



projects and services

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As the lead agency for multicultural issues, the Community Relations Commission carried out a number of major projects during 2004-05.

Youth Partnership with Arabic-Speaking Communities

The Government's Youth Partnership with Arabic-Speaking Communities is a whole of government and whole of community approach to meeting the needs of young people from Arabic-speaking backgrounds, their families and communities.

A review of the Partnership conducted in August 2004 by the Performance Measurement and Review Division of Premier's Department found that Youth Liaison Teams were effective in meeting Partnership goals.

Youth Liaison Teams operated from May 2002 to June 2005. During that time Teams made up of Muslim and Christian volunteers operated in Auburn, Bankstown, Liverpool, Parramatta, and the Sydney CBD where they engaged more than 6,000 young people in places where they gather such as at shopping malls, railway stations, and streets providing information and referrals for young people.

As part of an exit and sustainability strategy, Youth Liaison Team members undertook a 12-week training course and skills assessment at Bankstown TAFE to identify and accredit skills developed during work with the teams. A booklet of anecdotes and experiences of team members is in production.

In May 2005, the Commission entered into an Agreement with the Department of Community Services under Phase 2 of the Partnership to address the long standing issue of access to public space for young people and engagement of young people with security guards in public places. The project will build on an existing body of work developed by government and non-government agencies on developing an appropriate and effective training module to better equip security guards to engage young people and achieve positive outcomes.

NSW Council For Pacific Communities

The NSW Partnership with Pacific Communities is a whole of Government and whole of community approach to address the needs of Pacific communities.

Under this partnership, the Interim NSW Council for Pacific Communities was established and is being managed by the Commission.

The NSW Council for Pacific Communities is expected to be incorporated under the *Associations Incorporations Act* in July 2005.

This was a major achievement as the rules in the constitution were drawn up after extensive consultations with community leaders and ministers of religion as well as Pacific communities across Griffith, the Illawarra, Newcastle and Sydney to achieve consensus, particularly on the aims and objectives and management structure of the new organisation.

The Interim Council invited nominations for the permanent council to be elected at its first general meeting

The establishment of a Pacific Youth Committee was identified as a major priority for the interim Council. The Pacific Youth Network Committee (PYNC) consists of 30 to 40 young people ranging in age from 12 to 30 years and representing a broad range of communities and geographic locations. They are highly motivated and operate through a series of sub committees that identify and address issues of relevance to young people and refer these to the Council.

In August 2004 PYNC created a Youth Leadership Forum to explore possible educational and employment opportunities for Pacific young people. PYNC organised this activity - Pasifika Youth Day 2004 - at the State Sports Centre at Homebush.

This event showcased Pacific talent in the areas of cultural song and dance involving students from various high schools throughout Sydney and the regional areas of Newcastle and Griffith as well as groups from Canberra, Melbourne and featured artists from New Zealand.

CityWatch



The CityWatch program is part of the Cabramatta Anti-Drug Strategy. The Premier requested the Community Relations Commission to carry responsibility for the program's establishment and to provide ongoing support and secretariat services for the CityWatch Council and its initiatives.

Welcome to country at the CityWatch forum.

The Council has undertaken a range of activities and initiatives to assess and address local community safety concerns, including:

- consultation and relationship building with businesses in the area to identify safety and security concerns. A Commission representative and Police Area Commander regularly walk around and talk to business people.
- the annual Police and community forum, jointly organised by the Community Relations Commission and Cabramatta Police, took place in June 2005. The forum was well attended and represented a range of ethnic and age groups.
- the holding of 13 residents' focus groups to identify local safety and security concerns and build relationships with local residents as well as encouraging residents to report crimes.
- the production of a CityWatch brochure and four CityWatch Update newsletters that can be viewed on the CityWatch website www.crc.nsw.gov.au/crc/citywatch

Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table

The Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table is implemented by the Community Relations Commission in partnership with the Department of Community Services.

The Round Table was officially launched in April 2004 by the Hon. J. Hatzistergos MLC at Punchbowl Boys High School and is made up of 21 members who represent various segments of the community including community leaders, ministers of religion, young people, business people and community workers.

The aims of the project are to promote community harmony across cultures and generations, enhance the capacity of local communities and government agencies to sustain community harmony in the Canterbury-Bankstown area and develop and implement activities and strategies that strengthen positive community relations.

Links have been established between existing projects and services in the Canterbury-Bankstown area to build and support sustainable outcomes of the project.

Some achievements of the Round Table include:

- the Auburn Bankstown Canterbury leadership conference *Are Leaders Born or Bred?* was held at Bankstown Town Hall on 8 December 2004. This was a joint project between Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table project in conjunction with the Bankstown Multicultural Youth Service and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women's Leadership Project. A total of 90 delegates attended including young people, women, teachers and community leaders. Suggestions by the conference included opportunities for community groups to discuss community leadership issues, provide training for migrant services on running a service and involve young people on management committees of ethno specific organisations.

- an Intercultural Sports and Activities Day held at Wiley Park on in February, in conjunction with the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation and the Commission attracted some 250 participants including young people, parents and interested local residents. The event received positive feedback along with suggestions for another similar day.
- the Community Leadership Development Training is working with seven primary schools (three government, two Islamic and two Catholic) in the Greenacre area to develop a leadership program for years 5 and 6 through interschool sports and recreation day in late 2005.



The fun of the Intercultural Sports Activities at Wiley Park

NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee

In February 2005 the Premier approved the establishment of the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee, which is managed by the Commission.

The Committee is responsible for addressing settlement planning issues for humanitarian and non-humanitarian entrants in New South Wales. It monitors and assesses the impact of humanitarian and non-humanitarian migration and coordinates the development of NSW policy and positions on settlement issues, increasing the effectiveness of representation on these issues at meetings of the Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Membership of the Committee includes key NSW Government agencies and the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Immigration to regional New South Wales

The Commission is the State's coordinating body for strategic issues with the Commonwealth that address migration issues to regional New South Wales.

A Commonwealth-NSW Working Party on Migration to Sydney and Regional NSW was convened by the Commission to report on options to divert business and skilled migration from Sydney to regional NSW and reduce the level of temporary and permanent migration to Sydney.

The Working Party produced a report with 29 recommendations that address the issue of settlement in regional NSW. These recommendations are being implemented and the Working Party is due to report again in 2006.

Community Harmony Crisis Management Plan

The Community Harmony Reference Group was established in 2002 to deal with community unease following the terrorist attacks in Bali and to ensure a coordinated and rapid response to any local community relations issues which may arise in the wake of international events.

Subsequently, the Community Harmony Reference Group requested that the Commission develop a Community Relations Crisis Management Plan (COMPLAN)

COMPLAN details the needs, objectives, roles and responsibilities of agencies and non-government organisations and community leaders and identifies the resources available to implement the plan. It also spells out the protocols and procedures to be followed in the event of an incident here or overseas which may have an impact on community relations.

COMPLAN is nearing finalisation in conjunction with NSW Police, Department of Education and Training, Department of Community Services and the Anti-Discrimination Board.

Recognition of Overseas Nursing Qualifications

At the request of the Government, the Commission established a committee on the Recognition of Overseas Nursing Qualifications to examine, identify barriers to the employment of Filipino, Indonesian and Indian trained nurses in the NSW health sector and propose strategies to overcome the identified barriers while maintaining high standards of health and patient safety.

The committee includes representatives from:

- Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- NSW Health
- NSW Nurses and Midwives Board
- NSW Nurses Association.

The committee examined options to remove the barriers to the employment of nurses trained overseas, while ensuring high health standards are maintained. Options under consideration include offering bridging courses and adopting overseas models for recruiting nurses.

White Paper - Cultural Harmony The Next Decade 2002-2012

The Government released the White Paper *Cultural Harmony, The Next Decade 2002-2012*, which contains the Community Relations Plan of Action 2012. It was developed following public consideration and comment on the Green Paper.

The White Paper established four Key Objectives that flow from the Principles of Multiculturalism that are to be addressed by public sector agencies in implementing the Principles and providing services to a culturally diverse community. These are leadership, community harmony, access and equity, and economic and cultural opportunities.

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) Program

The EAPS program is one of the main vehicles for assisting and assessing New South Wales agencies in the implementation of the Principles of Multiculturalism.

In 2004-05 the Commission provided feedback on EAPS Standards Framework assessments and EAPS forward plans to nine EAPS key agencies and included a summary report on their activities in the *Community Relations Report 2004*.

Community Relations Report 2004

The *Community Relations Report 2004* was prepared by the Commission on the status of community relations in New South Wales, with a focus on cultural diversity.

The 2004 report was themed to highlight Government activities that strengthen community and religious harmony and to promote the potential of young people. The report:

- includes an overview of inter-religious activities that promote community harmony,
- reports on a range of Government activities that reflect on the experience of young people in cultural diversity issues,
- for the first time, highlights activities of local Government in providing programs and services to their culturally and linguistically diverse populations,
- includes awards presented by NSW Government agencies in recognition of individuals and organisations for artistic works that reflect our cultural diversity and the provision of multicultural services,
- contains an overview of the performance of Key Agencies against the Standards Framework of the EAPS program, as well as a summary of EAPS reporting compliance of Government agencies,
- highlights 130 multicultural initiatives undertaken by public sector agencies and local councils.

Joint Commission and Department of Local Government pilot project to assist local councils implement the principles of multiculturalism locally

The Department of Local Government and the Commission are jointly developing a framework to encourage and assist NSW councils to implement the Principles of Multiculturalism.

This project started in 2005 and involves piloting the framework with Blacktown, Baulkham Hills, Griffith and Walgett councils.

A Project Steering Group manages the project that includes representatives from local government organisations, the Department of Local Government and the Commission.

Online Language Services

The Commission created the Online Language Services (OLS) to enhance the provision of interpreting and translation services across New South Wales.

When fully operational, the service will transact electronically the full range of translation services and interpreter booking using the Internet. The full translation transaction, from booking to payment, will be processed electronically.

MediaLink

The Commission implemented MediaLink to make available information in community language newspapers to Government, non-government and community organisations and the public. MediaLink subscribers receive online reports daily.

CommuniLink

The Commission offers non profit sharing community organisations a free web-hosting service to give organisations in our culturally diverse community an opportunity to set up their own website free of charge, and interact with other communities over the internet.

CommuniLink brings 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.

Further information on CommuniLink is available at www.communilink.org.au.

Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS)

The Community Language Allowance Scheme is a Government strategy to recognise and value the linguistic skills of NSW public sector employees as an important resource for the benefit of the whole state, particularly in service delivery.

CLAS provides an allowance, additional to salary, for selected employees of New South Wales Government agencies who use a language other than English to communicate with clients in addition to their normal duties.

The Community Relations Commission conducts examinations of language competency for employees nominated by their agencies.

Video conferencing in rural areas

The Commission is planning to offer video conferencing in rural areas to improve the accessibility of interpreting services.

Trials between the courts, the Department of Corrective Services and the Community Relations Commission's interpreters are underway.

Language services

In May 2005 the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Land and Housing Corporation entered into two year contracts with the Commission for the provision of interpreting services.

The Commission supplies interpreters to the Roads and Traffic Authority for candidates undertaking the Driver's Knowledge Test through block bookings which are regular assignments booked in advance.

The Commission also supplies interpreters to the Land and Housing Corporation to assist clients in accessing housing information and services in an appropriate language according to the needs of the client.

Language Services recruited and arranged the induction of 58 interpreters and translators for the casual panel of interpreters and translators.

National Multicultural Marketing Awards



*National 2004 Awards -
Multicultural Marketing Grand Award Trophy*

To encourage businesses to utilise Australia's cultural diversity to its fullest potential, the Commission established the Multicultural Marketing Awards.

The Awards reward businesses that successfully market their product or service to the entire community and are an opportunity to highlight examples of best practice in the multicultural marketing arena.

In 2004 the winners were:

Grand Award and Integral Energy Community Award
Chabad House, Christian Interfaith Education & Forum on Australia's Islamic Relations.

Government Award

Waverley Library and the Metropolitan Public Libraries Association.

Commercial Big Business Award

Cantarella Bros.

Office of Fair Trading's Commercial Small Business Award and Export Award

Messages On Hold.

Advertising Award

LOUD Multicultural.

Technology Award

Etranslate.

The Commission also encourages businesses to incorporate multicultural marketing strategies into their overall communication campaigns by holding an information seminar that highlights the benefits of multicultural marketing. Sessions feature experts in the multicultural marketing arena who provide practical advice for corporations and government agencies seeking to initiate or promote multicultural marketing activities.

Sponsorships

The Commission offers a range of awards that recognise outstanding contributions to the arts by people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and artistic works that promote cross-cultural understanding and community harmony.

As part of the annual **Premier's Literary Awards** in May, the Commission offers an award to the writer of a book, play, music drama or script that portrays the interaction of Australia's diverse cultures and canvasses issues arising from the Australian immigration and migrant settlement experience. Tony Kevin won the 2005 Commission award of \$15,000 for his literary work *A Certain Maritime Incident*, an account of the sinking of the SIEV X between Australia and Indonesia in 2001 in when 353 asylum seekers drowned.

The Commission's prize in the **Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards**, a national poetry competition for school students, valued at \$350 in 2005 was won by Ms. Caley Stevens of Strathfield South Public School was the winner in November, 2004, for her poem, *Colours*.

Colours

by Caley Stevens

*I can feel
the coolness of the monkey-bars beneath her hands
and the thump of the soccer ball hitting his foot.*

*I can smell
his worn, dirt stained sports t-shirt
and sweat falling down under her nose.*

*I can taste
the sweat dripping onto her tongue as she opens her mouth
and the grass in his mouth as he gets up from the ground.*

*I can hear
his heartbeat pumping as he runs
and the shouts, cries and laughter of children
echoing over me,
as I sit, watching, drinking it all in, storing in my mind what*

*I can see –
A rainbow of children, not caring what country
the others are from; coming together
to enjoy life, celebrating
freedom.*



Ms Caley Stevens



Ms Alejandra Canales, writer and director of Switch on the Night

The \$2,000 prize for a final year student of the **Australian Film, Television and Radio School** was awarded in April 2005 to Alejandra Canales, writer and director of *Switch on the Night*, depicting the impact on young children of detention in immigration centres.

The award for a short film that best explores cross-cultural issues is presented at the annual **Sydney Film Festival** in June and is valued at \$4,000. Winner for 2005 was writer and director Tony Krawitz for *Jewboy* which explores the experiences of a Jewish young man and his painful encounter on a search for his place in the world, his family and his faith, before he can settle and marry.



Dr Chris Andrews receives a PEN medallion

The Commission sponsors jointly with the Ministry for the Arts the **NSW Premier's Translation Prize and PEN medallion**, valued at \$15,000. The prize acknowledges the contribution to literary culture by Australian translators for literary works translated into English. It is offered biannually, with the Ministry and the Commission meeting the cost of the award alternately. In 2005, the award was won by Dr Chris Andrews of Melbourne for his translation of Bolaño's *By Night in Chile* and *Distant Star* from Spanish.

NSW Premier's Chinese Community Service Awards

The Premier's Chinese Community Service awards recognise significant contributions made by members of the Chinese community both within New South Wales and across Australia.

The first awards were presented in February 2005 at lunar new year celebrations in Sydney's Chinatown. Winners received a certificate and official citation. The award categories and winners were:

the **Victor Chang Community Service Award for excellence in community citizenship**, in honour of Dr Victor Chang, a pioneer of the modern era of heart transplantation who was responsible for the establishment of the National Heart Transplant Unit at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney. The award recognises significant and innovative efforts in general community service to address a particular community welfare need in the Chinese community. The winner was Ms Rose Yeung.



*The Premier's Chinese Community Service Award winners.
From left to right: King Fong, Rose Yeung, Dr Tony Goh, Connie Tung.*

the **Jack Wong Sue Award for Voluntary Community Service Beyond the Chinese Community**, in honour of this distinguished war veteran and presented to a Chinese individual or group in recognition of community service beyond the Chinese community. This winner was Dr Tony Goh.

the **Quong Tart Lifetime Achievement Award in Community Service** in honour of pioneer Chinese Australian businessman, Mr Quong Tart, who is widely recognised for his significant philanthropic activities in the Ashfield and broader Sydney area at the turn of last century. This award is for an individual who has demonstrated exceptional commitment by providing outstanding volunteer service over an extended period of time and was won by Mr King Fong.

the **Young Chinese Volunteer** award recognises the valuable role in community service by young volunteers under 25 years of age and was won by Ms Connie Tung.

A Special Commendation was awarded posthumously to Mr George Cumines.



Mr Cumines' granddaughter, Tamara Yap, receives the award from Premier Bob Carr

The Commission Awards for Volunteering

2005 is the inaugural year for annual awards honouring individuals in NSW whose tireless community service has enhanced the cultural and social wellbeing of their migrant communities. The Awards for Volunteering are to be presented in the following categories:

The **Community Service Award** for distinguished volunteer community service which may include community service to health, settlement, social and welfare services, aged, disability and youth services or the establishment and/or management of community organisations or activities.

The **Volunteer of the Year Award** honours the outstanding contributions of an individual through distinguished volunteer service in any area of community service in the Australian community.

The **Young Volunteer Award** that recognises the valuable role in voluntary community services of volunteers under 25 years of age.

The **Lifetime Achievement in Community Service Award** that recognises an individual for their lifetime commitment to voluntary and community service within a migrant community.

Street Festivals Project

The Commission auspices a street festivals project in partnership with local councils to promote community cohesion and unity. Councils that hosted street festivals in 2004-05 were Hornsby in November 2004 and Waverley in April 2005.

Australian Multicultural Calendar

In 2004 the Commission in partnership with City Nations produced calendars that provide detailed information about cultural and religious festivals and events throughout the year. The calendar is illustrated with photographs of these types of events.

The Commission draws on its expertise in researching dates on which the various festivals fall annually and provides these to City Nations.

The calendar has many practical applications, for example as a planning tool for managers by alerting them to dates when their employees may wish to take leave or days off to participate in their religious or cultural festivals or holy days. This is particularly important for those culturally significant dates like Easter, the lunar new year and Ramadan which change annually according to the cycles of the moon.

The calendar is considered a potential as a marketing tool as it gives businesses the opportunity to plan promotions and sales around community functions and festivals.