

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross

Question No: 338

Topic: Access and Equity

Hansard Page: Greens

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 (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)) communities?

Answer:

FaHCSIA's role is to deliver the Government's agenda in relation to social inclusion through income support, housing, community services and a broad range of indigenous assistance and programs. Access to support and services is governed by social security legislation and is delivered to customers by the Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and other community organisation based on customers meeting the eligibility provisions. Given Australia's high migrant population, many of these are CALD customers.

FaHCSIA/DHS (Centrelink) Bilateral Management Arrangements (BMAs) require information to be exchanged in accordance with the Confidence Framework and Individual Service Arrangements and includes the multicultural program.

In early 2012-13, FaHCSIA will commission a project to outline how FaHCSIA can, over time, provide appropriate online content (via www.fahcsia.gov.au) to improve communication and the social inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) audiences.

The project will:

- consider specific culturally and linguistically diverse information needs;
- explore current standards undertaken by other government agencies;
- include consultation and advice from the Australian Multicultural Council; and
- detail a range of realistic options for consideration for FaHCSIA to take steps to improve social inclusion and communications with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) audiences. This will include language translation.

Through FaHCSIA's Strategic Framework 2011-2014, we develop strategies and services that encompass our access and equity obligations.

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We achieve access and equity obligations through:

- establishing a clear direction, focusing on our outcomes and planning to achieve them,
- understanding the context, and being knowledgeable about our business and the operating environment to enable sound policy advice to government,
- effective engagement; creating productive relationships, and
- improving policy skills and capabilities through the development of strategies for recruitment, retention and development of policy staff.