

Question on Notice

No. 529

Asked on 14 July 2015

MR RUSSO asked the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline how the government is working with multicultural communities to promote a more inclusive and harmonious society?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government is building a Queensland where everyone is equally included in our state's economy, society and culture, regardless of gender, culture or faith background.

The government is drafting and will introduce multicultural recognition legislation to promote belonging and acceptance, a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to promoting an inclusive and harmonious Queensland. Targeted consultations are being held this month across Queensland which will ensure that provisions in the draft Multicultural Recognition Bill reflect contemporary community views on promoting community harmony and inclusiveness.

Funding of \$770,000 per annum is allocated to support the implementation of the legislation. This investment will also enable the promotion of a Multicultural Queensland Charter and support of a Queensland Multicultural Advisory Council to engage with stakeholders across Queensland.

An interim Reference Group has been appointed, made up of respected community leaders and experts to advise me on issues affecting culturally and linguistically diverse Queenslanders. The Reference Group will operate until the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council is formed under the proposed new multicultural legislation.

In recent months, I have had opportunities to meet with representatives of many of Queensland's diverse cultures and faiths, across Queensland.

In 2014–15, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services provided approximately \$1.4 million to 16 organisations across Queensland. The Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program investment will increase to over \$1.7 million in 2015–16, including new CAMS services to support social connectedness for culturally diverse communities in Rockhampton and Mount Isa, and for Muslim women statewide.

For the first time, \$1 million multicultural grants program will be recurrently funded, demonstrating the Queensland Government's commitment to acknowledging the strengths of our multicultural community, celebrating and making the most of Queensland's diversity.

In addition, Queensland Multicultural Week, a growing annual statewide program of events and activities that celebrate inclusion and harmony, will be held from Saturday 22 August to Sunday 30 August 2015, beginning with the Queensland Multicultural Awards gala dinner.