



Japan-Australia Exchange Program: Japanese/POW Friendship Program

October 2011

Embassy of Japan, Australia

The Japanese/POW Friendship Program is a program through which the Government of Japan (GOJ) invites former Australian Prisoners of War (POWs) of the Japanese during the Second World War to Japan.

1. Objective

- The program aims to promote mutual understanding between the peoples of Japan and Australia by fostering a spirit of reconciliation and encouraging the growth of friendship between the two nations.

2. Program

- The program for the Japanese fiscal year (JFY) 2011 is scheduled to take place from the 27th of November to the 5th of December, 2011.
- A total of ten people, including 5 former POWs and their associated carers, have been invited to participate in the program.
- The program will incorporate visits to Tokyo and Kyoto, as well as visits to places of individual significance to the participants. It includes meetings with relevant government leaders/officials.

3. Background

- The program commenced from the JFY 2010. The program for the JFY 2010 was conducted in March 2011 and also invited 5 former POWs along with their carers.
- They paid a courtesy call on then Japanese Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara during their visit. Mr Maehara reiterated Japan's feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology for the tremendous damage and suffering inflicted on many people during the war, including former Australian prisoners of war.
- Dr. Charles Richards, one of the invitees, expressed deep appreciation on behalf of the Australian delegation, noting that the invitation represented a concrete way for the GOJ to express the feelings of apology.