

Message from Consul-General Kiya Masahiko

This message was on the consulate website as “Message from the Consul-General”
https://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/about_consul_generals_message.html
during Mr Kiya’s tenure, October 2019-September 2022.



I am Kiya Masahiko, Consul-General of Japan in Sydney. Pleased to meet you.

Today, the Japan-Australia relationship is stronger than ever before, across diverse areas including politics, economy and culture. Moreover, New South Wales and the Northern Territory, both under the jurisdiction of this consulate, have particularly strong ties with Japan.

In January 2017, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo visited Sydney, and in November 2018, he became the first Prime Minister of Japan to visit Darwin. In Darwin, Prime Minister Abe together with Prime Minister Scott Morrison paid their respects at the Darwin Cenotaph War Memorial. They highlighted the speed of reconciliation between Japan and Australia after the war. Not only do Japan and Australia have a “Special Strategic Partnership”, they share the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific”.

As for the economic relationship, Japan is Australia’s second largest trading partner in terms of overall trade, and for New South Wales, Japan is the state’s number 1 export destination. Against this backdrop of strong Japan-Australia ties, there are more than 180 Japanese companies based here in Sydney and business activity is thriving. At this year’s Japan-Australia Joint Business Conference, held in Osaka in October, a major point of discussion was the development of Western Sydney, an area which has the third largest economy in Australia. In the Northern Territory, the largest-ever overseas investment by a Japanese business, the Ichthys LNG project, has been developed in Darwin and is set to become a core industry in the area.

Japanese culture is widely appreciated and is growing. In Sydney, Darwin and other cities, there are multiple Japanese festivals. Some 42 sister-city relationships have contributed to years of exchange. On a per capita basis, Australia has more people studying the Japanese language than any other country. Such examples demonstrate how deeply rooted Japanese culture is becoming in Australia. Australia is a great sporting nation, and with the Rugby World Cup on now, the

Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020 and the Kansai World Master Games in 2021, sports exchange is flourishing between us. From December this year, there will be direct seasonal flights between Sydney and Sapporo in Hokkaido. As skiing and Japanese cuisine are attracting greater attention, more and more people will be travelling between the two countries than ever.

As a consulate, the most important role is to ensure the safety and security of Japanese nationals, including more than 30,000 Japanese residents as well as travelers. We will continue to work hard to make the consular window convenient and helpful.

From here on, working together with Japanese businesses and people, as well Australian businesses and organisations with close links to Japan, I hope to encourage Japan-Australia ties across every possible area in New South Wales and the Northern Territory. I would like to achieve an “open consulate” which people always feel comfortable to approach for advice and that we can be proud of on the world stage. To this end, I respectfully ask for your feedback and support.

Kiya Masahiko
Consul-General of Japan, Sydney
17 October 2019