

# BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF QUEENSLAND INC. (IA29696)



*An Umbrella Organization Representing Buddhists and  
Buddhist Groups And Institutions In Queensland* ABN 69 825 774 318

-- Affiliated Member of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils Inc. --  
Postal Address. P.O. Box 4510, Loganholme DC, Queensland, 4129 Australia

Phone: 0422 819 379 Fax: 07 3366 7388

Email: [buddhist\\_council@hotmail.com](mailto:buddhist_council@hotmail.com)

Web: [www.buddhistcouncilofqueensland.org](http://www.buddhistcouncilofqueensland.org)



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – June 19, 2010**

The 2010 Annual General Meeting marks the eleventh such gathering since this Council was incorporated and five years that I have had the privilege to be the President of such an excellent organisation.

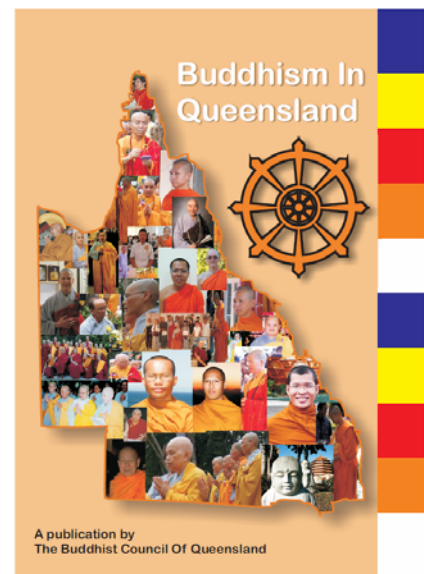
All voluntary organisations such as ours, are only as strong as the small groups of people who come together and form their management committees. Such is the case with this Council, comprising a committee of eight people who routinely give their time and expertise freely and without any expectation of recognition or reward. *Dana*, or the act of giving, is a fundamental practice within Buddhism and being involved as a committee member of the BCQ is an excellent example of such practice, and sometimes their generosity goes beyond merely time and labour, but also financial support as well.

This generosity has been clearly demonstrated this year through the production of the Council's new publication "*Buddhism in Queensland*" that has now been distributed to all dharma centres throughout Queensland and many other institutions, including schools, libraries and others. The Council received \$4,800 from the Queensland Government's Q-150 grant initiative to deliver both this book and a new and revised website to permit on-going up-to-date information on Buddhism in this state.

The collation of centre information and photographs, researching the actual history of this philosophy and growth in this state, the pre-press compiling of all the information and other liaison between centres and printers, web-designer and so on, consumed many hours and numerous meetings throughout the year, substituting for conventional management committee meetings, but which allowed for business matters to be managed. However, in reconciling the financial cost of delivering these outcomes, the final result was in excess of \$17,000... and after deducting the \$4,800 received from the Q-150 grant, the remaining \$12,200+ came solely from the pockets of this present committee, and a very small number of other supporters.

For their discrete demonstration of *dana* then, I believe the entire dharma community of Queensland should acknowledge those contributions of both effort and financial support and I personally extend a deep and sincere vote of appreciation for this committee's contribution to aiding the dharma in this state, and supporting its continuing growth and strength.

This publication and new website will, I hope, bring a new era of collaboration and cooperation within our state, so we can continue to build on our past achievements, and help gain increased recognition for Buddhism as the second largest faith system after Christianity in this state, and the fastest growing.



In supporting these aims, I am pleased to advise that Buddhism has now, finally, been recognised as an official religion under Federal Law that now permits the appointment of Buddhist Marriage Celebrants, and soon should also permit formal appointments as Buddhist-aligned Military, Prison and Hospital Chaplains.

This Council has already assisted in the appointment of the first Buddhist-founded Employing Authority for School Chaplains and facilitated the first Buddhist Chaplain in a Queensland government school – Milpera State High School – the Venerable Thubten.

Similarly, this Council is contributing to the Qld. Multi-Faith Health Care Council that is developing the framework for the formal training and recognition of Hospital and Pastoral Care Chaplains.

Through this Council's affiliation with the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils and the Australian Sangha Association, and the concentrated efforts of all member groups, it is also pleasing to note that the Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC] has now also amended the financial obligation requirements for sangha seeking to gain visa-entry to Australia, now recognising that the vows of poverty taken by sangha conflicted with the DIAC requirement that they show an income of at least \$45,000pa whilst living in this country. This condition has now been relaxed and new policy introduced for Buddhist clergy.

This Council continues to work also with the state's Religious Education Advisory Committee in formulating Religious Instruction in the state's schools and has just contributed a Fact Sheet on Buddhism for all schools, their principals and teachers. This Council is now the only certifying authority for RI teachers in the state's schools and a review of Buddhist teaching programs for schools, along with those of other faiths, is planned for 2011 which will require endorsement by this Council.

2010 and 2011 both promise to continue the growth of Buddhism in Queensland, with new centres opening across the state. This Council is committed to furthering its engagement with and support for all centres in their own pursuits of visas for sangha, funding for building projects and liaising with government and councils in every way possible.

As I identified in my opening remarks, all such efforts cannot be achieved from effort alone, and in order for the Council to be truly successful in all its objectives, we do, however, need funds.

With this in mind, I also urge all centres to also demonstrate *dana* in some form that may assist this Council with its continuing efforts in the name of the dharma, so we can all contribute to the on-going growth of the dharma in this state.

I also extend an open invitation to all the dharma community to also participate in the management committee's activities and roles, and so accordingly encourage as many members as possible attend this Annual General Meeting and help contribute to the energy of this wonderful team.....

With metta and O Mi To Fu...

Jim Ferguson  
President