



Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**


**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Queensland Australian of the Year Awards

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.52 am): Queensland is an extraordinary state made up of extraordinary people, and every year we stop and take the time to acknowledge Queenslanders who have given back to their community and who have achieved extraordinary things. Last week I hosted the Queensland Australian of the Year Awards. If you ever needed a reminder of how talented Queenslanders are, this was it. I would like to congratulate the four major award winners.

Queensland's Local Hero Award winner is Yasmin Khan, who has devoted her life to breaking down barriers when it comes to ethnic diversity and championing the fight against domestic violence in Queensland communities. The Queensland Young Australian of the Year, Taj Pabari, is a very impressive 17-year-old who came back from schoolies, by the way, to accept his award. He is an inventor and social entrepreneur who has created a build-it-yourself tablet and coding kit which is being used in schools around the world. The Queensland Senior Australian of the Year, Professor Perry Bartlett, is one of our leading neurological researchers. He is making incredible breakthroughs in the area of cell regeneration in the brain which could dramatically improve the lives of dementia sufferers. The Queensland Australian of the Year is Emeritus Professor Alan Mackay-Sim. Professor Mackay-Sim is leading the way when it comes to stem cell research that could benefit those who suffer from spinal cord injuries.

There were over 500 nominations for these awards, and I can only imagine how difficult it would have been for our selection panel to pick four winners. Now they will go on to represent Queensland at the national awards and, as I said on the night, it is about time we had another Queenslanders named Australian of the Year. Good luck to them all!