



Islamic Council of Queensland

Inaugural Community Report
2015

Contents

*Message from ICQ
President*

The year that was

Media and Communications

Halal

*Educational corner -
Periodic Table of Islam*

Announcements

Contact details

Message from ICQ President

Assalam-u-Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu

The Islamic Council of Queensland has had a very busy year and adopted a collaborative approach in establishing itself as a value adding peak body for the Queensland Muslim community. Our focus has been on engaging and building a stronger relationship with all of ICQ's Member Societies, other Muslim and Non-Muslim community based organisations, regulatory authorities and the various levels of government.

While it is not feasible to document every activity we have undertaken this year, we have set out a brief overview of a number of initiatives within this newsletter.

We are all living at a time which presents us with a great opportunity to lead the way in the promotion of positive messages that will, Insha-Allah, enhance social cohesion. ICQ's vision is to serve the very diverse Muslim community in a way which facilitates a future that is filled with strong bonds of friendship, both within our community and with the wider Australian community.

We are bound to have made many mistakes along the way, and we will surely continue to do so as we learn how to serve you better every day. Please accept our sincerest apologies if our actions have in any way offended or hurt you - for this was never our intent. We request that you provide us with any constructive feedback on how we can improve and we are always more than willing to receive any help you may wish to offer.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have assisted us, through countless hours of voluntary effort, to achieve the numerous milestones which we have this past year. May Allah (s.w.t) reward you for your efforts and I look forward to working with you and others next year.

Wa-alaikum-us-Salaam, Ismail Cajee – President ICQ

“Verily! Allah is with those
who do good deeds.”

(Surah al-Ankabut)

The year that was

It has been another busy period for ICQ. Apart from dealing with day to day matters, ICQ has spent a considerable amount of time implementing a number of improvement projects. An overview of some of the key initiatives is set out below.

Community consultations

There were numerous engagements during the year aimed at building a stronger relationship with all of ICQ's Member Societies as well as many other Muslim and Non-Muslim community based organisations.

Government representation

ICQ adopts a bipartisan approach to political engagement. ICQ is very active in engaging with politicians on both sides of the political spectrum and constantly raises matters of importance and/or concern on behalf of the Muslim community. To date, ICQ has found the open dialogue approach with politicians to be productive.

We are also working with the Queensland Premier's Department on a number of projects, aimed at promoting social cohesion and understanding.

Support services

ICQ continues to offer a range of support services to its Member Societies. These services include the arrangement of hufaaz for the month of Ramadaan, development of a centralised Islamic education curriculum and development of various other programs (e.g. youth development).

Property

ICQ is sourcing new premises (land) for a new Muslim cemetery due to the current one approaching full capacity.

Sustainability

ICQ is developing a self-sustainable operating model, which may include an Islamic Chamber of Commerce.

Law enforcement

We have engaged positively with law enforcement agencies and are actively collaborating on matters impacting our Muslim communities.

Aged Care

ICQ is working on a proposal aimed at establishing an aged care centre near the ICB. We will keep the community updated as to its progress.

Halal certification

ICQ carries out a halal certification process, offering a commercially viable proposition to various retailers (e.g. restaurants, butchers, etc.) and producers (e.g. abattoirs, processors, etc.) through advertising and promotions.

ICQ, with permission from AFIC, has obtained the right to conduct halal certification within Queensland by leveraging the AFIC license. This now gives ICQ a base to actively support halal certification requirements in a wider market context for Queensland businesses.

Deepening our relationship with other religious groups

ICQ has established a working group with prominent Brisbane based Christian leaders and the Council of Imams QLD to discuss positive ways to enhance community engagement in order to strengthen the social fabric of our society.

The participants included Archbishop Mark Coleridge (Catholic church), Reverend Canon Richard Tutin (Queensland Churches Together), Reverend David Baker (Moderator, Uniting Church in Australia), Dr. Mohamad Abdalla (Councils of Imams – Queensland), Ismail Cajee (Islamic Council of Queensland), Fahim Khondakar (Islamic Council of Queensland) and Ali Kadri (Islamic Society of Holland Park).

The Christian/Muslim working group agreed on quarterly meetings to take tangible actions that can assist in strengthening a safe and cohesive society for all Queenslanders. In addition to regular meetings the group also agreed that educational programs for communities of both congregations/faiths will be pursued in order to dispel misunderstanding through grass root initiatives; working together to ensure that the actions of few

individuals of any faith does not lead to a negative stereotyping of all members of that faith.

Regardless of the complexities of interfaith dialogues, cooperation to achieve unity in diversity is the only way forward for peace and security for all of our communities.

Legislation

ICQ submitted one of only two Queensland submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015 which at the time of writing is due to be introduced into parliament within a few weeks.

ICQ's submission articulated the concerns against the Bill which were echoed by many renowned academics and experts.

The submission was well received in the media with a very positive article published in the Sydney Morning Herald entitled, "Citizenship bill attracts just two Queensland submissions" which is available through this link: www.bitly.com/citizenshiparticle.

This is a very important issue that is of significant concern to all members of both the Muslim and Non-Muslim communities. ICQ encourages all community members to become informed of the proposed changes and raise any concerns they have with their elected federal and state representatives.

Police services

ICQ representatives have delivered an Introduction to Islam training course on behalf of ICQ as part of a rolling statewide training programme for the Queensland Police Service.

A number of local masjid imams and guest visitors have also attended the training, which has enabled positive relationships to be built and further strengthened between Muslim organisations and the Queensland Police Service.

The feedback from participating police officers and members of the Muslim community that have been in attendance has been positive. The training has enabled police officers to develop a basic understanding of the key teachings of Islam and to think about how to effectively engage with Muslim communities.



Media and Communications

ICQ has appointed a spokesperson to liaise with and respond to various media enquiries we receive as the peak Islamic body in Queensland. Since his appointed our media liaison officer has responded to over 100 media enquiries from print, radio and television media.

We have also developed a media strategy to be proactive in our public relations by sending press releases to various media outlets and submitting opinion pieces to leading newspapers on the issues concerning the Muslim community.

We have also extended our support to regional members by providing them with contact details of journalists and media outlets. In future our goal is to develop a comprehensive media strategy and organize media training for our members to increase the team of media representatives especially in regional areas.

The ICQ website and our Facebook page are good forums to discuss current affairs and provide feedback on our communication activities.

“Be steadfast, enjoin kindness, avoid ignorance, and bear with patience whatever befalls you.”

(Surah Luqman)

Announcements

Eidgah

ICQ would like to thank everyone for their participation at both Eidgahs, held at the Islamic College of Brisbane, Karawatha. ICQ would specifically like to thank the Islamic College of Brisbane, our member societies and our organising partners Holland Park Mosque and Kuraby Mosque. We would also like to thank the Muslim Charitable Foundation (MCF) for collecting the Zakat and Fitrah, the Deen family for serving food to the attendees, members of Ummah United youth group and the many volunteers who assisted with the car parking, set up and various other matters.

Refugee crisis

ICQ welcomes the announcement that Australia will take 12,000 refugees from Syria and Iraq in addition to the 13,750 places allocated through existing humanitarian program. A number of activities have already taken place and are planned and ICQ is looking for community members to assist and get involved in welcoming refugees to Queensland