

RAMADAN

Statement by Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests) [9.05 am]: I would like to inform the house that the month of Ramadan, a very important event for our Muslim communities, is likely to begin on Saturday, 27 May 2017. For the more than 39 000 Western Australian Muslims, and Muslims around the world, Ramadan is a time for reflection, prayer and charity. It also means abstaining from eating and drinking between sunrise and sunset, and refraining from activities that divert attention from their faith or honest and good conduct.

Muslims believe that it was during the month of Ramadan that the Koran, Islam's holy book, was revealed to the prophet Muhammad by Allah. The month is intended to bring Muslims closer to God and to remind them of the feelings and needs of people who are less fortunate. Each day of Ramadan ends with the iftar dinner, served immediately after sunset. It is a very social event and a time for the family or community to get together and share food. For the last six years, a parliamentary iftar dinner has been held in Parliament House. It is attended by parliamentarians and faith and community leaders, offering an outstanding opportunity for deepening social unity and understanding. This year's iftar dinner, which will take place on Friday, 9 June, and is organised by the Intercultural Harmony Society with support from both sides of the house, has received Office of Multicultural Interests' sponsorship of \$5 000.

The month of Ramadan ends with the Eid celebrations. These Eid events attract thousands of participants from Muslim communities, as well as increasing numbers from the wider community. The state government, through the Office of Multicultural Interests' community grants program, is supporting several key community Eid celebrations this year. The Islamic Council of Western Australia and the Australian Arab Association have each received a grant of \$12 500 from major community celebrations funding for 2017 Eid al-Fitr events and the Eid al-Adha festival, which will take place in September this year. I take this opportunity to wish Muslim Western Australians "Ramadan Kareem".