

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0171) Program: Internal Product

Senator Di Natale asked:

What changes will you implement over the next financial year to ensure your programs and services are more accessible to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities?

Answer:

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship has a number of new and ongoing activities planned for the 2012-13 financial year to support accessibility for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

Improvements to the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) Onshore Orientation Program (OOP)

Accessibility to the HSS OOP will be improved through new resources including ASIC's *Moneysmart* resource kit and National Legal Aid's '*What's the law?*' resource kit – both of which have been promoted extensively to CALD communities.

Updating the Commonwealth Language Service Guidelines

The Department is the lead agency in developing the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Language Services better practice guidelines. In the 2012-13 financial year the Department will finalise agency-specific guidelines for inclusion in the broader Commonwealth Language Service Guidelines.

Improvements to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

A new AMEP business model has been designed to encourage greater commitment from clients, facilitate continuous settlement-focused learning, and encourage ongoing participation and retention. Key improvements include:

- enhanced vocational and educational counselling;
- the introduction of Individual Pathway Guides; and
- a settlement course reinforcing important settlement information to clients upon entry and exit from the AMEP.

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

TIS National will progress a number of change initiatives that will make the service more responsive to the needs of its clients, including:

- access to an enhanced automated telephone interpreting service that will be simpler to use; and
- the development of a new website that will have dedicated sections for non-English speaking users, agency clients and interpreters.

Access & Equity Report

The department is currently providing secretariat and policy support to the Access and Equity Inquiry panel which reported to Government prior to 30 June 2012 on the responsiveness of the Australian Government to Australia's CALD population. The department anticipates a central role in coordinating the Government's response to the Inquiry's findings.