

Our Clients

Responding to Diversity – Multicultural Queensland – making a world of difference

The new Queensland Government multicultural policy: *Multicultural Queensland –making a world of difference* is a blueprint on how best to manage diversity and maximise the benefits it offers. Underpinning the policy are the core principles of access, equity and participation. These principles enhance social justice and cohesion while at the same time raise awareness and respect for difference.

The implementation and monitoring of the policy within the Service were coordinated through the Cultural Advisory Unit, Office of the Commissioner. This Unit worked closely with other government and non-government stakeholders, operational police, Cross Cultural Liaison Officers and Police Liaison Officers in all regions to progress the issues identified. To ensure Whole-of-Government coordination in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the policy, the Service was represented on the Interdepartmental Committee on Multicultural Affairs and on working groups that advised on evaluation and best practice strategies. Service projects and initiatives undertaken in 2005-06 to promote positive community engagement include:

- **Police Ethnic Advisory Group**

During the period, the Group met on six occasions. Issues raised at these meetings were subsequently addressed by the Cultural Advisory Unit, Cross Cultural Liaison Officers and Police Liaison Officers throughout the State.

- **Australasian Police Multicultural Advisory Bureau**

The Service, as an active member of the Bureau, continued to contribute to the development of co-ordinated approaches in the delivery of equitable and professional police services to culturally diverse communities within all Australian and New Zealand police jurisdictions. During the period, research focused on the recruitment and retention of people from diverse backgrounds; multicultural liaison officers, and updating the highly successful publication *A Practical Guide to Religious Diversity for Operational Police and Emergency Service Workers*.

- **African and Pacific Islander Communities**

The Service continued to work in partnership with other agencies such as Multicultural Affairs Queensland and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to progress Whole-of-Government strategies for African and Pacific Islander communities. The Service was represented on sub-committees which focused on existing services and on developing new strategies and action plans. The Service also continued its support of successful community-policing initiatives with African arrivals living in South Brisbane. This work focused on increased community ownership and participation as well as supporting young people through youth awards. Ongoing dialogue with community leaders in other areas continued to build relationships and assisted in addressing local issues.



- **Japanese Community Safety Meetings**

The Service has continued to liaise and consult with representatives from the Office of the Consul-General of Japan to discuss safety and security concerns for Japanese nationals, particularly in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast.

- **Use of Interpreters**

The Service continued to promote and monitor the appropriate use of interpreters and translators in line with government policy and relevant legislation. In addition, a database containing the names and contact details of multilingual staff is regularly updated by the Cultural Advisory Unit, to assist in meeting requests for assistance.

- **Indigenous Drivers' Licensing Program**

The Program assisted people in isolated, remote areas and Indigenous communities throughout the State to gain a driver's licence. The Program has effectively engaged a number of target communities in remote and urban areas and in the Torres Strait Islands, and included partnerships with other Government agencies.

- **Justice Entry Program**

The Justice Entry Program at the Queensland Police Service Academy delivers a Certificate IV in Justice (Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people) qualification. The Program prepares participants for successful entry to the Police Recruit Operational Vocational Education Program as well as other justice related areas. A group of five participants is currently completing studies with a further intake planned for October 2006.



- **Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland**

The Council continues to sponsor the Cross-Cultural Awareness Award presented at each Induction Parade to the recruit best able to demonstrate an understanding of, and sensitivity towards, effective policing for diversity. Representatives from multicultural communities are included on the Commissioner's guest list at each Induction Parade.

- **The Mosaic Fund**

Operational policing continues to benefit from this fund which was established to enhance police and community engagement through financial assistance and strategic support.

Cultural Appreciation Project

The Cultural Appreciation Project aims to enhance understanding of diversity for all Service personnel with an initial focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspects of cultural appreciation.

Statewide implementation was undertaken in stages during the reporting period and included three current units of the Competency Acquisition Program dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, race relations, government and the law and social issues. The 'Introduction to Culture' education sessions are being refined for delivery to recruits and police officers throughout the State. Profiles containing information relating directly to Aboriginal



and Torres Strait Islander issues are being developed to meet specific regional needs. These identify and address local issues and will be provided to new staff prior to arrival in each community. In addition, specific training is being developed to assist other units within the Service that interact with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Indigenous Community and Police Consultative Groups

Indigenous Community and Police Consultative Groups were established or maintained to develop and enhance partnerships between police and Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are presently 18 active groups in Queensland including Bundaberg and Palm Island, with several more planned to commence in 2006-07. They serve as local forums for discussing policing matters of concern to communities, facilitate decision making and, where necessary, act upon such decisions in an informed and co-operative way. The groups also provide information and referral of relevant matters to the Indigenous Community and Police Review and Reference Group.

Community Patrols

A Community Patrol commenced in Cairns on 1 August 2003. Further funding was made available in the 2005-06 Budget to continue the Cairns Community Patrol and establish Community Patrols in Townsville and Mount Isa. This project focuses on diverting Indigenous people from police custody and correctional facilities, through partnerships with key stakeholder agencies.

The Community Patrol has two designated PLOs in each area who, with support of other Service employees:

- arrange transport to safer places for people affected by alcohol;
- monitor identified public places where there is a history of anti-social behaviour;
- link homeless people to relevant community, government and professional support networks and agencies; and
- mediate in potential problem situations to defuse conflict and prevent escalating violence.



Government Community Champion

The Commissioner is the Government Champion for Mornington Island and Wujal Wujal. The Assistant Commissioner, Far Northern Region is the co-Champion for Wujal Wujal. Both are closely involved in Community Negotiation Tables which aim to minimise the number of separate consultations with Indigenous communities by Government agencies and achieve meaningful outcomes for the community.

Community Consultative Committees

Community Consultative Committees (CCC) are operating at Longreach and Winton. These committees deal with local issues affecting their respective communities. During the reporting period the Longreach CCC implemented several programs within the community including a program to target youth awareness and ensure friends look after one another regarding alcohol, drug abuse and suicide prevention. A workshop was facilitated by the Red Cross with the support of the CCC.

Rural and Regional Queensland

The Service is committed to the equitable delivery of policing services in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas of Queensland. The Service is structured into eight regions, with 29 districts working closely together with local communities to address issues of community concern.

The Service is committed to delivering policing in all Queensland communities and has established a number of programs and activities specific to rural and regional areas including:

- one and two officer stations in 165 rural and remote centres across the State;
- establishment of the North Queensland Campus of the Police Service Academy at Townsville to encourage recruitment and retention of police officers in central and northern Queensland. A total of 498 recruits have successfully completed their training at Townsville, with the majority of these officers remaining in the northern part of the State;
- operation of Queensland Government Agent Program Offices in police stations at Bedourie, Boulia, Birdsville, Jundah, Isisford, Windorah and Thargomindah, giving these communities access to a broad range of government information and services;
- employing over 140 Police Liaison Officers across the State to promote a positive rapport between police personnel and Indigenous and multicultural communities;
- ongoing support for Police-Citizens Youth Clubs and the Blue Light Associations across the State, which provide entertainment and activities for young people in rural and remote communities;
- continuing to upgrade police radio and communications with a particular focus on rural and remote areas of the State;
- ongoing support for the Rural Watch Program which comprises of small rural groups seeking to improve the safety and security of their families and other neighbourhood residents; and
- the development of the new Stock and Rural Crime Investigation Squads through provision of training in relation to the National Livestock Identification System which became compulsory throughout Australia on 1 July 2005.



Responding to Our Clients

The QPS Client Service Charter has been widely distributed and can be obtained from all police stations and on the Service website at www.police.qld.gov.au. The Service reviews client feedback to inform further development of service delivery plans and ensure the Service is responding to community needs. Members of the community can also provide feedback through letters, emails or by telephone. A Client Service Record is completed when a member of the public provides a favourable comment about the conduct or action of a member of the Service. During the reporting period, approximately 1,215 favourable comments were received.