



2002

Access and Equity annual report

*Progress in implementing the
Charter of Public Service in a
Culturally Diverse Society*

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Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
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Department of Immigration and Multicultural
and Indigenous Affairs

Secretary

The Hon Gary Hardgrave MP
Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

2002 Access and Equity Annual Report

I present the Access and Equity Annual Report 2002 titled *Progress in implementing the Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*. This report has been prepared by the department in accordance with the Government endorsed Recommendation 30 of the 1992 Access and Equity Evaluation Report.

I recommend that you table this annual report in Parliament and that it is made available to Senators and Members of the House of Representatives.

Yours sincerely

WJ Farmer
10 March 2003



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PREFACE

This is the second year that all Commonwealth agencies have been asked to report against the Performance Management Framework of the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*. I am encouraged by the fact that all portfolio agencies that were required to report, did so in 2002.

The quality of responses provided by agencies has improved. In last year's report a major gap in reporting was identified in relation to the Policy Adviser role. I am pleased to note that of the agencies that reported in 2001 a further ten provided reports on the Policy Adviser role for the first time in 2002. In addition, a further seven reported on the Provider role, five on the Regulator role, and one on the Purchaser role.

This year's Access and Equity Report provides an analysis regarding the strategies aimed at meeting the performance indicators. It is hoped that this information will assist agencies implement and report on Access and Equity in 2003.

Community input on the implementation of the Charter, including in the context of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs' Review of Settlement Services, has been included in this year's report. Feedback from the community indicated concern that there is a lack of adequate access to translating and interpreting services, particularly for newly-arrived smaller

communities. A *Language Services Guidelines* toolkit has been developed by DIMIA to assist Commonwealth agencies and organisations providing government-funded services to meet the language services needs of their clients, including new and emerging communities.

The *2001 Access and Equity Annual Report* emphasised the need to more closely examine Access and Equity in relation to Productive Diversity. In this year's report a chapter has been included on Productive Diversity which incorporates good practice examples from the public sector. The social equity and economic dividends of employing culturally and linguistically diverse Australians, and utilising their cultural knowledge and language skills in providing services for clients are now beginning to be fully appreciated in both the public and private sectors.

I congratulate agencies on the significant progress made in implementing and reporting on Access and Equity.



Gary Hardgrave
*Minister for Citizenship and
Multicultural Affairs*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TRENDS IN REPORTING IN 2002

Several agencies reported on more roles in 2002, indicating a better understanding and application of the Performance Management Framework of the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the Charter). Of the agencies that reported in 2001, ten provided reports on the Policy Adviser role for the first time in 2002, five on the Regulator role, one on the Purchaser role and seven on the Provider role. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) will continue to provide agencies with feedback on the application of the Performance Management Framework, including on the relevance to each agency of each of the five roles to enable this improvement to continue.

Thirty-six agencies reported against the Provider role, rendering it the role most frequently reported against. Only 16 of the 32 agencies reporting on their data collection systems had systems consistent with the *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* or were taking steps to make their systems comply. Two agencies that reported on the Provider role did not report against this performance indicator. Clear guidelines on how to meet the Standards will be provided in a forthcoming Access and Equity Manual to be developed in 2003.

All agencies purchase goods and services. However, many organisations are not involved in tendering out government services, grants programs or the purchasing of cultural items for display. These organisations either returned a nil response for the Purchaser role, or their response indicated that they were involved in the purchasing of goods, and there was no significant intersection with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This left eleven of the reporting agencies identified as Purchasers. This role was therefore the least applicable.

The role that was best met was the Regulator role, with 88 per cent of performance indicators met. Regulator was followed by Policy Adviser (86 per cent met), Purchaser (79 per cent met) and Provider (78 per cent met).

In 2001, ten agencies were assessed as having fully met their obligations under the Charter. These agencies had the option of not providing a full report for 2002 and could either contribute highlights for their organisation or write to the Secretary of DIMIA stating they had elected not to report. They were given these options because it was apparent that Access and Equity was an integral consideration in their work processes. Four of these agencies elected to report in full in 2002. They have therefore been fully assessed and included in the ranking table at Appendix A. A further three elected to provide highlights for their organisations. Three agencies opted not to report.

As a result of recommendations made in a review of Access and Equity reporting, which is discussed in greater detail in the section on streamlining diversity-related reporting below, agencies were not required to provide a report to DIMIA for the Employer role in 2002 and this reduced the number of performance indicators assessed from 16 to 12. The Employer role is covered by workplace diversity reporting to the Australian Public Service Commission.

This year there was a focus on ensuring that agencies had targeted strategies in place for culturally and linguistically diverse Australians. Accordingly, agencies that only reported employing non-targeted consultation, communication, planning, monitoring, and review were assessed as not meeting the performance indicators. Of the 46 agencies whose roles intersected with the Policy Adviser, Regulator, Purchaser and Provider roles, 19 achieved a 100 per cent score against the performance indicators. Given these increased expectations about performance and the fact that six of top performing agencies from 2001 did not report, this outcome indicates an improved performance across the board.

ACCESS AND EQUITY AND PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY

This year's report includes highlights and best practice examples on Productive Diversity.

Productive Diversity is one of the four principles of the Commonwealth Government's multicultural policy – the 1999 *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*. Civic Duty, Cultural Respect and Social Equity are the other three principles of the New Agenda. Productive Diversity is about utilising the language and cultural diversity of Australia's workforce and population for the economic benefit of all Australians and is applicable to both the public and private sectors.

The Commonwealth Government's Productive Diversity Program articulates and promotes the business case for language and cultural diversity in respect of boosting productivity in the workplace, domestic niche marketing or client service provision, and gaining a competitive edge in a globalised and diverse marketplace. Efficiency and effectiveness are two of the seven principles that underpin Access and Equity. The primary objective of the Productive Diversity Program is to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of business performance by capitalising on diversity.

The inclusion of highlights and best practice examples of Productive Diversity is an attempt to raise agencies' awareness of its relevance and importance to their business.

INTRODUCTION

THE CHARTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

The *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the Charter) represents a nationally consistent approach to ensuring that government services are delivered in a way that is sensitive to the language and cultural needs of all Australians. It draws its rationale from Australia's multicultural policy, which was updated in December 1999 as the Commonwealth Government's statement *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*.

A NEW AGENDA FOR MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

The vision for Australian multiculturalism adopted in the New Agenda is: 'a united and harmonious Australia, built on the foundations of our democracy, and developing our continually evolving nationhood by recognising, embracing, valuing and investing in our heritage and cultural diversity.'

According to the New Agenda, Australian democracy guarantees us our civic freedoms and our fundamental rights and equality, and it is the institutions of Australian democracy that enable diversity in our society to flourish. Australian society is diverse, encompassing a wealth of cultures, histories and traditions, rural and urban, of Indigenous and all other Australians. The proper functioning of our society requires us to manage the consequences of our cultural diversity in the interest of the individual and society as a whole.

This will be achieved, and Australian multiculturalism will be a continuing and fundamental strength of our society, if the Australian people and the institutions of our society base their actions on the following principles for living with cultural diversity:

- **Civic Duty**, which obliges all Australians to support those basic structures and principles of Australian society which guarantee us our freedom and equality and enable diversity in our society to flourish
- **Cultural Respect**, which, subject to the law, gives all Australians the right to express their own culture and beliefs and obliges them to accept the right of others to do the same
- **Social Equity**, which entitles all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity so that they are able to contribute to the social, political and economic life of Australia, free from discrimination, including on the grounds of race, culture, religion, language, location, gender or place of birth
- **Productive Diversity**, which maximises for all Australians the significant cultural, social and economic dividends arising from the diversity of our population.

The Government established the Council for Multicultural Australia to assist it with developing and implementing a multifaceted plan of action to implement the New Agenda.

THE CHARTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

The Charter is a key tool to assist government programs to meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse society. It integrates a set of service delivery principles concerning cultural diversity into the strategic planning, policy development, budget and reporting processes of government service delivery, irrespective of whether these services are provided by government agencies, community organisations or commercial enterprises.

These principles are:

- **Access** – Government services should be available to everyone who is entitled to them and should be free of any form of discrimination irrespective of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race or religion
- **Equity** – Government services should be developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of clients who are eligible to receive them
- **Communication** – Government service providers should use strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements and how they can obtain them. Providers should also consult with their clients regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of government services
- **Responsiveness** – Government services should be sensitive to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals
- **Effectiveness** – Government service providers should be 'results oriented', focussed on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds
- **Efficiency** – Government service providers should optimise the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to service delivery which meets the needs of clients
- **Accountability** – Government service providers should have a reporting mechanism in place which ensures they are accountable for implementing Charter objectives for clients.

The Charter has been endorsed by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and by the Australian Local Government Association, and as such represents a nationally consistent approach to the delivery of responsive government services.

To assist agencies report in a more meaningful way and to target diversity management strategies, a performance management framework was developed in 2000 in consultation with a wide

range of stakeholders. The framework is built around five key roles of government: Policy Adviser, Regulator, Purchaser, Provider and Employer. Sixteen performance indicators have been developed across these five roles to capture their intersection with the seven Charter principles of access, equity, communication, responsiveness, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. The roles and their respective performance indicators are explained in the table below.

¹ A copy of the Charter may be obtained through the website of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Table 1: OVERVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Role	Performance indicators
<p>The Policy Adviser is responsible for initiating and developing government policy. The policy adviser considers the needs of different groups and advises on what the government should achieve for the community as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PI 1: Appropriate consultation on policy/program proposals. ● PI 2: Potential differential impacts of policy proposals identified prior to decision. ● PI 3: Policy/program proposals have an appropriate communication strategy.
<p>The Regulator is responsible for the enforcement of legislation or other government 'rules'. The Regulator is responsible for all forms of regulations, including 'quasi regulations' such as codes of conduct and advisory instruments or notes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PI 1: Public information communicated to all Australians. ● PI 2: Regulatory compliance reporting is in accessible mediums.
<p>The Purchaser determines what is to be purchased and from whom it is to be purchased. The purchaser often receives guidance from government about policy and guidelines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PI 1: Appropriate consultation on purchasing proposals. ● PI 2: Tendering and contract specifications are consistent with the Charter. ● PI 3: Complaints mechanisms are sensitive to language needs.
<p>Providers deliver services, often under contract by government. Providers can be government, private or not-for profit organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PI 1: Mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and review are consistent with the Charter. ● PI 2: Data collections meet statistical standards on diversity. ● PI 3: Service standards address any differential impacts. ● PI 4: Complaints mechanisms are sensitive to language needs.
<p>All portfolio agencies undertake the role of Employer, involving the provision of a range of work conditions, including wages, in exchange for the provision of labour to produce goods and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PI 1: Corporate governance is consistent with the Charter. ● PI 2: Employment policies/practices are consistent with the Charter. ● PI 3: Learning programs include a focus on the benefits of diversity. ● PI 4: Complaints mechanisms are sensitive to language needs.

CHAPTER ONE: ASSESSMENT OF REPORTING AGENCIES AGAINST THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

SCOPE OF REPORTING IN 2002

In 2001, ten portfolio agencies were assessed as having fully met their obligations under the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*. These were: the Australian Broadcasting Corporation; the Australian Electoral Commission; Centrelink; the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (now Education, Science and Training); the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business (now, Employment and Workplace Relations); the Department of Family and Community Services; the Department of Health and Ageing; the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission; the Health Insurance Commission, and the Special Broadcasting Service Corporation.

These agencies had the option of not providing a full report for 2002 and could either contribute highlights for their organisation or write to the Secretary of DIMIA stating they had elected not to report. They were given these options because it was apparent that Access and Equity was an integral consideration in their work processes. Four of these agencies, Centrelink, the Health Insurance Commission, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Education, Science and Training, elected to report in full. They have therefore been fully assessed and included in the table summarising performance at Appendix A. A further three elected to provide highlights for their organisations' performance. These were: the Australian Electoral Commission; the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations; and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Three agencies: the Australian Broadcasting Corporation; the Department of Health and Ageing and the Special Broadcasting Service Corporation opted not to report in 2002. (For a full list of agencies that reported in 2002, see Appendix C.)

As a result of recommendations made in a review of Access and Equity reporting, which is discussed in greater detail below, agencies were not required to provide a report to DIMIA for the Employer role in 2002. Three agencies reported that they

had no intersections with diversity against any of the other four roles. These agencies are the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and the Department of Defence (DOD). They have therefore not been rated at Appendix A, which outlines agencies' performance against the performance indicators.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Given that this was the second year that all agencies were required to report against the Performance Management Framework, it was expected that agencies would have targeted strategies in place for culturally and linguistically diverse Australians. Accordingly, agencies that only reported employing non-targeted consultation, communication, planning, monitoring, and review were assessed as not meeting the performance indicators. Generic complaints mechanisms were assessed as not sufficient either. However, agencies that analysed complaints were assessed as meeting the performance indicator, because analysing complaints provides an opportunity for identifying complaints on the basis of language or culture.

In general, the standard of reports for 2002 has improved. Of the 46 agencies whose roles intersected with the Policy Adviser, Regulator, Purchaser and Provider roles 19 achieved a 100 per cent score against the performance indicators. A total of 34 agencies met 75 per cent or more of relevant performance indicators. Only two agencies met less than 50 per cent of the performance indicators. Given that six top performing agencies from 2001 did not report, and assessment benchmarks were raised, this outcome represents an overall improvement in performance compared with 2001. However, a caveat on this score is that many agencies just met some of the performance indicators and could do much more to achieve better outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.

Greatly encouraging was the fact that many agencies reported on more roles in 2002, indicating a better understanding and application of the

Performance Management Framework. Of the agencies that reported in 2001, ten provided reports on the Policy Adviser role for the first time in 2002, five on the Regulator role, one on the Purchaser role and seven on the Provider role. Agencies will continue to be provided with feedback about whether they should consider reporting against any other roles.

It should be emphasised that it is possible for a particular role or a particular performance indicator to be relevant for an agency one year, but not the next. For example, an agency that has previously reported on the Policy Adviser role may have no new policy or program initiatives in a particular year that are relevant to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

This year, seven agencies reported for the first time against the Performance Management Framework. Of these, the National Gallery of Australia's report was outstanding and the Australia Council's report was also of a high standard.

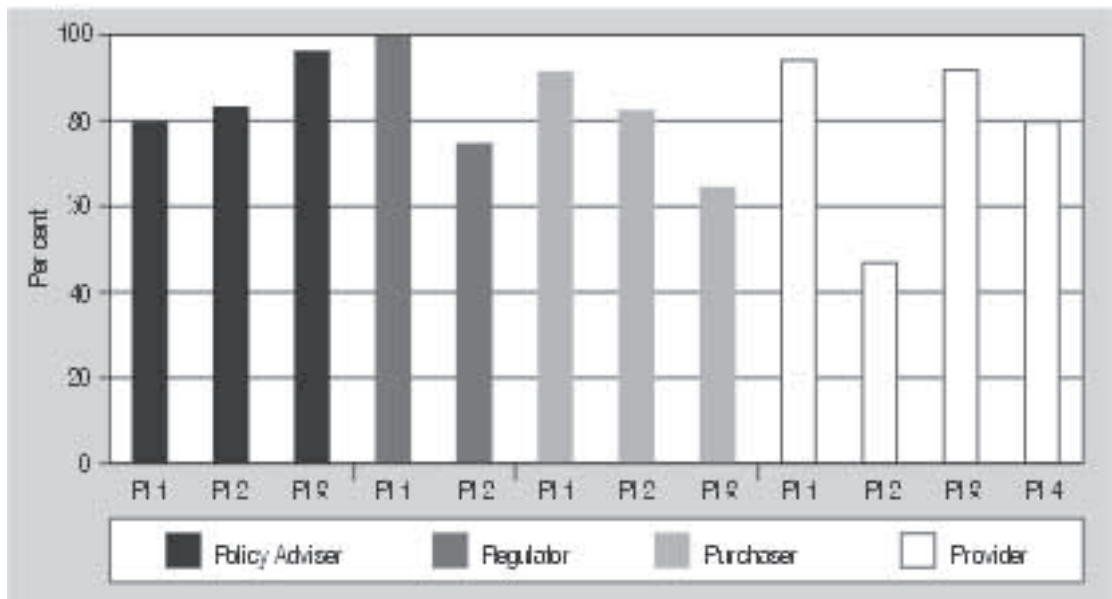
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs both

produced outstanding reports, reporting against all 12 performance indicators and with strategies in place to meet all of them well. Other top performing agencies that not only met all relevant performance indicators, but met all of them well are: the Australian Taxation Office; Centrelink; and the Health Insurance Commission.

Performance was not judged solely on the percentage of performance indicators met. A number of agencies just met all or most performance indicators, and a few agencies that did not meet one performance indicator performed to a high standard against the rest.

This year, it was very apparent that Government agencies with primarily a commercial focus or programs servicing or targeting business are performing far less well than others with a Provider role. They also performed less well than those with a regulatory role as their principle function. Although some of these agencies were able to meet most of the performance indicators, they did not meet them well. Only one such agency achieved top performance, and this was against just one performance indicator.

Table 2: PER CENT OF RELEVANT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS MET



None of these commercially focused agencies collected data incorporating the requirements of the *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity*, and it is therefore difficult to determine whether they have sufficient knowledge of their current or potential client base to appropriately target strategies at culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

Commonwealth departments and agencies with a focus on trade, business and industry support, and regional development need to consciously consider the fact that people born overseas operate 464,300 small businesses in Australia, or 29 per cent. These migrant business people have the same entitlement to access programs and initiatives designed to assist business and employment, and their special needs should be considered and addressed through consultation and appropriate communication.

This year, the role that was best reported was the Regulator role followed by Policy Adviser, Purchaser and Provider. Performance against the Provider role was generally good but was lowered by poor performance against performance indicator 2 which requires that Provider data collection systems incorporate the requirements of the *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* (the Standards). This indicator was met by only 46 per cent of agencies.

The percentage of agencies meeting relevant performance indicators for each role is summarised in Table 2.

The average percentage of relevant performance indicators met for each role was: Policy Adviser 86 per cent; Regulator 88 per cent; Purchaser 89 per cent and Provider 78 per cent.

POLICY ADVISER ROLE

The Policy Adviser role has a responsibility for initiating and developing Commonwealth Government policy. Key responsibilities of the policy adviser role include:

- determining and evaluating community outcomes

- deciding broad priorities and developing policies
- managing long-term strategic planning for community outcomes and
- holding purchasers accountable for their performance.

To achieve the Government's desired outcomes the policy adviser role needs to:

- reflect the culturally diverse nature of the community in the development and review of policies
- actively, through direct participation or via consultation, involve people from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds (for example, migrant and Indigenous backgrounds) in the policy process
- assess and quantify the differential impacts of policy directions on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the Australian community in the short, medium and longer term
- make publicly available policy information accessible to people from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Twenty-five or 51 per cent of agencies reported against one or more performance indicators for this role.

Performance Indicator One

New or revised policy/programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.

New policies or programs or those under review should be developed with the involvement of people that are directly affected. This may mean that people from particular cultural and linguistic backgrounds are:

- involved directly through reference or advisory groups
- consulted through the various peak bodies, or

- are able to voice their views through the use of focus groups, surveys, or by commenting on discussion papers.

Agencies met this performance indicator as a result of adopting one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- ethnic/Indigenous community consultations/ liaison/fora
- ethnic/Indigenous focus groups/client consultations
- multicultural/Indigenous advisory committees/ boards/steering committees
- consultation with ethnic/Indigenous peak bodies
- research into the impact of policy on culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- research to identify stakeholders
- discussion/issues papers
- elected Indigenous regional representatives/ council meetings
- ethnic community functions

- writing to ethnic community leaders for comment
- written or taped submissions
- multicultural regional workshop
- meeting with ethnic community leaders
- inviting submissions from ethnic organisations
- partnerships with Indigenous stakeholder organisations.

The first three strategies were by far the most common.

Eighty per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies that performed best against this performance indicator were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Attorney-General's Department; the Australia Council; the Department of Education, Science and Training; and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Five agencies did not meet this performance indicator because they had generic (non-targeted) strategies that did not cater for clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE - AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

Representation

The Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) is made up of nine members from each of the artform Boards including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board and three members who are appointed as community participants. The role of the committee is to make recommendations to the Australia Council on the implementation of the *Arts in a Multicultural Australia* (AMA) policy. ACMAC has a strong forward agenda and is focussed on external clients of Council. The Chair of ACMAC is a member of the Australia Council.

Focus Groups

During 2001-02, there have been specific focus groups run for the New Media Arts Board with artists of non-English speaking background, to assist with the

development of a strategic response for that Board to implement the AMA policy. The reporting mechanism will include feedback from the group members to the decisions of that Board.

Stakeholder Consultation

The Australia Council has had a policy about multiculturalism in the arts for over ten years. ACMAC initiated a review of this policy, in the belief that the inherent nature of policies is to be fluid and flexible in order to identify and respond to the changing social, political and economic values and priorities of contemporary society.

This review consisted of a broad and open process of consultations, debates and discussions both within Council and with stakeholders. It resulted in the new AMA, launched in 2000. As the title suggests, Council acknowledged a shift from a model primarily concerned with issues of equity and access to the recognition that there is a desire to focus on artists and practices operating within a multicultural society.

Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) Policy

The Australia Council recognises the layering, entanglements and complexities existing in the field of multicultural arts. A good example of these complexities is the use of the term 'multicultural' itself. The AMA policy document states:

The phrase 'multicultural arts' is sometimes perceived as relevant only in a community or ethnic context. Australian multicultural arts practice is in fact represented by a variety of expressions ranging from ethno-specific and bi-cultural, intracultural to cross-cultural and nation-to-nation inter-cultural exchange. Similarly, 'multicultural arts' is not synonymous with community art. The Arts in a Multicultural Australia policy endorses the view that our multicultural arts practice is relevant across the entire spectrum of arts activity.

The new policy also marks a shift in thinking about the arts as individually distinct art forms to an approach to the idea of 'the arts' as multi-component events and practices embracing and reflecting different and interconnected art forms, expertises, and genres. Although not part of the 'Western' canon, this cross-disciplinary approach acknowledges the way other cultures regard the arts. This new approach also includes strategic partnerships with different Boards at the Australia Council, as well as with a variety of arts and non-arts organisations.

ACMAC sets the trend by promoting research and development initiatives that cross the borders of conventional art forms and cultivate innovative practices grounded in different traditions present in our multicultural society.

Performance Indicator Two

New or revised policy/program proposals assess the direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to decision.

The needs of all relevant groups need to be considered prior to decisions being taken to avoid any unintended consequences. Major policy development and review processes should include the necessary steps to fully consider the impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds before decisions are made. This can be achieved by:

- documenting the impact of new and revised policy proposals on people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds as part of the policy proposal
- using the feedback gathered during consultations from people and/or organisations representing a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to develop and/or modify the new or revised policy proposals
- using case studies of people from particular cultural and linguistic backgrounds to highlight the impact of the new and/or revised policy proposal
- incorporating in budget commitments funding to facilitate access for people from particular cultural and linguistic backgrounds to new services and programs. For example, those funds may be used to access interpreter services for individual service users.

Eighty-three per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies met this performance indicator as a result of adopting one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- targeted programs to address/redress differential impact

- research to assess differential impact for culturally and linguistically diverse people
- revising program guidelines as a result of differential impact
- assessment of differential impact through consultation
- community input into design and delivery of programs
- reviewing guidelines to assess differential impact
- communication strategy developed as a result of differential impact
- policy proposal template/process included recording of differential impact
- case studies to assess differential impact
- mechanism to review multicultural policy to assess impact
- assessment of differential impact through surveys
- developing user profiles and pathways.

Targeted programs to address or redress differential impact was by far the most common strategy.

Agencies that met this performance indicator well were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Attorney-General's Department; the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; the Department of Education, Science and Training; the Department of Family and Community Services; the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; and Environment Australia.

The four agencies or 17 per cent that did not meet this performance indicator had general strategies only that did not address differential impact for culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – ATTORNEY-GENERAL’S DEPARTMENT

Family Law Act

The Attorney-General asked the Family Law Council to provide him with advice on the difficulties experienced by people of particular cultural backgrounds in relation to civil and religious divorce. The Council undertook targeted consultations of people from cultural backgrounds most affected by these difficulties. An Issues Paper was circulated to some thirty representative Australian Islamic and Jewish organisations and individuals that Council considered had a special interest in the topic.

Council decided that those organisations and individuals who had made a submission should be invited to consultative meetings to explore and clarify some of the issues raised in the submissions. As a result, meetings were held in Melbourne and Sydney in 2001. The report of the Council is being considered before any decision is made on changes to the Family Law Act that may be needed to address the difficulties.

Australian Law Online

Australian Law Online is a national call centre and web site providing information on the family law system, including services available to separating families and other family law related programs. In establishing Australian Law Online, the Attorney-General’s Department consulted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to ensure that the needs of Indigenous communities were considered. The needs of people of different cultural backgrounds and those with disabilities were also taken into account and advice was obtained from relevant bodies, prior to establishing the service.

Improving Justice Outcomes for the Aboriginal Community in the La Trobe Valley, Victoria

The objectives of this project are: to address the over representation of Aboriginals in the criminal justice system; improve Aboriginal access to justice related services; and promote greater awareness in the Aboriginal community of their civil, legal and political rights. The project will address family/ community violence and joblessness and will pilot ways to improve employment outcomes for young Aboriginals.

The project will directly support young people who are at risk and potential offenders, and deter them from moving into violence and/or other criminal behaviours. Diversion into the work force will improve the economic basis of the community and improve the likelihood of individuals not offending.

Consultations were conducted in relation to the need for this project. Discussions were held with the Indigenous Issues Unit and Department of Justice (Vic). The need for projects of this kind have been highlighted by the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Commission, key Aboriginal community nominees and representatives including:

- the Victorian ATSIC Commissioner
- Binjirru Regional Council
- Tumbukka Regional Council
- the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee, and
- the six regional Victorian Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees representing the Aboriginal community.

Performance Indicator Three

New or revised policy/program initiatives have a communication strategy developed to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

People from different cultural backgrounds need to know about new policies, as well as changes in policies that may impact on their lives. Policy change that impacts broadly across the Australian community requires a communication strategy designed to disseminate information to as wide an audience as possible to achieve the program outcomes.

The aim of this indicator is to ensure that people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds know about new policies, as well as changes in policies that may impact on their lives. This can be achieved by:

- using the ethnic media and ethnic networks to distribute information
- using plain English to explain the new and/or revised policy/program initiative
- developing translated information
- involving community leaders to inform members of their communities
- developing imagery rather than text based communication mediums.

Agencies met this performance indicator as a result of adopting one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- ethnic media
- provision of information in plain English
- translated fact sheets/brochures
- visual cues/images
- Indigenous media
- Indigenous newsletters

- community spokespersons/role models
- Indigenous/ethnic networks
- translated website information
- consulting peak bodies
- consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse people
- sending media releases to ethnic media
- culturally adapted advertising
- bilingual staff on ethnic media
- bilingual staff in partnership with ethno-specific groups
- peak body members informed and used to communicate
- Indigenous marketing strategy
- Indigenous communication research
- Indigenous facilitators
- training staff to use plain English
- translated policy handbook
- plans for use of ethnic media
- accepting taped submissions
- sensory cues.

The use of ethnic media was by far the most common strategy, but the provision of information in plain English and translated fact sheets or brochures also featured prominently.

Ninety-six per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. The best performing agencies against this performance indicator were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australia Council; the Australian Taxation Office; the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; the Department of Education, Science and Training; the Department of Family and Community Services; and Environment Australia.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS

When developing communications strategies with line areas, the Corporate Communications section of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) addresses how the program will be communicated to Indigenous Australians and people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Where appropriate, the area works with specialist consultants to ensure the needs of these groups are addressed. Plain English principles are followed.

Corporate Communications ensures relevant news releases etc. reach people from multicultural backgrounds, for example by sending media releases to the Indigenous and ethnic media.

Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities

The Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC) was developed following consultation with Indigenous communities, government and industry groups, and a call for Submissions to an initial Issues Paper. The TAPRIC Indigenous Payphone initiative, a targeted communications strategy, is being developed as an integral part of implementation of the Action Plan.

Connecting the Nation

For the Connecting the Nation community information campaign, materials were developed for audiences from different cultural backgrounds. As the campaign was targeted to regional, rural and remote audiences, advertising was translated into the four main languages in regional Australia—Greek, Italian, Cantonese and Mandarin—for use on community radio programs targeting these groups.

The campaign was one of the initiatives put in place by the Government in response to the Telecommunications Service Inquiry. The campaign was targeted to regional, rural and remote audiences to raise awareness and improve understanding of the opportunities and benefits delivered by Government telecommunications initiatives and encourage further involvement and support by local communities. The campaign also provided information about the regulatory safeguards and legal rights for consumers under the Customer Service Guarantee and the Universal Service Obligation.

A consultant was engaged, through the creative agency, to develop and translate advertising for these groups. Indigenous audiences in regional, rural and remote Australia were considered a specialist target group for the campaign. Radio and press advertising was developed for Indigenous media. A specialist Indigenous Public Relations consultant was engaged for the campaign to develop case studies for Indigenous media and an targeted version of the ‘Special Report’ insert, a supplement that was inserted in Indigenous press and mailed to key community stakeholders.

A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE - POLICY ADVISER ROLE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION

Performance Indicator 1

New or revised policy/programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.

Local Community Consultations

The Dampier Peninsula Local Government Services Project, in which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) was a major driver, involved extensive consultations utilising council and community meetings, family focus groups, representative steering committees, and consultation with the elected regional council.

Widespread Community Consultations

ATSIC's National Heritage and Environment Program Centre arranged for Environment Australia to provide briefings on proposed heritage amendments to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to different Indigenous groups in various locations throughout Australia to ensure that concerns voiced in each region could inform any amendments to the draft legislation.

Consultations with Representatives

Early briefings on the Community Participation Agreements/Capacity Building initiative involved a number of ATSIC Regional Councils, State Advisory Committees and the Board of Commissioners. A number of Indigenous communities were consulted during the development of the draft implementation plan.

Stakeholder Consultations

The Customer Lending and Support Services Program Centre (CLASS) reviewed the Business Development Program policy and program guidelines. The review took into consideration comments made by the State and Territory based ATSIC Senior Commercial Officers, following consultations with their established and potential future clients. Business Facilitators provide one-on-one support, mentoring and advice to clients to assist them in all phases of business establishment and development.

Performance Indicator 2

New or revised policy/program proposals assess the direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to decision.

Impact assessment

ATSIC has been consulting with its Regional Councils to assess the impact of a possible change in Commonwealth policy to focus on housing and related infrastructure funding on rural and remote areas. ATSIC's role is to assess the impact that this decision may have

on Indigenous people in urban areas and to advocate that urban needs be considered in the development of this policy. An analysis of the Community Housing and Infrastructure Survey and Census data is included in this assessment.

The Community Participation Agreement/Capacity Building initiatives have an initial focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from remote areas. The proposal aims to strengthen family and community structures and the capacity of individuals to contribute to community life. Indigenous communities will participate in the design and delivery of this initiative and will assess its impact on the lives of community members.

Differential Needs Initiative

The need for an Indigenous Interpreter Service program has been identified by numerous high level reports (Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths In Custody, Social Justice, The Charter for Service Delivery, Bringing Them Home etc) and by community and peak Indigenous organisations. An Indigenous Interpreting Service proposal has been developed in conjunction with Northern Territory service deliverers, the Kimberley Interpreting Service, various academic/industry stakeholders and the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL).

Reviewing Impact and Program Eligibility Modification

A comprehensive review of Business Development program was undertaken, including a revision of the eligibility guidelines. A key aspect of the review was to assess the impact of the Business Funding and Business Support programs on the lives of Indigenous Australians. Annual conferences of the ATSIC Senior Commercial Officers include sessions on assessment of the impact of the program nationally.

Performance Indicator 3

New or revised policy/program initiatives have a communication strategy developed to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Internet Information

ATSIC Output Funding Statements and related policies and guidelines for accessing services are available from the ATSIC website which also provides links to other relevant Indigenous sites.

Plain English Information

ATSIC produces plain English documents for Regional Councillors and clients including:

- The draft Preservation and Protection of Heritage Program Booklet
- A national publication, CDEP News, is produced and distributed to all Commonwealth Development Employment Project (CDEP) organisations. This publication provides information about the scheme and other initiatives or programs that impact on it

- The Indigenous Interpreter Service, FATSIL, distributes information through consultative meetings, its quarterly newsletter and via the network of ATSIIC funded Regional Language Centres and Regional Language Management Committees
- Tenders have been called to update data for the 2003 Visual Arts and Crafts Directory which will now also include information on practicing arts and craftspeople, art centres, galleries, art supply centres and supporting agencies for use by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples
- CLASS regularly provides articles to Indigenous publications such as Black in Business, ATSIIC News and the Koori Mail to publicise new initiatives.

Targeted and Tailored Media Communication

ATSIIC regularly uses media such as the Broadcasting for Remote Area Communities system and Imparja Television to publicise new programs or changes to current programs. Specific media strategies have also been developed for individual programs. For example, a Media Officer has been attached to the National Housing and Infrastructure Centre to improve communication with its client group.

Indigenous Communication Facilitation

ATSIIC facilitates communication for other agencies in respect of initiatives that assist Indigenous people by promoting use of its databases and regional networks to access Indigenous clients. ATSIIC has also encouraged CDEP organisations to participate in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Indigenous Employment Centres program. Group emails have been set up to grantee organisations and other stakeholders to quickly disseminate information on new Commonwealth Government program or policy initiatives.

Using Community Leaders for Communication

Key policy and program changes for the Business Development Program are communicated via the Senior Commercial Officers in ATSIIC offices across Australia, and through briefings to the ATSIIC Regional Councils and their assistance is sought in promulgating this information to communities.

REGULATOR ROLE

The Regulator is responsible for the enforcement of legislation or other government 'rules' which influence the way people behave. The Regulator is responsible for all forms of regulation including 'quasi-regulations' such as codes of conduct and advisory instruments or notes.

Fifteen agencies or 31 per cent reported against the Regulator role.

Performance Indicator One

Publicly available information on regulations is communicated to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Regulators should ensure that people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds know about the regulations that may impact on their lives.

Agencies met this performance indicator as a result of adopting one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- ethnic media advertising
- plain English website information
- translated brochures
- the use of culturally and linguistically diverse staff to explain regulations to clients
- plain English regulations
- plain English guides
- information sessions to culturally and linguistically diverse clients

- reviewing regulations and consulting and workshopping with multicultural clients
- targeted community awareness campaigns
- field visits
- a website that includes information on regulations using visual cues
- placing ethnic groups on a mailing list for information
- a newsletter that uses visual cues to explain regulations
- using interpreters to explain regulations to clients who are breaching them
- listing the Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) in a brochure.

Plain English information of some description (website, regulations or guides) was the most common strategy employed.

This performance indicator was met by all agencies (15) that reported against it. Those agencies that performed the best used a multi-faceted approach.

Agencies that met this performance indicator well were: the Australian Taxation Office; the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australian Communications Authority; the Australian Customs Service; Comcare; and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE - AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Australian Electoral Commission's (AEC's) role is both that of a Provider of services to enable voting, and a Regulator that ensures that all eligible Australians comply with the mandatory requirement to vote.

The AEC conducted an extensive public information campaign for the 2001 Federal election. The major messages it conveyed were:

- how, when, and where to enrol and vote
- how and when to vote using services such as pre-poll and postal voting, and
- how to correctly complete the ballot papers.

National advertising campaign

The national campaign consisted of six television commercials, eight radio commercials and seven press advertisements that were translated as outlined in the table below.

Table 3: TRANSLATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE 2001 FEDERAL ELECTION

Press advertisements were translated into 18 languages	Radio advertisements were translated into 26 languages	The radio advertisements were translated into 14 Indigenous languages	Television advertisements were translated into nine languages
Cantonese	Cantonese, Loatian	Western Kriol	Cantonese
Vietnamese	Mandarin, German	Northern Kriol	Mandarin
Spanish	Vietnamese, Thai	Naja Kajarri	Italian
Korean	Spanish, Hungarian	Mirriwong	Arabic
Arabic	Korean, Maltese	Yawuru	Greek
Greek	Arabic, Japanese	Pitjantjatjara	Spanish
Portuguese	Khmer (Cambodian)	Anindilyakwa	Japanese
Turkish	Farsi (Persian)	Walpiri	Macedonian
Polish	Greek, Tagalog	Kala Kawa Ya	Vietnamese
Macedonian	Portuguese	Gapapuyingu	
Russian	Turkish, Bosnian	Dhalwangu	
Italian	Polish, Serbian	Dhumbarpyungu	
Croatian	Indonesian	Yumpla Tok	
Serbian	Macedonian	Kalkadoon	
Farsi (Persian)	Russian, Italian		
German	Croatian		
Hungarian			
Maltese			

At the state/territory level advertising was designed to support the national advertising by providing key local information. The advertising informed electors of the details of pre-poll and mobile polling and listed the polling places for polling day, including access levels. The advertisements were placed in state/territory, regional and local newspapers.

Election Publications

The AEC distributed a multi-page election leaflet to more than 7.5 million households nationally, with distribution to remote areas commencing three weeks prior to election day. The elector leaflet was also available on the AEC website in English and a summarised version was translated into 15 additional languages. The translated versions were also available in hard copy upon request. Key information in the elector leaflet was also provided on audio cassette and in audio format from the AEC website.

Telephone Interpreting Service

A telephone interpreting service to assist electors from non-English speaking backgrounds also operated during the 2001 Federal election as part of a national telephone enquiry service. The service had 15 language specific telephone lines and one line for electors who did not speak any of the 15 specific languages available. A caller to one of the language specific lines was greeted by a recorded electoral message in their own language and if they required further information they could choose to be connected to an AEC officer with an interpreter on line.

Other Initiatives for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Target Groups

Key election information was sent to ethnic media outlets, community organisations and groups throughout the election period. In addition, videos explaining how to cast a formal vote were screened in selected polling places where a high percentage of voters were from non-English speaking backgrounds and in past elections there had been high informality rates. These videos were screened in various languages (including English) in polling places in the New South Wales divisions of Prospect, Reid and Fowler.

A remote area enrolment and information program was undertaken prior to the election. The program employed 12 Community Electoral Information Officers (CEIOs) to visit Aboriginal communities and organisations in remote areas to encourage the enrolment of Indigenous electors and to pass on information about the election. A poster and brochure were produced to support the CEIOs in their visits. Election radio advertising was translated into 14 Indigenous languages and was broadcast in every phase of the national advertising campaign.

Public Information Campaign Reviews

Internal reviews on all aspects of the AEC's public information campaign are being undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign and to enhance the planning of the information campaign for the next major electoral event.

Advertising Research

The AEC conducted tracking research to measure success of the AEC's election advertising campaign in reaching and impacting on the voting public. The research showed that all phases of the AEC advertising campaign succeeded in reaching the majority of Australian voters. Among other findings, the research indicated that among those surveyed:

- on an unprompted basis, 66 per cent of those surveyed recalled seeing advertising about enrolment. Of this figure, respondents not born in Australia and/or respondents whose first language was not English responded at 57 per cent and 51 per cent levels respectively. When prompted, 79 per cent of those surveyed recalled seeing at least one enrolment advertisement; and
- on an unprompted basis 56 per cent of those surveyed recalled seeing voting services advertising (pre-poll postal and absentee voting, location of polling places and the correct way to complete a ballot paper). There was no significant differentiation in terms of country of birth or first language. When prompted, this increased to 66 per cent.

The research found that the advertising campaign was more successful than for the previous Federal election and that, overall, a high awareness of the election processes was achieved.

Indigenous Research

One hundred and sixty-two interviews were held nationally with Indigenous people to examine the effectiveness of the AEC's advertising campaign for Indigenous electors. The research found that the majority of electors recalled television advertising with particularly high recall of the television enrolment and formality advertisements. Major findings were:

- posters were more effective than press advertising in remote areas
- an Indigenous enrolment poster, produced by the AEC prior to the election being called, had a significant impact
- 87 per cent of respondents reported that they were well informed about filling in ballot papers (93 per cent in the general community)
- 84 per cent of respondents did not experience any difficulty when voting (93 per cent in the general community). It should be noted that mobile polling arrangements in many remote communities, and difficulty in accessing some services (eg pre-poll voting), place some obligations on voters that are not present in non-remote areas
- responses regarding polling officials being helpful, efficient and friendly where on par with responses from the non-Indigenous community.

A range of suggestions were made regarding improving the AEC's advertising and services for the next election.

Performance Indicator Two

Publicly available regulatory compliance reporting is available in accessible mediums for people from the range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

This performance indicator requires Regulators to ensure that all individuals within the community can access publicly available information about how well an organisation performs against the regulations it must meet.

The framework includes guidance on how to measure performance by using the ethnic media and ethnic networks to distribute information, using plain English to explain regulations, developing translated information and involving community leaders to inform members of their communities.

Of the twelve agencies that reported against this performance indicator, nine met it.

Agencies that met this performance indicator adopted one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- took targeted remedial action (eg educative workshops, community consultation, targeted information) to prevent non-compliance
- provided information in a plain English annual report
- plain English website information
- peak bodies represented on forum provided with regulatory compliance reports

- provided a submission advocating simplification for a regulatory review committee
- provided opportunities to discuss compliance with bilingual staff
- provided translated website information
- provided information in a newsletter that was distributed to ethnic media
- ethnic community leaders on a distribution list for a newsletter.

Agencies met this performance indicator using very different approaches. Most agencies used only one approach.

Agencies were assessed as not meeting this performance indicator if they used only general strategies to report on non-compliance. They did one or more of the following:

- provided information in a published annual report
- provided information on their website.

Seventy-five per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies that met this performance indicator well were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australian Communications Authority; the Australian Taxation Office; and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY

The Australian Communications Authority (ACA) reports regularly on regulatory compliance, such as quarterly telecommunications performance bulletins, discussion papers and reports, which are available on the ACA website and in print from the ACA. The ACA issues media releases about its compliance reporting.

The ACA's Consumer Bulletins includes articles about compliance issues and is distributed to ethnic community and Indigenous groups. The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, as members of the ACA's Consumer Consultative Forum, have access to all ACA publications including regulatory compliance reports.

A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – REGULATOR ROLE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE

Performance indicator 1

Publicly available information on regulations is communicated to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has developed communication strategies with multicultural clients taking into account their language preferences, English proficiency and information format preferences as well as business ownership, income levels, recency of arrival and other factors that affect knowledge about the Australian tax system and compliance behaviours.

Ethnic and Indigenous Media

ATO's communication strategies utilise the ethnic and Indigenous media through advertising, editorial articles and media relations. Regular information programs are conducted in a number of languages on radio and television. These programs have been effective largely through the cooperation demonstrated by ATO media partners such as SBS Radio, Channel 31 and TVB. Information programs in other languages are also conducted on the Internet.

Using Bilingual Staff for a Community Relations Program

The ATO conducts a community relations program for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Bilingual tax staff attend community events, forums and festivals where taxpayers from multicultural backgrounds are able to interact one-on-one with tax staff in their preferred language. These staff also conduct information seminars or sessions in a range of languages for a variety of taxpayer categories.

Performance Indicator 2

Publicly available regulatory compliance reporting is available in accessible mediums for people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The ATO attempts to produce compliance reporting in easily understandable and accessible formats while taking into account the fact that, of necessity, a number of public rulings and compliance information, will be technical in nature.

To ameliorate the technical nature of some materials, the ATO has adopted a multi-faceted approach to communicating to multicultural audiences. This means that these taxpayers are given the opportunity to discuss tax issues directly with bilingual tax staff or access translated information on the website.

To ensure consistency and quality of translated materials, the ATO has an agreed translation for commonly used tax terms. For example, business activity statement is always translated the same way, regardless of which professional translation company undertakes the translation. This ensures that multicultural taxpayers are familiarised with common tax phrases and terminology.

PURCHASER ROLE

Purchasers frequently use purchase contracts, memoranda of understanding, service level agreements or partnership agreements to give effect to a proposed purchase arrangement. These mechanisms are usually supported by performance monitoring and reporting requirements.

Key responsibilities of the Purchaser include:

- determining what is to be purchased and what is to be achieved
- negotiating and contracting with services providers
- monitoring performance and suitability of services/goods being purchased
- encouraging competition between Providers.

To achieve the Government's desired outcomes of ensuring equity and maximising the benefits for people from different cultural and language backgrounds, the Purchaser needs to:

- develop consultation strategies to involve people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds where the goods/services that are to be purchased may have differing impacts on their lives
- ensure the specifications of both the tender and purchase contract comply with the Charter and
- ensure that the complaints mechanisms enable people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to have their issues heard and addressed.

All agencies purchase goods and services. However, many organisations are not involved in tendering out government services, grants programs or the purchasing of cultural items for display. These organisations either returned a nil response, or their response indicated that they were involved in the purchasing of goods, and there was no significant intersection with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This left eleven agencies or 22 per cent identified

as Purchasers and rendered this role the least applicable.

Performance Indicator One

Purchasing processes that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.

This performance indicator requires purchasers to ensure that when the Government purchases goods/services it does so in a way that takes into account the range of needs for all people in the community.

Eleven agencies reported against this performance indicator and ten of them met it.

Agencies were assessed as meeting this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- grants programs and outsourced programs developed in consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse groups (reference groups, focus groups, committees, consultations inclusive of peak bodies representatives)
- customer or client satisfaction surveys
- discussion paper sent to multicultural groups
- targeted briefings about grants application process
- targeted requests for donations for exhibits of culturally and linguistically diverse cultural material
- contracts specifying consultation with Indigenous groups.

The use of various types of fora involving people from multicultural backgrounds was by far the most common approach and was used by most agencies that reported.

Ninety-one per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies that met this performance indicator well were: the Australia

Council; the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; and the Department of Family and Community Services.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Personal Support Program

The new Personal Support Program will deliver a range of services for people with multiple, non-vocational barriers to employment. Contractors will assist participants overcome barriers, identify and achieve economic or social goals. The consultation process for designing and implementing the Personal Support Program included forums/meetings in major capital cities, major regional centres and a sample of rural and remote areas (including those areas in which the Community Support Program operated and did not operate). The consultations targeted specific customer groups, including people with different types of barriers, those from rural/remote and non-metropolitan locations, Indigenous people, and those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The initial consultations occurred in around 47 locations across Australia and were followed by 23 testing sessions to test the design of the program that was developed as a result of earlier consultations.

Mentor Marketplace

The Mentor Marketplace initiative helps young people stay connected to family, education, training and the workplace. It complements existing mentoring programs run primarily by the community sector and initiates new mentoring opportunities. The Mentor Marketplace has been developed in consultation with the business and community sectors, including with young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Service providers will collect client data such as the main language spoken at home to further target the program to client needs.

Job Placement Employment and Training (JPET) Scheme

JPET helps homeless and at risk young people aged 15 to 21 get into education, training or employment. Applicants for contracts for JPET Business Allocation were encouraged to consult and form partnerships as a means of ensuring that the needs of all target groups (such as young refugees) are taken into account.

Performance Indicator Two

Tendering specifications and contract requirements for the purchase of goods or services are consistent with the requirements of the Charter.

This performance indicator requires purchasers to ensure that when the Government purchases goods or services, it does so in a way that takes into account the range of needs of all people in the community.

Where applicable, tender documents should require providers to state their understanding of the cultural and language needs of clients and ensure their services will respond appropriately to these needs. For the purchasing agency this requires having useful data on their client characteristics.

Eleven agencies reported against this performance indicator and nine of them met it.

Agencies met this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- contracts included special clauses relating to knowledge of and sensitivity to different cultures
- contracts specify data collection requirements regarding culturally and linguistically diverse clientele
- specialist contracts given to provide for people from multicultural backgrounds

- plans to include a special clause to encourage applications as contractors from culturally and linguistically diverse people
- expert grants assessors include culturally and linguistically diverse assessors
- contracts include a clause to employ Indigenous Australians if possible
- special clause included to encourage applications as contractors from different cultures
- contracts specify need to outline strategies for multicultural clients
- training and support provided by agency to contractors for specialist services for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- contracts specify consultation with Indigenous groups.

The use of contracts specifying the needs for knowledge of and sensitivity to different cultures was by far the most common strategy and was used by most agencies that reported.

Eighty-two per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies that met this performance indicator well were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australia Council; the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; the Department of Family and Community Services; and the National Gallery of Australia.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

Many of the arts organisations funded by the Australia Council are asked to report against certain criteria including artistic outcomes and any stated outcomes anticipated for multicultural and Indigenous Australia.

The *Arts in a Multicultural Australia* policy launched in November 2000 includes a five year strategic plan. The Australia Council has allocated a total of \$900,000 over the last two financial years to implement the strategic plan which aims for long term change in three main areas: skilling for multicultural arts; the promotion of multicultural arts, and

engagement with multicultural arts. Some examples of recent initiatives are outlined below.

Community Cultural Development Board Grants for Newly Arrived Communities

Specific grant programs through the Community Cultural Development Board have been developed to encourage the participation of newly arrived communities. This program was developed in consultation with members from some of these newly arrived groups of migrants to Australia. The outcome increased awareness of the work of the Australia Council to these groups and increased participation in cultural activities in Australia.

Bilingual Publications by First Generation Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Writers

This project is being developed by the Literature Board of the Australia Council. The concept is to develop partnerships with organisations like SBS Translating Services, UNESCO, Boards of Studies in various states to develop a publication which involves writing in languages other than English and an English translation. The audience could be a general one, but the focus on upper level secondary students is considered important for increasing engagement with multicultural arts.

Creative And Cultural Difference Clusters

Creative and Cultural Difference Clusters initiative aims to encourage partnerships that explore and produce artworks which are cross artform and cross cultural in content. The partnerships will be between the tertiary sector, groups of artists and arts organisations. The three key areas that describe a successful cluster are:

- the way in which artistic practice and existing relationships are significantly extended
- the potential for national and international influence, and
- the way that existing successes for both creative and cultural difference are significantly increased.

To implement this strategy the Australia Council will commission the research and development of cross cultural explorations in an environment which enables support from peers and access to processes, expertise and critiques. A call for Expressions of Interest will be widely advertised, through ethnic, Indigenous and arts networks. There will be a long lead time provided so that the partners can be negotiated and the partnerships realised.

Multicultural Arts Marketing Ambassadors Strategy (MAMAS)

This is the third successive year of a very successful program made possible by a partnership between the Australia Council; the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne and Multicultural Arts Victoria.

MAMAS provides training in marketing and public relations for about 20 participants, many of whom are bilingual artists. It also provides experience in liaising directly between ethnic communities, diverse language groups and major companies based in Melbourne through several placements in major companies that are given to selected participants following the completion of the seminars. These have included: the Australia Ballet, the Melbourne International Film Festival, the Melbourne International Festival, Heide, the National Gallery of Victoria, and Melbourne Museum. MAMAS will also have a round table discussion with senior management of major companies to raise their level of awareness in respect of marketing to multicultural Australia.

Performance Indicator Three

Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of Purchasers and Providers.

This performance indicator requires purchasers to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lodge a complaint and have it addressed. It principally applies to any concerns related to the performance of organisations that have been contracted by government agencies to provide services to the public. However, it also applies in relation to complaints about grants programs and the purchase of cultural material for display in museums.

All purchasers reported having complaints mechanisms in place but generic complaints mechanisms were not considered sufficient to meet this performance indicator, unless there was evidence of an analysis of the complaints made. Seven portfolio agencies met this performance indicator. Four did not meet it.

Agencies that were assessed as meeting this performance indicator used one or more of the

following strategies in descending order of use:

- arranging interpreters for those making complaints
- analysis of complaints
- provision of translated information
- unrestricted independent scrutiny
- an Indigenous complaints forum
- feedback at ethno-specific fora
- ethnic community complaints/comments as an agenda item at regular meetings with contractors
- plans for a formal mechanism
- plans to analyse complaints data
- a random sample client satisfaction survey
- using field officers to investigate complaints and review grants through a formal process
- regular grants review process
- an Indigenous Client Service Charter.

The most common strategy reported was the use of interpreters for those making complaints,

although only three agencies mentioned adopting this approach. Only two were involved in the next common approach, analysing complaints about purchased goods or services. Most agencies reported using only one strategy and, as a consequence, those agencies that met this performance indicator generally did not meet it well.

Sixty-four per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. The agencies that met this indicator best were the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. Both had a number of strategies for complaints about contracted services.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION

Client Service Charter

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Board of Commissioners has approved a formal process for dealing with complaints about funded service providers. ATSIC ensures that service providers are aware of their obligation to meet the service standards in the ATSIC Service Charter. The Charter provides the opportunity for service providers to resolve complaints before ATSIC acts on them. Field officers in ATSIC regional offices are expected to act upon complaints from Indigenous clients made in relation to the services provided by Indigenous grantee organisations. Field officers then have a responsibility to investigate the complaints and, if necessary, review the grantee organisation through a formal process.

Performance monitoring

Complaints information is used to ensure improved services by service providers. Ongoing reviews of program impacts and performance of service delivery organisations are an integral part of ATSIC service delivery arrangements.

Each Link Up service provider advises clients that satisfaction survey forms are available if clients wish to comment. The National Aboriginal Health Strategy program and other elements of the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program are reviewed/evaluated regularly and include a mechanism for community complaint and input.

Grants Reviews

Major funding bodies are subject to a process of rolling reviews (every 3 years) which are undertaken by the Regional offices. Terms of Reference for reviews are scrutinised by the Program areas for performance inclusions, to ensure community consultation mechanisms are in place and realistic performance outcomes are reported upon. Reviews are undertaken primarily to raise accountability and avoid criticism/complaints, however they are sometimes instigated in response to complaints.

A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – PURCHASER ROLE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA

Performance Indicator 1

Purchasing processes that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.

Consultation with Indigenous Australians

The Aboriginal community or the relevant community council or group, as appropriate, is often involved in the planning stages of a proposed acquisition of a work of art or its display. The National Gallery of Australia (NGA) has a large Indigenous collection which has been acquired and maintained in close consultation with the Aboriginal community.

Tailored Workforce used for Consultation

Indigenous staff at the NGA visit Indigenous communities to understand their needs and to develop a close working relationships. All exhibitions now reflect consultation processes and conflict is not common. Negotiations for purchasing are conducted by Aboriginal Curators, who are familiar with the subtleties of negotiating with the various communities.

Tailored Purchases

Consistent with meeting the cultural needs of the people of Australia, the NGA conducts major exhibitions of varying cultural significance. Although this does not generally involve the purchase of works of art as such, works are quite often borrowed from other institutions nationally or internationally, and this process requires the purchase of services.

For example, in relation to the major exhibition *The Italians*, the NGA consulted widely with Italian officials in Australia and overseas as well as others from the Italian community. Input from the Italian community was achieved through formal and informal methods such as: through meetings and correspondence, and via visits to the NGA and support in the form of the use of NGA staff as interpreters.

Performance Indicator 2

Tendering specifications and contract requirements for the purchase of goods or services are consistent with the requirements of the Charter.

Contracts Specify Cultural Sensitivity

The NGA's Audio Guides include descriptions of the collection in various languages to ensure visitors have the opportunity to properly appreciate the works of art. The contractor must demonstrate an understanding of the cultural diversity of Indigenous and overseas visitors to the NGA.

Contracts Specify Translations

Many visitors to the Gallery are visitors from overseas. In seeking an audio tour supplier, the NGA aims to provide visitors with an opportunity to access more of the collection through audio tours, and thereby enhance their experience at the Gallery. Contracts specify the requirement for a number of languages on the tour guides.

Highlight tours of the permanent collection are required in at least six languages. The languages required are nominated by the NGA, and can be expected to change as the profile of visitors changes (for example, in response to economic conditions overseas or particular cultural exhibitions).

Performance Indicator 3

Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of Purchasers and Providers.

Client Service Charter

The NGA has a formal complaints-handling mechanism, the Service Charter, which takes into account the needs of people not proficient in the English language.

Interpreters Available

In accordance with the NGA Certified Agreement, interpreters are used, as appropriate, for the investigation of complaints in matters involving staff.

PROVIDER ROLE

The provider delivers services, usually under contract by Government. Providers can be government, private or not-for-profit organisations.

Key responsibilities of the Provider include:

- managing resources effectively to produce and deliver services as required
- developing and marketing (if appropriate) services to consumers/users and to Purchasers
- ensuring their organisation is able to provide the services required in the short to longer-term.

To achieve the Government's desired outcomes of ensuring equity and maximising the benefits

for people from different cultural and language backgrounds, the Provider needs to:

- show an understanding and capacity to provide services to people from the range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds in Australian society
- provide services that are accessible to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- have quality assurance and quality improvement systems in place which are developed and delivered on the basis of the fair treatment of clients who are eligible to receive a particular service
- have a Client Service Charter that defines the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of

both the Provider and consumer. Such a Client Service Charter should account for the needs of society in which there are people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds

- have established mechanisms for considering consumer satisfaction which meets the needs of their diverse clientele
- have established complaints handling mechanisms to address concerns raised by their consumers, and which meets the needs of their diverse clientele.

Thirty-six or 73 per cent of agencies reported against this role rendering it the role most frequently reported against.

Performance Indicator One

Providers have established mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and review that incorporate the principles underpinning the Charter.

This performance indicator required agencies and departments who provide services to ensure that they plan, deliver and monitor their services in ways that consider and account for the needs of their culturally diverse clientele.

This performance indicator was by and large met. Only two of the 36 agencies that reported against this indicator did not meet it.

Agencies were assessed as meeting this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- Indigenous consultations/programs
- using interpreters or bilingual staff
- ethnic community consultations/liaison/fora
- plain English information
- translated information
- monitoring access and equity issues through client surveys

- communication strategies using pictures, imagery and symbols, audio, video
- assessing differential impacts for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- targeting Indigenous ethnic media
- consultation with ethnic/Indigenous peak bodies
- multicultural community workshop
- multicultural/Indigenous focus groups
- Indigenous workshop
- culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous strategic planning framework
- multicultural service officers
- Indigenous customer service officers
- Indigenous call centre
- collecting ethnicity related data
- targeted recruitment of multicultural staff
- cultural awareness workshop for staff
- language courses for staff
- targeted research on culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- plans for focus groups and consultative committees.

The first six strategies were widely employed and overall this performance indicator was well met.

Ninety-four per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australian Bureau of Statistics; the Australian Taxation Office; Centrelink; the Commonwealth Ombudsman, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; Environment Australia; and the Health Insurance Commission were high performers against this performance indicator.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE - ENVIRONMENT AUSTRALIA

World Heritage

Environment Australia maintained consultative arrangements in a number of World Heritage properties and established new arrangements in others, to involve specific interest groups and the broader community in consultative mechanisms for World Heritage areas. New consultative arrangements include those for:

- the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves World Heritage property interests established in collaboration with NSW and Queensland management agencies which provide for representation of Indigenous interests
- the Naracoorte component of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites, established in collaboration with the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. Represented groups include those from the Indigenous, scientific, tourism, local government and landholder communities
- the Riversleigh component of the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites, established in collaboration with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to enable the Waanyi traditional owners to play a strong role in consultations.

An informal network of Indigenous managers and representatives engaged in the management of Australia's World Heritage properties has been established with the aim of exchanging views on issues, learning from each other's experiences, improving skills and seeking ways for all managers (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to strengthen cooperation.

Marine Protected Areas and Species

Environment Australia funds a collaborative project between the Shark Bay Yadgalah Aboriginal Corporation, the Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management, and the Edith Cowan and James Cook Universities on the movements and community based conservation of Shark Bay dugongs. Prior to the deployment of tags on dugongs there were planning meetings involving the Yadgalah Aboriginal Corporation. Regular social barbecues are held where Indigenous people could express their views on issues relating to the project and could continue to be thanked for their involvement in the project.

National Parks

Boards of Management for Commonwealth national parks that are jointly managed with traditional owners are required under legislation to have a majority of traditional owners on the Board.

Management plans for Commonwealth national parks are routinely prepared in ways that ensure there is effective involvement of Indigenous traditional owners and of stakeholders from varying linguistic backgrounds. Meetings in languages other than

English may be held with stakeholders as part of the planning process. The third plan of management for Christmas Island National Park published in March 2002 included summaries in Bahasa Malay and Mandarin, reflecting the significant role played by the Malay and Chinese communities in the Christmas Island Territory.

World, National and Cultural Heritage

The Australian Heritage Commission consulted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about matters pertaining to the National Estate in accordance with Commission policy. The Commission masked Indigenous images for inclusion in the Commission's public photographic database, to prevent unauthorised use. It consulted with Indigenous owners regarding the use of images of sites before they appear in publications or public documents.

The Commission conducted 12 workshops around Australia on the information contained in *Protecting Heritage Places Information and Resources*. The workshops included representatives from Local Government Associations, ATSIC in Tasmania, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation.

'Tracking the Dragon: A guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places'

The Australian Heritage Commission developed *Tracking the Dragon: A Guide for finding and assessing Chinese Australian heritage places* as a companion to its Migrant Heritage Kit. This received strong community support and prompted the establishment of committees in some States and Territories to use the guide as a basis for identifying and protecting such places.

'Art of Place' Exhibition

The *Art of Place* exhibition, an exhibition selected from works entered in the Fifth Indigenous Heritage Award, travelled around Australia, and involved Indigenous communities in promotion and public education activities. Publicity focused on people who had entries or art works in the exhibition. Indigenous people were involved in the launch of the exhibition through performances and welcoming ceremonies.

Performance Indicator Two

Provider data collection systems incorporate the requirements of the Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity (the Standards).

This performance indicator requires providers to collect data on cultural and linguistic diversity consistent with the Standards, or to take steps to comply with the Standards.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' minimum core set of variables which is specified in the Standards is comprised of the following:

- country of birth of person
- main language other than English spoken at home
- proficiency in spoken English
- Indigenous status (for those data collections

which are not specifically focussed on migrants to Australia).

This was the most poorly met of all the performance indicators. Of the 32 agencies that reported against this performance indicator, only 16 met its requirements. Two agencies did not report against this performance indicator.

Agencies met this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following in descending order of use:

- collecting data according to the Standards
- using ABS Census data to analyse client base, or
- having plans in place to collect data according to the Standards.

These three strategies were employed fairly equally by reporting agencies.

Agencies were assessed as not meeting this performance indicator if they did either of the following:

- collected data about clients but not according to the Standards, or

- cited the ABS Statistical clearing house as proof of meeting the performance indicator; (the ABS clearing house checks surveys for 'fitness of purpose', not for conformity with the Standards).

As indicated in last year's report, more needs to be done to promote the benefits of collecting standardised data about the language and cultural diversity of clients. Clear guidelines on how to meet the Standards will be provided in a forthcoming Access and Equity Manual.

Forty-seven per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. This performance indicator was met best by those agencies with data collection systems in place that accord with the Standards and by agencies that used ABS Census data. They were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; the Australian Broadcasting Authority; the Australian Bureau of Statistics; the Australian Film, Television and Radio School; the National Museum of Australia; the Australian Taxation Office; Centrelink; the Health Insurance Commission; the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; and Treasury.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – HEALTH INSURANCE COMMISSION

The Health Insurance Commission (HIC) collects and maintains limited customer data on cultural and language diversity. The introduction of an Indigenous identifier question as a component of the Medicare enrolment form is consistent with the Standards.

As Medicare is a national program inclusive of the vast majority of the population, HIC currently uses national ABS data relating to cultural and linguistically diverse communities for research and planning. For instance, in NSW HIC uses ABS data on Indigenous populations in rural centres to determine identified positions for Indigenous recruitment (seven Indigenous staff have been employed in Medicare offices during 2002).

Performance Indicator Three

Providers have established service standards that do not disadvantage consumers because of their cultural or linguistic background.

This performance indicator requires providers to ensure that services are able to adequately meet the needs of clients, including those that arise because of a person's cultural or linguistic background. This may include:

- monitoring the responsiveness of services to customers to ensure that, regardless of cultural or linguistic background, all customers receive the same level and responsiveness in service provision
- providing products that are tailored to respond to the needs of groups with specific cultural or linguistic backgrounds
- tailoring of workforce skills to better respond to needs of clients from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- including representatives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds in customer councils.

Overall agencies met this performance indicator. Of the 36 agencies that reported against this indicator only three agencies did not meet its requirements.

Agencies were assessed as meeting this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following in descending order of use:

- tailored products using interpreters
- cross-cultural/diversity training
- multicultural customer councils/consultations
- use of bilingual staff for client service
- translated information
- other tailored workforce (eg Indigenous or multicultural liaison officers)

- visual displays/cues
- plain English products
- translated Client Service Charter
- use of ethnic communication consultant
- targeted ethnic/Indigenous public relations
- dedicated other languages site on website
- monitoring responsiveness to culturally and linguistically diverse people through tailored research.

The use of tailored products was by far the most commonly reported strategy and the use of interpreters was also reported frequently. Some examples are: the Australian Broadcasting Authority provides advisory notes on the portrayal of cultural diversity by commercial television stations; the Australian Electoral Commission produced a poster and brochure for Indigenous voters; and Austrade uses bilingual staff for SBS radio interviews in other languages.

Overall this performance indicator was well met.

Tailoring of the agency's workforce was also a very common approach as was the use of bilingual staff. Utilising the available linguistic and cultural knowledge of an agency's workforce is not only of benefit to the client but is very valuable to the organisation. For instance, great efficiency savings are possible in relation to the cost of interpreters if bilingual staff are used.

Ninety-two per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. The best performers against this performance indicator were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australian Bureau of Statistics; Austrade; the Australian Customs Service; the Australian Federal Police; the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, the Australian Industrial Registry; the Australian Taxation Office; Centrelink; the Commonwealth Ombudsman; the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; the Department of Immigration and

Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; the Department of Veterans' Affairs; Environment Australia; the Health Insurance Commission; the

National Gallery of Australia; the Office of the Employment Advocate; and Treasury.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – HEALTH INSURANCE COMMISSION

Welcome Kit

The Welcome Kit (for new arrivals to Australia) provides comprehensive information about the range of HIC programs, for example, Medicare, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, Australian Organ Donor Register, the Family Assistance Office as well as the HIC Charter of Care. The Kit is available in English and 12 other languages and is available from Medicare offices, Migrant Resource Centres and from the HIC website.

Tailored Workforce

Equity and diversity training, including cross-cultural communication issues, is provided to staff to enable high quality responses to the diverse needs of our customer base. The HIC has conducted nationwide equity and diversity training reaching 90 per cent of HIC staff (more than 3,500 people).

Multilingual Staff

Multilingual staff members are listed in state internal telephone directories (language registers) to assist with enquiries from customers from multicultural backgrounds. These staff members (currently over 100 nationally) receive a linguistic performance allowance for offering this service.

Indigenous Liaison Officers

Indigenous Liaison Officers work across Australia to make the interaction between business needs of the HIC and Indigenous customer access needs more equitable. The Indigenous Liaison Officers respond in a culturally sensitive manner to enquiries from Indigenous Australians. Their work includes: enrolment drives; staffing enquiries 'desks' at Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS); regional office bulk-bill claim processing to reduce rejected claims; education and training to AMS staff; and an Indigenous baby enrolment scheme.

Indigenous Liaison Officers gather and settle grievance and concerns from Indigenous consumer areas. They pass on any grievance they cannot settle to State senior management.

Tailored Products

HIC tailors products to respond to particular cultural and language needs. A specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medicare enrolment form with reduced proof of identity requirements has been implemented. Simplified bulk-billing and bulk Medicare

enrolments have been introduced at Aboriginal Medical Centres. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access Line has been established and is well utilised (primarily by Indigenous Health Workers).

Following an extensive consultation process that included Indigenous representatives on the Indigenous Communication Strategy Steering Committee, an Indigenous communication strategy has been developed to promote Medicare enrolment and benefits to Indigenous Australians, health services and workers.

To meet the needs of customers who may have protracted transactions or need to have space for more than one person to be interacting with Medicare staff (such as a client and an interpreter), the Medicare offices are now including low counters. The HIC has worked with DIMIA to simplify Medicare enrolment for new arrivals.

Targeted Communication

The promotion and advertising of HIC programs to culturally and linguistically diverse clients occurs via targeted mediums, such as the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA's) magazine and ethnic print media such as IL Globo.

Performance Indicator Four

Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic background) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of Providers.

This performance indicator requires providers to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to lodge a complaint and have it addressed.

All departments and agencies that identified as providers have complaints mechanisms in place. However, if providers had generic complaints mechanisms this was not considered sufficient to meet this performance indicator, unless there was evidence of an analysis of the complaints made. Six portfolio agencies did not meet this performance indicator and one agency did not report against it. Of the 28 agencies that did meet, most did not meet the performance indicator to a high standard.

Some agencies met this performance indicator on the basis of analysing complaints alone. However,

those agencies that met this indicator best were those that did more than simply analyse complaints. They had strategies to assist culturally and linguistically diverse clients to make complaints, such as translated information and using interpreters.

Agencies were assessed as meeting this performance indicator on the basis of one or more of the following strategies in descending order of use:

- analysis of complaints (only one agency reported any complaints made on the basis of language or culture)
- arranging interpreters for those making complaints
- provision of translated complaints brochures
- bilingual staff
- provision of translated information in an English language brochure
- plain English brochure

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- plans for complaints in other languages to be lodged and addressed
 - provision of an Indigenous liaison officer to deal with complaints
 - provision of an Indigenous client service charter
 - addressing complaints through a consultative forum including representatives from the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
 - extensive individualised assistance
 - simplified form with a tick box for the type of complaint
 - a random sample client satisfaction survey
- plans to analyse complaint data
 - plans for translated complaints material on their agency's website.
- By far the most common approaches reported were to analyse complaints and to provide interpreters.
- Eighty per cent of reporting agencies met this performance indicator. Agencies that performed well against this performance indicator were: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission; the Australian Customs Service; the Australian Federal Police; the Australian Taxation Office; Centrelink; the Commonwealth Ombudsman; the Health Insurance Commission; the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; and the Social Security Appeals Tribunal.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE - CENTRELINK

Customer Charter and Complaints Brochure

Centrelink provides information on complaints handling processes and procedures in accessible formats for people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The Customer Charter is available online at the Centrelink website and from Centrelink Customer Service Centres in English and in 30 community languages. Also available is the on-line Fact Sheet *Do you disagree with a Centrelink decision?* translated in 32 community languages and available through 1,000 Centrelink customer contact points. The Centrelink Multilingual Call Centre telephone number is given in the multilingual version to enable customers to provide feedback in their own language.

Feedback Mechanisms on Centrelink decisions

Centrelink customer letters that contain information on appeal rights offer the Centrelink Multilingual Call Centre telephone number for customers to make contact in their own language. Multicultural Service Officers also promote the availability of these Centrelink feedback mechanisms to ethnic community organisations.

Use of Interpreters in Complaints Process

Centrelink uses interpreters to assist in the complaints lodgement and hearing process. It has a national language services policy to ensure that all Centrelink customers with limited English language proficiency will be provided with an interpreter at no cost. Centrelink customers can communicate their feedback in their own language through the Centrelink Multilingual Call number.

Analysis of Complaints

Centrelink analyses complaints data to show the percentage triggered by the language or cultural background of the client. In 2001-02 Centrelink recorded 4,178 items of feedback. Of these, 1,729 were complaints. Customers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds contributed 384 items of feedback, of which 102 were complaints. For these customers, the top three reasons for complaint were: 'disagree with assessment/decision'; 'delay in decision'; and 'call back not received'. Indigenous customers provided 121 items of feedback, of which nine were complaints. The results for multicultural and Indigenous customers were similar to those for all customers.

Other Feedback Mechanisms

Centrelink conducts Value Creation Workshops (VCW) throughout Australia as a mechanism for obtaining feedback from customers. VCWs are conducted for a range of customers including Indigenous customers and customers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They are also conducted in customers' preferred languages.

A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE – PROVIDER ROLE DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Performance Indicator 1

Providers have established mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and review that incorporate the principles underpinning the Charter.

Planning

Planning for the implementation of the Family Visitor Network (FVN) was undertaken in 2001-02. The aim of the FVN is to increase community awareness of the Government's visitor visa policy and procedures by better provision of information to clients, thus enabling them to lodge better-prepared applications. This process involved consultation with all overseas posts for the purpose of developing information sheets that reflect the needs of culturally diverse clientele.

Staff representing the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) in State and Territory Settlement Inter-governmental Planning Committees coordinated and participated in local settlement planning meetings. These Committees and their working groups addressed settlement issues through specific projects. For example, in Victoria refugee youth were identified as having significant problems settling in Australia. In response, a project on youth accommodation was developed, education pathways material in multiple languages was published and an Independent Persons' Program for youth in the criminal justice system was created.

Implementation

DIMIA is represented in about 73 Australian missions in some 65 countries worldwide. Local staff are employed at each location. In response to counter inquiries, they explain visa requirements to clients in the local language/s.

In Australia, and overseas when necessary, DIMIA's clients are able to access the Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) free of charge to make inquiries about visa application procedures and about any applications they have lodged.

Translated information, principally visitor visa application forms, and information about applying for citizenship is available in a number of languages on DIMIA's website.

Monitoring and Review

The Review of the Temporary Residence Program was ongoing in 2001-02. The Review is considering streamlining options for more than 20 visas and consultation has occurred with internal and external stakeholders including visa holders, sponsors, industry representatives and unions.

Performance Indicator 2

Provider data collection systems incorporate the requirements of the *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* (the Standards) for statistics on cultural and language diversity.

Data Collection System used to Assist Service Delivery

DIMIA's Settlement Database contains data about potential and actual settlers in Australia to assist planning and service delivery, in relation to matters such as community grants programs, language training, Access and Equity and Migrant Resource Centres. The data on the Settlement Database complies with the Standards.

The Community Information Network uses Settlement Database information to provide settlement-related information and statistical data through DIMIA's website.

Performance Indicator 3

Providers have established service standards that do not disadvantage consumers because of their cultural or linguistic background.

Client Service Charter and Service Standard Performance Data

DIMIA monitors and reports on its performance against its Client Service Charter (identified service standards and the management of client feedback and complaints) through service standard performance data obtained from individual offices and posts that self-assess performance against each identified standard over a given period of time.

Client feedback and complaints data are obtained from monthly statistical reports submitted by Complaints Handling Officers and from telephone usage reports for the department's dedicated complaints line.

Using Data to Improve Client Service

In order to monitor and improve client service, information on calls is collected and analysed so that information is available on matters such as queued calls, abandonment rates, average waiting times and average talk times. Information is also collected about the number of clients seen at reception and at counters, the reason for the contact, application lodgements and waiting times.

Tailored Community Briefings

DIMIA organised targeted community briefings in a number of States. For example:

- Tasmania organised information sessions for various groups such as the new emerging African communities on general procedures for proposing relatives to come to Australia. Other sessions covered various immigration categories relevant to particular communities. A DIMIA officer regularly briefs the Multicultural Council of Tasmania on new departmental initiatives and topical issues.

- DIMIA Brisbane's Business Centre has continued its 2001 series of information sessions for prospective business skills migrants over the past year, running these in both English and Chinese. In addition to signage in the local office and notices placed on the DIMIA website, participants are canvassed through the open press, using both mainstream and Chinese newspapers.
- A need identified within the local business community in Far North Queensland for a more strategic approach to information dissemination, with a particular focus on Employer Nominations, Regional Sponsored Migration, Business Skills Migration and Temporary Business visas, led to discussions for a joint initiative between DIMIA, KPMG, Queensland Department of State Development and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. Consequently arrangements were put in place for a series of eight seminars in the 2002-2003 program year.
- DIMIA NSW provided both formal and informal information sessions in response to client and public enquiries. An example is the provision of seminars on Business Skills migration categories.
- An information session was held by the Adelaide Business Centre to inform representatives from Local Government, Chambers of Commerce and South Australian businesses that frequently sponsor overseas visitors, about its work.

Use of Bilingual Staff

Local staff are employed wherever DIMIA is represented overseas at about 73 Australian missions in some 65 countries. These staff are able to explain visa requirements to clients in the local language/s.

DIMIA's State and Territory offices draw on the language skills of their diverse workforces. They utilise staff who receive the community language allowance in daily work for on-the-spot interpretations. These bilingual staff are drawn from a list of available staff on DIMIA's Intranet.

Performance Indicator 4

Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic background) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of Providers.

Translated 'Client Service Charter' and Complaints Brochure

DIMIA's *Client Service Charter* informs its clients of the standards of service they can expect from the department, provides an avenue to comment on its performance and advises on how clients can help the Department to serve them better. In order to identify problems and facilitate continuous improvement in service delivery, ongoing monitoring and periodic evaluation of performance against the service standards in the Client Service Charter is undertaken. The Client Service Charter and companion brochure *Do you have a complaint?* are written in plain English and are also available in 19 community languages.

Access to the Translating and Interpreter Service

Clients needing assistance when dealing with departmental staff, including when lodging a complaint or hearing about it, have access (either on request or when referred by staff) to the Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS).

Analysis of Complaints

Complaints are analysed into the following key areas: explaining decisions; customer service; and accessibility (both counter and telephone).

EMPLOYER ROLE AND PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY

Agencies were not required to report directly to DIMIA on the Employer role in 2002. A review of Access and Equity reporting commissioned by DIMIA and undertaken by KPMG Consulting was finalised in June 2002. The Review recommended that DIMIA remove the requirement for reporting on the Employer role under the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* as this overlaps with similar reporting requirements under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Information on the Employer role has been extracted from the Australian Public Service Commission's (APS Commission) publications: *Workplace Diversity Report 2001-02*.

In the absence of any alternative measure, the APS Commission uses the term 'people from a non-English speaking background'² (NESB) and the subgroups NESB 1 and NESB 2 because they capture information about first language, place of birth and parental heritage. NESB 1 is used to cover people born overseas whose first language is not English who arrived in Australia on or after the age of five.

NESB 2 includes children of migrants, including those:

- born overseas who arrived in Australia before

the age of five but did not speak English as a first language

- born in Australia but did not speak English as a first language and had at least one NESB parent, and
- born in Australia and had neither parent speaking English as a first language.

Note that all figures in this chapter refer to ongoing employees.

Issues associated with the use of the term 'non-English speaking background' and its acronym NESB are explained in *The Guide: Implementing the Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity*. The Guide can be accessed on DIMIA's website.

For the purpose of this report, the category NESB 1 is used for an analysis of equity issues in relation to the employment of people from multicultural backgrounds in the Australian Public Service (APS). The APS Commission category NESB 1 has been labelled 'migrants' in the tables at Appendix B.

Data from the Australian Public Service Database (APSED) indicates that the representation of staff from multicultural backgrounds is in decline. At the time of the 2001 census the proportion of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in the labour force was 13.8%. The proportion of APS employees identifying themselves as migrants

² Defined as people born in countries other than Australia, Canada, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America

(NESB 1) remained at 3.1% in June 2002, the same as at June 2001. In 1993 the proportion was 4.2%.

Of the agencies covered by this report with the highest proportion of migrant employees whose first language was not English were: the National Library (13.3%); the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (11.7%); the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (11.1%); the Australian Industrial Registry (8.4%); Treasury (7.9%); the Australian Bureau of Statistics (7.9%); the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (7.7%); and the Australian Broadcasting Authority (7.1%).

According to 2001 census data, the proportion of the Australian labour force identifying as Indigenous was 1.4%. The proportion of Indigenous Australians employed in the APS at June 2002 was 2.4%. This is consistent with its level in June 2001, but down from the June 1998 figure of 2.7%. Agencies covered by this report with a proportion of Indigenous employees equal to or higher than the proportion of Indigenous Australians in the labour force were: the Department of Education, Science and Training (10.5%); the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (4.2%); Centrelink (3.8%); the Australian Public Service Commission (3.7%); the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (2.9%); the Department of Health and Ageing (2.6%), the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2.4%); the National Museum of Australia (2.2%); the Australian Customs Service (1.6%); the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia (1.4%) and the National Archives of Australia (1.4%).

The reliability of the data collected about employees by agencies needs to be improved. There is inconsistency across agencies in the data collected on self-identification of employees in relation to ethnicity. The proportion of people identifying as from non-English speaking backgrounds when engaged appears to be lower than their representation in the Australian Public Service.

The provision of most diversity data is voluntary. As a consequence, there may be under-reporting in relation to Indigenous staff and other staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, possibly as a result of an initial reluctance to identify racial or ethnic origin, or because the agency has not reported it to APSED. Other evidence of the inaccuracy of some data is that, of 122 Executive Level employees identified by APSED as Indigenous Australians for a recent survey, 8% responded that they were not Indigenous Australians.

For migrants whose first language was not English, the rate of engagement for 2001-02 was 2.1% (see Table 6 at Appendix B) and this was higher than the separation rate which was 1.9% (see Table 7 at Appendix B). The median length of service for migrant employees is 5.6 years. This is much less than the nine-year median length of service for APS employees as a whole. The engagement rate for Indigenous Australians was 2.8%, higher than the labour force representation rate. However, the engagement rate was lower than the separation rate of 3.1%. Over the past decade, Indigenous Australians have been over-represented among employees separating from the APS. For instance, in 2001-02, 20.2% of Indigenous employees who separated had less than one year of service, compared to 4.9% of non-Indigenous employees.

Of employees promoted in 2001-02, only 2.3% were migrants whose first language was not English. Indigenous Australians fared better, achieving 3.0% of promotions in 2001-02, compared with 2.1% in 2000-01. This is slightly more than their representation rate in the APS (2.4%).

Workplace Diversity Programs were submitted to the APS Commissioner pursuant to section 18 of the *Public Service Act 1999*. Sixty-one per cent of agencies reported monitoring and evaluating diversity data and trends. Almost 15% reported using performance indicators to assess their Workplace Diversity Programs, 6% surveyed staff, and another 6% consulted employees and diversity networks.

Information provided to the Australian Public Service Commission for 2000-01 indicates that most agencies relied on 'mainstream' workplace diversity strategies to eliminate employment-related discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity. These strategies included promoting an understanding of the merit selection process, including a 'demonstrated commitment to workplace diversity principles' in selection criteria, and measures to prevent harassment and discrimination. Agencies had strategies designed to capitalise on the cultural and language background of their employees. Of those that did, the most common strategy was a language skills register, or community language allowance register, that recognised competency in a second language that could be used by the agency.

In 2002-03, the Australian Public Service Commission intends, as a priority, to work with agencies to develop a framework to enable them to better evaluate their workplace diversity programs.

PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY AND ACCESS AND EQUITY

According to the 2001 census, 23 per cent of Australians were born overseas. These migrants have come from 185 countries. Forty-three per cent of the total number of Australians were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. People from multicultural backgrounds thus represent a significant segment of the Australian population.

People born overseas operate 464,300 small business in Australia, or 29 per cent. The language and cultural diversity of the Australian community is reflected in Australian workplaces across industry sectors. Twenty-five per cent of the Australian workforce was born overseas, and those born in non-English speaking countries constitute 15 per cent of the total workforce.

Australian Government agencies responsible for the delivery of business and industry support

programs need to consider the potential economic benefits for Australia of facilitating access to these programs for migrants business owners and operators.

The main argument for capitalising on workplace diversity in the context of Access and Equity in the public sector is that utilising the language skills and cultural knowledge of employees to tailor services and products produces social equity outcomes. Moreover, capitalising on the language and cultural diversity of employees simultaneously delivers effectiveness and efficiency gains. These include: better quality service and outcomes for multicultural clients; savings on the cost of interpreters; and effective communication with clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds resulting in higher compliance and lower breach rates.

Management practices

Government agencies seeking to make better use of their workforce may consider a variety of measures to improve effectiveness and efficiency. This can be achieved through the integration of improved communication and understanding brought about by incorporating Productive Diversity elements in their human resource management practices. These elements include:

- assessing the skills of the workforce to determine how those skills can be best used to improve the quality of services and outcomes for clients
- assessing organisational structures and management styles to facilitate value-adding contributions by the diverse workforce
- improving recruitment and promotion strategies to attract people with language and cultural skills
- improving workplace communication so that it is open and reaches and involves all staff
- equipping supervisors with the skills to appropriately manage and support a diverse workforce, and

- improving customer service through the use of well-trained staff with cultural and language skills appropriate to the targeted customer base. The following are good practice examples of Productive Diversity initiatives reported by various Government agencies as part of their Access and Equity Reports for 2002.

PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY: GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

The Library employs a diverse mix of staff from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to enable a high level of service provision to all clients. Currently 10 staff have the requisite qualifications to receive a Community Language Allowance. They are able to be called upon to interpret and provide direct services to clients when required.

The Library's collection exceeds five million items and includes material in 35 languages. Material is collected from all over the world in accordance with the Collection Development Policy. In order to ensure that the library material in a range of languages is collected and made available to the public, the Library also maintains a Staff Language Skills List. This regularly updated list identifies staff with specific language abilities that are willing to assist in the handling and processing of non-English language materials. The Library currently has on the list staff with a total of 49 different languages.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES

To promote effective and efficient communication between the Department of Transport and Regional Services and its international counterparts, the department's Transport and Infrastructure Policy Division actively recruited and supported officers with a variety of language skills. The division currently has skilled speakers of Thai, Mandarin, Japanese, Russian and German.

AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

To ensure that the Australian Film Commission (AFC) adequately serves the Indigenous community, the Indigenous Unit employs two full time Indigenous staff members. The unit provides mentors to train and support new filmmakers. To facilitate compliance with contracts and AFC funding policy, the unit provides support and advice on all aspects of the application and reporting process.

CENTRELINK

Centrelink encourages the recruitment of staff from different backgrounds and uses their skills to provide a culturally appropriate service to customers in the customer's preferred language. Centrelink recognises their skills through the payment of a language allowance.

Employment seminars, which provide general information to customers, are run by staff in community languages. Indigenous and multicultural specialist staff are involved in community interagency networks at the local level to disseminate information and receive feedback on programs and policy.

Centrelink conducts Value Creation Workshops (VCW) as a mechanism for obtaining feedback from customers. VCWs are conducted throughout Australia for a range of customers including Indigenous customers and customers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They are conducted by staff in customers' preferred languages.

CHAPTER TWO: COMMUNITY INPUT

NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM

DIMIA coordinates a national network of State and Territory Settlement Planning Committees that includes community representatives and major government service providers from the three tiers of governments: Federal, State and Local. This is a significant avenue for community feedback and input into government service provision. These Committees discuss and work towards providing solutions to Access and Equity issues that affect culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback has recently been gathered as part of a Review of Settlement Services. Feedback included comments from ethnic communities about the performance of Government agencies in relation to Access and Equity. No specific agency was identified in relation to these issues. The main issues raised were:

- some newly arrived business migrants do not have sufficient English skills or understanding of the Australian business operational environment to be able to set up a business and operate effectively soon after arrival. There is a need to provide accessible information in relevant languages about processes, laws and regulations in relation to operating businesses in Australia and how to comply with them
- as many services have been outsourced to the community sector, Access and Equity should be focused on the quality of service provision by the community sector as well as on government agencies
- mainstream service providers should be subject to more stringent requirements in reporting on Access and Equity outcomes
- the written policies of government agencies in relation to the use of interpreters are often ignored due to costs and inconvenience. For example, ethno-specific agencies are often requested to translate and interpret for

mainstream service providers because they are known to the agency, or they are easier to access

- mainstream services may respond well to major ethnic groups, but are much less equipped to deal with smaller and emerging communities, particularly in regional areas.

INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Business Kit

DIMIA plans to develop an information resource in collaboration with relevant agencies, to enable business migrants to establish and operate their businesses as early as possible after arrival.

Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies

A *Language Services Guidelines* toolkit has been developed by DIMIA for dissemination to Commonwealth agencies and organisations delivering government-funded services. The toolkit consists of a *Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies* and a *Model for Assessing Translating and Interpreting Requirements*. The toolkit is intended to assist Commonwealth agencies and organisations providing government-funded services to meet the language services needs of their clients, including new and emerging communities.

The *Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies* outline:

- the diversity of languages in the Australian community
- the nature of language services and the necessity for providing language services to support equitable access to government services in Australia's multicultural community
- the obligations of Commonwealth agencies in relation to language services arising from the *Public Service Act 1999*, the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*

- the benefits of integrating language services into mainstream service planning, delivery, evaluation and reporting
- steps for achieving effective language services drawing on the performance management framework for *Access and Equity Annual Reports*.

The *Model for Assessing Translating and Interpreting Requirements* provides:

- a model for organisations for estimating the cost of providing language services
- assistance for government funding bodies with developing appropriate service and budget specifications for their purchasing processes
- guidelines for monitoring the provision of language services.

The toolkit acknowledges the specific issue of Indigenous language services.

The *Model for Assessing Translating and Interpreting Requirements* and the *Language Services Guidelines: A Toolkit for Commonwealth Agencies* will be available on DIMIA's website.

Remaining Issues

DIMIA will bring the rest of these issues to the attention of reporting agencies, particularly those with a service provider role.

COMMUNITY SETTLEMENT SERVICES SCHEME WORKERS, MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRES, MIGRANT SERVICES AGENCIES

The Commonwealth provides funding for grants to community-based organisations under the Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS), and core funding to the national network of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and Migrant Services Agencies (MSAs) for settlement services for migrants. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) administers these grants and core funding.

CSSS organisations raise mainstream service providers' awareness of community needs; provide snapshots of community demographics; identify service gaps; provide newsletters and other publications; hold forums and information sessions; establish support groups; and undertake casework and referrals.

MRCs/MSAs provide information, referral and outreach services; initiate and engage in planning forums and networks to promote and implement Access and Equity and the benefits of cultural diversity; and support the participation of people from diverse cultural backgrounds in the wider community.

The following are initiatives aimed at facilitating community input regarding settlement and other government services for 2001-02 by State or Territory.

New South Wales

Two pilots based in the Blacktown and Newcastle Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) were run by DIMIA during 2002. The pilots were aimed at assisting the MRCs to respond to immigration inquiries from their clients, by disseminating DIMIA information via the Internet and dedicated telephones with priority access to the Department. Throughout the pilots, each MRC was provided with a telephone handset. DIMIA paid for the call costs of the direct line to the NSW Contact Centre as well as the cost of a broadband Internet connection.

DIMIA NSW provides Settlement Database information to MRCs/MSAs to ensure that they keep up to date with changing demographics within their areas of responsibility. This enables their services to be appropriately targeted.

Victoria

In October 2002, DIMIA Victoria hosted consultative meetings with community representatives and settlement service providers,

including visits to regional areas, to receive input into a review of settlement services.

Victorian Settlement Services section ran a training program for funded workers, surveyed needs of workers and developed three new initiatives to address specific needs. These were:

- a forum for rural and regional based agencies to share information and best practices in service delivery in regional Victoria
- a development program for settlement workers from small and emerging communities to be conducted in 2003
- training for funded agencies in service delivery to refugee youth was negotiated with a funded specialist youth organisation.

Western Australia

A reference group of CSSS agencies was established in WA. The group advised DIMIA on the purchase and provision of training to enhance the capacity of CSSS workers and organisations to deliver services.

South Australia

DIMIA SA provided a broad range of community representatives with a discussion paper about the 2002 Review of Settlement Services. In addition, a discussion paper on future options for indicators to determine the visitor risk factor list was made available to community leaders. They were then encouraged to be involved in the review. The risk factor list is determined statistically from overstay rates by country, gender and age. Applicants who have made an application for a permanent visa in the five years prior to making an application for a temporary visa are also placed on the risk factor list.

DIMIA SA provided individual and group training sessions on the Community Settlement Services Scheme, including work program implementation and resolution of management issues. Three

training courses on DIMIA's Client Service Charter, and the CSSS Grants Scheme were held for successful applicants.

Tasmania

DIMIA Tasmania has encouraged the MRCs in the North and South of the State to include representatives from new emerging African communities to become Board members.

Australian Capital Territory

The settlement needs of communities throughout the ACT and regions were revised through ongoing consultations and research in 2001-02. This resulted in the award of two new CSSS grants in September 2002. One grant targets the needs of migrant women in the ACT, and the other grant targets the needs of new arrivals in the South Coast region of the Eurobodalla.

Extensive community relations work was conducted in order to ensure that the MRC Management Committee for 2001-02 would be more representative of the communities serviced by the MRC in the ACT and surrounding region.

Three training programs were provided to CSSS/MRC staff and Management Committee members of the MRC of Canberra and Queanbeyan and the Griffith Multicultural Council. The programs focused on strategic planning skills.

CHAPTER THREE: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

STREAMLINING DIVERSITY-RELATED REPORTING

During 2001-02, a Review of Access and Equity Reporting was undertaken. This Review considered a range of accountability options for managing and reporting on Access and Equity, including how the report aligns with other diversity-related reporting processes such as disability, gender and workplace diversity. KPMG Consulting was engaged to conduct the Review. The review team consulted widely, including with the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) on Multicultural Affairs.

The Review found some overlap in Access and Equity reporting with other diversity reporting. The Review recommended that DIMIA identify opportunities for improving the coordination of data collection for Access and Equity annual reporting.

A working group of the IDC on Multicultural Affairs has been established to examine options for streamlining diversity-related reporting. This working group, chaired by DIMIA, represents a wide cross section of Commonwealth departments and agencies and is expected to report in 2003 on how best to streamline Access and Equity reporting.

If appropriate streamlining arrangements can be developed, it is expected that this would enable departments to include a short statement in their annual reports that they have met their obligations for Access and Equity reporting. The statement would indicate how the public can access further details on how the department has implemented the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* and where this information can be obtained (eg via each agency's website).

The Review further recommended that DIMIA remove the requirement for reporting on the Employer role under the Charter as this overlaps with similar reporting requirements under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

A minimum data set for reporting on the Employer role is being developed by DIMIA with the

Australian Public Service Commission to enable the successful streamlining of reporting for this role.

ENHANCING ACCESS AND EQUITY REPORTING

The working group of the IDC will also be examining current methodologies for the assessment of Commonwealth agencies' performance in relation to diversity-related reporting to determine the most appropriate model for streamlined reporting. If the Access and Equity Performance Management Framework is determined to be the most appropriate reporting model, it will be closely examined to enhance its accessibility and minimise redundancies in reporting. For instance, it is evident that many strategies that are included for performance indicator 1 of the Provider role are also relevant to performance indicator 3 of the Provider Role. This overlap is creating confusion for reporting agencies, sometimes resulting in duplication in reporting of the strategy.

The list of Commonwealth departments and agencies that report will also be closely monitored to ensure the comprehensiveness of Access and Equity reporting. Currently all Commonwealth departments report on Access and Equity. However, many departments are not reporting on behalf of their portfolio agencies, and those agencies are not reporting separately. The Review recommended that DIMIA clarify the scope of the organisations required to report against the Charter.

Critical appraisal of Access and Equity reporting began with the 2001 Report as part of ensuring continuous improvement in the quality and coverage of reporting. This year, not only are agencies assessed as meeting or not meeting the performance indicators, the top performing agencies for each indicator are listed to showcase those organisations that met the indicator well. The most frequent strategies used by reporting agencies are also highlighted, and all strategies that were accepted as meeting the performance indicator are listed in order of frequency of use.

The Review further recommended that DIMIA provide organisations with feedback on their individual performance in implementing the Charter, as well as identify opportunities for improving future reporting. DIMIA gave feedback to organisations on contributions for 2001 and discussed areas where improvements could be made. A half-day seminar was held to assist organisations prepare their input for this year's report and agencies were encouraged to provide drafts for preliminary feedback prior to submission of their contributions for 2002. Comprehensive feedback will likewise be given in relation to contributions for this Report.

ACCESS AND EQUITY MANUAL

A practical Access and Equity Manual will be developed by DIMIA in 2003 to facilitate capacity building within Government agencies in respect of Access and Equity implementation and reporting.

The Manual will include good practice examples of approaches to implementing the Charter.

The Manual will relate Productive Diversity to the principles underpinning the Charter. It will

promote Access and Equity both as mechanism for achieving social equity in respect of the delivery of government services to all Australians, and as a business driver for achieving effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services. It will also enable better workplace diversity management by improving the utility of the employees' language and cultural skills as an integral part of business planning in relation to client services. The primary intent behind the integration of Access and Equity and Productive Diversity is to promote the importance of viewing the Charter, not merely as an external reporting tool, but most importantly as an internal business management tool with a direct nexus to the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations and programs.