

performance report

against critical success factors
of the Corporate Plan



- 24. **Critical Success Factor 1 –
An innovative leader in community relations**
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Best practice in information, records and
knowledge management**
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Responsive to the needs of our culturally diverse
society**
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Productive utilisation of our physical resources**
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Efficiency and excellence in language service
delivery**



Critical Success Factor 1: An innovative leader in community relations

Strategic corporate objectives

- Achieve a high profile as a point of reference for information provision
- Develop extensive networks and partnerships
- Anticipate and respond effectively to community issues
- Improve level of performance in EAPS Standards Framework

As the State's peak advisor on multicultural diversity, the Commission hosted the second annual Community Relations Forum in April; the Chairperson spoke at the National Press Club, the Commission participated in the organisation of two centenary celebrations and sponsored awards acknowledging volunteering in multicultural NSW. Sponsorship was provided for four street festivals that celebrated cultural diversity and the Commission worked with Government agencies and community groups on a project that identifies local safety concerns and sources of crime. To improve the consultation process with regional and rural areas, the Commission established regional advisory councils.

Achieve a high profile as a point of reference for information provision

On 11 September 2001, the Chairperson of the Commission, Stepan Kerkyasharian, AM, addressed the National Press Club on "Concepts of Citizenship in a Globalised World."

Mr Kerkyasharian's address and a subsequent question and answer session were broadcast on ABC television the following day.

The address traced the developing concepts of citizenship over many centuries and argued that the linkage of citizenship to a predefined national identity was no longer relevant. It argued that such a linkage had actually been a contributor to interracial and interethnic conflict. Mr Kerkyasharian told the National Press Club that ethnicity, race, language and religion should not play any part in determining or defining the status of a citizen. The paper has attracted widespread local and international interest.

The Commission was invited to give advice on ensuring Sydney's culturally diverse communities were represented in events to mark two special celebrations, the centenary of federation and 100 years of the Centennial Parklands. To mark the Year of the Volunteer, the contribution of volunteers to the State's cultural diversity was acknowledged through award sponsorship. The Commission also worked with communities on a gardening project and led Government agencies in the development of cross-cultural training.

During 2001, to mark Australia's centenary of federation, the Commission worked with a number of Government agencies to ensure that centenary celebrations in NSW included and represented Sydney's culturally diverse communities. For example, the Commission was on the initial steering committee for the Centenary Naval Review project of the Royal Australian Navy to advise on the involvement of culturally diverse communities in the review. Unfortunately, the review was cancelled in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attack in the USA and the subsequent commitment of Australian forces. However, a number of warships visited Sydney and the navy, with advice from the Commission, worked with the relevant communities to host community functions for the visiting crews.

For the centenary celebrations of the Centennial Parklands, the Commission contributed to the working party by advising the committee on sourcing performers from culturally diverse communities for the Parkfest event and helped ensure that culturally diverse communities were represented at the opening of the Avenue of Nations.

2001 was proclaimed as the International Year of Volunteers by the United Nations General Assembly in November 1997 to highlight the achievements of the millions of volunteers worldwide and to encourage more people globally to engage in volunteer activity. As part of the NSW theme of *Active Citizens Building Communities*, the Commission sponsored awards for volunteering in multicultural NSW to recognise and celebrate the volunteer work that promotes and enhances the State's culturally diverse community.

The Commission is on the steering committee for the Market Gardening in a Culturally Diverse Society project that is in its third year of operation. The Commission made a major contribution in developing a communications strategy to attract market gardeners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and provided a Khmer translator for a Cambodian farm walk in May 2002.

Recognising the contribution of volunteers

The International Year of Volunteers was embraced by NSW under the theme of *Active Citizens Building Communities*. The Commission sponsored awards for volunteering in multicultural NSW to recognise and celebrate the volunteer work that promotes and enhances the State's culturally diverse communities. The Commission received 87 nominations that were judged by an independent panel comprising:

- Susan Bures, representing Michael Marx, AM, Deputy Chair, CRC
- The Hon. Barry Unsworth AO, Chair, Australia Day Council of NSW
- Sandy Holloway AO, Chair, NSW Advisory Committee for International Year of the Volunteer
- Ezel Jupiter, Commissioner, CRC.

Winners were announced by the Hon. Morris Iemma MP, Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship.

Community General

Chan Yong Koh, Chinese Australian Services Society Co-operative Limited for establishment and/or management of community organisations or activities.

Community Welfare

Branislav Musovski, St. George Migrant Resource Centre, for extensive contribution in welfare areas, for example childcare, settlement or disability services.



Community Language Teachers in Ethnic Schools

Alessandro Adorni-Braccesi, Association of Illawarra Community Language Schools Inc. Bouasanith Sukhaseume, Lao Community Advancement NSW Co-op Ltd.

Two special prizes for outstanding service were awarded to Mieczyslaw Swat from the Polish Welfare and Information Bureau NSW Inc and Lolita Farmer from the Philippine Community Council of NSW.

Ms B. Sukhaseume a winner of a CRC volunteer award for Community Languages.

The Premier's Department designated the Commission as the lead agency to manage the development of a cross-cultural training program to increase capacity for access and equity in Government agencies. Consequently, the Commission is developing a training package that supports existing training and further builds sustainability of the service providers through a whole-of-government and whole-of-organisation approach. Initially, the training will be available to service providers that focus on the vulnerable and youth at risk within the context of the Youth Partnership with Arabic Speaking Communities project. Training will be conducted in the same local government areas as the project.

The Commission undertakes systematic and wide ranging consultation with people and groups. To achieve its objective to play a leadership role in achieving community participation and harmony, the Commission is linking the 200 community groups it coordinates through the Internet. The Community Interaction project will offer a free-of-charge service to set up and host and/or link to community group websites. The service will have its own website, that can be accessed from the Commission website or directly, and will be operational in late 2002.

Visit www.crc.nsw.gov.au

The Commission's website is a valuable reference for information on cultural diversity in Australia as well as providing an insight into its day-to-day activities. All Commission publications and business forms are now available online. During 2001-2002, the website was improved to provide access to the Commission's services.

Develop extensive networks and partnerships

To build sensitivity and support for cultural diversity during 2001-2002, the Commission developed a partnership with the Cabramatta community project to improve safety and worked with Arabic speaking communities on developing opportunities for Arabic youth to participate in their communities. In rural and regional areas, the Commission supported street festivals that celebrated cultural diversity.

Cabramatta CityWatch brings together community groups and other government service providers to work collaboratively with the police on identifying local safety concerns and sources of local crime as well as resolving the issues of community safety and policing in Cabramatta.

Following consultations with community organisations, representatives, leaders and workers, the Commission established forums and groups to involve even the most disenfranchised members to directly participate in CityWatch through a Link Group of people living or working in the Cabramatta area.

To encourage participation by a wide range of people in CityWatch, a number of forums and local community events, including a workshop, street arts factory and senior citizens forum were held. As a result, a number of recommendations were made by participants to improve information and links.

A joint initiative between the NSW Government and Arabic speaking communities, announced by the Premier in July 2001, aims to improve the lives of young Arabic speaking people, their families and their neighbourhoods by establishing youth liaison teams, introducing education initiatives, providing parent support, making available sport, recreation and cultural opportunities, and building community trust.

The Commission is responsible for the establishment and coordination of Youth Liaison Teams that will prevent problems by helping identify young people at risk. The strategy is to interact with young people in places they gather, and work with schools, local councils, police, health and other agencies. The teams liaise with families and the community to discuss, resolve and prevent risk-taking behaviour and connect young people to support structures and services.

Following a successful three-month pilot of two liaison teams who established positive connections with over 500 young people and their families, the Commission called for expressions of interest for additional members. As a result, 15 Youth Liaison Team members were recruited and went through induction that included conflict resolution, mediation and first aid training.



Members of Youth Liaison Team graduating from their training course.

The four new Youth Liaison Teams started on 30 May 2002 and all six teams operate on Thursday and Friday evenings in Auburn, Bankstown, Liverpool, Parramatta, and Sydney city.

Following the success of the Olympic 2000 Street Festivals, the Commission funded the *Street Festivals 2001* project. This project that targeted rural and regional areas, encouraged local communities to continue to celebrate their cultural diversity by holding events to coincide with *Carnivale*, the statewide multicultural arts festival. Funding was provided to four councils to conduct street festivals that:

- celebrated cultural, linguistic and religious diversity
- encouraged community participation in the organisation of events
- built and strengthened community networks
- improved understanding of the value of cultural diversity
- strengthened local community cohesion and unity
- disseminated information linking people to services.

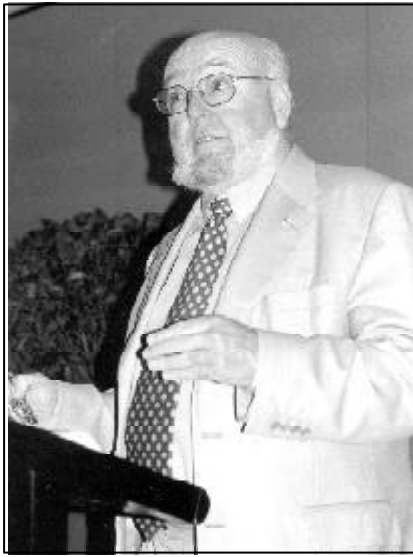
Street Festivals 2001 comprised the following four events:

- The Haldon Street Festival, Lakemba, Canterbury City Council
- The Campbelltown Festival of Cultures Festival Day, Campbelltown City Council
- Griffith Global Gathering, Griffith City Council
- The Festival of Fairfield, Fairfield City Council.

Anticipate and respond effectively to community issues

To enhance the Commission's reach on multicultural issues, it conducted its second annual Community Relations Forum, established ten regional advisory councils and consulted with young Pacific Islanders.

One of the Commission's legislative functions is to hold an annual forum to consult with communities from culturally diverse backgrounds on their needs and aspirations and provide opportunities to participate in policy and decision-making. The Community Relations Forum in April 2002 gave high priority to the issues of young people from culturally diverse backgrounds by focusing on encouraging youth participation. The Forum attracted over 250 delegates, with approximately one third from rural and regional NSW.



Noted Australian author Thomas Keneally, delivered the CRC oration at the 2002 Community Relations Forum.

The program of the Forum included presentations on the Green Paper, *Cultural Harmony – The Next Decade 2002-2012* and information on and review of Government initiatives under the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements (EAPS) program. An important part of the program was reviewing the work undertaken by the Commission in its first year with participants providing feedback on the needs of rural, regional and metropolitan communities and young people.

Noted author, Thomas Keneally, delivered the Commission's oration at the Forum. He spoke on the long-term nature of racism in Australia. He referred to this as an unpleasant feature of our society, with a succession of communities bearing the unfortunate burden of the effects of racism.

To identify issues affecting young people within various Pacific Islander communities, the Commission conducted community consultations during October and November 2001 that brought together young people, elders, community workers and community members for group and one-on-one consultations. Issues raised included education, negative stereotyping, parenting, employment opportunities and the justice system.



Launch of Hunter Regional Advisory Council.

The Commission established ten regional advisory councils of community representatives and key government agencies for Albury, Central West, Griffith, Hornsby-Wyong, Hunter, Illawarra, Macarthur-Liverpool, Nepean-Blacktown, New England, and Northern regions. The membership of the councils is listed at appendix 9.

The councils enhance the Commission's reach on multicultural issues to people living in those regional areas as well as monitoring and reporting on the implementation, value and effectiveness of Commission initiatives in the regional areas.

The Commission has regional offices in Newcastle and Wollongong to coordinate the activities of the councils and assist the Commission in consulting with isolated communities throughout NSW.

Improve level of performance in Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) framework

Under the EAPS Standards Framework, the Commission reviewed the EAPS reports of Government agencies, assisted with development and review of EAPS programs and consulted with communities on the future direction of the EAPS initiatives.

The EAPS Standards Framework, now in its fourth year, has proved an excellent way to measure agency performance against set parameters. The annual review of EAPS programs showed several agencies are performing well under the EAPS Standards Framework and approximately half of the key agencies have improved in some areas of the EAPS Standards Framework, mainly planning and evaluation, staffing and communication.

During 2001-2002, a wide range of key and non-key agencies were assisted in the development and review of their EAPS, and the EAPS reports of 19 key agencies were assessed.

As part of the Commission's commitment to consultation, staff of the Government Sector Services Unit actively participated in the review of the EAPS program, in the context of the evaluation of the *Ethnic Affairs Action Plan 2000*.

The Green Paper review of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements, *Cultural Harmony – The Next Decade 2002-2012*, was presented at the Commission's annual forum to over 250 delegates. The aim of the consultations is to develop a new *Community Relations Action Plan* which will provide a community relations charter.