



Speech by

## Hon. Cameron Dick

**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

Hansard Thursday, 2 September 2010

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### VISION AUSTRALIA

**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.34 pm): Tonight I want to take the time of the House to welcome a new resident to the electorate of Greenslopes. Vision Australia, a not-for-profit organisation that provides great support for people in our communities who are blind or have low vision, has opened its new Queensland headquarters in the Greenslopes electorate on Old Cleveland Road at Coorparoo. I have been a guest of the Vision Australia team twice in the past week, and I want to thank CEO, Gerard Menses, and regional manager, Karen Knight, for their kind invitations. My first visit was last week when I joined the Treasurer, Andrew Fraser, for the official opening of the new Queensland headquarters. The state government contributed \$10 million to this new building, which is a state-of-the-art facility for Queenslanders who have blindness or low vision. It will be home to some 47 staff and more than 50 volunteers who will provide various services such as a low-vision clinic, a kitchen for life skills training, and a seeing eye dog run.

At the opening I had the privilege of presenting an award to Duncan Collard, who has given more than 50 years of service to Vision Australia and its predecessor organisations. I returned to Vision Australia this week to officially open Texpo 2010—Queensland's inaugural technology expo for people who are blind or have low vision. This two-day event was held on Tuesday and Wednesday this week and attracted hundreds of visitors who were able to find out more about the technology available to improve their lives at home, in the community and in the workplace. While at Texpo I had a look at numerous displays and was given a demonstration of a modern Braille machine by Karen Knight and Luisa Ferronato. I also had the privilege of presenting awards to some of Vision Australia's local heroes—the staff and volunteers who help deliver services to more than 4,000 Queenslanders every year. Among them were Colin Ingram, who has notched up 35 years of service, and Ann O'Connell, who has dedicated 25 years to the organisation. Other recipients of awards were Olivia Lam, Greg Bond, Debbie Warner, Michael Bor, Matt Keliher and Paul McKenna. Between them, they have accrued a combined total of more than 140 years of service to Vision Australia.

Vision Australia works hard to establish collaborative relationships within the communities it serves. It also welcomes the input of community-minded volunteers who are willing to lend a hand. For example, Vision Australia is always looking for puppy carers—volunteers who are willing to care for a puppy in their home until the dogs are old enough to go on and become fully trained seeing eye dogs. Vision Australia also has opportunities for volunteers in Queensland to help out as drivers to take seniors with sight issues to one of its four low-vision clinics across the state at Coorparoo, Southport, Maroochydore and Cairns. It also wants people to visit homes to help read the mail and newspapers to people with impaired vision. Anyone who would like to offer their support for Vision Australia can phone 1300847466 and ask to speak to the Brisbane office or visit the website—[www.visionaustralia.org.au](http://www.visionaustralia.org.au)—and fill out an expression of interest to volunteer form.