

## Senate Standing Committee on Economics

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

19 – 20 October 2011

Question No: SBT 216 - 220

Topic: Using Aboriginal Interpreters to Collect Census Data

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

216. What was the estimated total cost for provision of interpreting services across all languages other than English within the 2011 Census?
217. What was the estimated total cost of provision on interpreting services in Aboriginal languages within the 2011 Census?
218. How do each of these figures for question 1 and 2 compare with funding arrangements within the 2005 Census?
219. For how many Aboriginal languages were there interpreting services provided in the 2011 Census?
220. How many Aboriginal people utilised interpreting services within the 2011 Census?

Answer:

216. The estimated total cost of interpreting services across all languages was \$731,850 in the 2011 Census. This cost included Translating and Interpreting Services National, multilingual agents at the Census Inquiry Service and interpreters employed to provide assistance during 'fill in the forms' sessions.
217. Minimal specific interpreting services were used, as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) employed and trained 1,195 collector interviewers from within remote and discrete Indigenous communities, and other regions, who were able to conduct an interview in the relevant Aboriginal languages where needed.
218. No comparable financial information is available from the previous Census held in 2006. For the 2011 Census, there was a greater focus on local level access to assistance such as through activities like 'fill in the form' sessions, and through new positions introduced in the 2011 Census to provide for interviews in identified urban (non-remote and discrete) areas.

219. The ABS is aware that people in more remote areas sought assistance from language centres and other Aboriginal service providers that may have also been received in language, without charge. The ABS employed and trained 1,195 collector interviewers from within remote and discrete Indigenous communities, and other regions, who were able to conduct an interview in the relevant Aboriginal languages where needed. No records are available to identify the number of Aboriginal languages that were interpreted.
220. The total number is not known.