

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 29 May 2003

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(75) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 440) asked:

The PBS figure for grants for migrant community services, which is on page 96, includes two separate programs – the Migrant Resource Centres and the Community Settlement Services Scheme – but no breakdown is provided of these figures. I notice that Minister Hardgrave's budget fact sheet says that the allocation includes \$18.2 million for CSSS, \$8.7 million for MRCs and \$200,000 for training. Is there any estimate for DIMIA running costs?

Answer:

Departmental operating expenses for 2003-04 in relation to the Migrant Resource Centre/Migrant Service Agency and Community Settlement Services Scheme programs are estimated at \$5.8 million.

Of this amount, \$5.3 million represents direct and indirect costs for all DIMIA employees who are involved in the management of the Migrant Resource Centre/Migrant Service Agency and Community Settlement Services Scheme programs. It is estimated an additional \$0.5 million will be spent on systems maintenance and project costs.

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(76) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 441) asked:

In relation to the training of community organisations, provide the details of each of the modules and the number of organisations each quarter which have attended training to date.

Answer:

The National Training Strategy has three modules. Each of these modules contains a learner's manual (for classroom learning), a self-paced learner's manual (for those in rural and remote areas who cannot come to a central location for training), and a trainer's manual (for the use of Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) staff or consultants delivering the training). A description of the three modules is provided below.

- Module 1 (released October 2002) is entitled *Understanding the Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS)*, and is designed for CSSS workers and Management Committee members. It provides an overview of the CSSS and the Service Agreement between DIMIA and service providers, and explains the relationship between CSSS grants and the broader settlement environment.
- Module 2 (released October 2002) is *Managing the Community Settlement Services Scheme*, and is designed for CSSS workers and Management Committee members. It is a 'hands-on' training package that builds on what participants learn in Module 1. It is designed to help funded organisations understand DIMIA's accountability requirements for CSSS grants, and to explain the various reporting requirements of the Service Agreement.
- Module 3 (released November 2003) is entitled *Effective Management Skills for Community Based Committees*, and is designed for Management Committee members of CSSS funded organisations and core-funded Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and Migrant Service Agencies (MSAs). It aims to assist community members to develop their management skills, with a focus on understanding their legal and financial responsibilities. Specific topics include conflict of interest, public liability and professional indemnity insurance, and obligations under the Privacy Act.

A total of \$150,000 (as rounded to \$0.2 million in Mr Hardgrave's budget fact sheet and other publications) was available for training community organisations in 2002-

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(77) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 441) asked for the figures for the running costs of the MRC and CSSS programs in 2003-04.

Answer:

The response to this question is the same as the response provided to question no. 75.

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(78) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 445) asked:

In relation to MRCs, provide a schedule showing a level of funding provided to all centres in 2002-03 and the corresponding figure for 2003-04.

Answer:

The funding comparison is outlined in the table below. All figures are GST exclusive. 2002-03 funding included a one-off amount of \$258,446 that is not available in 2003-04. 2003-04 funding represents funding awarded as at May 2003. It does not include funding that has been quarantined pending decisions on MRCs under review or for the provision of alternative services following the closure of the Inner Western Region MRC (VIC).

STATE, MRC/MSA	2002-03 FUNDING	2003-04 FUNDING
NSW		
Auburn	307,415	307,477
Baulkham Hills Holroyd Parramatta	304,767	296,678
Blacktown	345,481	313,664
Botany**	278,196	138,837
Canterbury Bankstown	294,831	291,781
Cabramatta Community Centre (Fairfield MRC)	277,814	274,592
Illawarra	306,635	293,293
Liverpool**	313,371	152,855
Macarthur	297,078	296,232
Migrant Network Services	275,914	281,432
Newcastle and Hunter Region	317,114	313,017
St George	325,895	311,823
NSW sub total	3,644,511	3,271,681
VICTORIA		
Geelong Ethnic Communities Council (Geelong MRC)	275,048	274,463
Gippsland	147,431	150,380
Migrant Information Centre	292,411	281,973
North East	290,173	289,890
North West Region	287,640	287,306
South Central Region	393,315	395,095
South Eastern Region	283,187	276,606
Westgate Region	125,125	127,520
Inner Western Region**	427,803	See footnote**
VICTORIA sub total	2,522,133	2,083,233

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(79) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 446) asked:

In relation to the AMEP Contract for 2003-04, what are the DIMIA running costs?

Answer:

DIMIA estimated operating expenses for 2003-04 in relation to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) for central office are \$1.343 million and for the state offices are \$0.055 million. This estimate represents departmental salaries, associated superannuation and administration costs.

In addition, it is estimated that \$2.4 million will be spent on IT systems maintenance (ARMS) and project costs.

The administration of the AMEP is broader than tuition contract administration as it includes:

- management of the AMEP Research Centre contract;
- overseeing the Special Projects Research Program;
- administration of the promotion, and the production of promotional material;
- contract management of the AMEP IT resource (ARMS) and its helpdesk;
- contract management of the National Management and Information Unit;
- focusing on the AMEP's role within the Government's settlement strategies; and
- the management of Interpreting Services (TIS) for AMEP eligible clients.

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(80) Output 2.2: Translating and Interpreting Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 448) asked:

In relation to TIS, did the user charges increase during 2002-03?

Answer:

User charges increased for Commonwealth Government Agencies on 1 July 2002 and for State, Territory and Local Government Agencies on 1 October 2002.

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(81) Output 2.2: Translating and Interpreting Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 448) asked:

In relation to TIS, is there some sort of percentage schedule over time to full cost recovery?

Answer:

TIS user charges were first introduced in 1991. The charges were not increased again until 1 September 2000. Since then, charges have been increased periodically to achieve full cost recovery for most agencies. Schedules of increases in charges were implemented for commercial agencies, Commonwealth Government agencies, DIMIA internal clients and State/Territory/Local Government agencies.

By July 2003, TIS user charges should achieve full cost recovery levels.

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(82) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Sherry (L&C 450) asked for some historical figures on the usage of the free TIS service.

Answer:

The usage of the free TIS service for the five years from 1998-99 to 2001-02 was:

YEAR	TELEPHONE INTERPRETING CALLS	ON-SITE INTERPRETING VISITS	DOCUMENT TRANSLATIONS
1998-99	77 421	28 492	8 286
1999-00	53 150	23 976	6 679
2000-01	71 000	24 000	5 980
2001-02	67 522	26 763	5 223

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(83) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 451) asked:

When did the redrafting process for the official handbook for citizenship ceremonies commence?

Answer:

Drafting of the new document, *Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code*, commenced in October 2002.

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IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(84) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 451) asked:

In relation to the official handbook for citizenship ceremonies, what is on the web site?

Answer:

On the DIMIA citizenship website, there is a link to an email address where local government councils and interested parties can request a copy of the Handbook to be mailed to them.

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(85) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 453) asked for a list of the groups and bodies which were consulted in relation to the redrafting of the official handbook for citizenship ceremonies.

Answer:

The following agencies were consulted:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
- Australian Electoral Commission
- Australian Local Government Association, which in turn sought comments from its State/Territory Associations and a range of Local Government Councils
- DIMIA State/Territory Offices.

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(86) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 453) asked:

In relation to the redrafting of the handbook for citizenship ceremonies, what deadline did you give the ALGA for its comments?

Answer:

The draft was provided to ALGA on 23 April 2003. ALGA undertook to provide comments by about the end of May 2003. ALGA's comments were received in the Department on 5 June 2003.

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(87) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 454) asked:

1. How many DIMIA officers were present at the citizenship ceremony held at Burwood City Council chambers on Australia Day this year?
2. Did the Burwood City Council register any protest to Minister Hardgrave following this event?
3. Has the Department taken any steps to ensure that perhaps this type of thing doesn't happen again under similar circumstances?

Answer:

1. Three departmental officers were present at the citizenship ceremony held at Burwood Council chambers on Australia Day 2003.
2. The General Manager of Burwood Council wrote to the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, on 18 February 2003 and asserted that Councillor Tannous's information was distributed during the conduct of the citizenship ceremony. The Council sought advice as to whether the alleged distribution of election material at the ceremony was in contravention of the relevant guidelines and of any actions the Department may intend taking as a result of such action. In his response, Minister Hardgrave affirmed that citizenship ceremonies should not be used as forums for the distribution of political material.
3. The current *Australian Citizenship Ceremonies – A Handbook for Local Government* indicates that political material should not be distributed at citizenship ceremonies. The draft *Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code*, expected to be available later this year, emphasises that citizenship ceremonies should not be used as forums for political or partisan expression or for the distribution of political material.

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(88) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 454) asked:

Do you know whether or not any of Councillor Tannous's election material was circulated at the Burwood City Council citizenship ceremony?

Answer:

I am advised Councillor Tannous in fact handed Chinese New Year Greeting Cards to those with whom he spoke to well after the Citizenship Ceremony had concluded.

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(89) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Kirk (L&C 455) asked

Following the citizenship ceremony, did the Burwood City Council take any steps to censure Councillor Tannous for his actions? Did the Burwood City Council register any protest at all with Minister Hardgrave, following this event? Has the Department taken any steps to ensure that the citizenship ceremony, held in this way, is not clouded by the events which occurred on this day?

Answer:

The General Manager of Burwood Council, wrote to the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, on 18 February 2003 and advised the Council had, at its meeting of 28 January 2003, resolved, among other things, that Councillor Tannous be censured for allowing the distribution of alleged election material at the citizenship ceremony held on Australia Day 2003.

In regard to the remaining parts of this question, the answer to question no. 87 responds to these issues.

