

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

As Mayor of the Sutherland Shire, I'm often given cause to pause and reflect on how lucky I am to be part of this incredible community. And there are few occasions that prompt this reaction more than the many different ways our community comes together to mark Australia Day.

Among the many ways that Australia Day will be observed locally is through our traditional Australia Day citizenship ceremony and awards presentation. It's hard to convey just how significant these events are for those who take part, and why I believe they are such an essential part of the many events we stage over the Australia Day period each year.

I am often approached by local residents set to undertake their citizenship ceremony who plead with me for the opportunity to take part in the Australia Day ceremony. I think that sends an important message, and one worth keeping in mind – people who make the decision to become Australia citizens do so because they are passionate about being part of this country and honouring the values we all hold dear. They see being part of Australia as something worth celebrating, and I think this is a sentiment which is strongly reflected across our community.

Every time I present a local resident with their certificate of citizenship, I reflect on my own family's journey to becoming part of this community. My grandfather's journey here from Italy in the early 1950s, arriving with little English and little money but a strong determination to forge a new life, start a new business and make a contribution to his community.

It's a tradition my father was proud to carry on when he established his own business in Caringbah in the early 1960s, and which I am proud to continue to this day both as a local businessman, born and bred here in the Sutherland Shire, and in my capacity serving as Mayor of this amazing community.

Our Australia Day awards ceremony provides us with the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of some true champions of our community, those who quietly go about making an enormous difference in the lives of others.



I can't wait to officially announce this year's winners – let me assure you each of our award recipients is a brilliant example of the tremendous spirit of service and selflessness I think is a hallmark of our community.

I have been lucky enough to get to know some of our award recipients well over a number of years, as they have quietly and conscientiously gone about making a difference in the lives of local residents. Others I know will make a huge difference for years to come.

It's stories like these – those of our newest Australians and their excitement at officially becoming part of our community, as well as those who are passionate about making the Sutherland Shire such a great place to call home – that ensure I will never tire of being a proud representative of this community.

Sutherland Shire Mayor Councillor Carmelo Pesce

Council Meeting - Monday 19 February 2024 at 6.30pm

Residents who are interested in attending ordinary Council Meetings as part of the Public Gallery can register their interest via Council's website. For more information regarding attendance, meeting dates, and to read Council Meeting minutes and business papers visit: sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/council-meetings

