



Speech by

Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Thursday, 18 June 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bellos, Mr J; Racism

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.46 am): I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Sergeant Jim Bellos, who was recently announced 2009 Queensland of the Year for his commitment to multiculturalism. Sergeant Bellos, a police officer with the Metropolitan South region, has been recognised for establishing community consultative groups, multifaith dinners, information sessions and a multicultural sporting program for 6,000 youths. Jim's efforts go a long way to discouraging racism in the community through sport.

The Bligh government is committed to taking a stand against any form of racism in Queensland. Yesterday, I convened a ministerial round table with representatives from the Indian community to ensure that Indian students studying in Queensland do not experience alleged racially motivated incidents like those occurring in other states. As a result of this round table, Minister Wilson and I have convened a group to meet again in early July to work with the police and the Indian community. We will then report back to the round table in six months to reassure Indian families and students that Queensland is a safe and secure place to study. Yesterday, I also announced that a designated cultural liaison officer within Multicultural Affairs Queensland will work with the Indian community and students over the next six months to ensure ongoing relationships.

Next month, the Brisbane Roar will take on Scottish giants Glasgow Celtic in the annual Roars Against Racism match. The Queensland government first introduced Roars Against Racism three years ago to challenge racist attitudes, to stamp out racial intolerance and to reinforce that there is no room for racism in Queensland. I thank the Department of Communities, Stadiums Queensland and the Brisbane Roar Football Club for their joint efforts in raising the profile of racism through football. Celtic has been an active participant in the Show Racism the Red Card campaign in the United Kingdom for the past 13 years—a campaign that uses footballers to educate against racism. The football game has the ability to bridge racial and ethnic divides and I am pleased that our Brisbane Roar players are such ambassadors for multiculturalism. I am confident that the football match at Suncorp Stadium on 12 July will be a great game for football fans. I would like to say to members that there are still tickets on sale if they want to attend.

There is a serious message behind the game and that is that no form of racism will be tolerated. I would urge the community to get behind the campaign and support these two great football teams as they 'red card' racism and send positive messages to football players, to schoolchildren and to the wider community.