



Speech by

Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Tuesday, 27 October 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Multiculturalism

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.53 am): Queensland is a vibrant multicultural state, home to more than 200 cultures, 220 languages and over 100 different spiritual beliefs. The Bligh government values multiculturalism and the contribution our diverse communities make to Queensland. We are committed to ensuring people from culturally diverse backgrounds live in communities that are fair, safe and prosperous. Across government we invest over \$20 million a year on a range of health, education, housing and recreational programs targeted at people from diverse cultural backgrounds. I am pleased today to launch a public discussion paper about ways to enhance Queensland's cultural diversity well into the future. I now table this paper—*A multicultural future: for all of us*.

Tabled paper: Department of Communities Discussion Paper, titled 'A multicultural future: for all of us' [[1134](#)].

It will give Queenslanders a say in shaping our multicultural future. We want to hear from people how they think we can improve our multicultural policies for the benefit of all Queenslanders. The economic and cultural benefits of multiculturalism are felt right across Queensland, from small rural communities to large urban centres. Public consultation will run for six months across Queensland, and the discussion paper will be translated into different languages to ensure as many people as possible get a chance to have their say. We need to look for new ways to promote cultural diversity and further strengthen Queensland communities. Our diverse communities make an enormous contribution to the cultural and economic life of the state.

Earlier this month over 50,000 people enjoyed international music, cuisine and live performances at the Queensland Multicultural Festival in Brisbane, in a celebration of the state's diversity. I have also attended a number of other successful multicultural festivals across Queensland this year, including the Australian-Italian Festival in Ingham—in the member for Hinchinbrook's electorate—the Bundaberg Multicultural Festival and the Gold Coast Multicultural Festival.

Our skilled migrant intake is helping to power the Queensland economy, with more than 3,600 arrivals in 2008-09. The Bligh government recognises the benefits that migration and multiculturalism bring to Queensland. Queenslanders have embraced multiculturalism and we are encouraging them to come up with new ideas to help build a stronger multicultural future for all of us.