

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(BE12/0169) Program: Internal Product**

Senator Di Natale asked:

How does the Department ensure that the Government's Access and Equity Strategy is implemented in its entirety and in relation to all Departmental activities? How does the Department acknowledge the multicultural character of the Australian society, in terms of the services and programs you provide?

*Answer:*

Departmental business plans include details of the strategies employed in support of the Government's Access and Equity Strategy.

The department also acknowledges the multicultural character of the Australian society through a variety of services and programs. In particular, the department provides a range of services and programs for migrants and refugees. These services and programs include:

- reception and induction on arrival for refugee and humanitarian entrants;
- assistance with locating accommodation for refugee and humanitarian entrants;
- information about, and referral to, settlement and community programs for refugee and humanitarian entrants;
- onshore orientation for refugee and humanitarian entrants;
- complex case support for humanitarian entrants with exceptional needs;
- settlement grants to assist clients to become self-reliant and to assist in participating equitably in Australian society;
- Adult Migrant English Programs which provide free English language tuition to eligible clients;
- a Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) which help migrants with limited English;
- fee-free TIS support for certain groups, such as general practitioners and pharmacies to access interpreting services to assist them with non-English speaking clients; and

- a Diversity and Social Cohesion Program which provides funding to eligible organisations to address cultural, racial and religious intolerance by promoting respect, fairness and a sense of belonging for all Australians.

The department also provides advice to Government on multicultural policy and community relations, administers a grant to the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia, and provides support to the Australian Multicultural Council.