

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### (119) Program 6.1 Multicultural and Citizenship Services

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In relation to those persons who have citizenship conferred on them without the need to have English language proficiency, what efforts or additional services are available to such persons regarding English language learning.

*Answer:*

Most people who apply for citizenship need to pass a citizenship test to demonstrate that they have a basic knowledge of the English language; an adequate knowledge of Australia and of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship; and an understanding of the nature of their application.

The following persons are **not** required to sit a test under the legislation

- those who lodged their citizenship application before 1 October 2007
- those aged under 18
- those aged 60 and over
- those who suffer from a substantial impairment or loss of hearing, speech or sight
- those who can provide specialist medical evidence of a permanent or enduring physical or mental incapacity which means they are not capable of:
  - understanding the nature of their application, or
  - demonstrating a basic knowledge of the English language, or
  - demonstrating an adequate knowledge of Australia and of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship
- those who were born to a former Australian citizen
- those who were born in Papua before 16 September 1975 to an Australian citizen born in Australia as currently defined
- persons who are stateless and were born in Australia.

The Australian Government does not target English language tuition specifically towards those citizenship applicants who are not required to demonstrate English language proficiency.

The Australian Government provides a range of English language tuition programs for eligible migrants, including the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP), the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program and the English as a second language – New Arrivals (ESL-NA) Program.