

**HOME AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY WRITTEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Select Committee COVID-19

QoN Number: CV19-434

Subject: COVID-19 in-language

Asked by: Stirling Griff

Question:

The ABC also reported that a message tweeted (July 28 at 11.52am) by the Federal Government is supposed to tell Chinese speakers where to look for more details about the pandemic. But the text instead translates to: "Use your language supplied information." Can the Department advise:

- (a) What the process for translation of the tweet was?
- (b) Was an automated method used for the translation and if so, what automated method was used?
- (c) If an automated method was used was it checked by an accredited translator, if not, why not?
- (d) If any automated method was used what was the rationale for this decision?
- (e) If an automated method was used why were accredited translators not used as the preferred method of translation?
- (f) If accredited translators were used what method did the Department use to confirm the accreditation of the translators?
- (g) What was the method of verifying the translation prior to publication?
- (h) How many COVID SAFE tweets have been tweeted by the Government and in how many languages?
- (i) How has the Government verified the accuracy of the translated tweets, if not why not?

Answer:

Answer to Question parts (a) – (g), and (i)

The Department of Home Affairs operates COVID19inlanguage website (<https://covid19inlanguage.homeaffairs.gov.au>).

The Department initially used Google translate subscription services to translate menu and navigation tiles (but not for factsheets) on the COVID19inlanguage website to ensure there was an easy to use repository of translated information available to multicultural communities as quickly as possible.

Once the website was up and running, the Department engaged NAATI-certified translators to review the website, including the menu and navigation tiles, and made amendments as necessary.

The factsheets published on the website have always been translated by NAATI-certified translators (where certification is available).

To date, the Department has spent more than \$2m on translating COVID-19 materials, using NAATI-certified translators.

The Department understands the Australian Government Twitter account tweeted a version of the automated translation of the menu and navigation tile text originally used on the COVID19inlanguage website.

Answer to Question part (h)

There have been 1,292 tweets from the Australian Government Twitter account. The majority of the tweets are specific to COVID or being COVIDSafe. Two Twitter tiles with the words 'Information in your language' in languages other than English were posted.