

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
 Supplementary Budget Estimates 19-23 October 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 2: Indigenous
Topic: Community Development Program (CDP/RJCP) - Interpreters

Senator: Senator Rachel Siewert
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Type of question: Written
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Number of pages: 2

Question:

Of those assessments of people who speak an Indigenous language at home, in how many cases was an Indigenous language interpreter used? Please provide overall number of assessments and number in which interpreter provided. Will changes to the costs of interpreters have any impact on job seekers and providers? If so, what are they, and how are these concerns being managed.

Answer:

The Department of Social Services (DSS), as the agency responsible for Employment Services Assessments (ESATs), has advised that data is not available on how many assessments were undertaken for participants who spoke an Indigenous language at home.

In remote regions, Employment Services Assessments (ESATs) are conducted by a team of Department of Human Services Assessors (Allied Health Professionals) with training in cultural and geographic issues specific to the region they work in. Many of the Assessors are also residents of the region (e.g. based in Darwin, Alice Springs or Broome) with extensive experience working in this field.

Interpreters have been used on nine occasions during the 503 ESATs conducted between 1 July 2015 and 31 October 2015.

ESAT Submitted with Interpreter Language

None	Aboriginal	Anindilyaka	Murinh-Patha	Tiwi	Total	% with interpreter
115	1			1	117	2%
131	1	2	2		136	4%
128	1				129	1%
120			1		121	1%
494	3	2	3	1	503	2%

There is a much higher rate of DHS Indigenous Service Officers and RJCP/CDP providers assisting job seekers with language during their ESAAt appointment. However these data are generally not included in the interpreter section of the ESAAt report.

The cost of interpreters is not borne by the job seeker or the provider.