

Preface

Australia's wide range of cultures and languages means that all government departments and agencies must work hard to ensure services are delivered effectively to a vast and diverse client base.

This report card on how 84 of those departments and agencies are tailoring their services to meet the needs of all Australians – regardless of cultural or linguistic background – includes numerous examples of how that demand is being met in practice.

These examples range from appropriate consultation in policy and programme design to the use of translating and interpreting services in the communication of vital information.

For the first time, reporting against the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* includes an analysis of key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions identified by agencies to guide their work in the future.

Progress has been made if measured through the number of contributors to this report and the gradual improvement in the quality of responses. But we must always ask ourselves how we can do better.

It is therefore pleasing that this report identifies future strategic directions to increase agency ownership and provide for greater community input into the Access and Equity process.

If we are to continue to meet the evolving and complex needs of a diverse Australia, all of us must work together to find and fix poor areas of service delivery. One current good practical example is the work of key government departments in consulting with Muslim leaders.

This report is not just a checklist. I would urge you to read it closely to inspire you in your daily work so Australia continues to belong to all of us.



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Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs