

Bundaberg - Nanning

*Growing together in strength –
A Shared Vision for the Future*



Category No. 7: OVERALL PROGRAM
Entrant: BUNDABERG REGIONAL COUNCIL
Date of event: 29 NOVEMBER, 2014
Name of participating Sister City: NANNING

Executive Summary

The old adage "good things come to those who wait" may well apply to the 17 year SisterCity relationship that has burgeoned between Bundaberg and Nanning, China.

Nanning holds an impressive 19 Sister City relationships worldwide, but it is its 17 year bond with Bundaberg that was recently recognised with a prestigious award. In November 2014, Nanning and Bundaberg received a Chinese national award to recognise their bond as one of the Best Sister City relationships in the People's Republic of China.

The Best Sister City award is made annually by the Chinese People's Association for Friendships with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC). The past year has been pivotal in further strengthening the relationship that has steadily evolved since its signing in May 1998.

During the past 12 months, delegations from Bundaberg Regional Council and Nanning have traded visits. The tangible results of these face-to-face meetings is manifest in five key project areas to:

- » **Improve joint educational opportunities;**
- » **Enhance relationships in agriculture;**
- » **Expand cultural experiences through commitments to Bundaberg's Chinese New Year celebrations and the "China Ready" tourism initiative;**
- » **Progress port to port opportunities; and**
- » **Explore joint aviation initiatives**

Trade and courtesy visits are becoming a regular occurrence between Bundaberg and Nanning local governments. The genuine desire to explore future economic, cultural and social benefits for both cities is built around mutual strength, trust and respect for our shared association.

The community of the Bundaberg region has embraced the relationship and the Chinese New Year celebrations are one of the highlight community events of the year. Nanning annually provides entertainers in support of this event, and this year visiting Chinese students participated as comperes and organisers.

Bundaberg Regional Council worked closely with Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism to promote the region's

tourism market to Chinese visitors. In April 2014, Council was granted funding from the Australia-China Council for its "China Ready" project. The project was designed to advise and train local businesses and tourism operators about Chinese cultural, culinary and social etiquettes to cater to the emerging Chinese tourism market.

The Bundaberg State High School and the Bundaberg Campus of Central Queensland University have agreements in place with Nanning counterparts that have laid a foundation for international exchanges involving students and teachers between the two cities.

Trade and manufacturing opportunities in the area of agriculture are generating financial returns particularly with Chinese interest in the area of sugar cane production. The Bundaberg region is providing expertise in agronomy and filling contracts for machinery production.

The visit to the Bundaberg region by Nanning's Mayor, Zhou Hong Bo and a top level delegation earlier this year has been the catalyst for the acceleration of the level of involvement both cities have enjoyed to date.

To some, the Sister City relationship between Bundaberg, with its regional population of 95,000, and Nanning, with its seven million inhabitants, may seem an improbable union. However, the strength of the relationship fostered over 17 years clearly demonstrates that it is the friendship and goodwill that provides this wonderful spirit of co-operation and feeling of kinship we enjoy.

PHOTO: Bundaberg Regional Council Mayor Mal Forman & the Nanning Mayor Zhou Hong Bo during the Chinese visit to Bundaberg.

