QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 22 May 2007

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(139) Output 2.4:   Promoting the benefits of a united and diverse society

Senator Ludwig (L&CA 82) asked:

Provide a copy of the guidelines that were provided to agencies for the 2005 and 2006 Access and Equity report and, if possible, provide a copy of one of the responses.

Answer:

Agencies were provided with the following information for contributing for the 2005 Access and Equity Annual Report:

- Letter to agency heads requesting contributions (Attachment A).
- Email to agency contact officers providing more information in regard to the reporting process (Attachment B), including the reporting template at (Attachment C), and checklists at (Attachment D).

For reporting against the Accessible Government Services for All: 2006 Annual Report, agencies were provided with the following information:

- Letter to agency heads requesting contributions (Attachment E).
- Email to agency contact officers providing more information in regard to the reporting process (Attachment F) including the reporting template (Attachment G).

A copy of the response provided by the Settlement Branch of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for the Accessible Government Services for All 2006 Annual Report is attached at Attachment H.

Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Secretary

Dear

I am writing to request a contribution from your agency to the *2005 Access and Equity Annual Report.* The report will document the performance of Australian Government departments and agencies in implementing the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the *Charter*) and will be tabled in Parliament in early 2006.

As noted in earlier correspondence, we are currently evaluating multicultural policy and programs as articulated in the 2003 *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity* policy statement. Many agencies are contributing to this process via a Steering Committee, an Interdepartmental Committee and a survey distributed to agency contact officers. While the final outcome of this review will inform future directions for cultural diversity in the Australian Public Service (APS), a number of key areas for immediate improvement have already been identified.

- It is our intention to substantially increase the scope of agencies contributing to the Access and Equity report. A number of new, currently non-reporting portfolio agencies and other bodies have been directly requested to contribute in 2005. Officers in all agencies will soon be provided with a template for reporting.

- In addition to requesting examples of *Charter* implementation across the whole range of agency activities, we will also request that agencies highlight major challenges, areas for improvement and future directions. Our aim is to help agencies to consider cultural diversity at the forefront of policy and program development.

Officers from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) will be available to assist your agency to compile its contribution. As in previous years, detailed feedback on contributions to the 2004 Access and Equity report will be provided where applicable and a seminar demonstrating best practice implementation of cultural diversity in the APS will be held in early September.

The 2004 report is available on the DIMIA website at www.immi.gov.au. Additional printed copies can be obtained by contacting Mr Abbas Adam, Director, Productive Diversity Section, on telephone (02) 6264 4106 or email abbas.adam@immi.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

(Andrew Metcalfe)

Dear Access and Equity Contact Officer,

I am writing to follow up a letter sent to your organisation by the Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Mr Andrew Metcalfe, requesting a contribution to the 2005 Access and Equity Annual Report. As indicated in the Secretary's correspondence, your agency may be one of a number of new organisations that have been requested to contribute for the first time this year.

The Access and Equity report documents whole-of-government performance in providing services that recognise and respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian community through implementation of the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (the *Charter*). The report is tabled in Parliament around March/April each year, and is an important way for government agencies to demonstrate leadership in efficient and fair service delivery, and contribute to an inclusive and harmonious society. More information about the *Charter* and Access and Equity reporting can be accessed online at www.immi.gov.au.

In compiling contributions to the report, each agency is required to complete the attached reporting template according to its relevant roles in government - Policy Adviser, Purchaser, Regulator and Provider. Each role has accompanying performance indicators, and agencies are required to provide examples to indicate the extent to which they meet each indicator. In addition, agencies are required to comment on key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for their organisation in implementing the *Charter* in each relevant role. Please find attached:

1) Template overview
2) Template for Access and Equity Reporting
3) Checklist of strategies for each performance indicator

DIMIA officers will be on hand to assist you in compiling your agency's report. As in previous years, each agency that contributed to the 2004 report will be provided with specific feedback on their 2004 contribution. DIMIA officers will soon begin contacting all agency contact officers by telephone to discuss reporting. This is an important process which takes about half an hour to complete. Please let us know if you have a preferred time or contact officer for this purpose.

In addition, DIMIA will also be conducting a Seminar in Canberra on Thursday 8 September, from 10:00am to 12:30pm, to explain Access and Equity reporting in detail and to discuss best practice implementation of the *Charter* in government. Contact officers from all agencies, particularly those reporting for the first time in 2005, are strongly encouraged to attend. Venue details will be forwarded closer to the seminar date.

The deadline for submitting contributions to DIMIA is 14 October 2005.

Agencies are requested to email completed templates to one of the contact officers listed below. Where requested, and time permitting, DIMIA officers may be able to offer advice on draft reports submitted prior to the contribution deadline.

The performance management framework for the *Charter of the Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society*

The table below is the template for reporting against the performance indicators of the framework.

Name of the Department/ Agency: _____

POLICY ADVISER ROLE ☐ Please check this box if this role is applicable to your organisation.

Performance Indicator	Performance Measure	In reporting against the Performance Indicators, please describe in dot points relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved.
PI1: New or revised policy/programs that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.	To ensure that policies are developed with the involvement of people from those cultural and linguistic backgrounds that are directly affected, may mean that people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are: • involved directly through reference or advisory groups; • consulted through the various peak bodies; or • able to voice their views through the use of focus groups, surveys, or by commenting on discussion papers. The consultation process should: • take the time to properly identify the customers and stakeholder groups; • use targeted strategies, such as ethnic media and ethnic networks to request input; • allow time for those consulted to properly consider issues and respond to suggestions; • involve organisations/networks representing ethnic users and stakeholders; and • where possible, seek the views of individual customers. Refer to attached checklist for Policy Adviser PI1 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	

PI2: New or revised policy/program proposals assess the direct impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds prior to decision.	To ensure that major policies, being developed or reviewed by Government, fully consider the impact on the lives of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds before decisions are made, by: • documenting the impact of new and revised policy proposals on people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds as part of the policy proposal; • using the feedback gathered during consultations representing a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to develop and/or modify the new or revised policy proposals; • using case studies of people from particular cultural and linguistic backgrounds to highlight the impact of the new and/or revised policy proposal; and • incorporating in budget commitments, funding to facilitate access for people from particular cultural and linguistic backgrounds to new services and programs. For example, those funds may be used to access interpreter services for individual service users. Refer to attached checklist for Policy Adviser PI12 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	
PI3: New or revised policy/program initiatives have a communication strategy developed and sufficiently resourced to inform people from relevant cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	To ensure that people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds know about new policies, as well as changes in policies that may impact on their lives, by: • using the ethnic media and ethnic networks to distribute information; • using plain English to explain the new and/or revised policy/program initiative; • developing translated information; • involving community leaders to inform members of their communities; and • developing imagery rather than text based communication mediums. Refer to attached checklist for Policy Adviser PI3 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	

Key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for Policy Advisor role.	Identify key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for your organisation in implementing the *Charter* in the Policy Adviser role.	

REGULATOR ROLE ☐ Please check this box if this role is applicable to your organisation.

Performance Indicator	Performance Measure	In reporting against the Performance Indicators, please describe in dot points the relevant regulations, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved.
PI1: Resources are provided so that publicly available and accessible information on regulations is communicated appropriately to people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and especially to those identified as having a high level of non-compliance.	This indicator aims to ensure that people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds know about the regulations that may impact on their lives. This can be achieved by: • using the ethnic media and ethnic networks to distribute information; • using plain English to explain regulations; • developing translated information; and • involving community leaders to inform members of their communities. Whatever the approach taken, it is important, that the information is understandable, comprehensible, intelligible and provided in a timely manner. Refer to attached checklist for Regulator PI1 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	
Key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for Regulator role.	Identify key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for your organisation in implementing the *Charter* in the Regulator role.	

PURCHASER ROLE ☐ Please check this box if this role is applicable to your organisation.

Performance Indicator	Performance Measure	In reporting against the Performance Indicators, please describe in dot points key outsourced programs, grants programs or cultural acquisition programs, initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved.
PI1: Purchasing processes that impact in different ways on the lives of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are developed in consultation with people from those backgrounds.	To enable people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to be involved in the purchasing process in relation to outsourced services, grants programs and the purchase for display of cultural items, the consultation strategy may involve: • the use of a Reference Group of people from a range of identified cultural and/or linguistic backgrounds to help inform the development of the purchasing processes; • liaison with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia and/or the State and Territory based Multicultural/Ethnic Communities' Councils to ensure that the views of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds are considered; • the use of focus groups with representation of individuals from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to inform the development process. Where possible representatives from newly arrived communities, as well as those more established communities, should be represented; and • the distribution of a discussion paper through established networks to reach people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This performance indicator is targeted at major contracts linked to priorities identified in the business plan. Refer to attached checklist for Purchaser PI1 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	

PI2: Tendering specifications and contract requirements for the purchase of goods or services are consistent with the requirements of the *Charter*.	Strategies to ensure that the needs of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds are met through the purchasing process, might include: • tender specifications that identify the needs of people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, seek strategies from contracted Providers on how to address such needs in ways that are consistent with the Charter; • contracts specify data collection standards and reporting requirements which assist the Provider to monitor the needs of their culturally and linguistically diverse clientele; • contracts require Providers to establish complaints handling mechanisms that are responsive to complaints which are triggered by the cultural and linguistic background of the complainant; • grants programs are publicised using the ethnic media and ethnic networks; and • tender specifications for individual projects over $5 million ($6 million for construction and related facilities) that are in places where there are significant Indigenous populations with limited employment and training opportunities should comply with requirements regarding consideration of the opportunities for training and employment for local Indigenous communities, the capabilities of local Indigenous suppliers and consultation with the relevant community council or group in planning the project as promulgated by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. Refer to attached checklist for Purchaser PI2 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	

| **PI3: Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic backgrounds) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of service providers (contracted or other), and the purchasing agency.** | Strategies to ensure that complaints from people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds are heard and addressed, may include:

• the provision of information on complaints handling processes and procedures in accessible formats for people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
• providing the Translating and Interpreting Service contact number in complaints brochures and client service charters;
• the use of bilingual staff or interpreters to assist in the complaints lodgement and hearing process; and
• analysis of complaints data to show the percentage triggered by issues of language and culture.

Refer to attached checklist for Purchaser PI3 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator. | |
| **Key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for Purchaser role.** | Identify key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for your organisation in implementing the *Charter* in the Purchaser role. | |

Performance Indicator	Performance Measure	In reporting against the Performance Indicators, please describe in dot points relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved.
PI1: Providers have established mechanisms for planning for implementation, implementation, monitoring and review that incorporate the principles underpinning the *Charter*.	To ensure that providers plan, deliver and monitor their services in ways that consider and account for the needs of their culturally diverse clientele, may include: • having evidence of consideration of cultural and linguistic diversity in strategic and operational plans; • establishing consultative committees that include people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to advise on the provision of services; • based on service data collected, budgeting includes sufficient funds to meet the need for interpreters; • providing products that are tailored to respond to the needs of groups with specific cultural or linguistic backgrounds; • developing strategies that provide information in accessible formats that can be used by people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds; • undertaking research to understand any differing needs of people that arise because of their cultural and linguistic background; and • in evaluating outcomes, assessing any differing impacts on people that arise because of their cultural and linguistic background. Refer to attached checklist for Provider PI1 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	

| PI2: Provider data collection systems incorporate the requirements of the *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* (the *Standards*) for statistics on cultural and language diversity. | To ensure that Providers collect data on cultural and linguistic diversity consistent with the *Standards*, may include:

• data collection forms, that contain data on cultural and language diversity, are consistent with the *Standards*;
• plans are in place to modify the data collection systems to comply with the *Standards*;
• ABS census data (consistent with the *Standards*) is used by Providers servicing the entire community or by any Provider for communication and consultation campaigns;
• maintenance of key databases on service users that are able to be interrogated to identify trends against cultural and linguistic diversity; and
• service data on cultural and linguistic diversity being used to inform future service planning and new initiatives.

Refer to attached checklist for Provider PI2 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator. | |
| PI3: Providers have established service standards that utilise the cultural and linguistic diversity of their staff, or their staff's cross-cultural awareness to facilitate and enhance service delivery. | To ensure that services are able to adequately meet the needs of clients, including those that arise because of a person's cultural or linguistic background, may include:

• tailoring of workforce skills to better respond to needs of clients from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds (including recruiting and using bilingual staff; multicultural or indigenous liaison officers),
• the provision of cross-cultural awareness training; and
• compiling and utilising a list of bilingual staff receiving a language allowance or with language skills for client service.

Refer to attached checklist for Provider PI3 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator. | |

PI4: Complaints mechanisms enable people (regardless of cultural and linguistic background) to address issues and raise concerns about the performance of Providers.	To ensure that complaints from people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds are heard and addressed, useful strategies may include: • the provision of information on complaints handling processes and procedures in accessible formats for people from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds; • the use of interpreters to assist in the complaints lodgement and hearing process; and • analysis of complaints data to show the percentage triggered issues of language or culture. Refer to attached checklist for Provider PI4 for strategies to help meet this performance indicator.	
Key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for Provider role.	Identify key challenges, areas for improvement and future directions for your organisation in implementing the *Charter* in the Provider role.	

Checklist for POLICY ADVISER PI1

- consultation with ethnic/Indigenous peak bodies
- culturally and linguistically diverse/Indigenous community consultations/liaison/fora/roundtables
- multicultural/Indigenous advisory committees/boards/steering committees/ taskforces/assessment committees
- research into the impact of policy on culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- strategic and operational plans for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- ethnic/Indigenous focus groups/client consultations
- discussion/issues papers/information available in plain English and/or community languages
- evaluation in policy formulation of the implications of culture and language/Indigenous issues
- partnerships with culturally and linguistically diverse/Indigenous stakeholder organisations
- use of networks/partnerships between Australian, state and local governments in the provision of services to culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- inquiries/white papers/discussion papers on issues affecting culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- research to identify culturally and linguistically diverse stakeholders
- elected Indigenous regional representatives/council meetings
- media releases and calls for submissions in ethnic/Indigenous media
- information sessions/workshops for culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- invitations for submissions from ethnic organisations
- meetings with ethnic community leaders
- interviews with Indigenous communities
- website fora/surveys/market research including culture and language issues
- targeted budgets for seeking input from culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- provision of policy guidelines on diversity issues
- implementation mechanisms/frameworks for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Checklist for POLICY ADVISER PI2

- assessment of differential impact through consultation
- potential impact analysis and surveys
- community input and feedback into design and delivery of policy/programs
- targeted programs to address/redress differential impact
- recommendations of consultative committees fed into policy drafts
- targeted case studies
- statistical data systems relating to culture and language used to inform new policy/programs
- research conducted to assess differential impact for culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- revision of program guidelines as a result of differential impact
- evaluation and review of guidelines to assess differential impact
- outcomes focus groups/follow up consultation/community feedback
- strategic and operational plans address diversity issues
- targeted funding for assessment of culture and language issues
- use of interpreters to assist with impact of policy assessment
- use of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census and other demographic data for policy impact assessment
- frameworks and tools to measure impact of policy
- development of community partnerships to implement programs
- communication strategy developed as a result of differential impact
- policy proposal template/process includes recording of differential impact.

Checklist for POLICY ADVISER PI3

- communication through ethnic and Indigenous media
- provision of information and communications in plain English
- translated fact sheets/information sheets/brochures/handbooks/case studies/frequently asked questions and website information
- webpage devoted to information on cultural and linguistic diversity
- use of imagery/graphics/visual cues in communications
- consultation with peak bodies or umbrella organisations such as ethnic community councils/Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- targeted public awareness campaigns/community awareness programs
- community spokespersons/role models
- culturally adapted advertising
- tailored/targeted communication strategy for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- use of bilingual staff on ethnic media
- radio announcements in ethnic/Indigenous languages
- inclusion of interpreter information on brochures/fact sheets
- use of Indigenous/ethnic networks
- dissemination of case studies
- peak body members informed and used to communicate strategies
- provision of national 1800/free call enquiry lines with TIS facility
- Indigenous communication research
- information available in CD, animation, video format, radio plays and travelling exhibitions
- diversity newsletters/magazines
- use of bilingual staff in partnership with ethno-specific groups
- use of interpreters to communicate policy developments
- use of culturally and linguistically diverse email lists and databases
- making culturally appropriate presentations
- use of ABS Census data and Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) Settlement data for selection of languages for translated materials.

Checklist for REGULATOR PI1

- translated brochures, forms, fact sheets and posters and information in culturally appropriate formats, including use of visual cues
- ethnic media advertising, broadcasts and mailing lists
- information on websites available in several languages
- use of interpreters to explain regulations
- Translating and Interpreting Service listed in brochures
- information available in video, audio and CD formats
- use of culturally and linguistically diverse and/or Indigenous liaison officers
- field visits, participating in cultural festivals or community events to disseminate information
- targeted community awareness campaigns
- use of communication consultants to reach diverse groups
- consultation fora with representative peak bodies
- community leaders engaged in communication strategies
- use of ethnic/Indigenous media for dissemination of information in community languages
- use of culturally and linguistically diverse staff to explain regulations to clients
- newsletters provided to diverse peak bodies and communities
- seminars and information sessions for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- consultations and review of regulations, including workshops, with diverse clients
- website containing information on regulations using visual cues
- ethnic community group information mailing list
- visual cues in newsletters to explain regulations
- responses/complaints accepted in preferred language
- budgeted funds for communication with diverse clients
- plain English guides, regulations and website information.

Checklist for PURCHASER PI1

- grants programs and outsourced programs developed in consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse groups (advisory bodies, reference groups, focus groups, committees, consultations inclusive of representative peak bodies)
- consultation with relevant peak bodies such as the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- consultation and relevant community input through meetings, correspondence, visits and interviews using interpreters
- targeted funding to consult with culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- dedicated staff to liaise/consult with relevant clients on diversity/Indigenous issues
- consultative councils/advisory panels/committees that provide input on diversity/Indigenous issues in purchasing processes
- discussion papers sent to migrant groups
- partnerships with culturally and linguistically diverse groups and Indigenous organisations to manage projects
- use of Indigenous coordinators
- targeted briefings about grants application process
- face to face consultation
- consultations with remote communities
- targeted programs for new and emerging communities
- negotiations conducted by staff with awareness of cultural sensitivities
- targeted research into needs of culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- consultation documents in plain English.

Checklist for PURCHASER PI2

- contracts include special clauses relating to knowledge of and sensitivity to different cultures
- tender specifications and contracts include the requirement for consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse/Indigenous groups
- requirement that tenderers display an understanding of cultural and community sensitivities in regard to the project
- tender documents/contracts specify data collection requirements regarding culturally and linguistically diverse clientele
- tender information advertised in ethnic/Indigenous media
- contracts specify need to outline strategies for diverse clients
- contracts specify that interpreters are provided for interviews
- specialist contracts given to provide for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- contracts include a clause to employ Indigenous Australians as appropriate
- tender documents specify taking into account needs of Indigenous communities
- training and support provided by agency to contractors for specialist services for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- tenders include a special clause to encourage applications as contractors from culturally and linguistically diverse groups/providers
- grants assessors include expert culturally and linguistically diverse assessors
- contractors assisted to collect/access data on cultural and linguistic diversity
- tender selection panels include Indigenous/culturally and linguistically diverse officers/experts
- comparative analysis of expenditure on services to Indigenous/ culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

Checklist for PURCHASER PI3

- interpreters arranged/available for those making complaints
- analysis of complaints for cultural and linguistic trends
- Service Charters include Translating and Interpreting Service contact numbers and complaints processes outlined in Service Charter
- culturally aware and bilingual staff handle complaints
- review of Service Charter to include culture and language issues
- provision of an Indigenous complaints forum
- feedback facilitated at migrant-specific fora
- migrant community complaints as an agenda item at regular meetings with contractors
- random sample client satisfaction survey to identify culture and language issues
- use of field officers to investigate complaints and review grants through a formal process
- provision of an Indigenous Client Service Charter
- websites allow culturally and linguistically diverse clients to make complaints or raise issues of concern in their preferred language
- multicultural call centres
- Conduct and Service Charters available in community languages
- complaints process determined in consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse/Indigenous communities
- complaints process available in plain English.

Checklist for PROVIDER PI1

- services tailored for specific culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous client groups
- use of interpreters or bilingual staff in service provision
- translated information sheets, forms, leaflets and brochures available both in hard copy and/or online
- inclusion of diversity considerations in corporate, strategic or operational plans
- culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous community consultations/liaison/fora/workshops
- allocated funds to provide services for culturally and linguistically diverse, including Indigenous, clients
- migrant and Indigenous peak body and community representatives on consumer consultative forums, focus groups, advisory councils, standing committees, facilitator networks, user groups
- targeted education and communication strategies using pictures, imagery and symbols, audio, posters, stickers, videos and CDs
- research on culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- multicultural service officers
- assessment of differential impacts for culturally and linguistically diverse clients
- provision of seminars, briefings, presentations, outreach programs to diverse clients
- monitoring of access and equity issues through client satisfaction surveys
- community and rural/remote area visiting teams
- Indigenous customer service officers/call centres
- targeted information and education campaigns through ethnic and Indigenous media
- sponsorship of multicultural awards
- website usability studies among diverse clients
- provision of plain English information.

Checklist for PROVIDER PI2

- collection of data according to the Standards
- use of ABS Census data in line with the Standards to analyse client base
- use of ABS Census information in line with the Standards in planning processes and service provision
- use of reports provided by the ABS in line with the Standards for planning and analysis
- revision of data collection forms to conform with the Standards
- client research and surveys incorporating the Standards
- client information collected and recorded according to the Standards during client visits
- revision of databases to enable analysis of clients according to the Standards

Checklist for PROVIDER PI3

- cross-cultural/diversity/cultural awareness training, including for senior managers
- tailored client service using bilingual staff
- targeted recruitment of staff with specific/accredited language skills
- Indigenous or multicultural liaison officers
- database/recognition of staff language skills
- provision of a community language allowance
- cultural issues awareness-raising among staff
- celebration of Harmony Day and NAIDOC week
- multicultural customer councils/consultations
- monitoring of responsiveness to culturally and linguistically diverse clients through specific research projects
- multimedia multicultural training packages for staff
- cultural knowledge requirements included in selection criteria
- employment profile reflects community diversity
- study assistance for language training
- cultural exchanges to raise awareness of the value of diversity.

Checklist for PROVIDER PI4

- availability of interpreters for those making complaints
- analysis of complaints by language and cultural issues
- toll free numbers for complaints incorporating TIS facility
- provision for complaints to be lodged in other/preferred languages
- information on complaints processes in community languages on websites/brochures
- utilisation of bilingual staff in complaints handling
- multicultural call centres
- translated complaints section contained in English language brochures
- business surveys/Client Service Charters available in several languages
- provision of an Indigenous liaison officer to deal with complaints
- provision of an Indigenous Client Service Charter
- complaints able to be raised through consultative fora including representatives from peak migrant and Indigenous bodies
- simplified form with a checklist/tick box for the type of complaint
- use of interpreters in three way conference calls
- guaranteed response timeframes for complaints made in languages other than English
- plain English brochure containing complaints information.

Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

SECRETARY

February 2007

Dear

2006 Report on "Accessible Government Services for All" - **Request for agency's contribution**

I am writing to request a contribution from your agency to the *2006 "Accessible Government Services for All" Report* (previously known as the Access and Equity Annual Report).

The report is scheduled to be tabled in parliament in June 2007.

"Accessible Government Services for All" (attached) is the new Access and Equity framework which was approved by the former Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP, in early January 2007. It was developed following the evaluation of cultural diversity policy and more recent consultations with Commonwealth agencies, including at a seminar held on 15 November 2006. We are pleased with the strong support shown by agencies for the new framework, which simplifies the language used, retains key principles and streamlines agency reporting and sharing of good practices.

Another important feature is that the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will not assess agencies' performance in this area. Instead, agencies will include a self-assessment that presents a clear picture of their performance. Agencies have also agreed to provide concise input emphasising areas where improvements have been achieved, examples of good practice and key performance challenges.

The deadline for contributions from agencies is 30 March 2007. Further information can be obtained by contacting Mr Adrian Burn, Director, Policy and Coordination Section, on telephone (02) 6264 1682 or email adrian.burn@immi.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

(Andrew Metcalfe)

people our business

Dear Access and Equity Contact Officer

The Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Mr Andrew Metcalfe, will shortly be writing to your agency head, requesting a contribution to the 2006 report on "Accessible Government Services for All" (previously known as the Access and Equity Annual Report). The report documents whole-of-government performance in providing services that recognise and respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Australian community. The report is tabled in Parliament each year, and is an important way for government agencies to demonstrate leadership in efficient and fair service delivery, and contribute to an inclusive and harmonious society.

"Accessible Government Services for All" is the new Access and Equity framework which was approved, with minor amendments, by the former Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP, on 19 January 2007. It was developed following the evaluation of cultural diversity policy and more recent consultations with Commonwealth agencies, including at a seminar held on 15 November 2006. Agencies have shown strong support for the new framework, which simplifies the language used, retains key principles and streamlines agency reporting and sharing of good practices.

"Accessible Government Services for All" simplifies and replaces the Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society and the Performance Management Framework. The new reporting framework has four principles (instead of seven), and aligns performance indicators with the principles: responsiveness, communication, accountability and leadership, and suggests strategies to meet each indicator. As in previous years, the report will provide an opportunity for agencies to showcase examples of policy implementation and service provision in response to issues arising from cultural diversity. Agencies will be asked to report on what has been done to address the challenges mentioned in their contributions in the 2005 report.

The report is scheduled to be tabled in parliament in June 2007.

Another important feature of this year's report is that the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will not assess agencies' performance in this area. Instead, agencies will include a self-assessment that presents a clear picture of their performance. During the consultation process, agencies agreed to provide concise input emphasising areas where improvements have been achieved, examples of good practice and key performance challenges.

The deadline for contributions from agencies is 30 March 2007. Further information can be obtained by contacting Mr Adrian Burn, Director, Policy and Coordination Section, on telephone (02) 6264 1682 or email adrian.burn@immi.gov.au.

Please find attached:

1) Overview of "Accessible Government Services for All" Reporting including examples of strategies for each performance indicator
2) Template for "Accessible Government Services for All" Reporting

DIAC officers will be on hand to assist you in compiling your agency's report.

Agencies are requested to email completed templates to one of the contact officers listed below. Where requested, and time permitting, DIAC officers may be able to offer advice on draft reports submitted prior to the contribution deadline.

Template for agency input for 2006 report on "Accessible Government Services For All"

Name of the Department/ Agency: _____

Authorised by:

Checklist

❑   Have specific areas of good practice been identified?

❑   Have qualitative and quantitative data been included to demonstrate performance against indicators?

❑   Have key challenges identified in previous reports been addressed?

❑   Have the main concerns of stakeholders about agency performance been identified?

❑   What challenges have been identified for reporting against next year?

Department/Agency Overview

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved

Responsiveness – Extent to which programmes and services are accessible, fair and responsive to the individual needs of clients.	1. Developing and delivering fair programmes and services that are based on a sound knowledge of the needs, circumstances and cultural and other characteristics of clients and assess the direct impact on the lives of people.
	2. Drawing on cultural diversity to improve efficiency and effectiveness of agency programmes and to support innovation and success of Australian enterprises:
	  – auditing and raising the profile of staff cultural skills
	  – providing appropriate staff training
	  – taking steps to recruit culturally diverse employees, volunteers, grantees and contractors
	  – supporting Australia's competitive business advantage arising from the diverse backgrounds, skills and networks of its workforce and population.
	3. Identifying and responding quickly to emerging issues affecting particular population groups or arising from Australia's cultural diversity.	

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Communication – Open and effective channels of communication with all stakeholders.	1. Providing information in a timely manner, in appropriate media, publications, formats and languages. 2. Recruiting and training staff who have appropriate linguistic and cultural skills or using interpreting services, to ensure effective communication with clients, as necessary. 3. Consulting appropriately with diverse communities and client groups about the development of policy, legislation and regulations, the implementation of programmes, and the delivery of services.	

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Accountability – Effective and transparent reporting and review mechanisms.	1. Establishing mechanisms to encourage feedback from people of all cultural backgrounds and allow them to register complaints and raise concerns about the performance of policy developers, programme implementers and service providers (including outsourced services). 2. Responding to concerns raised by clients, to improve agencies' performance. 3. Reporting to appropriate audiences of community concerns about agency programmes and agency responses to those concerns.	

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Leadership – A whole of government approach to management of issues arising from Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse society.	1. Collaborating within and between agencies and with other partners to identify and address issues relating to cultural diversity, through publicising good practices, sharing information, coordinating programmes or collaborating on projects. 2. Working with state, territory or local governments, non-government and community organisations, and contractors, raising their awareness of their responsibilities and encouraging improvement in their responses to cultural diversity. 3. Contributing to the broader goals of cultural diversity policy, for example by: – strengthening the settlement prospects of migrants – enhancing the ability of all to achieve self-reliance – encouraging social, economic and educational participation for people from diverse backgrounds – including issues relating to social cohesion and participation in research and data development.	

Settlement Branch DIAC input for 2006 report on "Accessible Government Services for All"

Checklist

❑ Have specific areas of good practice been identified?

❑ Have qualitative and quantitative data been included to demonstrate performance against indicators?

❑ Have key challenges identified in previous reports been addressed?

❑ Have the main concerns of stakeholders about agency performance been identified?

❑ What challenges have been identified for reporting against next year?

Editor's note:
Green text = input from Settlement Planning and Information Section
Red text = input from Settlement Policy and Coordination Section
Blue text = input from AMEP Section
Plum text = input from Settlement Grant Section

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Responsiveness – Extent to which programmes and services are accessible, fair and responsive to the	1. Developing and delivering fair programmes and services that are based on a sound knowledge of the needs, circumstances and cultural and other characteristics of clients and	4. Under the National Framework for Settlement Planning, the Department undertakes a needs-based approach to planning including an annual process of information gathering and analysis to identify priority settlement needs for humanitarian entrants and migrants. Formal consultations and ongoing engagement with new arrivals forms an important component of the needs

individual needs of clients.	assess the direct impact on the lives of people.	identification process. The process facilitates more flexible, targeted policy and programme delivery that is responsive in addressing the needs of new arrivals.
	2. Drawing on cultural diversity to improve efficiency and effectiveness of agency programmes and to support innovation and success of Australian enterprises: − auditing and raising the profile of staff cultural skills − providing appropriate staff training − taking steps to recruit culturally diverse employees, volunteers, grantees and contractors − supporting Australia's competitive business advantage arising from the diverse backgrounds, skills and networks of its workforce and population. 3. Identifying and responding quickly to emerging issues affecting particular population groups or arising from Australia's cultural diversity.	• **IN APRIL 2006 THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CONVENED THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE (IDC) ON HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT TO DEVELOP A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SETTLEMENT OUTCOMES FOR RECENTLY ARRIVED HUMANITARIAN ENTRANTS.** • **THE IDC DEVELOPED A RANGE OF RECOMMENDATIONS WITH A FOCUS ON SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION THROUGH LEARNING ENGLISH, GETTING A JOB, COMMITTING TO AUSTRALIAN VALUES AND PARTICIPATING IN MAINSTREAM ACTIVITIES.** • **ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2006, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT GAVE IN-PRINCIPLE APPROVAL FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDC'S RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITY ON KEY RECOMMENDATIONS.** • **A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION CANVASSING KEY DIAC RECOMMENDATIONS WAS RELEASED ON 17 OCTOBER 2006. CONSULTATIONS WERE ALSO HELD WITH STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENTS. 133 SUBMISSIONS WERE RECEIVED AND INFORMED THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF INITIATIVES FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSIDERATION** • **THE IDC WAS A SIGNIFICANT EXAMPLE OF INTERAGENCY COOPERATION, IN CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO IDENTIFY SERVICE NEEDS FOR NEWLY ARRIVED HUMANITARIAN ENTRANTS AND DEVELOP MORE RESPONSIVE SERVICES IN RESPONSE TO THOSE NEEDS.** • **SETTLEMENT BRANCH IS ALSO DEVELOPING ON AN ONSHORE ORIENTATION DVD FOR NEWLY ARRIVED**

- **AMEP** – The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) delivers English language tuition via contracted service providers as a settlement service to eligible adult migrants and humanitarian entrants.

  The service provider contracts require all Service Providers and their personnel to be appropriately trained and to demonstrate cross-cultural sensitivity and awareness in their delivery of the AMEP.

  Service providers are required to assess and meet the individual needs of clients by providing flexible tuition options (for example classroom, distance learning, home tutors) in a variety of settings (for example formal classroom or informal locations such as home or a community centre). To enable clients to take up their entitlement, where required, they provide registered, culturally appropriate childcare in close proximity to the clients home or place of tuition.

  AMEP Home Tutor Scheme recruits volunteers (often ex-clients, from culturally diverse backgrounds) who are trained by AMEP service providers, initially on recruitment, and subsequently on an ongoing basis.

  The Research Centre regularly develops materials to support service providers that provide current, specialist information on teaching learners with varying needs and backgrounds.

  The National ELT Accreditation Scheme (NEAS) enures that service providers and their staff; and their tuition procedures and material; are and remain, of the highest quality and meet industry standards.

  A client satisfaction survey is conducted by independent means and indicates the high level of client satisfaction with AMEP services.

- The funding priorities for the Settlement Grants Programme (SGP) are informed by annual assessment of the settlement needs at the national,

		state/territory and regional level. This is undertaken through ongoing consultation with the community, settlement services sector and key government agencies and consideration of data from the department's Settlement Database.
		• The information is gathered through processes set out in the National Framework for Settlement Planning. This approach aims to ensure that services provided through the SGP are targeted towards those communities and locations in greatest need of settlement assistance.
		• Undertake a planning process each year.

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Communication – Open and effective channels of communication with all stakeholders.	1. Providing information in a timely manner, in appropriate media, publications, formats and languages. 2. Recruiting and training staff who have appropriate linguistic and cultural skills or using interpreting services, to ensure effective communication with clients, as necessary. 3. Consulting appropriately with diverse communities and client groups about the development of policy, legislation and regulations, the implementation of programmes, and the delivery of services.	a. The Department produces a range of settlement planning information products for external stakeholders, including state/territory and Commonwealth government agencies: i. Community Profiles of new caseloads under the Humanitarian Programme provide information about entrants' pre-arrival experiences, cultural backgrounds and specific settlement needs; ii. Annual Planning Reports provide information on arrival trends and demographic profiles of humanitarian entrants; iii. Comprehensive information on arrivals' settlement needs is also provided. These products assist service providers to target their programmes to meet the identified needs of new arrivals, and have been enthusiastically received; - "Beginning a Life in Australia" booklets are produced in English and 24 community languages and are updated annually to assist new migrants and humanitarian entrants with their settlement process; - "New Beginnings: Live in Australia" booklets are produced and updated annually to support new arrivals with their settlement journey; - Visual information packages are produced and provided to humanitarian entrants prior to their arrival to regional locations, for example: one package has been produced for Mt Gambier and one for Ballarat. • Information on expected humanitarian arrivals and their settlement location is provided to state government officials on a monthly basis to assist in their service planning process. • **COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS WAS A KEY FOCUS OF THE IDC ON HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT. A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION CANVASSING KEY DIAC RECOMMENDATIONS WAS RELEASED ON 17 OCTOBER 2006. CONSULTATIONS WERE ALSO HELD WITH STATE AND**

		TERRITORY GOVERNMENTS. 133 SUBMISSIONS WERE RECEIVED, WHICH WERE DRAWN UPON TO INFORM THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF INITIATIVES FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSIDERATION • The onshore orientation DVD for newly arrived humanitarian entrants from Africa has been developed in consultation with African community representatives, settlement service providers and other government agencies across Australia. • The tender process to recruit an appropriate production team focussed heavily on the need to have sensitivity and cultural awareness to the needs of newly arrived African humanitarian entrants. • The DVD will be tested on community representatives, service providers, and relevant government agencies before final production in 2007. • AMEP Service Providers utilise promotional materials translated into many languages (including new and emerging such as Karen and Dinka) and employ staff that are specialists in teaching English as a second language. AMEP Service Providers work with other organisations and government agencies to communicate the needs, and assist in the provision of services and support for their clients. Service providers are contractually required to be flexible, responsive and culturally sensitive in their dealings with all stakeholders. The AMEP client satisfaction survey informs the development of AMEP policy and future contracts. • Grant Managers are in constant liaison with the funded organisations. State and Territory workshops are conducted for the funded organisations. The grant rounds are advertised in local news papers and the DIAC website and an SGP Information Booklet is published and available to the public.

		• Yearly Settlement Planning Conference.
		• This is built into the SGP Funding Agreement and forms part of the assessment process.
		• SGP Funding Agreement which includes Client Service Charter refers to consulting with clients

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Accountability – Effective and transparent reporting and review mechanisms.	1. Establishing mechanisms to encourage feedback from people of all cultural backgrounds and allow them to register complaints and raise concerns about the performance of policy developers, programme implementers and service providers (including outsourced services). 2. Responding to concerns raised by clients, to improve agencies' performance. 3. Reporting to appropriate audiences of community concerns about agency programmes and agency responses to those concerns.	a. Monthly reporting from Settlement service officers in the state and territory includes direct feedback from clients. b. A Regional Settlement protocol has been established which includes a consultative mechanism at all levels of government and service providers and a review process to ensure participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the direct settlement of humanitarian entrants in regional Australia. • All AMEP Service Providers have feedback (complaints) mechanisms (covering processes for hearing and resolving client grievances) which clients are advised of. Clients are also able to contact DIAC about the provision of AMEP services. AMEP Service Providers report formally to DIAC on their performance against the contract KPIs, and attend Contract Management Meetings. STO settlement managers and AMEP NatO staff closely monitor Service Providers throughout the year to ensure services are delivered appropriately and effectively.

		- Settlement Grants Programme Help Desk. Funding Agreement and Client Service Charter. - Quarterly Reports and on accessibility and equality. - Communities to supply feedback on the organisations to the CLOs. - Proposed SGP Client Satisfaction Survey in 2007. - STOs workshop with Funded Organisations.

Performance indicator	Strategies	Please provide dot points on relevant programs, key initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
Leadership – A whole of government approach to management of issues arising from Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse society.	1. Collaborating within and between agencies and with other partners to identify and address issues relating to cultural diversity, through publicising good practices, sharing information, coordinating programmes or collaborating on projects. 2. Working with state, territory or local governments, non-government and community organisations, and contractors, raising their awareness of their responsibilities and encouraging improvement in their responses to cultural diversity. 3. Contributing to the broader goals of cultural diversity policy, for example by: – strengthening the settlement prospects of migrants – enhancing the ability of all to achieve self-reliance – encouraging social, economic and educational participation for people from diverse backgrounds – including issues relating to social cohesion and participation in research and data development.	• The Department is working to increase the settlement of humanitarian entrants in regional areas of Australia: regional areas can provide good settlement prospects for some humanitarian entrants, particularly those who come from a rural background or who have skills suited to finding employment in those areas. Receiving towns can also benefit from an increased population and greater degree of cultural diversity. Following initial identification of a potential settlement location, comprehensive consultations are held with key stakeholders, including all levels of government and the local community, to ensure that the location can provide the appropriate level of support for refugee entrants and a welcoming environment. Under this approach, direct settlement has begun in Shepparton, Victoria with a recent evaluation describing the initiative as a positive experience for both the Congolese entrants and the community at large. Direct humanitarian settlement is also planned for Ballarat, Mount Gambier and Murray Bridge. • Consultative mechanism is in place with various agencies including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Medicare Australia, Centrelink and DEWR to enable a whole of government approach to settlement planning. • Through the Settlement Database, migrant arrival statistics are gathered and provided to all levels of government, service providers and community organisations to assist with their settlement planning activities. • **THE IDC ON HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT WAS A SIGNIFICANT EXAMPLE OF INTERAGENCY COOPERATION, IN CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO IDENTIFY SERVICE NEEDS FOR NEWLY ARRIVED HUMANITARIAN ENTRANTS AND DEVELOP**

		MORE RESPONSIVE SERVICES IN RESPONSE TO THOSE NEEDS. THERE IS SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER AWARENESS OF CLIENT NEEDS AND ONGOING IMPETUS FOR WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT COOPERATION.
		
		• The DVD will be a settlement information product covering a range of important areas across departmental and jurisdictional boundaries.
		
		• The DVD is broken into the following chapters:
		  - An Introduction
		  - An overview of Government Services and Support, including contact details
		  - Advice on dealing with culture shock
		  - Advice on accommodation
		  - Information on Health Services and Emergencies
		  - Information and advice on Education and Learning
		  - Information and advice on employment
		  - Information and advice on Parenting
		  - Advice on budgeting
		  - Information on Australian Law
		  - Advice on becoming part of the community
		
		• AMEP Service Providers work with local service providers, and government agencies, including Job Network providers, DEST, DEWR, Human Services, FACSIA, and Centrelink to share information and ensure appropriate provision of service to their clients. With humanitarian entrants, service providers also liaise with IHSS service providers and build the special needs of such entrants into their plans for tuition delivery.
		DIAC has an ongoing approach to streamlining AMEP processes to cause least inconvenience to clients.
		AMEP national curriculum includes information on Australian society, citizenship, values, culture and customs and advice on accessing essential services.

		- STOs workshop on best practice. - The role of the Settlement Grants Progamme is to deliver services which assist clients under the SGP to become self-reliant and participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival. - The SGP funds organisations to implement projects that assist new arrivals to orient themselves to their new community promote social participation and integration and help new communities develop.