



Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF) Inc.

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Sam Wong AM

CMCF welcomes award for Naming Australia head

April 2, 2008

The chair of the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF), Sam Wong, has congratulated the President of Naming Australia, Christopher Peters, AM, who has received the Spanish Order of Isabel la Catolica (Cruz de Oficial) for his commitment to strengthening relations between Spain and Australia.

Mr Peters, who is also the Chief Executive of the ACT and Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is an adviser to CMCF on business and governance. In the 2004 Queen's Birthday Honours List, Mr Peters was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to the business sector as an administrator of a range of private, public and professional authorities and organisations, and to the community.

Throughout 2006 Naming Australia presented a program of events to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the expeditions of Spanish explorers Pedro Fernandez de Quiros and Luis Vaez de Torres. De Quiros, landing in Vanuatu in May 1606, mistook it for the fabled Great Southern Land and took possession for Spain naming it Australia del Espiritu Santo. Later that same year de Torres sailed through the straits that now bear his name.

Mr Wong said that while neither man actually recognised Australia for what it really was, they made an invaluable contribution to its history and naming. "Their exploits, and Spain's role at the very dawn of Australia's European history, is now much better known thanks to the Naming Australia project which Mr Peters headed," he said.

"The award, which comes directly from King Juan Carlos I and is the equivalent of the Order of Australia, is richly deserved. It is recognition of Chris' work in this important project and in a wider sense, to his tireless devotion to the cause of multiculturalism."

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