# Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020

## Planning, data collection and reporting

### Planning

The objective of the *Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020 and Guidelines* is to provide all Western Australian public sector agencies with the tools necessary to promote equitable access to information and services through the provision of language services.

Agencies can do this by:

- including the provision of language services and multilingual information into core operational plans and/or project budgets

- ensuring staff are aware of their agency's language services policies and procedures, including working effectively with interpreters

- providing staff with access to cultural competency and cross-cultural communication training, opportunities to work with interpreters, and input into multilingual information strategies as aspects of their agency's management of cultural diversity both internally and externally

- developing a register of bilingual/multilingual staff, and a policy relating to their role when liaising with people from CaLD backgrounds

- supporting staff to obtain a tertiary qualification and/or NAATI credential using their language skills to assist clients

- collating and utilising data on languages spoken by clients to develop more responsive and targeted client services.

Western Australian public sector agencies must incorporate appropriate arrangements for funded non-government service organisations to engage interpreters and translators for service delivery and make them aware of how to access assistance through the Common Use Arrangement (CUA) for Interpreting and Translating Services.

**Tips for promoting language services within Western Australian public sector agencies**

- upload the policy and guidelines to the front (news) page of your agency's intranet

- hold information sessions or workshops for front-line service staff

- inform executive officers, managers and service staff about how to use the policy and guidelines, and have a conversation about who is doing what and how

- develop short e-learning modules addressing the core principles of your agency's language services policy and procedures that staff can complete quickly as part of their ongoing professional development

- share good news stories across the agency via internal e-newsletters

- include information about the policy, guidelines and outcomes in Corporate Executive briefings

- promote completion of the **Diverse WA** online cultural competency training program, particularly the interpreting module.

For external promotional ideas, see the *Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020 and Guidelines* chapter about **Multilingual communication strategies.**

## Data collection and reporting

Collecting data about the agency's clients can help determine the demand for language services.

The main language other than English spoken at home and English proficiency are two of the four *core* cultural and linguistic indicators recommended by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The other two core indicators are country of birth and Indigenous status.

Other *standard* indicators are ancestry; birthplace of parents; first language spoken; languages spoken at home; main language spoken at home; religious affiliation; and year of arrival in Australia.

Agencies are encouraged to collect the four core data indicators and to identify and include relevant standard variables as appropriate.

Depending on the agency's business, it could also be useful to collect data on:

- the number and frequency of requests for interpreters and translations
- the preferred and most appropriate type of interpreting for clients (for example, onsite only, telephone only)
- results of stakeholder satisfaction surveys. Feedback from clients about their experience with access to, and the quality of, the language services they received can help agencies to improve service delivery.

Data analysis can reveal:

- whether the service or program is reaching the target audience
- whether certain groups are accessing agency services or programs more than others
- trends over time
- whether new strategies need to be considered to draw in other target groups.

Data can also provide evidence to secure funding to continue a successful program or introduce a new initiative.

■ Analysing data about first languages other than English spoken at home, together with proficiency in spoken English, can help an agency identify the need for language services and inform their communication and marketing strategies.

■ Language service providers listed as contractors on the Department of Finance's **Common Use Arrangement (CUA) in Interpreting and Translating** must supply quarterly sales reports to the Department of Finance.

The reports include data about category of service provided to an agency (CaLD languages, Australian Aboriginal Languages and Auslan); the type of service supplied (onsite, telephone, video conference, translation, other); name of language/s interpreted or translated; the name of the practitioner and qualification level; number of service hours; service rate (for example, per hour); and the total cost-price to the agency for the services provided (including GST).

## Further reading

Office of Multicultural Interests

- **Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020 and Guidelines**
- **Guide to Cultural and Linguistic Data Collection for the Public Sector**
- **Search Diversity WA**

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
www.abs.gov.au

- **ABS TableBuilder**—an online data tool to create tables, graphs and maps of Census data
- ABS—**A guide for using statistics for evidence-based policy** (2010)
- ABS—**Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups** (2016)

Department of Finance, Government Procurement – Contracts WA

- **CUAIS2017—InterpretingandT ranslating Services**
- **Who are the Contractors?**