

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Outcome: All
Output Group: All

DEST Question No. E341_05

Senator Ludwig, provided in writing.

Question:

1. What efforts has the Department made to identify employees from a non-English Speaking background and what languages they are fluent in?
2. What proportion of the Department's personnel have a non-English speaking background?
3. For each language other than English that the Department has identified employees with fluency, can the Department provide how employees were fluent?
4. For each language other than English, how many were identified as being fluent?
5. Of these employees, what efforts has the department made to identify the language proficiency of these employees?
6. For each language other than English, how many were identified as having proficiency?
7. Of these employees, how many has the Department identified as possessing accredited language skills to either translator or interpreter standard?
8. For each language other than English, how many were identified as having accreditation at the a) translator and b) interpreter level?
9. Of these employees, how many has the Department funded in whole or in part accreditation of language skills to either a) translator and b) interpreter level?

Answer:

Agency	Response
DEST & QUESTACON	<p>1. <u>DEST</u></p> <p>On commencement with DEST all employees are asked to complete the Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC's) "Promoting Equity in APS Employment Statistics for Evaluation Progress" form. This allows employees, where they choose, to identify themselves as being from a non-English speaking background. DEST Employees also have online access to their personal details and can update them as required. DEST sends out an annual reminder to staff to update these details.</p> <p>DEST does not measure the language fluency of employees who identify as being from a non-English speaking background.</p> <p><u>Questacon</u></p> <p>In Questacon, all employees fill out an equal employment opportunity form on commencement of employment. This form asks general questions about country of origin, languages spoken and disabilities. The provision of this information is voluntary.</p>

	<p>2. <u>DEST</u> As at 30 June 2004, approximately 5.7% of DEST staff declared themselves through the process outlined in response to question one as being from a non-English speaking background.</p> <p><u>Questacon</u> Approximately 15% of Questacon staff have identified as being from a non-English speaking background.</p> <p>3. <u>DEST</u> One DEST staff member has provided DEST with evidence of accreditation of fluency from an appropriate body. The employee is fluent in an Indigenous Australian language.</p> <p><u>Questacon</u> Questacon does not collect information regarding employee's fluency in languages other than English. Questacon is currently reviewing the collection of this information via a skills audit questionnaire.</p> <p>4. <u>DEST</u> One person in DEST was identified as being fluent in a language other than English (an Indigenous Australian language).</p> <p><u>Questacon</u> NA</p> <p>5. DEST/Questacon - NA 6. DEST/Questacon - NA 7. DEST/Questacon - NA 8. DEST/Questacon - NA 9. DEST/Questacon - NA</p>
AIATSIS	<p>1. AIATSIS has advised that the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducts a survey every two years to identify EEO information, including languages spoken; and • does not collect information regarding employee's fluency in languages other than English. <p>2. AIATSIS has advised that none of their staff has declared that they are from a non-English speaking background.</p> <p>3. NA 4. NA 5. NA 6. NA 7. NA 8. NA 9. NA</p>
AIMS	<p>1. Data on non-English speaking background employees is collected on a voluntary basis when new employees commence employment, for EEO purposes.</p> <p>2. 7.55% of staff have identified as having a non-English speaking background.</p> <p>No records are maintained on languages spoken or fluency.</p>

ANSTO	<p>1. ANSTO has advised that on commencement new employees are given the opportunity to complete an Equity and Diversity questionnaire. In respect of information on other languages this questionnaire does not identify the level of fluency. Information gathered covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First language spoken • Other language spoken • Mother's first language • Father's first language • If not born in Australia, arrival date in Australia <p>2. ANSTO has advised that 23.4% of ANSTO total staff have identified as being from a non-English speaking background.</p> <p>3. ANSTO has advised that the number of employees fluent in a language other than English cannot be identified from the data collected.</p> <p>4. ANSTO has advised that 17 employees declared that their first spoken language was a language other than English. It is expected that all of these employees are fluent in that language.</p> <p>ANSTO has advised that 75 staff identified that their first spoken language was English and another language but ANSTO does not know the level of fluency.</p> <p>5. ANSTO has advised that no data has been collected on the language proficiency of these employees.</p> <p>6. NA</p> <p>7. ANSTO has advised that no data has been collected on the accreditation of language skills.</p> <p>8. NA</p> <p>9. NA</p>
ANTA	<p>1. ANTA has advised that in the past data was collected from all staff on commencement. The data has, however, not been gathered over the last few years and ANTA is unable to formally identify the number of employees from a non-English speaking background or the languages in which they are fluent.</p> <p>2. NA</p> <p>3. NA</p> <p>4. NA</p> <p>5. NA</p> <p>6. NA</p> <p>7. NA</p> <p>8. NA</p> <p>9. NA</p>

ARC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ARC has advised that it requests that employees provide EEO information when commencing in the ARC (although this is not mandatory). The level of language fluency is not recorded or tested. 2. The ARC has advised that 30% of employees identified as being from a non-English speaking background. 3. NA 4. NA 5. NA 6. NA 7. NA 8. NA 9. NA
CSIRO	<p>CSIRO has provided the following response.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All new CSIRO employees are asked to complete a Diversity (EEO) Survey on commencement with CSIRO. The responses from the survey are recorded in CSIRO's Human Resource Information System. <p>New employees are asked to respond to the following questions in the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your country of birth? • Did you arrive in Australia before age five? • What is your first language? • Is English the first language of both your parents? • Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent? <p>Therefore, while this survey does identify employees from a non-English speaking background, it does not attempt to ascertain fluency or proficiency nor does it elicit any other languages the individual may be fluent/proficient in.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. As at December 2004, 13.42% of CSIRO employees have identified themselves as having a non English speaking background, i.e. 876 staff. 3. While CSIRO does occasionally call on the assistance of employees known to speak or read languages other than English, the Organisation does not keep a comprehensive register of employees with fluency in these various languages. 4. 876 CSIRO employees have identified, through the EEO survey, as having languages other than English as their first language. This does not necessarily reflect fluency. 5. CSIRO does not keep a comprehensive register of employees with proficiency in languages other than English. 6. CSIRO does not have a process for formally identifying proficiency of staff who speak another language. 7. CSIRO is aware of a small number of its employees with accreditation as translators and interpreters through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), however CSIRO does not maintain a formal register of such employees itself. 8. CSIRO's Corporate International area is not aware of any.

