

LEVEL 12  
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SYDNEY

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## 2015 Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation Awardees Announced

On August 19, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan announced this year's awardees of the **Foreign Minister's Commendation**.

The Foreign Minister's Commendation is awarded to individuals and groups who have made outstanding achievements in the international field, and acknowledges their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other nations.

In NSW, the following five individuals were awarded because of their remarkable contributions to promoting mutual understanding and friendship between Australia and Japan:

**Mr Hideo Dekura** - Since arriving in Australia in 1972, Mr Hideo Dekura has contributed to the introduction and promotion of Japanese food culture as one of the pioneers of Japanese cooking in Australia. He currently works as a food critic and is engaged in demonstrating and lecturing on Japanese cooking, and consulting with Japanese restaurants.

**Cr Jenny Dowell** - Under the leadership of Cr Jenny Dowell, who assumed the office of Mayor of Lismore City Council in 2008, sister-city exchange and student exchange have been actively pursued between Lismore and Yamato Takada. Notably, in 2013, the Mayor undertook various activities to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the sister-city relationship.

**Ms Cathy Jonak** - Ms Cathy Jonak has contributed to the promotion of Japanese language education in Australia through her work as a teacher in state high schools and as the senior lecturer in the Japanese language department at The Japan Foundation. She has also worked for the training of Japanese language teachers throughout Australia and the support of student exchange programs.

**Mr Manuel Panagiotopoulos** - Mr Manuel Panagiotopoulos has helped to promote mutual understanding between Japanese and Australian business communities through organizing economic seminars and providing them with relevant economic information. He was Executive Director of Australia-Japan Economic Institute from 1989 to 1998, and is currently Managing Director at Australian and Japanese Economic Intelligence.

**Ms Sally Lorraine Shimada** - Ms Sally Lorraine Shimada has helped to promote Japanese language education through her role as the Japanese Language Officer at the NSW Ministry of Education, as well as promote friendship between the two countries through student exchange and sister city relationship programs.