

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

**Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority**

**DEEWR Question No. EW0322\_13**

**Senator Nash asked on 30 May 2012 , Hansard page 16**

**Question**

**ACARA - Breakdown Provincial**

Senator NASH: You are lumping them in provincial. Mr Randall: You are asking if I can breakdown provincial more? Senator NASH: Absolutely. Mr Randall: Okay. Senator NASH: And could you confirm that 'provincial' does indeed mean that big bucket of regional that you have in there? Mr Randall: We will look at the definition that is in our thesaurus, if you like, for 'provincial' and see if we can break it down. Senator NASH: That would be great. To assist you in understanding where I am coming from, you could look at the Australian Standard Geographical Classification map, which defines outer regional and inner regional. I suspect that provincial captures both of those types of areas, but I am interested in a much better breakdown of those results. Mr Randall: I am sure we can do that.

**Answer**

*ACARA has provided the following response.*

ACARA uses a variant of the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia plus (ARIA+) to report on the impact of geographical location. This is also the basis of the Remoteness Structure provided in the Australian Standard Geography Classification (ASGS) (to be superseded in 2012 by the Australian Statistical Geographical Standard).

Prior to ACARA's establishment, the Ministerial Council on Education, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA – now SCSEEC) determined that for the purposes of reporting of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, in line with existing state and territory geographic reporting, only four categories of the ARIA would be used. This decision resulted in a single category called 'Provincial' instead of 'inner and outer regional ARIA categories.

ACARA receives data and conducts subsequent analyses for national reporting based on the ministerially-endorsed geographic reporting structure, and a re-analysis of existing data to show performance by inner and outer regional areas as defined in the ASGC would involve an unreasonable diversion of the ACARA's resources to obtain.