



NEWSLETTER

June 2006



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Multiculturalism is widely recognised as Australia's greatest achievement during the past half century.

But we cannot afford to take multiculturalism and community harmony for granted.

Many people have worked long and hard to build support for the fundamental values of multiculturalism – respect, understanding and a fair go for all.

I encourage all South Australians to recognise how precious, yet fragile community harmony and multiculturalism are.

If we do not have strong support for multiculturalism then our community harmony could all too quickly be replaced by the division, turmoil and even hostility that we have seen elsewhere in the world.

Every South Australian has a responsibility to speak out in support of multiculturalism and the community harmony that comes with it.

Hieu Van Le, Chairman

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission values its links with communities and is always keen to learn more about current and emerging issues and concerns.

In 2006 the Commission is holding consultative receptions after each of their regular monthly meetings with leaders of ethnic community organisations.

Commission members will take account of the information provided during the consultations in their work to ensure that issues and needs are met by Government and other agencies.

MUSLIM REFERENCE GROUP

On 24 April 2006 the South Australian Government Muslim Reference Group met with the Hon Carmel Zollo M.L.C., Minister Assisting the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, to discuss ways of improving community relations and promoting interfaith dialogue.

On 25 March 2006, Reference Group members took part in a program to help them better manage media interviews and relationships. The following day, an additional media training session was provided to members of South Australian Muslim communities nominated by Reference Group members.



Participants at the Media Training Day for Muslims

The training was provided by Professor Peter Manning, Adjunct Professor in Journalism at the University of Technology in Sydney, NSW. Professor Manning has extensive senior experience in public and private television and radio and a special interest in media representations of Muslim people.

LAND TAX RELIEF GRANT SCHEME

Many community organisations have already received grants to cover the full cost of their land tax bill under the State Government's Ethnic Community Organisations Land Tax Relief Grant Scheme.

Eligible organisations that have not yet applied for a land tax relief grant are encouraged to apply immediately. Call 8226 1974 or 8226 1968.



NEW INTERPRETERS INDUCTED

In response to the continuing growth in need for additional interpreters the Interpreting and Translating Centre recently inducted 24 new interpreters.

The new interpreters speak the following languages: Dutch, Persian, Dari, Hindi, Kiswahili, Somali, Dinka, Arabic, Lingala, Kibemba, Kireka, Mandarin, Kikuyu, Makua, Kingoni, Krio, Temne, Mende, Vietnamese, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujerati, Portuguese, Serbian, Mandingoes, Amharic, Tigrigna, Kirundi and Polish. Some interpreters speak two or more of the above.

The new interpreters have been taken on escorted orientation tours of hospitals and courts.

COMMUNITY HARMONY RECEPTION

Harmony Day provides an opportunity for all Australians to celebrate our many successes as a diverse and harmonious multicultural society.

On Friday 17 March 2006, the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission held a Community Harmony breakfast reception.

The event provided an ideal opportunity for ethnic community leaders to talk with senior officers from South Australian Government agencies about current and emerging concerns in their communities.

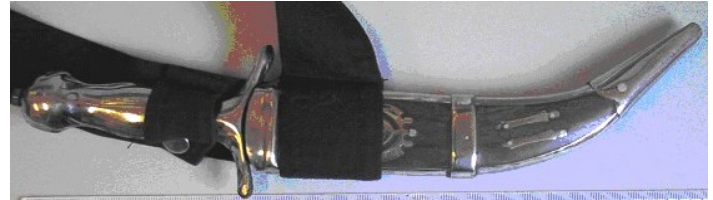
INTERPRETING SERVICES IN THE RIVERLAND

Medical students of the Flinders University Parallel Rural Community Curriculum attended a talk on 'Working Effectively with Interpreters' at the Renmark Paringa Community Hospital presented by ITC Marketing & Development Officer Paul Hellander

While in the Riverland, Paul consulted with local interpreters on local issues – including how to increase the use of interpreters and how to increase the number of interpreters available for some recently arrived migrant groups. ITC has 30 interpreters registered in the Riverland.

OKAY TO KIRPAAN

A kirpaan, one of five religious items worn by baptised Sikhs, is now officially exempt under the Summary Offences (Dangerous Articles and Prohibited Weapons) Variations Regulations 2006. The kirpaan is a small sword, worn by Orthodox Sikhs as an article of faith, in a shoulder belt, which hangs at the waist.



When new laws about offensive weapons were introduced in 2004, members of the Sikh community were concerned that Orthodox Sikhs wearing a kirpaan had no defence against a charge of carrying a prohibited weapon.

The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission raised the matter with the Attorney-General and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Hon. Michael Atkinson M.P. and the Sikh community. Consequently the regulations were changed to exempt kirpaans. To be exempt, a Sikh must be wearing the kirpaan for religious purposes only.

INTERNATIONAL POLICE TATTOO 2006

Multiculturalism was a feature of the 2006 International Police Tattoo. The performers organised by Multicultural SA to participate in the event were the Greek Lyceum of S.A. Song & Dance Ensemble, Atsui-no-Taiko (hot drums) Japanese Drumming Ensemble and Volya Ukrainian Dance Ensemble.



Volya Ukrainian Dance Ensemble
at the International Police Tattoo 2006

