Australian Government

OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES FOR AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Assessing Interpreting and Translating Services

The information below has been developed to assist Australian Government agencies providing government- funded services to meet their clients' language service needs. It also provides Australian Government agencies with a model of how to estimate the cost of providing these language services and it may serve as a guide for government funding bodies to monitor the delivery of these services.

It is proposed that this information should be used in the preparation of relevant tender documentation and funding and service agreements so that the provision of appropriate language services is given due consideration. These Procedures suggest some basic steps only, and should be adapted to suit the circumstances of the individual services being provided and to meet the requirements of the relevant funding or contracting bodies.

A: Developing tender specifications and funding and service agreements

1. **What is the number of people with low English language proficiency in your catchment area?**

   (use demographic data such as ABS census data, DIAC settlement data)

   Figure: ☐

2. **List the predominant:**

   Counties of birth: ☐

   languages spoken: ☐

   other special needs: ☐

3. **How many clients with low English language proficiency currently access your service?**

   Number of individuals: ☐

   Number of client contacts per year: ☐

4. How often were interpreters engaged in the last financial year?

Figure: [　　]

5. List current and future agency activities where language services should be provided.

Examine your business plan and identify ongoing and future activities where language services will be required. Consider:

The type, frequency and level of language services required (that is, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accreditation level)

[　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　]
(maximum 1000 words)

The requirements for servicing special needs groups.

[　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　]
(maximum 1000 words)

List current resources available within your agency for servicing clients with a low level of English language proficiency (For example: bilingual staff or translated information)**.**

[　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　]
(maximum 1000 words

B: Projecting a budget allocation for the provision of language services

1. Current number of contacts with (occasions of service for) clients with low English language proficiency: [　　]

2. Estimate number of contacts with (occasions of service for) clients with low English language proficiency next year: [　　]

3. Estimated number of occasions of on-site interpreter services required next year: [　　]

4. Unit cost for on-site interpreting: [　　]

5. Estimate number of occasions of telephone interpreter services required next year: [　　]

6. Unit cost for telephone interpreting: [　　]

7. Estimate total number of words requiring translation: [　　]

8. Unit cost of translation ($ per 100 words)**:** [　　]

To validate the projected language services expenditure, compare this projection against the data collected on past language service usage and the number of people with low English language proficiency in your catchment area.

C. Monitoring the delivery of services

List the number of your clients by language group and their English language proficiency.

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

Language spoken: [____]

Very good: ☐ **Good:** ☐ **Poor:** ☐ **NIL:** ☐ **Not sure:** ☐ **Total:** [____]

You may also wish to monitor:

- language services provided under funding arrangements
- language services provided against the demographic profile of clients with limited English language proficiency
- percentage of staff who have received training on how to access language services and work with interpreters
- unmet demand (i.e. where interpreting agencies are unable to provide services requested, or your agency cannot provide these services)
- input from evaluation tools (e.g. client satisfaction surveys or focus groups with ethnic support agencies)
- contractors' (language services provider) performance management/monitoring.

Endnotes

i. ABS census collection records data for districts, local government areas, postcodes and regions and includes English language proficiency and country of birth information. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship settlement database provides information on newly arrived migrants and includes the postcode of intended residence, English language proficiency and country of birth. Local Migrant Resource Centres or the Department of Immigration and Citizenship may be able to assist in gathering this information (Email: settle.data-admin@immi.gov.au).

ii. Note that some translation services also offer production/publication services. Where general funds are available for publications, it would be expected that these funds would cover production/ publication costs. In some instances, it may be necessary to include production/publication costs in projecting a budget allocation for the provision of language services.

iii. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has developed Standards for statistics on cultural and language diversity (Catalogue Number 1289.0), which were endorsed by the Council of Ministers for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in April 1999. These standards are designed to replace the use of the phrase 'non-English speaking background' and its acronym NESB. The standards provide a comparative basis across Australia for government and non-government agencies when collecting data to determine whether programs are reaching Australians who face cultural or language barriers when accessing services.