

## **legislative and corporate governance**

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## Principles of Multiculturalism

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

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

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



## Members of the Community Relations Commission

as at 30 June 2009



*Commissioners from left to right:  
Standing: Ezel Jupiter, Michael Christodoulou AM DO, Katrina Banh, Seini Afeaki, Angelique Vongsaya.  
Seated: Jihad Dib, Wajiha Ahmed, Stepan Kerkyasharian AM (Chairperson), Gambhir Watts, Vivian Pak.*

### **Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian AM, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer**

Appointed 27 February 1989. Re-appointed to 14 September 2013.

- President, Anti-Discrimination Board
- Member, National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
- Member, Commissioner's Advisory Council on Culturally Responsive Policing
- Member, Migration Heritage Centre Panel of Advisors
- Member, Ministerial Taskforce on International Education
- Member, Chief Executives Counter Terrorism Coordinating Group

### **Ms Seini Afeaki**

Project Officer

Appointed 25 March 2009. Appointment expires 24 March 2012.

Community involvement:

- Chairperson, Liverpool-Macarthur Regional Advisory Council
- Assistant Treasurer, Tongan Community Support Services
- Consultancy Support, NSW Council for Pacific Communities.

### **Ms Wajiha Ahmed**

Solicitor.

Appointed 15 February 2006. Re-appointed to 24 March 2012.

Community involvement:

- Chairperson, Albury Regional Advisory Council
- Chairperson, Griffith Regional Advisory Council.
- Lecturer, Insearch, University of Technology, Sydney
- Member, Geographical Names Board

### **Ms Katrina Banh (youth commissioner)**

Lawyer, Allens Arthur Robinson

Appointed 6 December 2006. Re-appointed to 4 November 2010.

Community involvement:

- Chairperson, Multicultural Youth Network
- Chairperson, Central West Regional Advisory Council.
- Choreographer, Ming Der Chinese School dance group
- Management Committee, Football United, Australian Research Council Project

### **Mr Michael Christodoulou AM DO**

Chiropractor and Osteopath

Appointed 2 March 2005. Re-appointed to 9 April 2011.

Community involvement:

- Chairperson, Illawarra Regional Advisory Council
- Commission representative to the Federation of Community Language Schools
- Commission representative to the 2006, 2007, 2008 Cohesive Community School Award of the Department of Education and Training
- Commission representative to the Beyond Sympathy - Across My Bridge, Islamic Arts Youth Project.
- Coordinator, United Nations Human Rights Day Committee
- Director, Board of Directors of the Stanmore Hawks Football Club
- Member, Board of World Council of Hellenes
- President, Cyprus Community of NSW
- President, Federation of Cyprus Communities of Australia and New Zealand
- Chairperson, Hellenic Emergency Relief Fund.

### **Mr Jihad Dib**

High school principal

Appointed 22 April 2009. Appointment expires 21 April 2012

Community involvement:

- Secretary, Lebanese Muslim Association
- Board member, Together For Humanity Foundation

### **Ms Ezel Jupiter**

Senior programs officer, NSW Police Force.

Appointed 17 October 2001. Re-appointed to 26 March 2011

Community involvement:

Chairperson, New England Regional Advisory Council

### **Ms Vivian Pak**

Partner, KP Lawyers.

Appointed 7 November 2007. Appointment expires 6 November 2010.

Community involvement:

Chairperson, Nepean-Blacktown Regional Advisory Council

Vice President, Korean Society of Sydney

Deputy Chair, Bendigo Bank Strathfield Community Bank

Member, NSW Ambulance Services Advisory Council

Commission representative of NSW Legal Assistance Forum CALD Working Group

Legal Advisor Korean Elderly Friendship Association Inc.

Advisor, Korean Australian Young Leaders Inc.

### **Ms Angelique Vongsaya (youth commissioner)**

University student.

Appointed 6 December 2006. Appointment expires 5 December 2009.

Community involvement:

Chairperson, Hornsby-Central Coast Regional Advisory Council.

Chairperson, Hunter Regional Advisory Council.

Chairperson, Multicultural Youth Network

Member, board of directors, Lao Community Advancement Co-op Ltd

### **Mr Gambhir Watts**

Company director.

Appointed 6 December 2006. Appointment expires 5 December 2009.

Community involvement:

Chairperson, Northern Regional Advisory Council.

Founder director, Australia India Foundation

President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia

Member, Leaders' Council, Sydney Alliance

Commissioners whose appointments concluded during 2008/09

Mr N Maruncic, OAM

Mr M Marx, AM



## Former Commissioners of the Community Relations Commission

Alagich M, BEM, OAM *	Kama M	Peng B
Aquilina J	Karanges C, OAM*	Raheb A, OAM*
Aquino M	Koutsounadis-Germanos V, OAM	Rasoni F
Arrarte A	Le Dang C	Rifi J
Baena T	Le-Dang T	Ristevski D
Barakat J *	Lee M	Rufo D
Barany M, BEM, OAM	MacLeod D	Sham-Ho H
Bozikis N	Marchich C	Shboul A, AM
Buckland-Fuller D, AM	Maruncic N, OAM	Sipka J
Bures S, AM	Marx M, AM	Skoroszewski N, OAM*
Cantali M	Masselos P	Sonter J
Cassar V	Mills-Evers G, AM	Spasojevic N
Chan P	Miltenyi G	Strong-Cincotta M
Chan M	Mojsin L	Szajewski M, OAM*
Chuchkovich N	Moss I, AO	Taskovski S
Chung C	Moussa L, OAM	Themal U, OAM
Dal Broi J	Muhieddine L	Totaro P, AM
Doueih J*	Ngo P	Tzannes R, AM
Duncan A	Nguyen-Hoang P*	Varova S
Gebhardt J, OAM	Norton L	Wakim J
Giang D	Owen K, AM	Walsh M, MBE*
Gonzalez C	Obeid E, OAM	Walsh V, OAM
Harrison G	Otaegui P*	Witton R
Hussain F	Pan H, OAM	Wong P, AM
Jegorow W, MBE, AM*	Pangallo F, MBE	Zuro V
Kahla M	Peponis G	* deceased



## Commissioners' attendance at meetings

Commissioner	Number of meetings eligible to attend	Number of meetings attended
S Kerkyasharian	12	12
M Marx	8	4
S Afeaki	3	3
W Ahmed	10	10
K Banh	11	11
M Christodoulou	12	11
J Dib	2	2
E Jupiter	12	10
N Maruncic	8	7
V Pak	12	12
A Vongsaya	12	12
G Watts	12	12



## Principal staff of the Commission

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### CHAIRPERSON AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian AM

### DIVISION HEADS

#### Business Services

Director

Mrs Marte Tagle MBT GCertPSectMgt

#### Community Relations Service

Director

Mr Richard Acheson

#### Financial and Corporate Services

Director

Hakan Harman FCPA, MP Admin

#### Government Relations Service

Director

Ms Steffanie von Helle

#### Language Services

Director

Ann Groth ALAA

#### Regional Services

Director

Fadel Benhima PSM

#### Executive Officer

Ms Patricia Giannotto



# Organisation structure

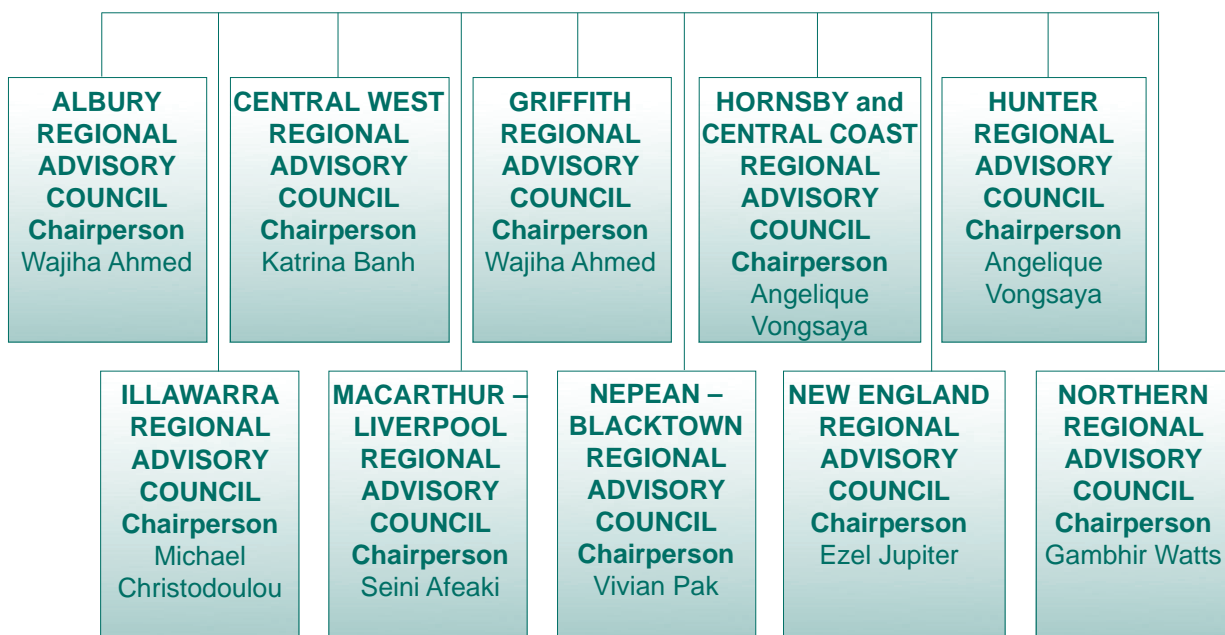
## Organisation structure - boards and committees

as at 30 June 2009

**PREMIER OF NSW**  
The Hon Nathan Rees MP  
and  
**MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP**  
The Hon Virginia Judge MP

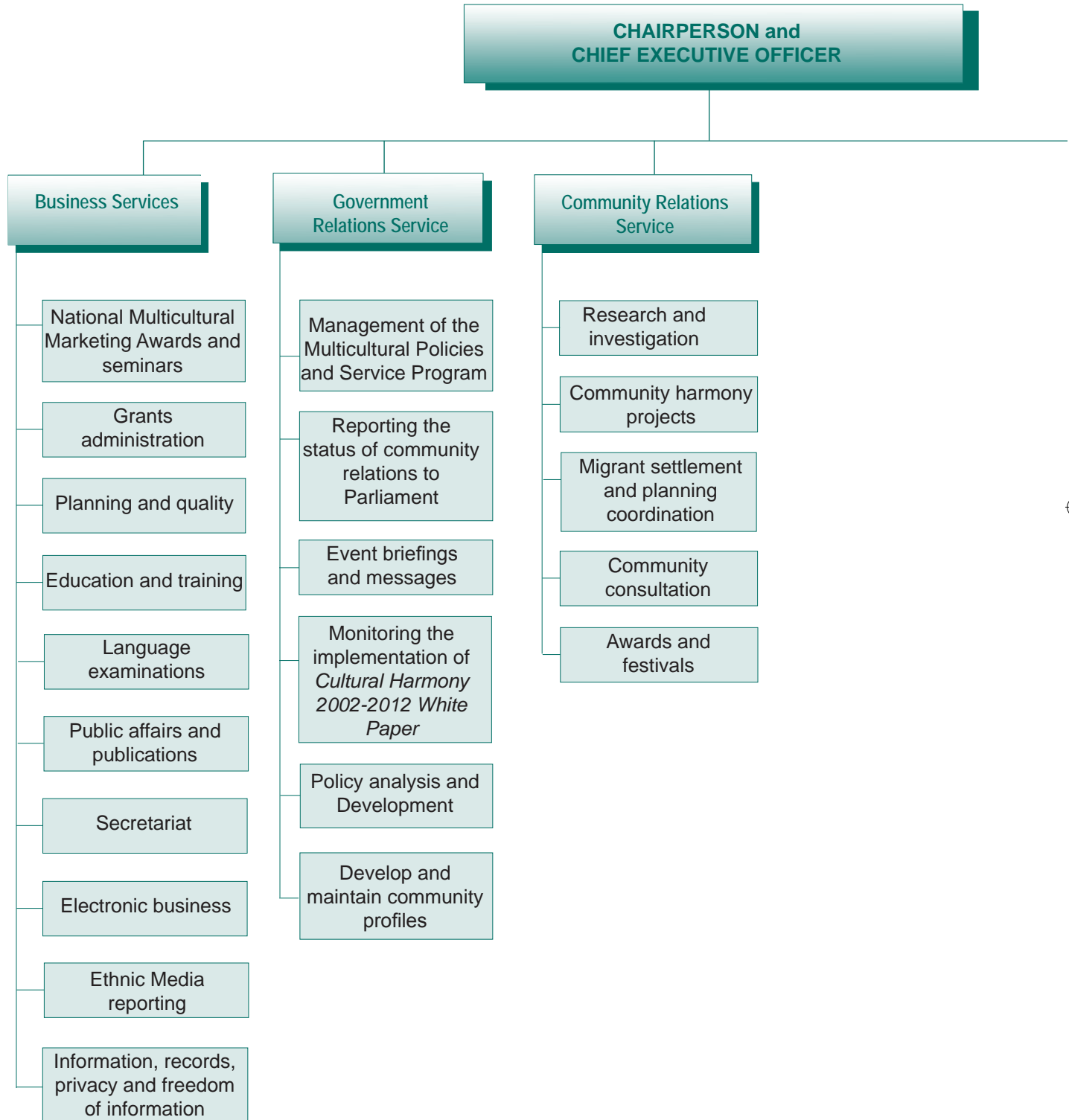
**CHAIRPERSON AND  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
Stepan Kerkyasharian AM

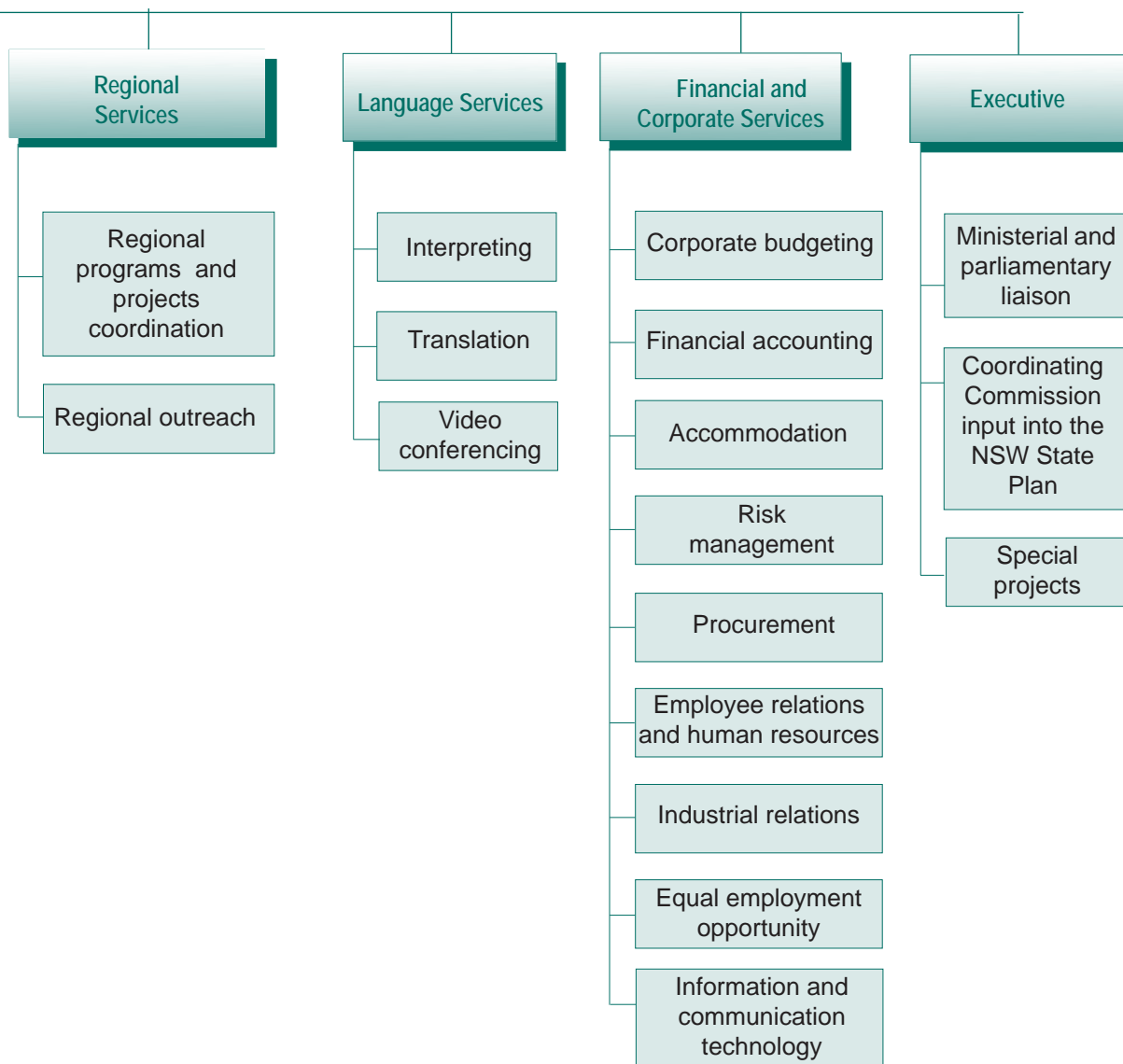
**PART-TIME COMMISSIONERS**  
Seini Afeaki  
Wajiha Ahmed  
Katrina Banh  
Michael Christodoulou  
Jihad Dib  
Ezel Jupiter  
Vivian Pak  
Angelique Vongsaya  
Gambhir Watts



# Organisation Structure - functional

as at 30 June 2009







## Executive Position

### **Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian AM**

Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer

SES Level 5: remuneration as at 30 June - \$288,350 and an allowance of \$10,000pa as President of the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW.

As the Chairperson of the Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW and President of the Anti Discrimination Board, Mr Kerkyasharian has realised a number of significant objectives for the Commission.

1. In response to protests by Indian international students in the Harris Park area, the Chairperson played a significant role in meeting with students, stakeholders and key government agencies to address the needs of the students gathered. The Chairperson was also instrumental in establishing a working party to manage the concerns and information needs of the students. Partners in the working party include the Commission, Federation of Indian Students in Australia, the United Indian Association, the Consulate General of India, and Commonwealth and NSW Government agencies. The working party meets regularly and is developing strategies related to a range of international student information resources.
2. The Commission conducted an exhaustive review of its Community Development Grants Program. The review set a new direction for the program examining changing migration patterns and community needs and how state and local government could better work together. The review was completed in June and resulted in the creation of three grant categories; General, Sponsorship and Local Partnership grants. These new arrangements will enable the Commission to better support the work of community organisations and work in partnership with local councils to address the needs of new arrivals and emerging communities.
3. The 2008 Community Relations Symposium was successfully held over two days in August, with the first day being dedicated to youth leaders. A total of 220 delegates participated on the Youth Leaders' Day from various public, private and religious schools in NSW. The aim of the event was to create a forum for young people to discuss multicultural youth issues that were of relevance and interest to them and their peers, while 180 delegates participated from peak organisations including regional NSW at the main Symposium on day two. The forum allowed community leaders, government and community groups to foster relationships and expand their networks with various groups and with the Commission.
4. The Commission's annual "Community Relations Report" for 2008, prepared under section 14 of the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act (2000)*, detailed nearly 150 wide-ranging initiatives that were undertaken by NSW Government agencies and local councils to promote community harmony. The report also included a section devoted to awards presented during the year, which recognised the positive contribution to our society by multicultural communities and individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

5. The Commission, in partnership with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, successfully organised information sessions on justice and the legal system with members of the African community in Coffs Harbor. The sessions were attended by community leaders, local refugee services, multicultural networks, the Police, court representatives and Legal Aid. Under the Chairperson's leadership the sessions, with the aid of interpreters, resulted in a better understanding of the legal system and greater interaction between the African communities and the service delivery agencies involved. The sessions led to more successful integration and effective communication channels between all stakeholders in attendance.
6. In 2008 the Commission conducted an operational review of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS). EAPS has for 26 years been the principal system of multicultural governance in the New South Wales public sector. The review found that the program has no parallel, even in states, provinces or countries with some comparable form of multicultural legislation. The review also found that it was timely to revitalize the program, by simplifying procedures and drawing it closer to the current public sector operating environment. The program will be re-launched with a new name and suite of resources in 2009.
7. In 2008, the Commission with the close oversight of the Chairperson launched the LanguageLink service. The LanguageLink facility enables the full range of translation services to be conducted online from start to finish - from booking, acceptance by the translator, submission to the Commission, invoicing and payment to the translator. This facility enables prompt processing of requests for translations within 24 hours of request. LanguageLink has provided greater efficiency for customer service staff and is now used by the Supreme Court and most Local and District Courts.
8. The Commission successfully organised three events during World Youth Day 2008; the Premier's Reception for cardinals, bishops, non-Christian religious leaders, youth and community leaders, a Multifaith prayer event and a *Did You Know?* exhibition on migration heritage in NSW. The Commission hosted the Multifaith prayer event for global peace and social justice at MacLaurin Hall, Sydney University with the Chairperson giving the opening address. The event provided an opportunity for World Youth Day delegates and young people from different faiths to connect, make friendships and join in multifaith prayers.
9. The Commission's Regional Advisory Councils continued to play an important role in the relationship between the government and the community by identifying and addressing major issues of concern in NSW. The meetings brought together community and government representatives to discuss and address issues of concern to people from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Regional Advisory Councils demonstrated the capacity to highlight the particular needs of multicultural communities and to effectively share and distribute information relating to the policies that affect them, as well as promoting the programs and services available to people throughout regional NSW.

10. During 2008 the Commission actively consulted with ethnic and religious leaders, members of the public and communities regarding a shortage of burial space in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan area. The availability of affordable burial space is of concern to a large number of communities in the Sydney region, particularly the Muslim community. A number of meetings discussed various alternatives for the use and re-use of burial space to address concerns from community representatives.
11. The Chairperson attended and participated in hundreds of community meetings, events and functions throughout the year.