

# New peak body to help multicultural youth

The establishment of a new peak advisory body will provide a nationally coordinated approach to advocacy for multicultural youth issues, the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, announced today.

**T**he government has recognised the need for advocacy for young migrants and refugees in Australia and this project will play a significant part in improving the lives of these young people," Mr Ferguson said.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship has provided \$285 000 to the National Multicultural Youth Advisory Network (NMYAN) through its Diverse Australia Program for the two-year project.

"The National Multicultural Youth Advisory Network will build the capacity of youth agencies and networks around the country to meet the needs of young refugees and migrants," Mr Ferguson said.

"The majority of refugees who come

to Australia under our humanitarian programs are young people under the age of 30.

"Along with other newly arrived young people with culturally diverse backgrounds, they face significant challenges when settling into their new country including learning English, negotiating the education system, coming to terms with a new culture and finding jobs and housing.

"Many of these young people have to deal with these issues without the support of family or the established networks that other young Australians are able to draw upon. Unfortunately, they can also experience racism and discrimination along the way."

The project, which will be administered by the Centre for Multicultural

Youth in Victoria, will also develop the structures necessary to establish NMYAN as the national peak advisory body.

"I would especially like to recognise Ms Carmel Guerra, Director of the Centre for Multicultural Youth, for her continued commitment to assisting refugee youth in need. Ms Guerra's valued work is not only recognised through her role as Director, but also as an active member of the national Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council," said Mr Ferguson.

The Diverse Australia Program helps local communities address cultural, racial and religious intolerance and works with different levels of government and community organisations to empower grassroots action.



## MASTER PAINTERS REWARDED FOR EXCELLENCE

Fair Trading Minister Virginia Judge congratulated recipients of the 2009 New South Wales Master Painters Association Awards.

Ms Judge said Fair Trading was proud to continue its support of the prestigious awards.

"The Awards for Excellence and Apprentice of the Year celebrate the highest standards of skill and customer service across the painting industry," she said.

Ms Judge presented awards to:

- Parramatta resident Mr Daniel Kottaridis, an em-

ployee of Dukes Painting Service at Ryde for Outstanding New Apprentice;

- Mr Les Robertson of Drummoyne for Excellence in Customer Service; and
- Mr Rob Vukovic of Fusion Painting Services at Latham ACT for the Business Management Award.

"Apprentices are the future of the industry and the commitment and skill shown by the nominees proves the industry is in excellent hands," she said.

"I would also like to congratulate the employers who have sponsored the apprentices through their training and helped them gain valuable skills and knowledge."

President of the Master Painters Association Tony Isgrove welcomed the Rees Government's support.

"These awards show case the talents of the best tradespeople in the industry and also recognise our future masters of the trade," he said. Ms Judge said the Master Painters Association had a proud history in Australia extending back more than 100 years.

"The awards provide an opportunity for painters and decorators to showcase their projects to their peers in categories including residential, commercial and industrial work, decorative finishes, and heritage restoration," she said.

## Australia Post told 'the mail must get through'

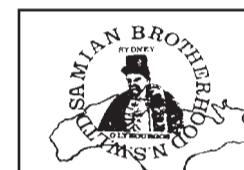
The Postal Industry Ombudsman, Professor John McMillan, has identified a heavy reliance on manual systems as the root cause of many errors and the likely reason for 65,000 complaints in 2007 to Australia Post about its mail redirection service.

"The non-delivery of mail can have serious consequences for those affected, including financial loss owing to late or non-payment of bills or mail falling into the wrong hands," according to Professor McMillan.

'People rely on the redirection service for many reasons—to ensure that mail is not missed when they move house, go on holiday, temporarily relocate for work, or renovate a property.' Releasing the results of his investigation into Australia Post's administration of its mail redirection service, the Ombudsman today said that the most common complaint related to the failure of redirections that had, at some stage, worked effectively.

"The problem is that because the service relies on manual systems, the potential for human error is high."

Professor McMillan explained that Australia Post's mail redirection application forms are paper-based only and must be sent to a central location for processing, where redirection stickers are produced and sent to the relevant postal outlet. Delivery people are then required to recognise—by reference to a folder in which the stickers are held—that mail to a certain address is subject to redirection and to manually apply the stickers to the mail.



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