

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TREASURY

Australian Taxation Office

(Supplementary Budget Estimates November 2004)

Outcome 2, Output 2.2.1

Topic: Employees from non-English speaking backgrounds

Supplementary question on notice: Supp 16

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) What efforts has the Department (Tax Office) made to identify employees from a non-English Speaking background and what languages they are fluent in?

Answer:

New employees are provided with an equity form to complete on their cultural and linguistic background. Twice a year the Tax Office seeks information from its existing employees via an online survey. Employees are asked to identify their first language, non-English speaking language and both their mother's and father's first language. This information is used for the Tax Office response to the annual Australian Public Service Equity Data (APSED) survey in which employees indicate their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As the provision of this information is not mandatory, the Tax Office is unable to provide comprehensive as to which languages employees consider themselves fluent. The Tax Office has recently established a network of Diversity Contacts in each Business and Service Line and will use those contacts to encourage higher participation rates in the future.

- b) What proportion of the Department's personnel has a non-English speaking background?

Answer:

2% of ATO employees have identified themselves as being from a non-english speaking background.