



Australian Government

Multicultural Access and Equity in Australian Government Services Report

2013–2015



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Australian Government

Department of Social Services

**Finn Pratt AO PSM
Secretary**

Senator the Hon Zed Seselja
Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the *Multicultural Access and Equity in Australian Government Services Report 2013–15*.

The Department of Social Services has prepared this report in accordance with the Australian Government's response to Recommendation 17 of the Access and Equity Inquiry, March 2013.

I recommend that this report be tabled in Parliament and that it be made available to members of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Finn Pratt'.

Finn Pratt
20 April 2017

Foreword

Australia is one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world.

We can be proud of our history of welcoming migrants from across the world and supporting their transition into Australian society. The skills, knowledge and experiences that they bring continue to enrich our way of life and enhance our productivity to the benefit of all Australians.

Today, some 47 per cent of Australians were born overseas or have at least one overseas-born parent. We identify with around 300 ancestries and languages, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

To make the most of our diversity, all Australians must have the opportunity to participate in our economy and be empowered to enjoy life to the fullest.

The Multicultural Access and Equity Policy is critical to achieving these goals.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that its programs and services are accessible to all eligible Australians and deliver equitable outcomes for them, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Each Australian Government department and agency is responsible for identifying, understanding and responding to the needs of their diverse clients.

I am pleased to note the many innovative strategies mentioned in this report that departments and agencies are using to meet the needs of the multicultural society they serve. Together, these examples provide a valuable resource for government, business and community sectors.

While this report demonstrates progress, it also indicates that there is still work to be done to provide equitable opportunities for Australians to participate in our society and help shape its future. I look forward to seeing further improvements that help to ensure that all Australians can feel part of our society and get a fair go.



Senator the Hon Zed Seselja
Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs

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Executive summary

This report summarises the performance of Australian Government departments and agencies in implementing the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy.

The policy aims to ensure that Australian Government programs and services meet the needs of all Australians, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Multicultural access and equity has been a guiding principle of Australia's successful approach to multicultural affairs for decades.

An ongoing commitment to implementing this principle helps us maximise the benefits of our multicultural society by supporting Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to participate fully in the social, economic and cultural life of the nation.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has prepared this report in its capacity as lead agency for coordination of the policy, based on input provided by Australian Government departments and agencies.

Responses for the reporting period show strong performance across most of the policy's minimum obligations. Overall, departments and agencies demonstrated that they are responding well to the challenge of designing programs and services that meet the needs of their diverse clients.

The practical examples in the report indicate that departments and agencies are using a range of innovative strategies to overcome the barriers that can prevent clients with CALD backgrounds from participating in all aspects of Australian life.

Despite this progress, the report includes community feedback highlighting the need to keep working towards better access to and equity in government programs and services.

In particular, we need to do more to expand cultural competency training, promote the collection and dissemination of cultural and linguistic data, and help agencies to develop key performance indicators (KPIs) specific to the way they engage with CALD clients and the outcomes of their services to those clients.

To address these issues and deliver a more streamlined and effective system, the Australian Government has introduced revised arrangements for implementing the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy. These include more flexible planning mechanisms and the new Multicultural Access and Equity Interagency Support Group.

Terminology

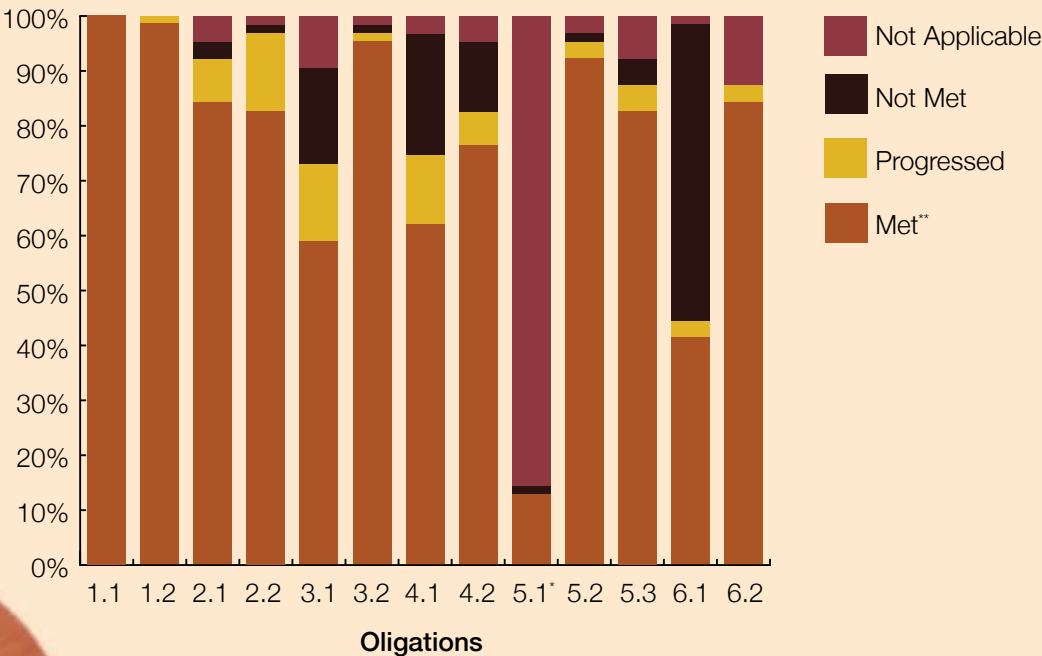
While we acknowledge that there is no single definition of the term 'culturally and linguistically diverse' (CALD), in this report, CALD is used to describe individuals and communities of Australia's non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural groups who are not from an English-speaking, Anglo-Celtic background.



Table 1: Multicultural access and equity minimum obligations

Core dimension	Minimum obligation	Description	Percent of Government Departments and Agencies meeting MAE obligations
Leadership	1.1 Executive accountability	Assign a Senior Executive Officer to be responsible for implementation of multicultural access and equity obligations in the agency	100%
	1.2 Agency commitment	Leadership to ensure that staff understand and are committed to multicultural access and equity implementation	98.41%
Engagement	2.1 Stakeholder engagement	Have a stakeholder engagement strategy to understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interaction with their agency	84.13%
	2.2 Language and communication	Have a language and communication plan for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including on the use of languages other than English and incorporating the use of interpreters and translators	85.54%
Performance	3.1 Performance indicators and reporting	Develop a set of KPIs relating to engagement with, or outcomes of services to, culturally and linguistically diverse clients	58.73%
	3.2 Feedback	Have arrangements to ensure affected culturally and linguistically diverse communities are able to provide feedback on agency multicultural access and equity performance	95.24%
Capability	4.1 Cultural competency	Have training and development measures to equip staff with cultural competency skills	61.9%
	4.2 Research and data	Each agency is required to collect ethnicity data on the culturally and linguistically diverse groups with which it delivers services directly or indirectly	76.19%
Responsiveness	5.1 Standards	Any whole-of-government standards and guidelines developed by the agency must address multicultural access and equity considerations	12.7%
	5.2 Policy, program and service delivery	Provision to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are effective for culturally and linguistically diverse communities	92.06%
	5.3 Outsourced services	Where relevant, provision for incorporation of multicultural access and equity requirements into contracts, grant agreements and related guidance material of which the agency has carriage	82.54%
Openness	6.1 Publishing	Agency to publish its Agency Multicultural Plan on its website and performance reports against agency KPIs for culturally and linguistically diverse clients in agency annual reports	41.27%
	6.2 Data	Agency to make culturally and linguistically diverse data available to other agencies and the public	84.13%

Figure 1: Self-rated performance of Australian Government departments and agencies meeting multicultural access and equity minimum obligations



* The overwhelming majority of departments and agencies (86 per cent) reported that this obligation did not apply to them as they were not responsible for any whole-of-government standards.

** Australian Government departments and agencies rated their own performances against the 13 minimum obligations in the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy and the responses were classified into; met; progressed; not met; and not applicable. Ratings were combined to assess performance on a whole-of-government basis.

Introduction

Multicultural access and equity reflects the principle that government programs and services should be accessible to all eligible Australians and deliver fair outcomes for them regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Since they began in the late 1970s, multicultural access and equity policies in Australia have been about putting this principle into practice.

These policies continue to be relevant — increasingly so — given the demographic facts of Australian society. More than a quarter (26 per cent) of Australia's population were born overseas, while almost half (47 per cent) were born overseas or have at least one overseas-born parent.

An ongoing commitment to multicultural access and equity benefits not only the direct target groups but all Australians. It helps us to harness the economic and social benefits of our diversity by supporting Australians of CALD backgrounds to participate in all aspects of our society.

Background

In 2013 the Australian Government launched the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy document *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy — Respecting Diversity. Improving Responsiveness*, which was a new version of the 2006 Access and Equity Framework.

The policy required all departments and agencies under the then *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, excluding the parliamentary departments, to prepare a two-year Agency Multicultural Plan (AMP) using a standard template. By completing the AMP template, departments and agencies identified how they intended to address 13 minimum obligations across six core dimensions: leadership, engagement, performance, capability, responsiveness and openness. Portfolio agencies had the option of being covered by the AMP of their lead department or developing a separate plan.

Agency Multicultural Plans 2013–15

Before the start of the AMP cycle on 1 July 2013, the then Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) held a series of workshops for departments and agencies to help them develop their AMPs. DIAC also gave departments and agencies tailored feedback on their draft AMPs.

The Minister for Multicultural Affairs approved a total of 68 AMPs, covering 19 departments and 75 agencies. This followed review and endorsement by the Australian Multicultural Council.

The Minister for Multicultural Affairs gave 10 agencies exemptions from the requirement to produce an AMP, due to their highly specialised or technical role.

In September 2013, the government moved responsibility for coordinating the policy and its implementation from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to the Department of Social Services (DSS), following machinery-of-government changes.

These machinery-of-government changes, and others announced during the AMP cycle, affected the number and coverage of AMPs, as agencies were abolished and functions transferred between portfolios. Some departments and agencies chose to update their AMPs to reflect the administrative rearrangements.

In May 2015, DSS extended the AMP cycle by six months to 31 December 2015 while it revised the implementation arrangements for the policy.

Multicultural Access and Equity in Government Services Report 2013–15

This report summarises the progress Australian Government departments and agencies made in implementing the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy from 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2015.

Its release continues the Australian Government's commitment to report regularly to Parliament on multicultural access and equity performance, which began in 1993 when it tabled the first access and equity report.

DSS coordinated the end-of-cycle reporting from Australian Government departments and agencies and consolidated the information received to form this report.

The scope of the policy is limited to Australian Government departments and agencies; there is no input from state/territory and local governments.

DSS received end-of-cycle reports for 63 AMPs, covering 18 departments and 58 agencies. Appendix B lists these departments and agencies, and Appendix C lists those that are exempt from developing an AMP.

Structure of this report

This report has four parts.

Part 1 identifies the policy's core dimensions and minimum obligations.

Part 2 examines end-of-cycle reporting from Australian Government departments and agencies against each minimum obligation. It includes examples of good practice for each core dimension.

Part 3 summarises community feedback on multicultural access and equity from the annual consultations facilitated by the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.

Part 4 discusses the future direction of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy through the introduction of revised implementation arrangements.

1. Multicultural Access and Equity Policy

The *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy* has the following six core dimensions and 13 minimum obligations.

LEADERSHIP

1.1 Executive accountability — assign a Senior Executive Officer to be responsible for implementation of multicultural access and equity obligations in the agency

1.2 Agency commitment — leadership to ensure that staff understand and are committed to multicultural access and equity implementation

ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Stakeholder engagement — have a stakeholder engagement strategy to understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interaction with their agency

2.2 Language and communication — have a language and communication plan for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including on the use of languages other than English and incorporating the use of interpreters and translators

PERFORMANCE

3.1 Performance indicators and reporting — develop a set of KPIs relating to engagement with, or outcomes of services to, culturally and linguistically diverse clients

3.2 Feedback — have arrangements to ensure affected culturally and linguistically diverse communities are able to provide feedback on agency multicultural access and equity performance

CAPABILITY

4.1 Cultural competency — have training and development measures to equip staff with cultural competency skills

4.2 Research and data — each agency is required to collect ethnicity data on the culturally and linguistically diverse groups with which it delivers services directly or indirectly

RESPONSIVENESS

5.1 Standards — any whole-of-government standards and guidelines developed by the agency must address multicultural access and equity considerations

5.2 Policy, program and service delivery — provision to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are effective for culturally and linguistically diverse communities

5.3 Outsourced services — where relevant, provision for incorporation of multicultural access and equity requirements into contracts, grant agreements and related guidance material of which the agency has carriage

OPENNESS

6.1 Publishing — agency to publish its Agency Multicultural Plan on its website and performance reports against agency KPIs for culturally and linguistically diverse clients in agency annual reports

6.2 Data — agency to make culturally and linguistically diverse data available to other agencies and the public

2. Analysis of reporting

To prepare this report, the Department of Social Services asked Australian Government departments and agencies to rate their own performance against the 13 minimum obligations in the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy. The department and agencies' responses were combined for each obligation into four categories: met, progressed, not met, and not applicable. The department and agencies responses were then classified into ratings to assess whole-of-government performance against each obligation.

Core dimension: leadership

Leadership requires Australian Government departments and agencies to demonstrate their commitment to multicultural access and equity and take responsibility for its implementation. It also emphasises the capacity of senior leaders to influence, motivate and enable staff to apply multicultural access and equity principles to their work.

Performance against minimum obligations

1.1 Executive accountability — assign a Senior Executive Officer to be responsible for implementation of multicultural access and equity obligations in the agency.

All reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Most of the senior executives responsible for multicultural access and equity implementation had the title of Multicultural Access and Equity Champion. Most had senior positions in the corporate services, operations, or communication divisions of their department or agency.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre** (AUSTRAC) appointed two Senior Executive Officers to oversee implementation of its AMP. General Managers also nominated a Multicultural Access and Equity Champion from each of their branches. The Senior Executive Officers and Multicultural Access and Equity Champions formed an AMP Committee, which met regularly during the reporting period to monitor progress of the AMP.

AUSTRAC's intranet dedicates specific pages to the AMP. These contain the AMP Committee's terms of reference and meeting minutes, an AUSTRAC internal language register and directions for engaging translation and interpreting services.

The **Department of Human Services** held working groups at the Senior Executive Service level to discuss diversity issues in key business areas. For example, the communications working group met regularly during the reporting period to develop a strategy addressing gaps in multicultural communications.

1.2 Agency commitment — leadership to ensure that staff understand and are committed to Multicultural Access and Equity Policy implementation.

Ninety-eight per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. They did so through a wide variety of strategies. Many created a formal governance structure, such as a working group or committee, to support their Multicultural Access and Equity Champion and oversee the development, monitoring and implementation of their AMP.

A number of departments and agencies chose to incorporate their AMP into a broader strategy that included other diversity initiatives, such as those relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disability and workplace diversity.

To build understanding of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy and encourage staff to contribute to its implementation, departments and agencies used internal communication tools – most commonly all-staff presentations and/or messages, staff newsletters, and intranet pages dedicated to multicultural access and equity.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Taxation Office** (ATO) issued a Chief Executive Instruction, *An Inclusive and Diverse ATO*, setting out expectations and standards for service delivery to culturally diverse clients, and staff responsibilities.

The **Federal Court of Australia** ran an internal communication program to increase staff awareness of its AMP. It included information about the AMP in staff newsletters, on the intranet and in orientation packages for new starters. The Court regularly asked frontline staff (court officers and client service staff) for suggestions about actions to assist CALD clients. It also established an informal working group with the Federal Circuit Court to review and consider policies and practices for services to CALD clients.

The **Family Court of Australia** worked with Migration Council Australia to set up the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity, an advisory body formed to help Australian courts, judicial officers and administrators respond positively to the diverse needs of people from different cultural backgrounds. The Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity is an initiative of Chief Justice French of the High Court of Australia and endorsed by the Council of Chief Justices of Australia. Its purpose is to develop a framework to support procedural fairness and equal treatment for all court users – regardless of race, colour, religion, or national or ethnic origin — and to promote public trust and confidence in the courts and the judiciary. Its members are mostly from the judiciary, with some representation from legal and community bodies. Further information is at <http://jccd.org.au>.

The **Australian Institute of Criminology** revised its staff performance agreement templates to incorporate reporting and discussions about multicultural considerations.

The **Australian Securities and Investments Commission** (ASIC) held the inaugural ASIC Diversity Week: Actions, Not Words in the first week of March 2015. This featured an address by His Excellency the Hon. Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia and a former manager at ASIC. As part of Diversity Week celebrations, staff were invited to share a photo telling the story of their cultural background. The resulting photo collection, *My Photo — My Heritage*, was displayed in all ASIC offices.

The background of the entire page is a warm, orange-toned image showing several hands of different skin tones cupping a globe. The hands are positioned at the top and bottom edges, with fingers gently supporting the globe in the center. The lighting is soft, creating a sense of unity and care.

PROFILE: Department of Defence — building workforce diversity

The *Defence Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2012–2017* outlines the Department of Defence plan to build an organisation that embraces and capitalises on diversity. Increasing the representation of people from CALD backgrounds is a key objective of the strategy.

The department's senior leaders drive action on multicultural access and equity priorities through the Defence CALD Action Plan and CALD Implementation Plan, which have been endorsed by the Defence Executive through the Defence People Steering Group.

Defence is positioning itself as an employer of choice for all Australians by focusing on attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining employees from CALD backgrounds.

Core dimension: engagement

Engagement requires Australian Government departments and agencies to provide information in formats and languages that recognise and respond to the needs of their CALD clients. It also incorporates consultation with diverse communities and client groups on developing policy, implementing programs and delivering services.

Performance against minimum obligations

2.1 Stakeholder engagement — have a stakeholder engagement strategy to understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interaction with their agency.

Eighty-four per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Many implemented formal stakeholder engagement strategies on either an organisational or a project-based level. Others demonstrated the practical application of a variety of stakeholder engagement strategies. These included consultations with peak bodies or communities through forums or roundtables, and staff networks dedicated to interacting with CALD communities.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Taxation Office** (ATO) has an external consultative forum with strong CALD representation through the involvement of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (the national peak body representing CALD Australians) and AMES Australia (a settlement service provider for new and recently arrived refugees and migrants). In addition to this formal consultative forum, in 2013 and 2014 the ATO convened non-English-speaking background community advisory group forums to seek direct input from multicultural community leaders and key CALD service providers on an open agenda for tax and superannuation administration.

The Census program of the **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) has a strong focus on stakeholder engagement with CALD communities. In the six months to June 2014, the Census program met with over 80 different organisations, of which a number represented CALD Australians, to discuss the contents of the 2016 Census and how to improve coverage across communities. The ABS also appointed a national CALD-targeted strategy manager for the 2016 Census.

The **Australian National Audit Office** incorporates multicultural access and equity and cultural competency considerations into all performance audit work plans. For each audit, the planning process explicitly requires audit work teams to identify and flag audits where CALD factors are likely to play a significant role in communities' interactions with government departments and agencies. For these audits, the teams prepare an audit-specific engagement strategy that accounts for CALD factors.

In 2013–14, the Digital Switchover Taskforce in the **Department of Communications and the Arts** managed the transition to digital television. It ran a communications campaign targeting multicultural communities through television, press, radio advertising and CALD media. It also employed 34 Multicultural Ambassadors on the ground across regional and metropolitan switchover areas.

In 2015, to mark the 40th anniversary of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, the **Australian Human Rights Commission** engaged with CALD communities through a national consultation to understand and report on the lived experience of racism. Starting with a conference that developed and then published a multidisciplinary assessment of the Act, it held public consultation events in every capital city. A communications strategy involved CALD community organisations, civil society, non-government organisations and advocates. Through the networks of these organisations, the Human Rights Commission was able to reach and facilitate the participation of a wide range of CALD communities and individuals. *Freedom from Discrimination: Report on the 40th anniversary of the Racial Discrimination Act* documents the activities and findings of the year's events, providing a record of the voices and experiences of the CALD communities that participated in the project.

In 2014, the **Australian Law Reform Commission** developed a CALD consultation strategy in relation to the Equality, Capacity and Disability in Commonwealth Laws Inquiry. As part of the strategy, it sent media releases to CALD news outlets and to community organisations for distribution through their own diversity networks. The Law Reform Commission has also made information available on its website in 20 community languages about the law reform process and how to make a submission to an inquiry.

The **Independent Hospital Pricing Authority** appointed a representative of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia to its Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

The **Australian Federal Police** engages with CALD community groups through a range of initiatives to strengthen and develop relationships. For example, it supports the annual Unity Cup Australian rules football competition featuring Muslim, Jewish, African, Indian, Pakistani and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teams. During the reporting cycle, it also hosted dinners to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, attended by leaders of local Islamic communities and mosques and representatives of other government and non-government agencies.

To raise awareness of business opportunities arising from Australia's new free trade agreements with China, Korea and Japan, **Austrade** and other federal government agencies conducted 57 seminars across Australia. Over 2 000 participants attended, including a significant number of representatives from Australia's CALD communities. Austrade also made a range of translated fact sheets available.

In June 2015, the **Department of Defence** appointed Imam Mohamadu Nawaz Saleem to the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services to work with the Islamic community and the committee in advising on the religious and spiritual wellbeing of all members of the Australian Defence Force.

Engaging diverse communities is a key objective of the **National Archives** Access Programs Strategy. As part of this strategy, the National Archives has two touring exhibitions (*A Place to Call Home? Migrant Hostel Memories* and *A Ticket to Paradise?*) and an online platform (Destination: Australia) that focus on telling and sharing migration stories. The Archives also provides universal access to immigration records in its collection through a telephone interpreting service.

The **Fair Work Ombudsman** (FWO) developed its Chinese Australian Engagement Strategy in collaboration with prominent Chinese community and business leaders. The strategy aims to promote the FWO to Australia's Chinese community, provide information and education about workplace issues in Australia and create a culture of compliance with workplace laws. FWO developed a variety of resources, including fact sheets to support their Chinese videos, and made them available in both Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese at www.fairwork.gov.au/chinese.

The **Department of Social Services** network of Multicultural Community Liaison Officers (MCLOs) conduct a planned, purposeful and strategic schedule of engagement and regular communications with CALD communities. MCLOs attend CALD community events and celebrations, meet and maintain relationships with community leaders, and host community engagement forums across each state and territory in regional and metropolitan areas. MCLOs perform a crucial function by:

- informing CALD communities about DSS programs, initiatives and funding opportunities
- improving departmental understanding of issues affecting CALD communities' access to DSS-funded mainstream services
- communicating community perceptions about service gaps and access barriers.

Performance against minimum obligations

2.2 Language and communication — have a language and communication plan for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including on the use of languages other than English and incorporating the use of interpreters and translators.

Eighty-three per cent of departments and agencies met this obligation.

They reported a range of actions, including:

- the development of a standalone language and communication plan (or equivalent guidelines for the use of multicultural language services)
- promoting the use of translating and interpreting services and the provision of translated information.

The reporting suggests that departments and agencies are using innovative ways to overcome language and communication barriers for CALD clients, particularly through using new media platforms and focusing on improving the usability of digital services.

Good practice examples

The **Federal Court of Australia** reviewed the recommendations in the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration's Interpreter Policies, Practices and Protocols in Australian Courts and Tribunals and used them to inform development of a language and communication plan by:

- reviewing and updating the Court's 2009 language allowance policy and skills register
- reviewing the Court's interpreter and translation policy
- revising the in-court guidelines for the use of interpreters
- revising the guidelines in the Judges' Benchbook for use of interpreters in court.

The **Family Court** is working with the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity to develop the Australian National Standards for Working with Interpreters in Courts and Tribunals, to establish minimum and optimal practices for Australia. Model rules and a model practice note will give effect to the standards.

The **Australian Financial Security Authority** website now displays key information and publications in 14 languages after updating its priority language list to include five more languages (French, Farsi, Somali, Thai and Hindi). It also added a 'Help in your language' function to the website via an interactive translated image located in the website footer. This function and a restructured translations section include translated languages as webpage content, PDF files and landing pages to allow CALD clients and stakeholders to easily navigate to the information they are looking for.

The **Australian Communications and Media Authority** released its educational short film *Tagged* with subtitles in five community languages: Arabic, Italian, Greek, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese. The film was developed for teenagers and tackles contemporary themes about making positive choices online, being aware of the risks of cyberbullying and managing your digital reputation. The film is supported by lesson plans and has become a key resource for Australian teachers and parents.

The **Department of Human Services** used new media platforms to provide information to CALD communities with low levels of literacy. It released three videos on demand (*Payments, Looking for work, and Medicare and Health Care cards*) in Arabic, Farsi and Hazaragi. In 2015 it added a further seven languages: Burmese, Cantonese, Chin (Haka), Mandarin, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Cancer Australia translated and published on its website 190 consumer resources in languages including Italian, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Greek, Vietnamese, Spanish, Korean, Hindi and Tagalog.

The Marine Weather Services Project of the **Bureau of Meteorology** translated rock-fishing safety information into Korean, Bahasa Malaysian, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese. The translations are available from the Bureau's Marine Weather Services website at www.bom.gov.au/marine/about/check-rock-fishing.shtml.

The **Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)** website has a page for consumers from non-English-speaking backgrounds that includes information on how they can contact the ACCC using its translating and interpreting service. The page also contains consumer and business information in languages other than English on a range of topics, including door-to-door sales and consumer rights and guarantees.

The **Department of Immigration and Border Protection** Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) connects government, business and communities by providing accredited, cost-effective and secure language services. In February 2015 it launched TIS Online — an automated booking service for on-site interpreters — to allow client agencies, on behalf of their non-English-speaking customers, to self-publish and manage their interpreter booking requests online 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Since TIS Online was introduced, the average lead time to fulfil a booking request for an on-site interpreter has reduced significantly from 28 days via the manual process to around 10 minutes by using the digital self-service application. The department's engagement with clients and interpreters before the launch, which included providing customised learning materials to help with the transition, has contributed to the high take-up of TIS Online.

The **Australian Securities and Investments Commission** MoneySmart website provides access to information, tools and guidance to improve the financial literacy of all Australians. Publications, audio and video recordings are available from the website in 26 languages via the 'Other languages' page. During February 2016, the website featured money messages tailored to Australia's Chinese community to coincide with Chinese New Year celebrations. The material was published in Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese and English, and promoted through CALD community media channels.

To coincide with the launch of its Agency Multicultural Plan, the **Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions** translated key documents for victims and witnesses into eight priority languages. Following a review of the priority languages in 2014, it added a small number of additional languages. Publications covering a range of topics, including *Giving evidence in court* and *Steps in the prosecution process*, are available from the website in languages such as Arabic, Dari, Indonesian, Mandarin, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.

The **Family Court of Australia** National Enquiry Centre (NEC) responds to an average of 6 485 calls, 985 email queries and 825 live chats each week. To support CALD clients, the Family Court introduced its Diversity Protocol, a one-page, step-by-step process that the Court must follow for all clients who identify as CALD. It covers:

- checking whether the client needs assistance from an interpreter
- engaging an interpreter if required
- checking for upcoming events where the client may need an interpreter
- ensuring that the interpreter booking is recorded.

The protocol has a 'Diversity tips and scripts' sheet for staff members that outlines simple questions and responses to check the need for an interpreter and to arrange interpreting services.

The NEC takes calls in other languages through the Translating and Interpreting Service. It provides procedural information and legal referrals on a range of topics often relevant to CALD clients, such as getting documents translated, getting a divorce if you were married overseas, and using interpreters for court events.

In 2014–15, the former **Migration Review Tribunal** and **Refugee Review Tribunal** (which amalgamated with the **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** on 1 July 2015) produced a set of video guides for applicants about the process for reviewing migration and refugee decisions. The videos include a voiceover and optional captions in English, Arabic (classical), Farsi, Mandarin, Punjabi and Vietnamese.

Fair Work Building and Construction added a language assistance page for CALD audiences to its website. The page features a range of in-language resources such as brochures, case studies, employment checklists and a video.

PROFILE: Department of Social Services — addressing violence against CALD women

Between October 2014 and March 2015, in consultation with the states and territories, the Department of Social Services (DSS) supported over 29 small group discussions across Australia with CALD women leaders and community representatives about domestic and family violence and sexual assault. The conversations focused on barriers and challenges, community involvement and what works well to prevent violence. The *Hearing Her Voice* report from these discussions was released in July 2015.

On 7 August 2015, DSS hosted the first national roundtable on violence against CALD women and their children. The roundtable brought together over 80 participants, including CALD leaders, community and business leaders, academics, specialists from domestic violence and sexual assault services, and other key stakeholders from around Australia. Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers responsible for reducing violence against women and their children also attended, along with senior officials from each jurisdiction. Building on the findings in the *Hearing Her Voice* report, roundtable participants discussed how to support CALD women, their children and young people; engage CALD men; and drive whole-of-community action. *A Platform for Action*, the report from the national roundtable, was released in May 2016. This report will help us build on existing work, improve our understanding of diverse forms of violence and contribute to policy and program development in the future, including the work under the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010–2022.

Hearing Her Voice and *A Platform for Action* are both available online at www.plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au/resources/research/.



PROFILE: Organ and Tissue Authority — promoting organ and tissue donation in culturally appropriate ways

Ensuring access to culturally appropriate information about organ and tissue donation for CALD communities is a priority for the Organ and Tissue Authority (OTA).

In 2013–15 the OTA, in partnership with the DonateLife Network, implemented a national CALD communications and engagement strategy. The strategy included consultation with national faith and community leaders to develop a range of culturally appropriate resources as part of the ‘DonateLife ... the greatest gift’ campaign. The resources, which aim to increase family discussion about organ and tissue donation decisions, are available in multiple languages in print format and online at www.donatelife.gov.au.

Religious and cultural leaders are invited to sign DonateLife Statements of Support to demonstrate to their communities that they support organ and tissue donation and to mark the start of their partnership with DonateLife. There are now 87 statements available online, and the number continues to grow as the OTA consults more religious and cultural leaders to understand their position on organ and tissue donation.

The OTA has worked closely with priority faith groups to prepare religious rulings (in English and community languages) in support of organ donation. Through its Community Awareness Grants Program, the OTA has also funded community projects to conduct education activities with CALD groups.

The OTA has established partnerships with 20 ethnic media outlets and provides translated media releases and case studies for placement throughout the year, including for DonateLife Week.

Core dimension: performance

The ability of Australian Government departments and agencies to measure their multicultural access and equity performance is critical to tracking progress and identifying opportunities for improvement. Performance requires that Australian Government departments and agencies build effective review mechanisms by developing key performance indicators and ensuring that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients can provide feedback on policies, programs and services.

Performance against minimum obligations

3.1 Performance indicators and reporting — develop a set of key performance indicators relating to engagement with, or outcomes of services to, culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

Fifty-nine per cent of departments and agencies met this obligation.

Many in this group chose to develop their key performance indicators on an organisational, project or business level. Others elected to base their key performance indicators on delivery of their AMP actions.

As the reporting indicates, this obligation proved to be one of the most challenging for departments and agencies to complete. We assessed 14 per cent as having 'progressed' this obligation and 17 per cent as having 'not met' it; 10 per cent stated that the obligation did not apply to them. Factors that departments and agencies cited as having prevented them from developing their key performance indicators included difficulty obtaining reliable data, resourcing issues, and the lack of a direct interface with CALD Australians.

These results indicate that departments and agencies need more support to develop indicators for multicultural access and equity performance. The topic will be a focus of the recently established Multicultural Access and Equity Interagency Support Group.

Good practice examples

In December 2013 the **Australian Taxation Office** (ATO) finalised a set of key performance indicators relating to outcomes of its AMP implementation developed by 12 representatives from operational, service, support and corporate areas who were nominated by senior executives across ATO business and service lines. The key performance indicators are:

- non-English-speaking background (NESB) clients have access to contemporary products and services necessary for them to be aware of their obligations and entitlements
- the ATO is able to identify and respond to the issues, needs and vulnerabilities of NESB clients in a timely manner
- the ATO engages with NESB clients so that they are willing to participate in the tax and super systems
- the ATO is viewed as a leading agency in multicultural access and equity.

In November 2014, the **Department of Social Services** (DSS) completed an internal audit to identify challenges and strengths in communicating with and providing services to its CALD clients. The DSS Executive Management Group considered the audit findings and used the priorities identified to guide departmental actions to improve access and equity performance, primarily through the work of the DSS Multicultural Access and Equity Committee.

3.2 Feedback — have arrangements to ensure affected culturally and linguistically diverse communities are able to provide feedback on agency multicultural access and equity performance.

Ninety-five per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. The most common strategies they implemented included translating complaints information and providing translation and interpreting services enabling clients to provide their feedback in languages other than English. High-performing departments and agencies also conducted targeted consultations directly with CALD communities or representative bodies.

Good practice examples

The **Department of Human Services** (DHS) gathers feedback on its services by conducting targeted consultations with key communities that have particular concerns. For example, in December 2014, DHS staff attended a consultation with service providers on ageing to identify barriers and opportunities to improve services for older Australians from CALD communities. In November 2015, DHS held refugee and asylum seeker consultations in Brisbane, Hobart, Darwin, Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Perth to engage with service providers about how to improve services to best support this vulnerable client group.

Fair Work Building and Construction (FWBC) investigators follow up investigations with all clients, including where CALD workers or employees are involved. They ask the clients routine questions about how FWBC was helpful, and seek feedback on areas for improvement. FWBC makes its enquiry form and contact details available in translated languages.

The **Bureau of Meteorology** conducts an annual user survey to gather feedback on its performance. Analytics of the survey and feedback data include comparisons of service satisfaction between CALD and English-speaking stakeholders. The bureau considers this when developing new products and services.

In 2015, the **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade** updated its guidelines for heads of overseas missions to require staff in these roles to consult with CALD community leaders relevant to their countries of accreditation during pre-posting and mid-term consultations.

The **Australian Financial Security Authority** released translations of its Client Service Charter complaints information and 'how to contact us' instructions in August 2014. It has added another five languages since then.

The **National Mental Health Commission** (NMHC) released *Contributing Lives, Thriving Communities: Report of the National Review of Mental Health Programs and Services*, which specifically highlights CALD communities. In developing the report the NMHC Chief Executive Officer met with members of the Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHIMA) executive and MHIMA consumer and care working groups.

The background of the entire page is a warm, orange-toned image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching up and down, framing a central area. The hands appear to be holding or supporting something, creating a sense of community and support.

PROFILE: Australian Taxation Office — enabling feedback from CALD communities

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) provides a number of avenues for CALD communities to give feedback on its services and performance. For example, representatives from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) and service providers to CALD communities are members of the ATO peak consultative group for individual taxpayers, and the ATO conducts NESB-specific consultation through an annual forum. It also integrates feedback mechanisms into marketing and communication products for multicultural communities. These include:

- a widely promoted dedicated email contact for CALD clients and intermediaries
- an electronic multicultural newsletter distributed to over 200 subscribers
- person-to-person feedback and open Q&A sessions at community events and seminars
- liaison with multicultural radio and TV broadcasters
- community information gathering by community relations and education field staff.

Core dimension: capability

Capability in the multicultural access and equity context requires that Australian Government departments and agencies have the capacity to understand and meet the needs of CALD clients in the delivery of policies, programs and services. It emphasises the importance of CALD client data collection, and the cultural competency of staff and service providers, to achieve equity in access and outcomes for CALD Australians.

Performance against minimum obligations

4.1 Cultural competency — have training and development measures to equip staff with cultural competency skills.

Sixty-two percent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation, most commonly by delivering online cultural competency training to staff. Some provided face-to-face cultural awareness training for staff in specialised roles. A small number reported that their cultural competence training was mandatory for all staff.

Other strategies that departments and agencies reported using to increase staff awareness and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity included:

- support for CALD staff networks
- promoting a calendar of cultural and religious dates internally
- participating in major awareness-raising events such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week.

Good practice examples

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** (AAT) and former Social Security Appeals Tribunal jointly developed an e-learning module, 'Appreciating Diversity', that covers topics such as appreciating culture, language, encouraging participation and the law. The module formed part of the induction program for new staff. The AAT also makes available to its members and staff a range of publications about assisting people from CALD backgrounds.

In September 2014 the **Department of Human Services** facilitated a cultural immersion day for Senior Executive Service (SES) staff to develop leadership capability and integrate CALD community considerations into decision-making. Following this successful event, the department developed the SES Cultural Awareness Package, which it piloted from August to November 2015.

The **Family Court of Australia** developed a cultural competence e-learning package, 'Let's Talk', to provide court staff with the knowledge, skills and awareness needed to work competently with culturally diverse clients across a range of scenarios. Using a specifically built website, the package employs adult learning principles to deliver over two hours of training combining text with videos, podcasts, TED Talks, interactive scenarios, quizzes and reflection exercises. The Family Court is now working with the Judicial College of New South Wales to turn this e-learning package into a judicial training program.

When the **Australian Competition and Consumer Commission** implemented a new intranet in early 2015 and invited all employees to update their profile, it included their ability to speak/write in languages other than English. A list of these employees is available on the intranet.

The **Family Court of Australia**'s new Community Language Allowance Policy aims to encourage staff who speak another language and have regular client contact to develop and use their language skills at the counter and over the telephone. Under the new policy, it pays for eligible staff to achieve and maintain the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) or equivalent qualifications.

The **Australian Securities Investments Commission** (ASIC) launched its *Developing Cultural Awareness* program in July 2015 to encourage ASIC staff to reflect on their own understanding and awareness of cultural competence and provide them with practical resources and strategies. The program covers three distinct areas:

- Introduction to Cultural Awareness: provides an interactive learning experience with information and tools to raise awareness of how to be more culturally aware
- Workplace Activity: offers a range of practical examples of how ASIC is engaging with customers from CALD backgrounds
- Action Planning: participants document how they will apply what they have learned in the workplace, what challenges they might face and how they might manage them.

As at September 2016, over 91 per cent of staff had completed the training program.

4.2 Research and data — each agency is required to collect ethnicity data on the culturally and linguistically diverse groups with which it delivers services directly or indirectly.

Seventy-six per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Many did so through targeted research into the needs of CALD groups. Others reported data collection techniques that included client surveys and feedback forms, analysis of the use of translating and interpreting services, and application of data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) provides extensive migrant and ethnicity data through the ABS Migrant Data Matrices. During the reporting period, the ABS Migrant Statistics Unit continued to improve CALD survey and administrative data through a number of data integration projects including the Australian Census Migrants Integrated Dataset and the Personal Income Tax Migrants Integrated Dataset.

The **Australian Taxation Office** captures data on CALD clients through a range of research including the Taxpayer Behaviour Survey, Single Corporate Perceptions Survey 2014–15, Lodgement Perceptions Preferences and Behaviours, Transitioning Paper Lodgers Online Market Research Report, and GST Voluntary Compliance Program. The research findings help inform business strategy development.

The **Department of Human Services** updated customer language and payment profiles to help business areas and service zones with ethnicity data relating to CALD client groups. The data collected includes country of birth, date of arrival in Australia, preferred spoken language and interpreter needs.

IP Australia expanded its customer surveys to capture data on CALD stakeholders in accordance with the ABS publication *A Guide for Using Statistics for Evidence Based Policy*.

The **Department of Health** and its portfolio agencies collect data from a variety of sources to help ensure that policies and programs are targeted and effective. For example, the National Health Performance Authority (NHPA) assessed the performance of Australia's health system against performance indicators agreed by the Council of Australian Governments. It published data and reports at the hospital level for the hospital indicators, and Primary Health Network catchment and smaller geographical levels (Statistical Area 3) for primary health care indicators. This enables the NHPA to see the effects of factors such as geography and socioeconomic status on access to and use of health services and, potentially, health outcomes. The local-level reporting provides rich information about communities that have a significant proportion of CALD residents. This information is available to Commonwealth, state and local government policymakers as well as service providers in government and non-government sectors.

The **National Mental Health Commission** commissioned Mental Health in Multicultural Australia to prepare an independent report, *Mental health research and evaluation in multicultural Australia: Developing a culture of inclusion*. This looked at knowledge about the mental health of CALD communities in Australia; whether Australia's mental health research pays adequate attention to cultural and linguistic diversity; and whether national data collections support evidence-informed mental health policy, practice and reform in multicultural Australia. The report is intended to contribute to developing a culture of inclusion in Australian mental health research.

The **Organ and Tissue Authority** conducts annual market research on levels of community awareness and attitudes about organ and tissue donation, which influences the strategic direction of its national community awareness and education program. The 2014 survey included CALD segments to help ascertain specific barriers and motivators for Australians from Chinese, Indian, Arabic, Vietnamese and Greek backgrounds. The research showed that willingness to donate had increased among respondents from Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese backgrounds, and remained steady among those from Greek and Indian backgrounds.

The **Australian Transport Safety Bureau** (ATSB) modified its biennial external stakeholder survey to increase its ability to collect ethnicity data. From this survey it identified the need for a range of reporting forms translated into multiple languages, including Chinese, Filipino, Hindi, Indonesian and Ukrainian. These forms are available from the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

Core dimension: responsiveness

Australian Government departments and agencies should be responsive to the individual needs of clients from CALD backgrounds. Responsiveness is about achieving this objective by ensuring that multicultural access and equity considerations are a central element of Australian Government policies, programs and services, whether in-house or outsourced.

Performance against minimum obligations

5.1 Standards — any whole-of-government standards and guidelines developed by the agency must address multicultural access and equity considerations.

The overwhelming majority of departments and agencies (86 per cent) reported that this obligation did not apply to them as they were not responsible for any whole-of-government standards.

As a consequence, only 13 per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. The whole-of-government standards that were the focus of reporting against this obligation addressed issues including data collection, language services and advertising and information campaigns by non-corporate Commonwealth entities.

Good practice examples

In 2013, the **Department of Social Services** (DSS) published the *Multicultural Language Services Guidelines for Australian Government Agencies* to provide overarching guidance to officers in the Australian Public Service on policies and procedures relating to language service initiatives, such as the use of interpreting and translating services. The guidelines are available from the DSS website at www.dss.gov.au.

The **Department of Finance** administers the Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by Non-corporate Commonwealth Entities, which provide a framework for the conduct of all publicly funded information and advertising campaigns. The guidelines require non-corporate entities undertaking advertising campaigns above the value of \$250 000 to pay special attention to communicating with information-disadvantaged individuals or groups, including those for whom English is not a convenient language in which to receive information. Imagery used in campaigns should reflect the diverse range of Australians and realistically depict their interests, lifestyles and contributions to Australian society.

The **Family Court of Australia** worked closely with the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity on the consultation report *The Path to Justice: Migrant and Refugee Women*. The report is available at http://jccd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/JCCD_Consultation_Report_-_Migrant_and_Refugee_Women.pdf. The Family Court has since reviewed its service provision and is working through the recommendations of the report to improve services to this group.

5.2 Policy, program and service delivery — provision to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are effective for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Ninety-two per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. In keeping with the obligation's broad scope, the approaches that departments and agencies took to meet it were varied. For example, many departments and agencies used targeted service delivery to CALD groups, language services and improved CALD workforce capacity. Others reported strategies such as regular public consultations, data collection activities, corporate instructions and regular audit plans to ensure that policies, programs and services were meeting the needs of CALD clients.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Taxation Office** (ATO) partnered with NSW AMES to produce an English-language teaching resource aimed at helping new migrants understand practical basics of the tax and superannuation system. The resource incorporates basic concepts into the five-episode *New to Australia* video series, which shows the stories of migrants and positive experiences of tax and super, together with activities aligned to the learning outcomes in Certificates I, II and III in Spoken and Written English. The teaching resource is available for teachers, instructors and self-access study.

In 2015, the Classification Branch of the **Department of Communications and the Arts** engaged with a broad cross-section of the community, including participants from a range of cultural backgrounds, through focus groups exploring community responses to and concerns about film and computer game content. It used insights from these consultations to assess the alignment of community values with the assumptions underpinning the classification guidelines.

The **Department of Social Services** revised its Internal Costing Request for New Policy Proposals to include consideration of translation and interpreting costs in all new policy proposals.

In 2015, the **Department of Defence** began implementing measures to improve interaction with CALD communities through Australian Defence Force recruiting, work experience and youth engagement activities. This included establishing the Navy Diversity and Inclusion Directorate as a sustainable platform for the ongoing development of CALD initiatives in the Navy.

Through the use of hover text, family law terminology on the **Family Court of Australia's** Application for Divorce form on the Commonwealth Courts Portal now comes with a plain English definition. This initiative targets litigants experiencing language barriers and unrepresented litigants. The Commonwealth Courts Portal also now provides links to the Family Law Termfinder, a joint project between the Attorney-General's Department and Macquarie University. This allows clients to search for plain English definitions of 400 commonly used terms and view translations in Arabic, Vietnamese, Spanish, Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese.

In 2014, the **Department of Immigration and Border Protection** expanded the multilingual capability of Arrivals SmartGate, Australia's automated border processing system. Nineteen languages are now available, including Arabic, Danish, Dutch, Greek and Thai.

The **Department of Human Services** developed a multilingual mobile app, Express Plus Lite, to help people from CALD backgrounds complete common transactions from their mobile devices. The app was available in three major community languages (Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese) from July 2013 and added Persian (Farsi) in 2014.

Cancer Australia's Support for Clinical Trials program encourages national cooperative trial groups, through grant rules, to implement plans and procedures to monitor and potentially increase trial participation among consumers, including those from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and CALD backgrounds.

The **Department of Agriculture and Water Resources** Service Delivery Modernisation Program, which started in 2013–14, aims to improve services to clients by designing and implementing a contemporary service delivery model. The department has developed the design principles for the program to consider and incorporate the needs of CALD clients.

The **Department of Health** National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy provides a framework to ensure that aged care activities are appropriate to the needs of older people from CALD backgrounds, with a view to embedding these approaches as core business in the future. The strategy is guided by a set of principles and includes six strategic goals and actions to create tangible outcomes.

Recognising the importance of making passport information available to CALD communities in community languages, the **Australian Passport Office**, part of the **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**, began translating passport brochures in February 2012. In the reporting period, it provided Australian passport brochures translated into Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Hindi, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Arabic and Indonesian.

5.3 Outsourced services — where relevant, provision for incorporation of multicultural access and equity requirements into contracts, grant agreements and related guidance material of which the agency has carriage.

Eighty-three per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Many in this group stated that they act in accordance with Commonwealth rules and guidelines covering procurement and grants, including the use of grant agreement templates. Others reported having updated standard contracts and guidelines to include multicultural access and equity considerations. A few reported applying additional measures such as providing advice for grant managers and program staff on multicultural access and equity issues and developing multicultural access and equity resources specific to contracting.

Good practice examples

The **Department of Industry, Innovation and Science** developed a fact sheet to help staff incorporate multicultural access and equity requirements into contracts for procurement and grants. It reviewed the access and equity requirements in its long-form agreement templates to ensure that they are consistent with the policy.

The **Australian Communications and Media Authority's** new contract for the Do Not Call Register service includes provisions for CALD communities. The new service provider will continue to provide information on how to access translating and interpreting services through the Do Not Call Register website at www.donotcall.gov.au. It also provides general information and application forms in a variety of languages other than English.

The **Australian Institute of Family Studies** Ethics Committee includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and cultural sensitivity criteria in its application form for an ethical review of research. Researchers must outline their arrangements for ensuring appropriate consultation with communities and demonstrate how they will appropriately manage language, cultural and other relevant issues.

PROFILE: Australian Competition and Consumer Commission — protecting vulnerable CALD consumers

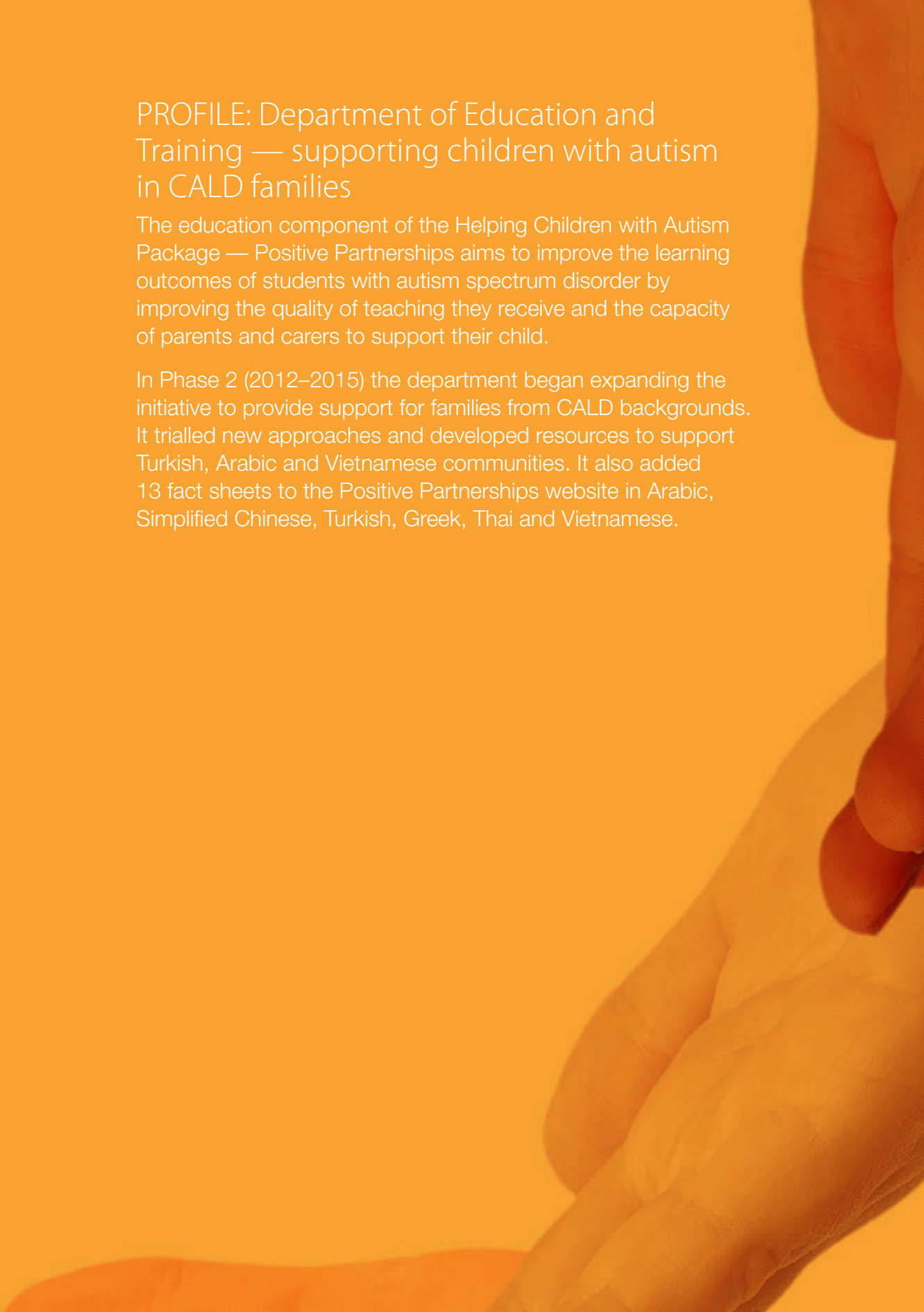
The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Consumers Program is aimed at identifying and responding to commercial and business practices that target or exploit vulnerable consumers, including CALD groups where language barriers may exist. The program seeks to:

- raise awareness of the consumer protection role of the ACCC by developing and disseminating education and information initiatives
- consider the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers in general communication strategies
- encourage the referral of complaints and concerns from disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers
- build and maintain relationships with key consumer groups to gather intelligence about emerging issues, monitor trends and facilitate complaint referral
- provide guidance to businesses for dealing with disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers
- closely monitor complaints and inquiries from or on behalf of disadvantaged or vulnerable consumers to identify areas of market activity where targeted compliance and enforcement activity is required.

PROFILE: Department of Education and Training — supporting children with autism in CALD families

The education component of the Helping Children with Autism Package — Positive Partnerships aims to improve the learning outcomes of students with autism spectrum disorder by improving the quality of teaching they receive and the capacity of parents and carers to support their child.

In Phase 2 (2012–2015) the department began expanding the initiative to provide support for families from CALD backgrounds. It trialled new approaches and developed resources to support Turkish, Arabic and Vietnamese communities. It also added 13 fact sheets to the Positive Partnerships website in Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Turkish, Greek, Thai and Vietnamese.



Core dimension: openness

Openness is about Australian Government departments and agencies being held accountable to the public for their multicultural access and equity performance. It also encompasses departments and agencies working collaboratively with each other and with key stakeholders to develop more efficient and effective ways to address the needs of diverse clients.

Performance against minimum obligations

6.1 Publishing — agency to publish its Agency Multicultural Plan on its website and performance reports against agency key performance indicators for culturally and linguistically diverse clients in agency annual reports.

Forty-one per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Fifty-four per cent did not — the poorest result across all 13 minimum obligations. While a significant proportion of this group published their Agency Multicultural Plans on their websites, challenges with developing key performance indicators meant they were unable to include them in their annual reports to satisfy the second part of the obligation.

The Multicultural Access and Equity Interagency Support Group will pursue efforts to overcome the difficulties departments and agencies have had in developing performance indicators.

6.2 Data — agency to make culturally and linguistically diverse data available to other agencies and the public.

Eighty-four per cent of reporting departments and agencies met this obligation. Most commonly they achieved this by making CALD data publicly available through their websites and annual reports. Some also reported working collaboratively with other departments and agencies and with CALD stakeholders to share data and build understanding of CALD clients' experiences of government program and service delivery.

Good practice examples

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) continues to collect and disseminate ethnicity data on CALD groups through the Population Census and household survey outputs. This information is available to the public on its website at www.abs.gov.au. Access points for CALD data include a Migrant and Ethnicity page (via ABS Topics @ a Glance) and Quickstats Country of Birth (via the Census Portal).

To enhance analysis of Australia's cultural diversity, the 2016 Population Census collected more useful data on parents' countries of birth. Previously there were only two categories for this: overseas born and Australian born, but the 2016 Census asked respondents to specify which countries their parents were born in.

The **Australian Institute of Family Studies** manages *Building a New Life in Australia: the Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants* on behalf of the Department of Social Services. The study is a long-term research project about how humanitarian migrants settle into their new life in Australia. Its purpose is to identify factors that help or hinder the successful settlement of humanitarian migrants, to help improve policy development and program delivery. The first wave of data is available to approved researchers from government, academic institutions and non-profit organisations. A data highlights paper is available to the public at www.aifs.gov.au/bnla.

The **Department of Immigration and Border Protection's** Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National collects data on the demand for each different language and each type of interpreting service. TIS National regularly provides this data to a range of clients and stakeholders, including the Department of Social Services through the Free Interpreting Service. TIS National also collaborates with the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters to develop priorities for new language tests based on high-demand languages.

Through collaboration with the **Department of Human Services**, staff of the **Family Court of Australia** now have intranet access to the department's online guide to ethnic naming practices. Covering the naming conventions of 66 languages, the guide provides information on:

- the order in which the parts of a name appear
- how children are named
- whether and how a woman's name changes after marriage, divorce or partner's death
- pronunciation of names.

The **Department of Social Services** participates in the cross-sector settlement coordination bodies for states and territories under the National Settlement Framework: Settlement Planning Outcomes Committees and Humanitarian Settlement Planning and Outcomes Groups. These groups provide a forum for humanitarian settlement service providers and peak non-government organisations working with CALD clients to meet with state and Australian Government representatives. Their role is to improve settlement-related services and achieve positive and sustainable outcomes for clients.

PROFILE: Australian Human Rights Commission — preventing and reducing racism

The Australian Human Rights Commission leads the National Anti-Racism Strategy, with input from the National Anti-Racism Partnership. The partnership includes the:

- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples
- Australian Multicultural Council
- Attorney-General's Department
- Department of Social Services
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The aim of the strategy is to promote a clear understanding in the Australian community of what racism is and how to prevent and reduce it.

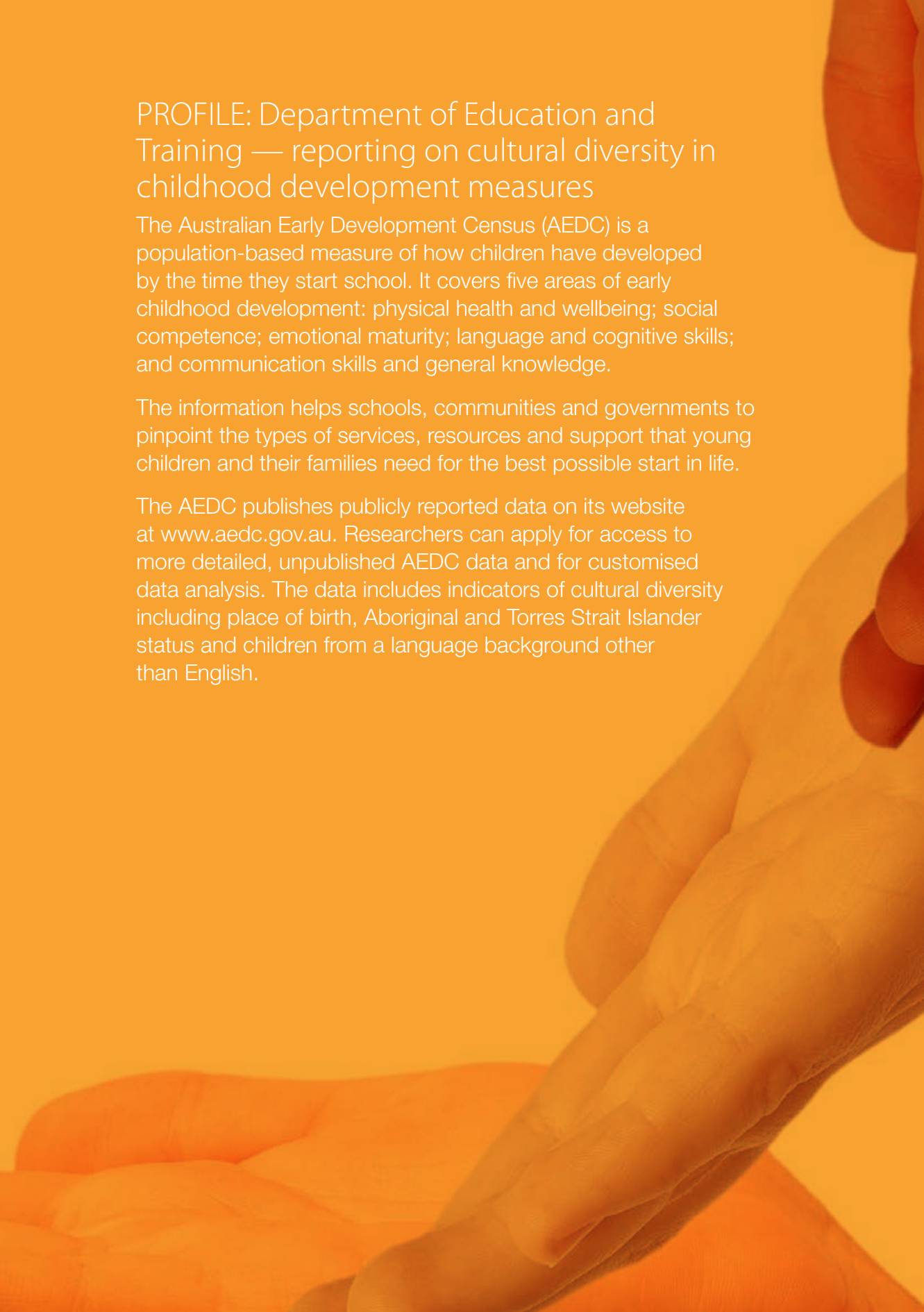
The strategy's main awareness-raising and engagement activity is the 'Racism. It Stops With Me' campaign. Many organisations have signed up as campaign supporters as a way of demonstrating their stance against racism. By mid-2015, 364 organisations had pledged their support to the campaign, spanning business, sport, local government, education and the community sector.

PROFILE: Department of Education and Training — reporting on cultural diversity in childhood development measures

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a population-based measure of how children have developed by the time they start school. It covers five areas of early childhood development: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills; and communication skills and general knowledge.

The information helps schools, communities and governments to pinpoint the types of services, resources and support that young children and their families need for the best possible start in life.

The AEDC publishes publicly reported data on its website at www.aedc.gov.au. Researchers can apply for access to more detailed, unpublished AEDC data and for customised data analysis. The data includes indicators of cultural diversity including place of birth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and children from a language background other than English.



3. Community feedback

Community feedback is critical to driving improvements in multicultural access and equity performance.

The Department of Social Services provides support to the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), the national peak body representing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians. This includes funding for FECCA to hold annual consultations across Australia to hear from CALD communities about their experiences of government service delivery.

Consultation sites are selected in both regional and metropolitan locations on the basis of their CALD populations.

Consultations in 2013–14 and 2014–15

In 2013–14, FECCA conducted face-to-face consultations in Dandenong (Victoria), Murray Bridge (South Australia), Adelaide (South Australia) and the Gold Coast (Queensland). FECCA also developed an online survey, which it hosted on its website and promoted widely to CALD communities. In total, approximately 250 community members and service providers participated.

In 2014–15, FECCA held face-to-face consultations in Shepparton (Victoria), Logan (Queensland), Sydney and Darwin, which more than 160 community members and service providers attended. The accompanying online survey received 130 responses.

Outlined below are some of the key themes of the feedback received through both sets of consultations. More detailed summary reports are available from the FECCA website, www.fecca.org.au.

Feedback themes

Digital service delivery

A major theme of the consultations was the shift of government towards digital service delivery. While some participants welcomed this development, more expressed concern about the barriers that CALD clients can face when accessing services online, including:

- lack of access to the internet
- insufficient computer literacy
- limited English language proficiency
- privacy concerns.

On these issues, some of the most consistent feedback related to the need for departments and agencies to provide more translated materials. However, participants also cautioned that relying only on this approach would exclude community members who are illiterate in their own language.

The feedback highlighted the importance of departments and agencies ensuring access for all clients by complementing online services with other means of accessing services and information. In particular, participants indicated that face-to-face interaction using on-site or phone interpreters is the preferred and most effective form of communication.

Translating and interpreting services

While feedback on translating and interpreting services was generally positive, there were complaints about the lack of professional interpreters, particularly in new and emerging languages. According to some participants there were delays in clients being able to access services from an appropriate interpreter, and community or family members sometimes had to interpret.

The feedback suggested that the government should build greater capacity in language services through:

- more pathways for people who speak community languages to become interpreters
- support for more bilingual workers.

The consultations recorded particular concerns about the use of translators and interpreters in the health sector. Several community representatives raised issues about interpreters' lack of familiarity with medical terminology. Others identified a specific deficiency in the awareness of translating and interpreting services in relation to aged care. Participants also reported that some healthcare practitioners were reluctant to use interpreting services for medical appointments. This finding reinforces the need for stronger engagement with the health sector to communicate the critical importance of using professional interpreting services to interact with patients with low English language proficiency.

Complaint handling

The consultations indicated a need for improvements to ensure that CALD clients are aware of, and can access, complaint mechanisms. FECCA noted that information to clients about lodging complaints in languages other than English was inconsistent across Australian Government agencies. It recommended that all agencies prioritise releasing this information and promote it through key information channels such as agency websites.

FECCA also stressed the need for agencies to complement standard complaint mechanisms with proactive measures to obtain feedback directly so that CALD clients who have low literacy or limited computer skills can contribute.

Education and training

FECCA's consultations highlighted a range of barriers that CALD communities face when accessing education and training opportunities. These include:

- age restrictions
- lack of awareness about available services and pathways
- practical difficulties such as lack of transportation.

FECCA recommended addressing these issues through community awareness-raising initiatives about the Australian education system for migrant and refugee families, incorporating translated materials. It also identified tailored assistance programs for people from CALD backgrounds, including young people, as a priority.

Specific feedback on the Adult Migrant English Program suggested the need to develop more flexible service delivery options for clients who find it difficult to physically attend classes. Some participants also said that English language training should have more emphasis on vocational English.

Employment

While most consultation participants were aware of Australian Government employment services, views on the responsiveness and effectiveness of these services were 'consistently negative'. Most community members who gave feedback believed that the support provided by employment services was inadequate, pointing to a tendency for service providers to disregard their previous experience and skills. The cultural competency of employment service provider staff is an area requiring improvement.

Feedback also focused on the difficulties that participants had in communicating with employment service providers, either because they did not use interpreters or because they did not use plain English. Participants shared examples of cases where staff directed clients with poor language skills — some illiterate in their own language — to web search engines or newspapers to look for a job. Involving more bicultural staff in employment services for CALD clients was one suggested strategy to help address these communication issues.

Other barriers to employment access and equity that were raised during the consultations included:

- lack of recognition of overseas qualifications
- lack of flexible employment opportunities
- discrimination
- lack of Australian work experience
- limited English language skills.

To address these issues, participants suggested encouraging employment service providers to adopt a more personalised approach and implement targeted strategies for CALD jobseekers. They identified a need for providers to mentor businesses about the advantages of recruiting people from CALD backgrounds and dispel any concerns. They also saw an opportunity to promote the idea of volunteering among migrant and refugee jobseekers who might not be familiar with the concept of undertaking unpaid work as a way to gain local work experience.

Participants noted that limited access to employment often put CALD Australians at risk of exploitation. However, community members reported having difficulty finding information about their work rights and how to find support.

There was positive feedback about the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme, which helps jobseekers to set up and run their own small business. Participants noted that it had delivered positive outcomes and recommended promoting it more widely.

Social services

Participants generally rated their experience of Australian Government social services delivered by Centrelink as positive. Their criticisms largely related to the focus on self-service through the internet or over the phone, which some CALD clients found challenging. Most community members, especially new arrivals, preferred face-to-face engagement feeling that it allowed them to more confidently explain their circumstances and find a workable solution.

Participants noted the positive steps that Centrelink had taken to meet the needs of its CALD clients through initiatives such as the Multicultural Services Officer Program, the Multicultural Phone Line, bicultural workers and community information sessions. However, there is scope to improve and extend these strategies to ensure that all clients have the opportunity to engage with the service in a comfortable environment.

FECCA recommended that, when engaging bicultural workers is not possible, cultural awareness training should be a minimum requirement for all staff interacting with CALD clients.

4. Future directions

In 2016 the Australian Government introduced revised arrangements for implementing the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy to deliver a more streamlined and effective system.

Tailored planning

It adjusted planning requirements to take into account the different ways in which multicultural access and equity affect different departments and agencies. Now, instead of all having to use the same planning template, departments and agencies can choose a planning mechanism that suits their role and function. This makes it easier to target their efforts towards areas where applying multicultural access and equity principles is likely to make the most difference.

Stronger accountability

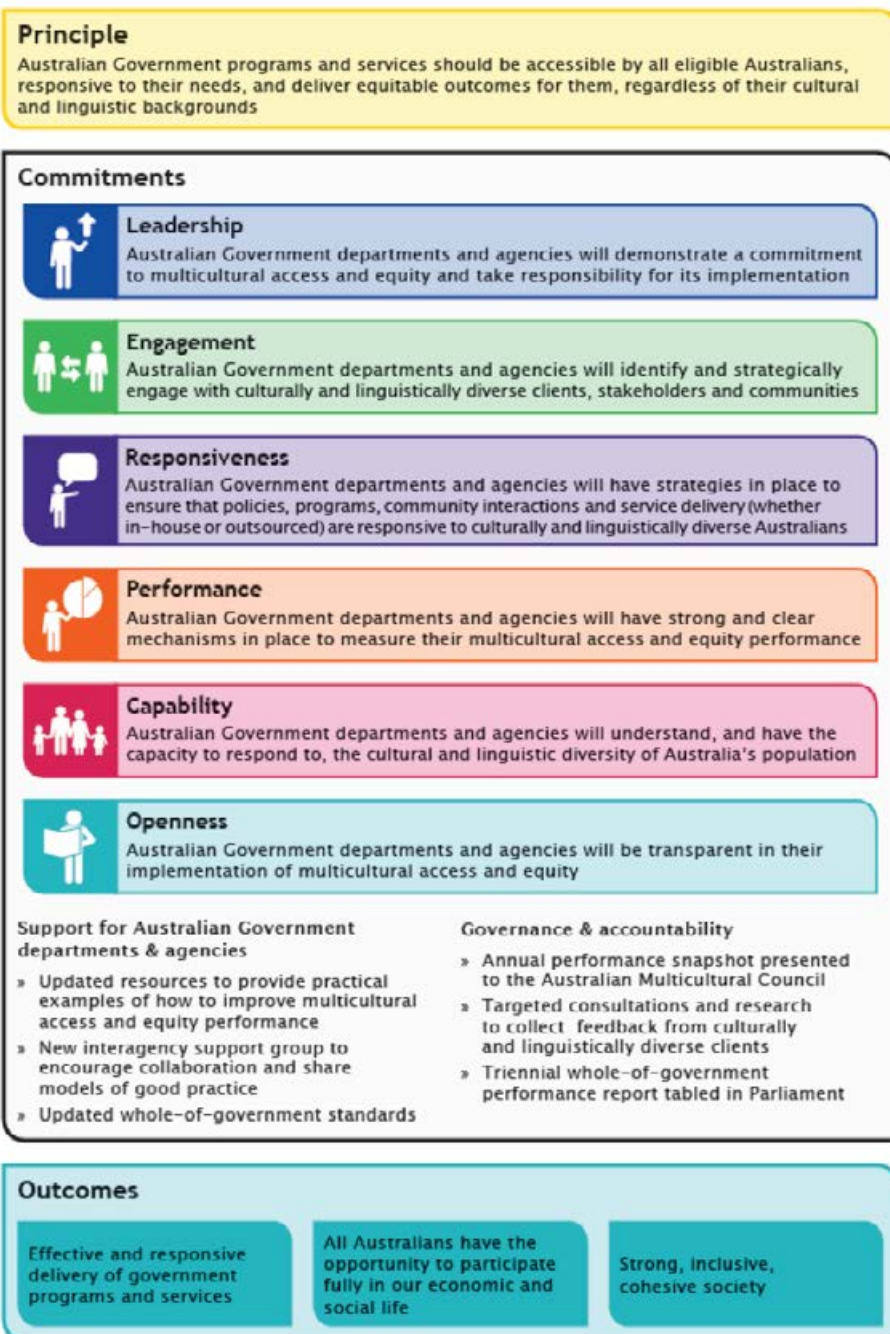
To strengthen accountability measures, the Department of Social Services (DSS) will prepare an annual snapshot of the policy's implementation and present it to the Australian Multicultural Council.

Support and collaboration

In its role as policy leader, DSS is committed to providing practical support to Australian Government departments and agencies to help them achieve their multicultural access and equity goals. DSS has developed a new range of staff resources, including a policy guide, assessment tool, sample planning template and reporting timeline.

One of the goals of the revised arrangements is to encourage more collaboration between departments and agencies on multicultural access and equity matters. Based on a recommendation of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, DSS has set up an interagency support group for multicultural access and equity contact officers across the Australian Government. This group will meet regularly. Its focus in the year ahead will be responding to the challenges highlighted by this report, especially data collection, key performance indicators and cultural competency training.

Figure 2: Revised Multicultural Access and Equity Policy implementation arrangements



Appendix A: Acronyms

AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCC	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AMP	Agency Multicultural Plan
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investments Commission
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
AUSTRAC	Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre
Austrade	Australian Trade and Investment Commission
CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
DHS	Department of Human Services
DEX	Data Exchange
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship (previous name of Department of Immigration and Border Protection)
DSS	Department of Social Services
FECCA	Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
FWBC	Fair Work Building and Construction
FWO	Fair Work Ombudsman
KPI	key performance indicators
MCLO	Multicultural Community Liaison Officer
MHiMA	Mental Health in Multicultural Australia
NEC	National Enquiry Centre
NESB	non-English-speaking background
NHPA	National Health Performance Authority
NMHC	National Mental Health Commission
OTA	Organ and Tissue Authority
Q&A	Question and Answer
SES	Senior Executive Service
TIS National	Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National
VIO	Voter Information Officer

Appendix B: Reporting departments and agencies

Department of Agricultural and Water Resources

Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Attorney-General's Department

Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Australian Crime Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Security Authority
Australian Institute of Criminology
Australian Human Rights Commission
Australian Law Reform Commission
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)
Family Court and Federal Circuit Court
Federal Court of Australia
National Archives of Australia
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Office of Parliamentary Counsel
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Department of Communications and the Arts

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Department of Defence

Department of Education and Training

Australian Research Council
Australian Skills Quality Authority
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

Department of Employment

Fair Work Commission
Office of the Fair Work Building Industry Inspectorate
Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman
Safe Work Australia
Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority (Seacare Australia)
Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Department of the Environment

Bureau of Meteorology
Clean Energy Regulator
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Department of Finance

Australian Electoral Commission

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australian Trade Commission

Department of Health

Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority
Cancer Australia
Independent Hospital Pricing Authority
National Health and Medical Research Council
National Mental Health Commission
Organ and Tissue Authority
National Health Performance Authority

Department of Human Services

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

IP Australia

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Australian National Audit Office
Australian Public Service Commission
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Office of the Official Secretary of the Governor-General

Department of Social Services

Australian Institute of Family Studies

The Treasury

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Office of Financial Management
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
Australian Securities and Investments Commission
Australian Taxation Office
Commonwealth Grants Commission
Inspector-General of Taxation
National Competition Council
Office of the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board
Office of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
Productivity Commission
Royal Australian Mint

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Appendix C: Exempted agencies

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency

Australian Secret Intelligence Service

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation

CrimTrac Agency

National Blood Authority

National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority

Office of National Assessments

Professional Services Review Scheme

Appendix D: History of the Australian Government's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy

1978 — *Migrant Services and Programs: Report of the Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants* (commonly referred to as the Galbally Report) identifies guiding principles for multicultural policies, including equal access to mainstream government services for migrants and the provision of specialist services where needed.

1978 — The new Ethnic Liaison Officer (ELO) scheme assigns senior officers in Australian Government departments with responsibility for disseminating information about migrants' needs.

1979 — The Australian Government establishes the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) in accordance with recommendation 49 of the Galbally Report.

1982 — The AIMA conducts an evaluation of the implementation of the Galbally Report. It finds that, while there has been considerable progress, the government needs to make more effort to ensure that all institutions are responsive to Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population.

1985 — The Australian Government announces the Access and Equity Strategy, which supersedes the ELO scheme.

1986 — A report to parliament, *Access and Equity in the Delivery of Federal Government Services and Programs to Migrants*, becomes effectively the first Australian Government access and equity report.

1986 — A committee established to review migrant and multicultural programs and services, chaired by Dr James Jupp, releases its report *Don't Settle for Less*. The report includes a recommendation to create a formal advisory and monitoring body to oversee access and equity implementation.

1986 — The AIMA releases its *Future Directions for Multiculturalism* report, which supports the findings of *Don't Settle for Less* and recommends extending the Access and Equity Strategy to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women of non-English-speaking backgrounds, and people of non-English-speaking backgrounds with disability.

1987 — The new Office of Multicultural Affairs, in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio, takes on responsibility for coordinating the Access and Equity Strategy.

1988 — The Office of Multicultural Affairs releases the first official access and equity report, *A Fair Go, A Fair Share: Access and Equity for a Multicultural Australia, Access and Equity Report No. 1*.

1989 — As part of the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia ... Sharing our Future*, the Government extends the Access and Equity Strategy to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and second-generation Australians. It also highlights the double disadvantage experienced by women of non-English-speaking background and people of non-English-speaking backgrounds with disability.

1992 — The Government conducts an evaluation of the Access and Equity Strategy. It records improvements in service delivery but also finds that the strategy's impact on Australian Government departments and agencies is varied.

The Government endorses all of the report's 43 recommendations, including that a cross-portfolio access and equity report be tabled in parliament annually.

1993 — The Government tables the first annual access and equity report in parliament.

1996 — The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs releases *A Fair Go For All: Report on Migrant Access and Equity*, following the committee's inquiry into the extent to which access and equity principles are being applied in government service delivery. The report highlights the need to clearly define access and equity so that affected government entities can more easily understand its purpose and application.

1996 — The Government transfers functions of the Office of Multicultural Affairs to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

1996 — The Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society replaces the Access and Equity Strategy. The charter is endorsed at the state/territory and local government levels.

1998 — The Government officially launches the charter nationwide.

2001 — The Government introduces a performance management framework for the charter.

2003 — The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) undertakes the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants. The review's findings lead to revised performance indicators being included in the charter's performance management framework.

2005 — DIMIA, in consultation with key stakeholders, conducts an evaluation of the Australian Government's multicultural policy and programs, including the Access and Equity Strategy. It finds the arrangements for the Access and Equity Strategy to be broadly appropriate but suggests that departments and agencies need greater ownership and accountability to ensure that their programs are fair and equitable.

2006 — A new Access and Equity Framework, *Accessible Government Services for All* replaces the charter. While agencies continue to provide annual access and equity reporting, the associated report to parliament is tabled every two years rather than annually.

2010 — The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council, chaired by Andrew Demetriou, presents its statement on cultural diversity, *The People of Australia*. It recommends a strengthened and more independent access and equity framework.

2011 — The Government launches *The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy*. The policy assigns oversight of the Access and Equity Strategy to the Australian Multicultural Council. It commits to conducting an inquiry into the responsiveness of Australian Government services to Australia’s CALD population.

2012 — The Access and Equity Inquiry Panel, chaired by Peter Hughes PSM, presents its report *Access and Equity for a Multicultural Australia*. The report finds that commitment to and application of access and equity are inconsistent across Australian Government entities. It makes 20 recommendations to rejuvenate access and equity policy, implementation and practices.

2013 — The Government updates and revises the Access and Equity Framework, now called the *Multicultural Access and Equity Policy — Respecting Diversity. Improving Responsiveness*. This policy broadly targets Australia’s CALD communities. It does not extend to other sectors of the community (for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people with disability), as there are separate policy and reporting obligations to address the distinct needs of these and other groups.

2013 — Lead responsibility for coordinating the policy and its implementation transfers from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to the Department of Social Services.

2016 — The Department of Social Services introduces revised arrangements for implementing the policy. The reforms aim to deliver a streamlined and more effective system by removing unnecessary internal red tape, increasing cross-agency collaboration and strengthening reporting obligations.





