

performance reports

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1 FOCUS

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

OBJECTIVES

To maintain the lead agency profile as facilitator to government and community promoting community harmony and the benefits of cultural diversity.

To provide expert advice to government and community on community relations and harmony.

To coordinate government responses to issues relating to cultural diversity.

RESULTS

Facilitate and support cooperative arrangements and community initiatives.

Increase participation in government initiatives in the promotion of cultural diversity.

African communities meet local government forum

The Commission organised a forum in Blacktown to increase the access and participation of people from African communities in activities, programs and services offered by local government authorities.

The forum aimed to promote an understanding of the role and functions of local government and to provide information on how community members can play an active role within their local government areas.

The forum involved three main presentations which provided an introduction to local government, an overview of services provided by councils and advice on how to become an active citizen of the area.

Over 80 people from the Congolese, Ghanaian, Sierra Leonean and Sudanese communities living in the western Sydney region attended the forum.

African cultural awareness forum

The Commission organised an African cultural awareness forum in Coffs Harbour in 2007. It was attended by over 130 people representing State, Commonwealth and local government departments as well as community-based organisations and relevant service providers.

Local African community members presented their views on the challenges they face in the areas of accommodation, education, employment, health, law and order, mental health needs of refugees, refugee family reunions, transport and youth.

Arabic pay TV broadcasts survey

As part of the National Action Plan (NAP), the Commission in partnership with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship is developing a survey of Arabic pay television broadcasts. The survey will ascertain the extent of Arabic-speaking pay TV broadcasts from overseas, establish the level of use by Arabic speaking households in NSW and collect some basic information on content as related by viewers.

The Social Research Centre in Melbourne has been contracted to assist in the preparation of a questionnaire, provide independent analysis of the data and prepare a report on the findings. A discussion paper has been prepared outlining seven sample questionnaire designs and each method's respective advantages.

Assist and assess public authorities in observing the principles of multiculturalism

Advice, guidance and information on Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements planning and implementation, in accordance with the Commission's legislated responsibility, were provided on request on some fifty occasions to various agencies during 2007/08.

Availability of burial spaces for community needs

The Commission coordinated and participated in a series of community consultations to address the issue of diminishing burial space availability and the particular needs of a range of ethno-religious communities.



Representatives of religious and ethnic communities at consultations in Eastwood and Regents Park about future uses of burial spaces in New South Wales.



Beach bonanza

The Commission in partnership with the Sutherland Shire Council lifeguards and the Council's *On the Same Wave* project organised a beach bonanza carnival on 19 October 2007 at Don Lucas Reserve at Cronulla.

The carnival included a variety of beach activities for young people including surf life saving activities. It aimed to promote community harmony and build stronger relationships between students of different cultural backgrounds. The beach bonanza carnival involved 260 year six students from nine schools. These were Bankstown, Cronulla, Grays Point, Greenacre, Lakemba, Punchbowl, and Wiley Park.

The Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship opened the event and the Chairperson of the Commission as well as Councillor Kevin Schreiber (representing Councillor David Redmond, Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council) both attended.

Following the event students participated in an essay writing competition on their experiences at the beach bonanza.

Cabramatta CityWatch

The Cabramatta CityWatch program was initially funded for four years from July 2001 to June 2005 and was later extended to May 2008. The program promotes the exchange of information and a coordinated approach to the resolution of issues regarding community safety and policing in Cabramatta.



An officer of the Cabramatta police reads suggestions for public safety at the Cabramatta CityWatch annual forum.

The program has been successful in bringing police and the local community together to develop solutions to local crime in order to build a safer and more vibrant community.

A key feature of the program is the annual Cabramatta CityWatch forum. At this forum the community holds the police accountable for what they achieved in the past year and identifies priorities for the forthcoming year. There was an increased attendance by community members to the forum this year.

Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table

This project was implemented by the Commission in partnership with the Department of Community Services. The aim was 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 to develop and implement activities and strategies to strengthen positive community relations.



Members of the Canterbury-Bankstown Community Harmony Round Table with Commission Chair Stepan Kerkyasharian, and other Commission staff at the final meeting of the project.

Members of the Round Table represented various segments of the community including community leaders, ministers of religion, young people, business people and community workers. Activities undertaken included youth leadership, intercultural sports and a theatre production. The project ended this year with the production of a fact sheet on making a complaint to the Australian media.

CommuniLink webhosting

CommuniLink is a free webhosting service for ethnic community organisations. It supports multilingual content that facilitates communication and enhances the provision of information. Each community website features a calendar of events that links to a consolidated community events calendar.

Another feature is a discussion board to encourage participation and involvement in community issues. The Commission uses the website to inform communities of opportunities for involvement in forums, consultations, projects and career development. There are 56 organisations hosted, an increase of seven on last year.

Community Development Grants Program

The Community Development Grants program provided funding to community-based projects of not-for-profit organisations that support the objectives of the Commission. 531 expressions of interest were received in 2007/08 compared to 549 the previous year. This is greater than the 250 targeted for the year. One hundred projects have been awarded funding to a total of \$898,341. Appendix 7 provides a list of all grant recipients, project purpose and amount of grant. The list includes grants made outside the Community Development Grants Program.

Community presentations at Regional Advisory Council meetings

Presentations were conducted during Regional Advisory Council meetings by various communities in an effort to increase the awareness of government representatives about community needs such as housing, employment, discrimination, health, education and aged issues. These communities included:

- African
- Arabic
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Pacific Islander.

Community relations in the Camden area

A working party was established following public protest in response to the Quranic Society's lodgement of a development application with Camden Council for the development of a 1200 student Muslim school in Camden.

Meetings were held with representatives of Camden Council, NSW Police and the Department of Premier and Cabinet to monitor the situation and develop strategies to manage community relations in the area.

The Commission assisted the Council to stage a function during Refugee Week and will continue to support Camden Council and assist it to manage diversity through appropriate and adequate EAPS planning.

Community resource list

The Commissioner of Police sought the assistance of the Commission to engage community representatives to work with police and young people. As a result, the Commission commenced the development of a community resource list in consultation with the NSW Police Force and the Department of Juvenile Justice, so that respected community members can be called upon to assist the police with matters relating to young offenders from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds.

The Commission is finalising an operational guidelines manual detailing the roles and responsibilities of respected community members and the overall purpose and role they will play in reducing the risk of young people re-offending and in enhancing links to the community.

Once the guidelines are finalised, recruitment will follow to pilot the community resource list in various areas.

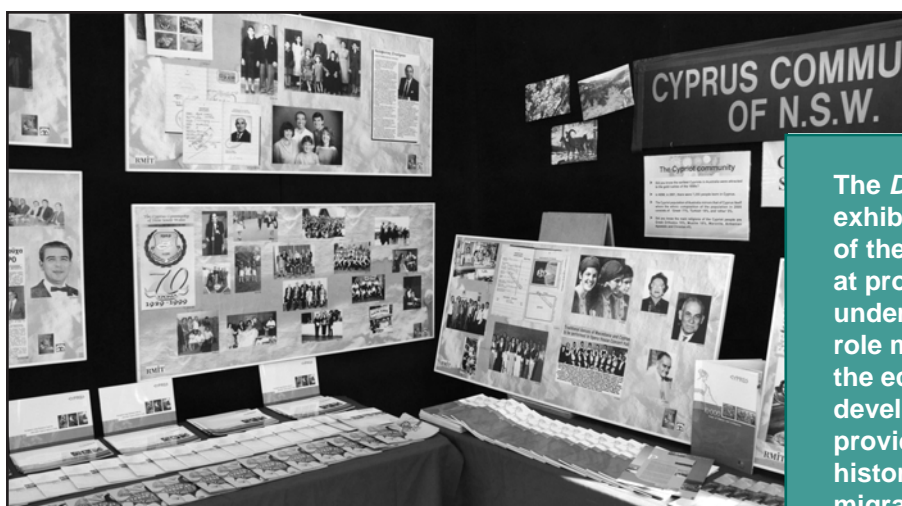
Respected community members from the culturally and linguistically diverse community will be selected for inclusion on the community resource list and engaged on a voluntary basis to assist in giving cautions and to participate in the preparation and process of youth justice conferences.

Consultations with the Islamic community

The Commission was involved in coordinating a meeting to discuss the availability and management of burial land for Muslims in Sydney. The meeting was held on 21 February 2008 and attended by representatives of the Community Relations Commission, the Department of Lands, ministerial staff and forty-seven community representatives from twenty-five organisations.

The Commission is involved in ongoing negotiations with representatives of the Islamic community, the Department of Lands and Rookwood Necropolis to progress interim and short-term plans and to ensure that community representatives are actively engaged in the development and implementation of the plan, and to monitor progress, milestones, and delivery against the plan.

Did You Know? at the Royal Easter Show



The *Did You Know?* exhibition is an initiative of the Commission aimed at promoting a better understanding of the important role migrants have had in the economic and social development of Australia by providing examples of the history and contribution of migrants.

The Cyprus community display at the Did You Know? exhibition at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

The Commission in partnership with the Migration Heritage Centre organised the *Did You Know?* exhibition as part of the Day of Cultures at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. The Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship, the Hon Barbara Perry MP, officially opened the exhibition.

In association with the Commission, the Migration Heritage Centre produced an interactive *Did You Know?* presentation that documents migration history in Australia. The Broken Hill Migration History exhibition was also featured and eight community organisations showcased their culture and contribution to Australia. Entertainment was provided to emphasise the contribution of dance, music and the arts to our culturally diverse community.

Drafting of events briefings and provision of community profiles

The Commission responded to 740 requests for briefings, speech notes or messages, to assist the Premier or his representative when attending community events.

EmailLink



*At the EmailLink launch.
The Hon Barbara Perry MP (left) with Kirsten Downie, Performing Arts
Marketing Manager from the Sydney Opera House.*

EmailLink is an electronic delivery service which provides the public and private entities with a link into the Commission's contacts, covering multicultural community groups, ethnic leaders and community members. The service leverages on over 30 years of knowledge and expertise of the Commission.

EmailLink, along with its associated services (cultural advisory, translation and presentation services) presents a comprehensive one-stop shop for multicultural services.

The service was officially launched in April 2008 and has achieved 115 percent increase in usage compared to 2006/07. Customers of the service span across government, community and private agencies.

The service assists customers who seek direct contact with the multicultural communities.

Government presentations at Regional Advisory Council meetings

Presentations and information sessions were conducted by various government departments, covering issues that include:

- advocacy services for non-English speaking background people with disabilities, their families and carers
- anti-discrimination laws and procedures
- assistance to new arrivals and to emerging communities
- employment opportunities for emerging communities
- fire safety, fire alarms legislation, prevention and the role of the NSW Rural Fire Service
- Griffith community action plan implementation
- group homes and respite care services for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- multicultural health issues in the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service

- new departmental initiatives to build strong communities
- new workplace legislation
- NSW State Plan and significant local projects in various parts of the State
- planning and infrastructure coordination for rezoning and land release at Lightning Ridge
- planning and infrastructure in the north west and south west of Sydney
- public and private child care
- refugee sponsorship requirements as well as refugee applications processing
- settlement services for refugees and skilled migrants and their families in regional and rural New South Wales
- support for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- support for young adult offenders and their families
- support to emerging communities in obtaining drivers licences
- tenancy laws and the role of the Office of Fair Trading
- the living libraries projects in NSW
- the restorative justice programme for students
- transcultural mental health issues in rural areas
- work opportunities for women, and ESL classes at TAFE.

Griffith community action plan

Following on from the tragedy that occurred to one of the younger members of its community, Griffith City Council developed a community action plan to improve safety, establish relevant youth service and to help maintain community harmony.

The Commission has been involved in consultations between the Griffith City Council and local communities, and has provided significant funding to facilitate the development of the action plan, including the arranging of translated survey material into various community languages.

Inter and intra-communal intervention

The Commission continued to work within and between communities to alleviate tension and resolve disputes as appropriate or when required.

Islamic scripture resource kit

The Commission has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to undertake work related to the *National Action Plan to Build Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security*.

The Commission is developing a resource for providers of Islamic special religious education in government secondary schools. The resource kit will assist in educating young Muslims about aspects of Islam and their alignment with Australian values.

Key community members including providers of Islamic scripture instruction in schools are helping to develop the kit, which will target students in high school years 7-10.

Lead agency in settlement planning and immigration policy development

The Commission represented the NSW Government on committees and at meetings of:

- the Standing Committee on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (SCIMA) meeting in February 2008 and coordinated the NSW Government agenda and position papers for the July 2007 meeting of the Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (MCIMA)
- the Commonwealth-NSW Working Party on Migration to Sydney and regional NSW. The Working Party's final report *Evaluation of Skilled Migration to the Riverina* is available on the Commission's website
- the SCIMA Commonwealth-State Working Party on skilled migration
- the Joint State, Territory and Commonwealth Research Advisory Committee for the Australian Population, Immigration and Multicultural Research Program. A jointly funded research report on the social costs and benefits of migration was released in 2007
- the NSW Government Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee (chaired by the Commission), which has proven an effective instrument in coordinating the development of NSW policy and positions on immigration and settlement issues
- the National Working Party on Trafficking and Sexual Servitude (co-chaired by the Commission and the NSW Office for Women), and produced the Working Party report. The recommendations of the Working Party report were endorsed by the Ministerial Conference on the Status of Women in August 2007 and will go before MCIMA for endorsement in July 2008.

The Commission also made recommendations from the *Report of the Committee on the Recognition of Overseas Nursing and Midwifery Qualifications* which have been endorsed by the Treasurer, the Ministers for Health and the Minister for Ageing and Disability.

MediaLink

The MediaLink ethnic media reporting service is the first and only service of its kind in Australia. It offers online English reports of articles appearing in the ethnic media.

Subscription by government agencies to MediaLink increased to 70% compared to 60% last year. This resulted in a 5% increase in MediaLink revenue.

Since its introduction in early 2006, MediaLink subscription has been primarily from government sources. Subscriptions expanded to include the media and private sectors during the year and this resulted in meeting the targeted subscription number and revenue.

Ministerial advice and issues briefings

The Commission provides policy advice and issues briefings on a range of government and community issues. This includes background information and advice about the concerns of the culturally and linguistically diverse communities in New South Wales.

Multicultural support structure in Albury-Wodonga

The Commission is providing guidance and support to the members of the Albury Regional Advisory Council and other community members by organising an informal multicultural support structure. The aim of this support structure is to provide feedback to the Commission on current and emerging community issues through the Albury Regional Advisory Council, and to promote the benefits of diversity to the communities of Albury and Wodonga.

National interpreter symbol



The national interpreter symbol is a national public information symbol designed by the Community Relations Commission and developed in partnership with the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. The symbol provides a simple way of indicating where people with limited English proficiency can request language assistance when using government or community services.

The Commission-designed symbol was one of five variations tested by over 580 people from a diverse range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds from Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales, and was selected in accordance with Australian Standards.

The symbol is being implemented nationally in places that deliver government and community information and services such as community centres, housing and employment offices, local councils, migrant resource centres, public hospitals, police stations and state schools.

Participation in agency and interagency committees

The Commission was represented on a range of agency and interagency committees. The committees and the staff serving on them are listed at appendix 4.

Premier's rural and regional taskforce

The Commission provided information to its Regional Advisory Councils and encouraged their participation in the public consultation for the Premier's Rural and Regional Taskforce, which provided advice on economic, environmental and social issues in rural and regional areas of New South Wales.

The Commission coordinated and facilitated the preparation of a number of proposals by the Regional Advisory Councils for inclusion in the Commission's overall submission to the Taskforce.

The issues identified included problems arising from:

- access to health services in rural and regional areas
- the need for culturally appropriate care for an ageing rural population
- the need for strategies to retain skilled migrants in regional areas
- unplanned humanitarian settlement in rural and regional areas.

The Commission is providing feedback to its Regional Advisory Councils on the final report of the Taskforce.

Recognition for multiculturalism and community harmony

The Commission's expertise in multiculturalism and community harmony is increasingly recognised nationally and internationally.

The Commission participated in a series of cultural and educational exchanges with Japanese cultural organisations following on from the 2006 Year of Exchange between Japan and Australia.

At the invitation of the Japan Foundation, the Commission organised a delegation in January 2007 that provided public symposia on multiculturalism in Tokyo, Nagoya and Sendai, and has since participated in a number of educational exchanges involving distinguished Japanese scholars and Australian experts in the field of multiculturalism.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade continues to send delegations from southern Thailand and Malaysia to the Commission to learn of the success of multiculturalism in a multifaith society, and the Commission recently received a delegation from the Hellenic Migration Policy Institute.

Regional Advisory Council meetings

The Regional Advisory Councils continue to play a significant role in strengthening the relationships between the government and the community and in identifying and addressing major issues of concern.

There were 44 Regional Advisory Council meetings held in ten regions across NSW bringing together government and community representatives to discuss and address issues of concern to people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Sendai study tour



Members of the Sendai study group from Japan on Clark Island in Sydney Harbour with indigenous dancers and story tellers.

The Commission coordinated a week of multicultural activities for a Japanese study tour group, organised by Sendai International Relations Association (SIRA) that visited Australia from 13 to 18 February 2008. Previous to this, the Commission participated in a series of cultural and educational exchanges with Japanese cultural organisations following on from the 2006 Year of Exchange between Japan and Australia, which marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Japan and Australia.

The Commission was part of a delegation that visited Tokyo in January 2007 and was involved in a number of educational exchanges involving distinguished Japanese scholars and Australian experts in the field of multiculturalism.

The week of organised activities and mini forums engaged the interest of the Sendai study tour members and provided an excellent learning opportunity and insight into multicultural policies and practices.

The range of activities and travel to different services and localities also demonstrated the diversity of cultures and religious practices in New South Wales. The tour received coverage in the press in both Japan and Australia and was the subject of a report published in Japan.

Street festival project

The Multicultural Street Festival project arose from the 2000 Sydney Olympics and aimed to promote multiculturalism at the local level. Seven councils have participated in the multicultural street festival project in the past 12 months. These are Camden, Clarence Valley, Dubbo, Hornsby, Penrith, Waverley and Wollongong. This represents the highest participation rate since the inception of the street festival funding program in 2003.

Sudanese information sessions

The Commission is facilitating dialogue between government departments and the emerging Sudanese refugee community in Coffs Harbour. Information sessions are being organised for government departments on the needs of this community as well as informing the community of the functions of, and services available from government departments.

The AUSMUS group

The AUSMUS group is a conduit for Australians of all sects within the Islamic faith residing in NSW to work together at State level to further the well-being of Australians. The Commission has been assisting the establishment of the AUSMUS group which was incorporated on 21 February 2008.

Members of the AUSMUS group have developed a schedule of activities and opportunities for its members, and a series of bimonthly networking events featuring high profile speakers is scheduled for the coming year.

Training package for security guards

The relationship between young people and security guards in public spaces has often proven difficult. In an attempt to improve this, the Commission successfully advocated for an enhanced training program for security guards with the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council.

The enhanced training program incorporates cultural competency skills and introduces ways of communicating and resolving conflict with young people from diverse backgrounds.

It is the belief of the Commission that this approach will provide the platform for positive and sustainable improvements in the interaction between security guards and young people and enhance their participation in public space.

World Youth Day 2008

The Commission assisted the Catholic Church by organising consultations with the Muslim and Jewish communities to inform them of World Youth Day 2008 and of the role their communities could play in the week of festivities.

In preparation for World Youth Day 2008, the Commission organised events including a *Did You Know?* exhibition at the Australian Museum, an interfaith prayer for global peace and social justice at the University of Sydney and the Premier's reception for bishops and cardinals.

Youth harmony festival



Dancers of the Hamazkain Armenian Dance Group performing at the Youth Harmony Festival at Darling Harbour.

The Commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to implement an Islamic Youth Project under the National Action Plan (NAP) and a youth festival was coordinated by the Commission on 4 May 2008 at Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour. The day was filled with cultural activities, food stalls, music, performances, sports and workshops.

The aim of the youth festival was to enhance the interaction of young people from different communities by engaging them in activities that promote a better understanding of cultural and religious diversity through entertainment, display and social activities within an Australian context. Between 5,000 and 10,000 people participated in the event.

Young people from various cultural and religious backgrounds took part in the festival alongside Australian Muslims from Afghani, African, Arabic, Indian, Indonesian, Malaysian and Pakistani communities.

2 FOCUS

PROVISION OF QUALITY LANGUAGE SERVICES

OBJECTIVE

To enhance access to quality interpreting and translation services in New South Wales.

RESULT

Improve access to government and community services that has regard to the linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic diversity of the people of New South Wales.

Justicelink

Negotiations and discussions took place between the Attorney General's Department and the Commission to explore the possibility of using the LanguageLink system as an interim measure until the Department's proposed Justicelink has been implemented in all courts. Currently, local court data regarding interpreter requests are sent directly to the Commission.

LanguageLink

The online system which tracks all interpreting and translation requests has had several processing enhancements developed and implemented to reduce errors and improve the secure flow of information to clients.

Monitoring of language service provision by NSW agencies through EAPS Standards Framework assessment

Interpreting and translating service provision by eleven EAPS key agencies was monitored and analysed as part of the regular EAPS Standards Framework assessment process.

Online interpreter booking system

Customers are now able to request, monitor and cancel interpreter bookings online and responses through the integrated email system have reduced the number of faxes and telephone calls to and from the Commission.

Panellists' feedback sessions

The Commission continued to meet face-to-face with casual panellists to discuss service provision and enhance the quality of service to customers.

Provision of quality interpreting and translation services

The Commission continued to provide interpreting and translation services in 85 languages and dialects to government departments and agencies, private and commercial organisations, community groups and individuals.

Providing interpreting and translation services to government departments and agencies, private and commercial organisations, community groups and individuals

Recruitment drive

A substantial recruitment drive for translators and interpreters took place during May 2008 targeting the Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Assyrian, Auslan, Bengali, Bosnian, Cook Island Maori, Croatian, Dinka, Fijian, Filipino, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Lithuanian, Malay, Maltese, Punjabi, Pushto, Russian, Samoan, Serbian, Sudanese, Tamil, Tigrinya, Tongan and Urdu language groups.

As a result, 25 new interpreters and translators joined the casual panel of interpreters and translators and attended induction and orientation in July 2007.

Review of casual panellists' qualifications

In order to be eligible for new casual employment offers for up to twelve months, 63 panellists who hold recognition as an interpreter in a language where NAATI accreditation exists have been requested to upgrade their qualifications before mid 2009. This will increase the number of professionally qualified practitioners on the casual panel and enhance the quality of the interpreting service provided.

Service charter

A service charter was developed in April 2008 in consultation with the staff of Language Services in order to improve the quality of the provision of language services to customers. The service charter was placed on the *LanguageLink* website. Feedback has been invited and will be closely monitored.

Shop front at Parramatta justice precinct

A shop front to provide language services has been secured in the Parramatta justice precinct. Working space has been allocated for up to three staff members and this facility is expected to open in July 2009. This will provide an additional access point for clients to lodge translation requests and reduce travelling time for clients living in the area.

Specialised interpreter training

Approximately 50 casual panellists attended training sessions on interpreting in sexual assault and domestic violence cases.

An extensive user guide and a quick user guide to the LanguageLink system has been developed and implemented and is accessible to all permanent and casual staff.

Tenders

The Commission was successful in its tender to provide onsite interpreting services to Housing NSW for block bookings over a two year period, with an option to extend for a further two years. Assignments in 11 languages were provided.

The contract with the Roads and Traffic Authority to provide onsite interpreting services has been extended until March 2009. Assignments in 22 languages were provided.

Video conferencing

The Commission has promoted the use of video conferencing for appropriate court matters requiring an interpreter in rural locations. This has resulted in greater efficiency in the use of interpreting resources, when interpreters for rare languages are in demand. There is also significant cost savings for clients, as travelling costs have been eliminated or greatly reduced. Positive feedback has been received from interpreters and court staff on the convenience of this system. The Commission accommodated 75 requests for video conferencing.

3 FOCUS

EFFECTIVE RESOURCE UTILISATION

OBJECTIVES

To improve and strengthen internal capability.

To meet extended targets for tangible and intangible asset utilisation.

RESULTS

Meet performance standards and strategic targets set out in the Results and Services Plan.

Maximise customer benefits through continuing development of electronic service delivery.

Communication technology upgrade

The Commission upgraded to a faster internet access and increased bandwidth enabling other government agencies and community organisations to communicate through web-based technology. All PCs were upgraded to more energy-saving as well as ergonomically compliant equipment.

Electronic service delivery

Online bookings of interpreters were introduced during the year. Existing customers were invited and given access to book online for the first time. Customers willingly embraced this enhancement, improving efficiency and productivity for all parties. Telephone calls and faxes were minimised due to the new system-built email confirmation booking of an interpreter. The number of interpreting assignments performed was 18,829, an increase of 746 over the previous year. Documents were scanned and sent to translators via the LanguageLink system. There were 27,241 documents translated, an increase of 1,468 over the previous year.

There were 75 interpreter requests conducted using the Commission's video conferencing facility. All requests were from NSW regional areas, making for an efficient and cost effective interpreter resource that saves on costs associated with accommodation and travelling.

Other online transactions with the Commission increased during the year. Expressions of interest to the Community Development Grants Program exceeded the target by almost 100%; nominations for the Awards for Volunteering tripled from last year and nominations for the NSW Premier's Chinese Community Service Awards doubled.

Ministerial database and tracking system

The Commission maintains a database of ministerial and other briefing requests and tracks work to assist the organisation to operate effectively. During 2007/08, 728 requests for community events and other briefings were recorded and processed.

Results and Services Plan

The Commission continued its strong performance in meeting its financial targets, agency results indicators and service measures for the year ended 30 June 2008.

Results indicators

Observation of the principles of multiculturalism by public authorities

	Units	Actual 2005/06	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Forecast 2008/09
Agencies compliant with EAPS	%	95	97	94	97

Notes:

This indicator shows the level of compliance with the EAPS program among New South Wales public institutions.

Equitable access to government and community service

	Units	Actual 2005/06	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Forecast 2008/09
Languages provided	No.	67	73	78	85

Notes:

This indicator demonstrates the diverse range of languages provided by the Commission.

Promotion of social justice

	Units	Actual 2005/06	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Forecast 2008/09
Community grants*	No.	118	107	117	110
Community grants satisfaction survey result **	%	90.5	^	^	90

Notes:

* This indicator shows the number of community organisations that were financially supported by the Commission.

** This indicator shows the proportion of community organisations that were satisfied with how the Commission administered the community grants program.

^ Information is not available.

Service group statements

The Commission has two service groups, Community Support Services and Language Services. A brief description of each together with linkage to results and services measures follows.

1. Community Support Services

Service Description:

This service group covers the provision of community relations policy advice to the Government, implementation of the principles of multiculturalism by all Government agencies, involvement in community projects and administration of the community development grants program.

Linkage to Results:

This service group contributes to creating more harmonious communities by working towards a range of intermediate results that include the following:

- promotion of social justice, community development and community initiatives for ethnic communities in New South Wales
- participation of the people of New South Wales in community life and the public decision-making process
- promotion of cohesive and harmonious multicultural society with mutual respect for and understanding of cultural diversity
- observation of the principles of multiculturalism by public authorities.

Service measures:

	Units	Actual 2005/06	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Forecast 2008/09
Expression of interest received for grant applications	No.	350	550	531	550
Successful grant applications	%	60.2	67.7	57.7	60.0
Employees	EFT*	49	53	50	50

Notes:

* EFT = equivalent full time.

2. Language Services

Service Description:

This service group covers the provision of efficient, reliable and professional interpreting and translation services of community languages, in a form relevant to client needs, provided by appropriately trained interpreters and translators.

Linkage to Results:

This service group contributes to providing equitable access to government and community services that have regards to the linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic diversity of the people of New South Wales.

Service Measures:

	Units	Actual 2005/06	Actual 2006/07	Actual 2007/08	Forecast 2008/09
Assignment performed	No.	42 500	43 800	45 770	46 500
format complains registered	No.	50	109	100	100
Employees	EFT*	72	72	74	74

Notes:

* EFT = equivalent full time.

4 FOCUS

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

OBJECTIVES

To maintain consistent and responsive internal and external communication.

To enhance the profile of the Commission as the reference point for community harmony and cultural diversity.

RESULT

Develop targets and performance measures for reporting commencing early 2009.

Commemorative booklet marking the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China

To mark the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China, a commemorative booklet was developed with assistance and input from the Australian Chinese community. Demand for the publication was so strong that a second printing was made.

Community Language Allowance Scheme

The Community Language Allowance Scheme is a key strategy to recognise and value the linguistic skills of agency employees who assist their agency's clients by providing access to services. In the 2007 round of examinations, 27 agencies nominated 90 candidates, as compared with the previous year when 21 agencies nominated 125 candidates.

Community Relations Report

The Commission prepares and publishes an annual report for each calendar year on the state of community relations in New South Wales as affected by cultural diversity.

The 2006 report under the title *Harmony in Motion* which was prepared and tabled in the previous reporting year, was launched by the Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship in July 2007. The report for 2007, titled *Youth Diversity and Harmony – Shaping Our Future* was launched by the Minister on 26 June 2008. The 2007 report provides an overview of achievements of NSW agencies under the Ethnic Affairs Priority Statements program and also features initiatives for our culturally diverse community, across a wide spectrum of NSW public sector agencies.

5 FOCUS

PROMOTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF MULTICULTURALISM

OBJECTIVES

- To recognise and promote the benefits of diversity to the community.
- To maintain government accountability for the implementation of the principles of multiculturalism through the EAPS program and reporting.
- To provide opportunities to communities to inform decision-making by government.
- To facilitate the participation of people of culturally diverse backgrounds on advisory bodies and in volunteer.

RESULTS

- Promote social justice, community development and community initiatives for ethnic communities in NSW.
- Increase the participation of people of NSW in community life and the public decision-making process.
- Measure and report the observation of the principles of multiculturalism by public authorities.

A planning framework for Councils – *Implementing the Principles of Multiculturalism Locally*

In 2007/08 a project to develop a planning framework to assist local councils fulfil the legislated requirement to implement the principles of multiculturalism within their areas of responsibility was completed. This was a joint project with the Department of Local Government and was assisted by the Council of the Shire of Baulkham Hills, Blacktown City Council, Griffith City Council and Walgett Shire Council. The planning framework has been completed and the publication is due for release in July 2008.

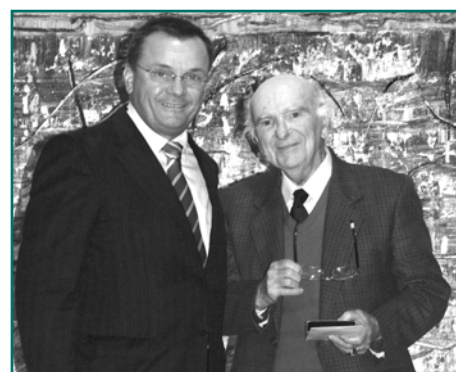
Awards

The Community Relations Commission’s awards program promotes the advancement of multiculturalism in New South Wales and contributes to the enrichment of all sections of society through the benefits of cultural diversity.

Community Relations Commission Award in the Premier’s Literary Awards

Each year the Community Relations Commission presents an award at the Premier’s Literary Awards for a work that showcases and promotes cultural diversity and the migrant experience.

The 2008 award went to Mr Jacob G Rosenberg for his work *Sunrise West*, a book which retells the personal story of the pain and joy of a holocaust survivor.



The NSW Minister for the Arts, Frank Sartor MP (left) and Mr Jacob G Rosenberg, winner of the 2008 Community Relations Commission prize at the Premier’s Literary Awards.

Dendy Short Film Award

Each year at the Sydney Film Festival, the Community Relations Commission presents a short film award for a film where the content reflects the multicultural experience in Australia. In 2008 the Dendy Short Film Award went to *296 Smith Street*, directed by John Evagora. The film shows a slice of life on a suburban shopping street which reflects the day-to-day reality of cultural diversity.

Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Award

The Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society Community Relations Commission Poetry Award is awarded to a poem to an Australian school student that which makes a contribution to multiculturalism. The 2007 award was won by an eleven year old from the Hunter Valley, Evelyn Hinklin from Mayfield East Primary School in NSW with her entry *Colour it like yours*.

Colour it like yours

*Our school's
Like most others
Except for our Rwandan wall
Painted in 1994*

*Because of the war there
Triangles and squares of
Orange, yellow, blue and red*

*Go around the corner and it's
Just like any other corner but for
Our elephant
An African elephant
Painted in the pattern of
Orange, yellow, blue and red*

*Then in front there's a garden
If it wasn't for the hands it's
Like most other gardens
Hands of terra cotta*

*Made for Sorry Day
Some years ago now*

*In front there's our school canteen
Sells food like they all do
But on the outside
There's an image
Done by an aboriginal elder*

*Come inside our school
Climb the stairs and walk the corridors
It's lined with photographs
Of children cooking
In front of Tongan cloths
Bark painting tunga bags*

*Further on
A calendar
On it
A drawing of a girl, a
Refugee from Africa
From a camp there
She travelled here
And it took four years
To find peace at our school*

*Keep going
Walk into our room
Just like other classrooms
But then there's the Mexican angel
Made for Christmas last
To raise money
For a sponsored African boy*

*Look out our window and there's
The sky
My sky
Your sky*

Everyone's sky

Everyone's world

Everything's different

But some things are the same.

Evelyn Hinklin

National Multicultural Marketing Awards

The 2007 National Multicultural Marketing Awards program was officially launched by the Hon Barbara Perry MP in June 2007. The event generated the attendance of some 180 representatives from various business sectors including government agencies, diplomatic officials, private companies, community organisations and the media.

A seminar that highlighted the emerging trends in marketing to a culturally diverse community was conducted in September 2007. These sessions highlighted areas such as reaching a diverse audience via the internet, the latest e-business trends and reaching your targeted market through digital radio. The sessions received positive feedback from seminar attendees and further encouraged businesses to take their multicultural communication strategies one step further.

The annual gala presentation dinner was held in November 2007. The event was attended by some 370 business representatives and hosted by the Premier of NSW, the Hon Morris Iemma MP.

The event served to acknowledge and commend the following organisations for their efforts within the multicultural marketing arena. They were:



The Premier and Minister for Citizenship, the Hon Morris Iemma MP, congratulates the winner of the 2007 Multicultural Marketing Awards grand prize, Anita Hanicek of the National Interfaith Festival.

The 2007 awards program was sponsored by:

Casella Wines

CMC Markets

Integral Energy

Laiki Bank

Multillon Group

Qantas

The Australian Newspaper

Vietnam Airlines

Westin Sydney

Advertising Award

Multicultural Marketing and Management

CMC Markets Commercial Big Business Award

NRMA Insurance

Export Award

Travelex

Information Technology Award

Etranslate

Integral Energy Community Award and Grand Award

National Interfaith Festival

Laiki Bank Commercial Small Business Award

Bollywood Dreams

Multillon Government Award

Lismore City Library

NSW Premier's Chinese Community Service Awards

The annual NSW Premier's Chinese Community Service Awards recognise the long and active participation in philanthropic and voluntary community activities of the Chinese community. The awards honour Chinese individuals who demonstrated outstanding service within and beyond the Chinese community.



Winners of the 2008 Premier's Chinese Community Service Awards. Left to right: Mrs Sylvia Sau Yung Tinyow, the Hon Helen Sham-Ho, Premier Morris Iemma MP, Mr Frank Chou, Miss Yee-Ting Michelle Chan and Henry Tsang MLC.

The Premier, the Hon Morris Iemma MP presented the awards at a ceremony at Government House on 11 February 2008.

Jack Wong Sue Award for Voluntary Service Beyond the Chinese Community

The Hon Helen Sham-Ho

Quong Tart Lifetime Achievement Award in Community Service

Mr Frank Chou

Victor Chang Community Service Award

Mrs Sylvia Sau Yung Tinyow

Young Chinese Volunteer

Miss Yee-Ting Michelle Chan

Community Relations Commission Awards for Volunteering

The Commission's annual Awards for Volunteering honour individuals in NSW whose community service has enhanced the cultural and social wellbeing of their migrant communities. The purpose of these awards is to highlight the cultural diversity of those undertaking voluntary work and to foster a greater understanding of the value of their contributions.

The Hon Barbara Perry MP, Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship, presented the awards at a ceremony at Parliament House on 6 March 2008.



*One of the joint winners of the 2007 Volunteer Awards
Lifetime Achievement in Community Sector, Mustafa Hamed
with Barbara Perry MP.*

Volunteer of the Year

Bethany Warth

Community Service Award

Nasser Sedghi

Community Service Award Highly Commended

Dorjee Dadul

Young Volunteer Award

Joseph Majambere

Young Volunteer Award Highly Commended

Nancy Dennaoui

Commission's Lifetime Achievement in Community Sector

Mustafa Hamed and Jon Soemarjono

Community Relations Symposium and Youth Leaders Day 2007

The Community Relations Symposium was held on 15 and 16 August 2007 for the seventh consecutive year and included the Youth Leaders Day as the first day of this important community event.

A high level of participation was received from the members of the Multicultural Youth Network in the planning of the day and also in the facilitation of workshops.

Highlights included:

- a keynote speech from Neville Roach OA
- thirty workshops over two days
- an Australian Film Television and Radio Service film award presentation
- energetic performances from the South West Youth Peer Education program coordinated by Mission Australia.

Diversity in volunteer activities

The Commission through its Regional Advisory Councils invited Australian Red Cross representatives to present their regional activities. Ten presentations were conducted which generated significant community interest and the concept of volunteerism as a whole.

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) program, review and presentations

Providing assistance to government agencies to implement their Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements program (EAPS), and to monitor EAPS performance and compliance across the New South Wales Government sector.

During 2007/08, the Commission provided advice and assistance to a wide range of agencies in planning implementing and evaluating their EAPS programs. Meetings focussing on EAPS provision were held with some 20 agencies.

The biennial self-assessments against the EAPS Standards Framework and the forward plans of eleven EAPS key agencies were evaluated, and detailed feedback was provided to the agencies.

The EAPS operations review, which commenced in 2006/07 continued and expanded into a more general review of EAPS, with the assistance of a research team from the University of New South Wales. Initial findings from the research indicate that New South Wales is a world leader in government-led multicultural policy, planning and implementation measures and promotion of community harmony, primarily because of the EAPS program.

Various state government agencies that include the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, the Department of Community Services, the Department of Education and Training, the NSW Department of Health and the NSW Police Force conducted presentations at Regional Advisory Council meetings across the State on the progress of implementing their agency's EAPS.

Multicultural Youth Network

The NSW Multicultural Youth Network was set up in 2005 as a group of dedicated young advocates from various cultural backgrounds committed to working together to promote cultural identity, awareness, understanding, acceptance and respect. The Network enables young people to develop their leadership skills and to discuss issues of concern to themselves and their communities. Members of the Network played a critical role in the planning and implementing of the successful 2007 Youth Leaders Day, including the facilitation of workshops on the day.

Members of the Multicultural Youth Network are enthusiastic about youth issues. They meet regularly throughout the year at various venues exploring and identifying the cultural issues facing young people in NSW. The Multicultural Youth Network is co-chaired by the Commission's Youth Commissioners Angelique Vongsaya and Katrina Banh.

Regional visit to Broken Hill

The Commission conducted its December 2007 meeting at Broken Hill where it met representatives of local ethnic communities and visited places and buildings of significance to them. A visit to a region is an ongoing aspect of the Commission's program of consultations when it can learn of local multicultural issues which can inform government policy development.



EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES

To develop an effective knowledge management system.

To apply continuous improvement to the technological and human aspect of the knowledge management system.

RESULTS

Improve access to information.

Measure, report and improve customer satisfaction with frontline services.

Business continuity and disaster recovery

The business continuity and disaster recovery plans provide a blueprint for strategies for action in the event of a major disruption to the Commission's operations. These plans help to ensure that critical business processes and information technology systems can continue to provide service to clients. An alternate site was tested and found to be suitable for the Commission's requirements for disaster recovery. Plans have been updated to ensure that disruption to customer services will be minimised or prevented.

Customer feedback

Language Services received one hundred internal and external complaints, which is a decrease of 8 percent from last year. All complaints were registered, analysed and dealt with promptly. Written follow-up was carried out as well as face to face communication, training and discussions with in-house staff and casual panellists.

Language Services encourages customers, panellists and full time staff to provide written as well as verbal feedback (see customer service charter). The provision of a complimentary customer feedback facility is available on the casual panellist's interpreter record book which is stringently monitored. The positive and negative feedback enables the Commission to continually enhance the quality of language services.

Customer information management system

The customer information management system is a database of organisations and individuals, in which rich and relevant contact information is retained enabling the Commission to connect to the wider community and networks in New South Wales.

The use of the customer information management system has been expanded to incorporate a new electronic distribution service, a fast and cost effective means to deliver information and messages directly to community organisations and individuals. Registration of individuals and organisations in the database of ethnic communities and leaders exceeded predicted growth with an additional 700 contacts.

Electronic document management

The Commission introduced digital imaging technology to complement and strengthen its record-keeping system and to provide a flexible solution for the capture of documents in digital format.

The scanning software was installed using an inbuilt OCR (optical character recognition) engine that converts images into text searchable files. Document scanning has added value to information services for both internal and external customers by increasing efficiency in the search and retrieval of information and thereby supporting business operations and decision-making. This technology has proven to be an effective tool used in the capture, retrieval and distribution of information.

Information services

The Commission views the management of information as a core resource that requires effective coordination and management. The structure to provide information services to customers has been fortified with the implementation of a succession plan for the ongoing supply of information services using existing staff. The number of staff able to provide information services increased from one to six.

Privacy management plan

The privacy management plan of the Commission identifies strategies to meet the requirements of NSW privacy legislation (*Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2004*). Achievements during 2007/08 were:

- forms updated to include privacy statements and declarations where personal information is collected
- privacy management plan updated to incorporate new services of the Commission
- website privacy statement was updated.

Understanding profiles of emerging communities

A cultural exchange day was held to assist Commission staff to enhance their understanding of the profiles of emerging communities including the history of immigration, pre and post arrival services, emerging issues for women and young people during settlement, and an overview of strategies employed in the non-government sector in meeting the needs of these newer groups.

This session was facilitated by the bilingual staff and program coordinators of the Blacktown Multicultural Resource Centre. The session was also attended by members of the Afghan, Iraqi, Liberian, Sierra Leonean, and Sudanese communities.

7 FOCUS

LEADERSHIP SYSTEM THROUGHOUT THE COMMISSION

OBJECTIVES

To maintain an effective leadership system throughout the Commission.

To align the Commission's organisational culture to support leadership to achieve the Commission's strategic direction.

RESULT

Measure performance against the Corporate Plan.

Corporate culture



Members of the Commission's executive at a weekly meeting, chaired by Stepan Kerkyasharian.

The Commission's strong corporate management culture is reflected in the processes it has adopted that assist it to maintain a leadership role. Commissioners meet monthly and set the tone for the strategic direction of the Commission's operations.

Further, weekly meetings are held between the divisional directors and the Chairperson to discuss operational issues and the outcomes of these are conveyed to staff in a timely fashion.

Commission staff are given the opportunity to discuss projects and to raise issues affecting their range of operations at regular division meetings, as well as at meetings that the Chairperson holds with staff.

The leadership role extends to corporate training sessions where Commission staff have been taught the correct procedures on aspects of management. For example, during the reporting year, a compulsory training session on email procedures was conducted by the Chairperson.

Development and training

Corporate training courses were conducted as follows:

- train the trainer
- managing emails

- effective annual reporting.

The customer service manager of the Language Services division completed the Public Sector Management Course.

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee continued to monitor and address occupational health and safety concerns of staff and to notify management of these concerns.

In 2007/08 the activities of the occupational health and safety committee included:

- revising and updating the Commission's Occupational Health and Safety Constitution to ensure that the document is current and relevant
- accepting the nomination of a new member as divisional representative of the Business Services division
- arranging training for new committee members to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide leadership in this area and are able to give appropriate advice to the Commission
- Conducting annual workplace inspections, and as a result of these inspections, identified five main areas of concern, including unsatisfactory air conditioning, lack of storage resulting in cramped workplaces, wires not taped down or safely compiled, lights not working, and some staff were unfamiliar with evacuation procedures and nominated first aid officers. These concerns were reported to management and followed up by the relevant directors.

Strategic planning

The Commission has formally commenced and implemented its new Corporate Plan 2007-2012 and the strategic planning processes has required the development of divisional operational plans.