



STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP

Member for Stretton

Minister for Natural Resources, Mines & Energy

Minister for Trade



MEDIA RELEASE FROM STEPHEN ROBERTSON

TOPIC: AWARDS RECOGNISE COMMITMENT TO A MULTICULTURAL QUEENSLAND

AWX Agribusiness at Acacia Ridge, the Queensland Eidfest Association Inc and the Islamic Women's Association of Queensland have all been recognised for their exceptional role in promoting cultural diversity within the community.

Stephen Robertson MP congratulated both the Queensland Eidfest Association Inc and Islamic Women's Association of Queensland on receiving the Highly Commended Award in the Community Organisation category and AWX Agribusiness on winning the Private Enterprise Award at the 2010 Queensland Multicultural Award ceremony held last night.

"The Queensland Multicultural Awards recognise people and groups whose outstanding efforts have helped promote multiculturalism, support new migrants and increase community awareness of the value of multiculturalism," Mr Robertson said.

AWX Agribusiness works closely with Multicultural Development Association to actively recruit people from a refugee background to work in the agricultural sector. "Most of these workers have sought asylum after arriving by boat and AWX Agribusiness helps these refugees find employment and to integrate into the community," Ms Palaszczuk said.

The Islamic Women's Association of Queensland (IWAQ) is a not-for-profit organisation that started in 1991 by a group of women who identified the need for support for Muslim women and their families to settle in Queensland. "IWAQ has been involved in a number of community activities including an annual Hamper project to distribute goods to refugees, the elderly and disadvantaged families," Mr Robertson said.

IWAQ also established the Salam Overnight Cottage Respite, which offers time-off to carers of seniors and people with disability and is actively involved in Harmony Day events to further promote multiculturalism in the community. Our cultural diversity is one of Queensland's strengths and many people work hard to promote positive community relations across Queensland.

Queensland Eidfest Association Inc has consistently promoted cross-cultural and interfaith understanding through community programs and festivals. As part of their community activities, the organisation coordinates the annual Eidfest celebration in Brisbane which, as well as being a celebration after Ramadan, also seeks to foster greater understanding through interaction between Queensland's Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

This organisation has also contributed to building bridges between different groups within the Muslim community, raising awareness about the diversity and contributions of Queensland Muslims within the broader community.



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Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland was established in 1976 to represent the interests of the many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) who are part of the broad social community of Queensland, and to promote multiculturalism. ECCQ is a voluntary, not-for-profit, community-based State peak organisation. It has a State focus and, through affiliation with the Canberra-based Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) contributes to national policy and debate on all matters concerning ethnic communities and multiculturalism.

ECCQ undertakes project and program development and is active in aged and frail care for CALD people through Diversicare, its in-home care division which provides best-practice in-home services for the frail aged, and state-of-the-art residential care at Berlasco Court Caring Centre.

The Queensland Multicultural Awards provide an opportunity to recognise and thank those people. This year awards were offered across six categories - outstanding volunteer, community organisation, private enterprise, public sector, education and media. The Minister also presented a Minister's Encouragement Award and a Minister's Multicultural Community Award.

Multicultural Affairs Minister Annastacia Palaszczuk said the Queensland Government remained focused on its *Towards Q2* commitment of creating a fairer Queensland and initiatives such as the Queensland Multicultural Awards to recognise the people and organisations helping to achieve that vision.

"The Queensland Multicultural Awards are just one way we encourage more people to support their communities and to thank those who already do," she said. "Since 1990, these awards have recognised Queenslanders whose long-term efforts have helped make Queensland a diverse and dynamic place to live, study, work and raise a family. I congratulate those who received a 2010 Queensland Multicultural Award and thank them for their ongoing commitment to promoting multiculturalism in our state."

For more information on the 2010 Queensland Multicultural Awards winners, visit www.multicultural.qld.gov.au.

Media contact:
Stretton Electorate Office
Telephone: 3344 2659