

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 2

**Output Group:** 2.5 – Assistance for post school students including those with special needs.

#### **DEST Question No. E688\_05**

Senator Aden Ridgeway provided in writing.

#### **Question:**

In how many languages is information on these arrangements provided to remote communities?

#### **Answer:**

##### *ABSTUDY information*

Centrelink regularly uses the National Indigenous Radio Service to broadcast information regarding ABSTUDY entitlements. Most information is aired in English as well as being translated into 8-12 Indigenous languages. As many as 12 stations are involved in airplay.

Centrelink seeks to ensure that there are staff in Indigenous Call Centres who are fluent in the dialect of their local community and are able to speak to ABSTUDY customers from remote areas in the main Indigenous languages. These Call Centre operators are specifically trained in ABSTUDY and have a comprehensive knowledge of entitlements and payment arrangements.

Community agents, located predominantly in rural and remote areas, also play a vital role as interpreters who are able to assist students and parents in remote communities understand their ABSTUDY entitlements. The Agents frequently do this in conjunction with the Indigenous Call Centres.

All ABSTUDY publications are in English.