 1 March 2008.

Community involvement

President, Cyprus Community of NSW
 Secretary, Ethnic Communities Council of NSW
 Trustee, Casino Community Benefit Fund, NSW Department of Gaming and Racing
 Director on the Board of Directors of the Stanmore Hawks Soccer Club
 Coordinator, United Nations Human Rights Day Committee
 Chairperson, May Murray Neighbourhood Centre Inc.
 Chairperson, Hunter Regional Advisory Council

Members of the Commission whose appointment expired during 2004-05

Ms Therese Le-Dang J.P.
 Appointment expired 16 October 2004.

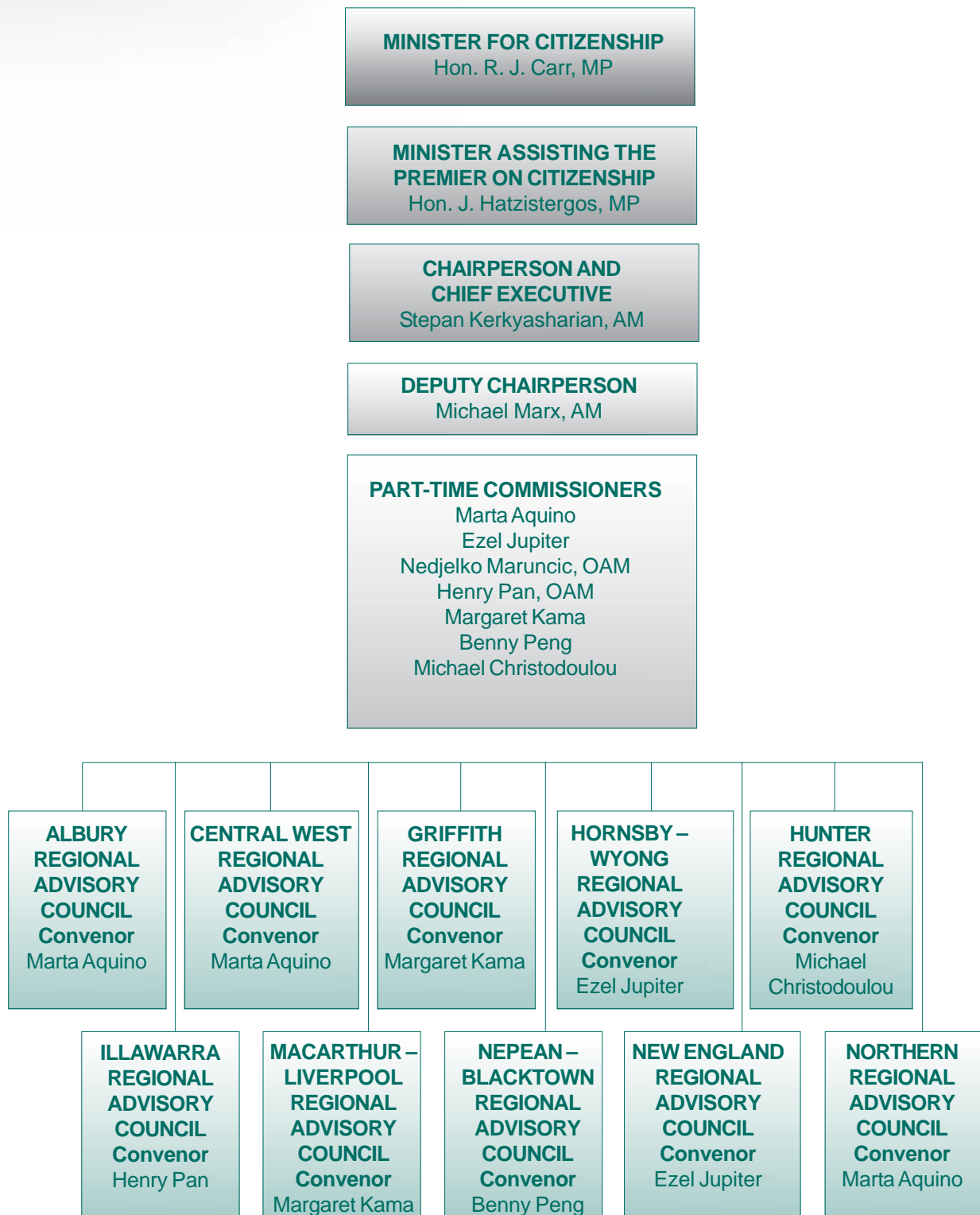
Ms Paula Masselos
 Appointment expired 19 December 2004.



ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

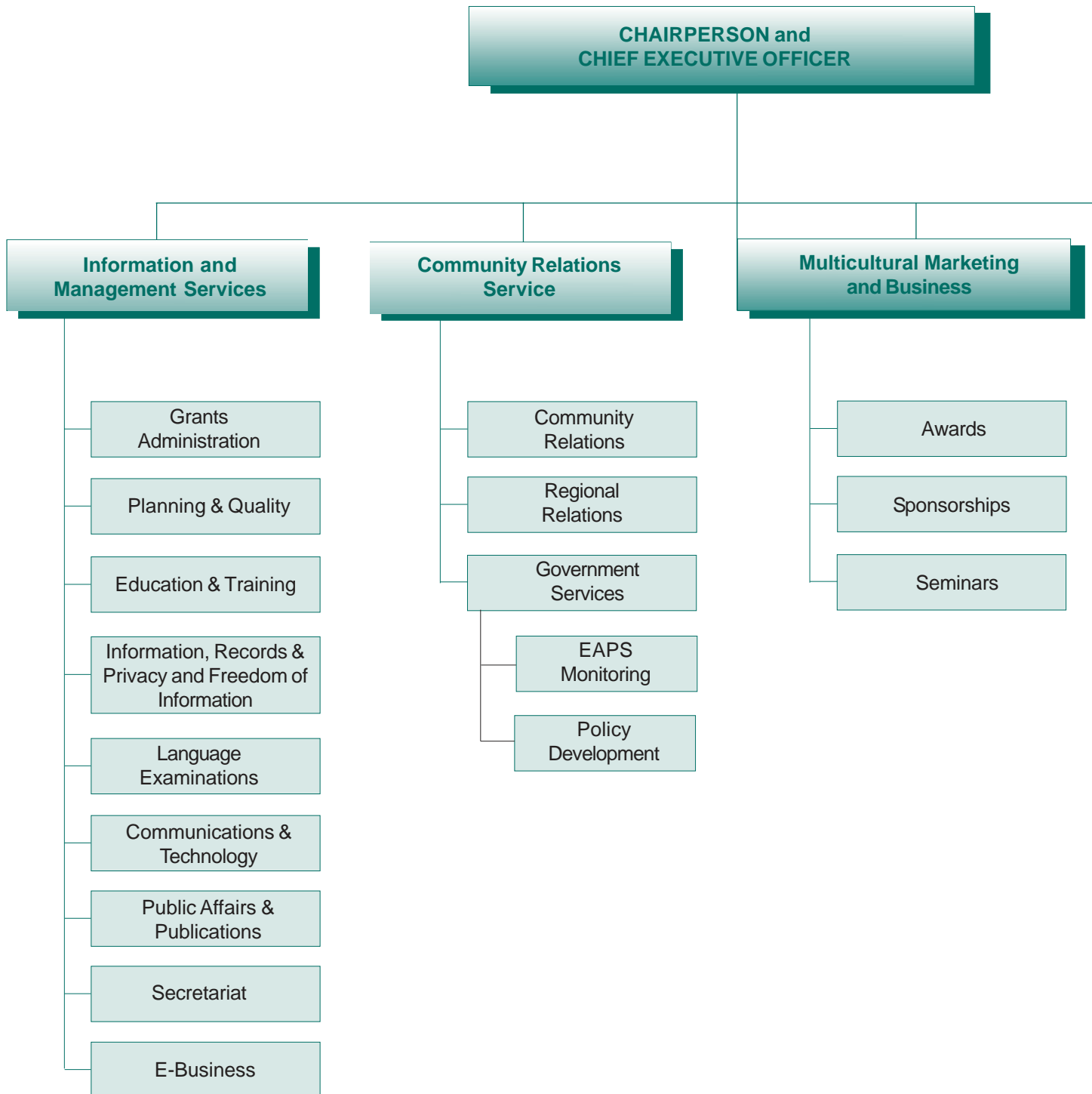
Organisation Structure - boards and committees

as at 30 June 2005



Organisation Structure - functional

as at 30 June 2005



Language Services

- Interpreting
- Translating
- Video Conferencing

Financial & Corporate Services

- Budgeting
- Financial Accounting
- Accommodation
- Risk Management
- Procurement
- Employee Relations & Human Resources
- Industrial Relations
- EEO



PRINCIPAL STAFF of THE COMMISSION

CHAIRPERSON AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM

DIVISION HEADS

Community Relations Service

Director

Richard Acheson

Financial and Corporate Services

Director

Hakan Harman, FCPA, BCom

Information and Management Services

Director

Marte Tagle, MBT, GCertPSectMgt

Language Services

Director

Ann Groth, ALAA