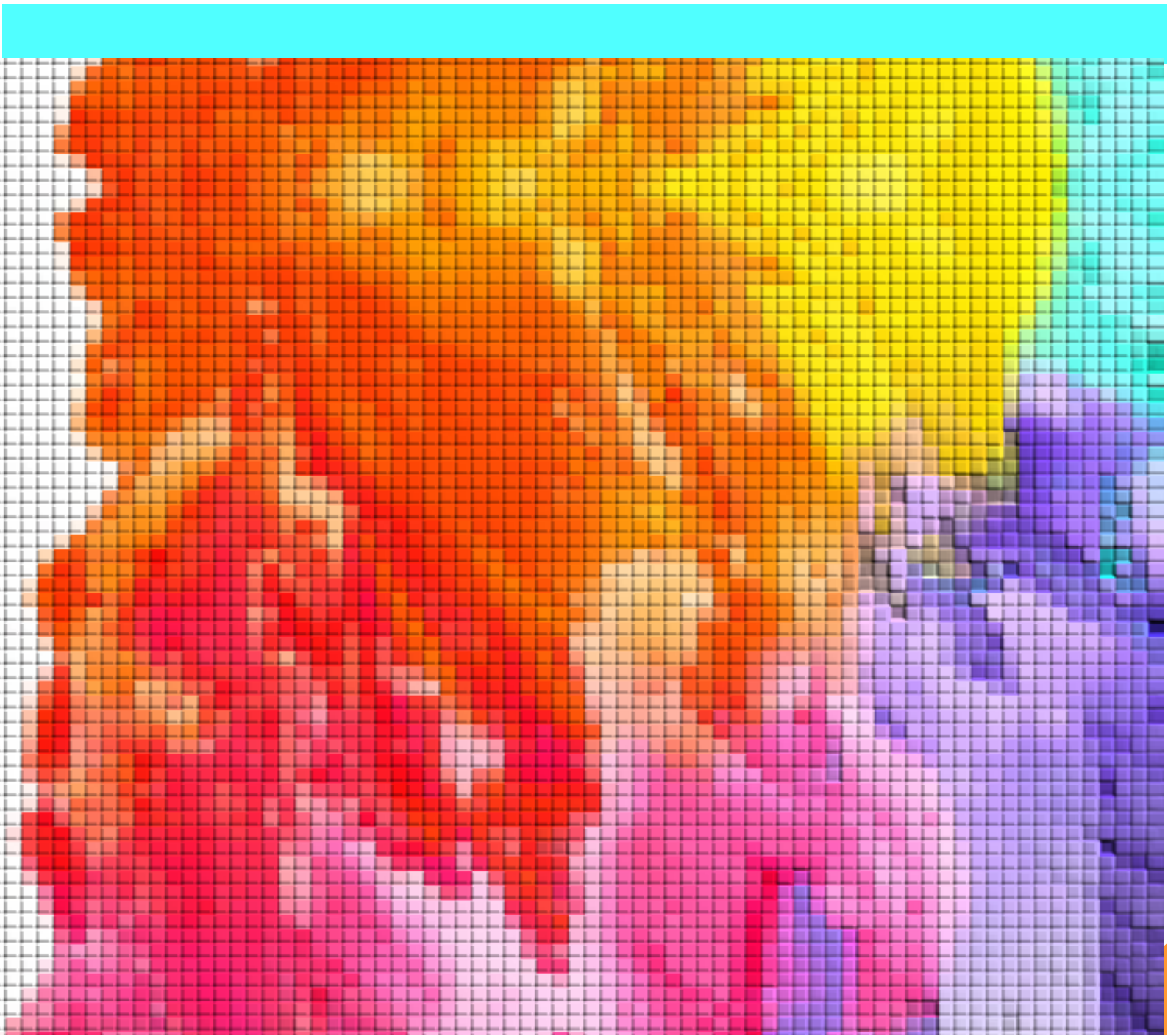
Australian Government

Multicultural access and equity: Australian Government services report 2017–22



Multicultural access and equity: Australian Government services report 2017–22

COPYRIGHT

© Commonwealth of Australia 2024

With the exception of the Coat of Arms, the entity's logo, third party content and where otherwise stated, all material presented in this publication is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australian Licence. To the extent that copyright subsists in a third party, permission will be required by a third party to reuse the material.

Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia Licence is a standard form licence agreement that allows you to copy, distribute, transmit and adapt this publication provided that you attribute the work.

The details of the relevant licence conditions are available on the Creative Commons website, as is the full Creative Commons legal code.

The Commonwealth's preference is that you attribute this publication (and any material sourced from it) using the following wording: © Commonwealth of Australia 2024, Department of Home Affairs, Multicultural Access and Equity: Australian Government Services Report 2017–22.

Material used 'as supplied'

Provided you have not modified or transformed the material in any way (including, for example, by changing the text, calculating percentage changes, graphing or charting data, or deriving new statistics from published statistics), the Department prefers the following attribution:

Source: *The Department of Home Affairs.*

Use of the Coat of Arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed at:
www.pmc.gov.au/government/commonwealth-coat-arms

CONTACT OFFICER

Requests for information about this report should be directed to:

Multicultural Affairs Policy Team, Multicultural Affairs Branch
Department of Home Affairs
PO Box 25
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Email:

Website:

ISSN 2653-0368 (Online)
ISSN 2653-108X (Print)

Contents

Foreword 4

Executive summary 5

Report structure 6

PART 1. Role of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy in a culturally diverse Australia 7

PART 2. Supporting culturally and linguistically diverse Australians in response to the COVID-19 pandemic 10

PART 3. Consolidated results against the 6 Multicultural Access and Equity Policy commitments 16

PART 4. Community feedback 48

PART 5. Future direction and recommendations 53

Appendix A – Acronyms and initialisms 54

Appendix B – Reporting departments and agencies 56

Appendix C – History of the Australian Government's multicultural access and equity reporting 62

Foreword

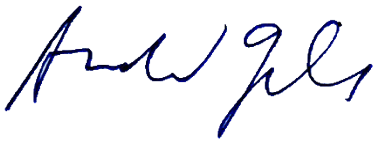
Australia is one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world. Over half (51.5 per cent) of the Australian population was either born overseas or has a parent who was. We identify with about 320 ancestries and speak 429 languages, including 183 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.[1]

The Australian Government believes that this cultural diversity, an inherent Australian characteristic, must be harnessed fully to deliver the social and economic benefits required to build a more productive and socially cohesive Australia. Australians of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds should have the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, our society. To this end, the Government is committed to ensuring its programs and services are accessible to all eligible Australians and to achieving equitable outcomes for them. The Multicultural Access and Equity Policy is key to the achievement of these goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts highlighted the importance of supporting culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians with accurate and timely information about the range of services offered by government. During this evolving pandemic, accurate and credible government information countered misinformation and disinformation circulating in communities, helping to keep Australians safe. The Australian Government's comprehensive response package to the COVID-19 pandemic involved a number of government agencies working together to reduce damage inflicted on the social, economic and emotional wellbeing of all Australians. This comprehensive response is a tangible demonstration of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy in action.

After a delay in providing this Report due to the impacts of COVID-19, I am pleased to note that over the extended 2017–22 reporting period the number of departments and agencies reporting on how they implement the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy has grown each year. Many departments and agencies have taken new approaches to meeting the needs of the diverse society they serve.

The Government will continue to build on this progress to provide better access and equitable opportunities for CALD Australians, whose full participation will help strengthen a socially cohesive nation.



The Hon Andrew Giles MP
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Snapshot of Australia: A picture of the economic, social and cultural make-up of Australia on Census Night, 10 August 2021', 28 June 2022, accessed 25 January 2024; Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), 'SBS Australian Census Explorer', July 2022, accessed 25 January 2024.

Executive summary

The *Multicultural access and equity: Australian Government services report 2017–22* (the Report) summarises the performance of Australian Government departments and agencies in implementing the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy (the MA&E Policy).[2] The policy applies to all non-corporate Commonwealth entities under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).[3]

Multicultural access and equity (MA&E) has been a guiding principle of Australia's successful approach to multicultural affairs and social cohesion. Our ongoing commitment to putting this principle into practice helps maximise the benefits of our multicultural society by supporting the full participation of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in the social, economic and cultural life of the nation.[4]

The MA&E Policy aims to ensure that Australian Government programs and services identify, understand and respond to the needs of all Australians in a manner that is inclusive of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although the broad focus of the MA&E Policy is CALD Australians, its goal is to achieve equality of opportunity and equity of outcomes for all Australians. Government departments and agencies apply these commitments to relevant activities, including those conducted on behalf of government by contractors and service delivery partners.

The Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) has prepared this report in its capacity as the lead agency for coordinating the implementation of the MA&E Policy, drawing from individual reporting by Australian Government departments and agencies in the period 2017–22. The Report covers this extended period, as preparation of a triennial report for 2017–20 was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Responses for the reporting period show steady performance across the MA&E Policy's 6 commitments, which are essential to the effective delivery of programs and services. These are leadership, engagement, performance, capability, responsiveness and openness. The good practice examples and case studies in this Report illustrate the practical steps taken by departments and agencies to remove barriers that may prevent CALD Australians from accessing government services or programs.

Reporting on MA&E has increased steadily from 71 per cent of departments and agencies in 2017–18, to 95 per cent across 2020–22.

The Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) *State of the Service Report 2022–23* notes that, as at 30 June 2022, 23.1 per cent of APS staff were born overseas and 23.4 per cent speak a first language that is not exclusively English.[5] Since 2000, there has been an increase in the proportion of APS employees born overseas, especially those coming from non-English speaking countries. The leadership and capability commitments in the MA&E Policy enunciate practical strategies on how departments and agencies can utilise the skills, innovation and creativity that a culturally diverse workforce offers. Notably, a number of departments and agencies have strategies to harness the particular skills and talents of their CALD staff, including through CALD action plans. A number of departments and agencies have also identified diversity champions in the senior executive service (SES) to ensure the MA&E principles are embedded in the work of the department or agency. The APSC's CALD Employment Strategy is due for release in 2024.

The unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic required swift, agile and tailored responses across a number of areas of Australian Government policies, programs and services. Government agencies developed innovative methods of communicating the wide range of government initiatives so that all communities had access to accurate, credible and timely information. This was particularly important when promoting health advisory messages, Jobseeker and Jobkeeper payment eligibility, and mental health initiatives.

---

[2] Australian Government, *The Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Guide: For Australian Government Departments and Agencies* [PDF 1242KB], 2018, viewed 24 January 2024.

[3] There were 100 non-corporate Commonwealth entities listed under the PGPA Act as of 1 July 2022.

[4] In this Report, 'culturally and linguistically diverse' (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. First Nations people are covered under separate policies.

[5] Australian Public Service Commission, *State of the Service Report 2022–23*, 26 September 2023, viewed 24 January 2024.

Report structure

The MA&E Policy applies to all non-corporate Commonwealth entities under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The broad focus of the policy is CALD Australians. The Report uses the term CALD to ensure consistency of terminology across reporting periods, and department and agency input. The Report does not extend to First Nations people or people with disability. The distinct needs of these and other groups are addressed through separate, although interrelated, initiatives.

The last MA&E Triennial Report was tabled in Parliament in June 2017, by the Minister responsible for the Department of Social Services (DSS), which had charge of the MA&E Policy at the time. The responsibility for implementing, coordinating and reporting on the policy was transferred to Home Affairs in December 2017 as part of machinery-of-government changes. While this Report continues to provide an overview of the performance of Australian Government departments and agencies across the 6 commitments, the information presented follows a different format to that of the previous Triennial Report.

During this reporting period, some departments and agencies were renamed, or were subsumed under other portfolios, under machinery-of-government changes. References to departments and agencies throughout this report reflect structures current at 30 June 2022.

Given the extraordinary circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, a separate part has been included in the Report to capture examples of the exceptional work undertaken by multiple departments and agencies to ensure the needs of CALD Australians were addressed at that time (see **Part 2**).

The Report has 5 parts.

PART 1. Role of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy in a culturally diverse Australia

Provides context to the MA&E Policy's 6 commitments against a backdrop of Australia's cultural diversity and our success as a cohesive nation based on a unique model of integration.

PART 2. Supporting culturally and linguistically diverse Australians in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Highlights examples of best practice targeted work undertaken by select departments to ensure that the range of government initiatives in response to the pandemic were communicated to CALD Australians.

PART 3. Consolidated results against the 6 Multicultural Access and Equity Policy commitments

Captures the performance of departments and agencies that provided reports against the 6 commitments in the reporting period. It also includes good practice examples and case studies for each commitment.

PART 4. Community feedback

Analyses community feedback on government services from consultations conducted by the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.

PART 5. Future direction and recommendations

Outlines the future direction of the MA&E Policy's implementation through renewed engagement with departments and agencies to develop a robust reporting framework.

PART 1. Role of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy in a culturally diverse Australia

Australia – a unique model of multicultural success

Australia is a prosperous and socially cohesive liberal democracy. We have one of the world's most thriving multicultural societies. Our diversity is a national strength. We have common values, a shared language and a commitment to freedom, security and prosperity. Contemporary Australia is built on a foundation of migration. Since the mid-2000s a falling birth rate, combined with a relatively high number of overseas arrivals, has resulted in net overseas migration again contributing more to population growth than natural increase. Since 2005, around 38 per cent of population growth has occurred from natural increase, with net overseas migration accounting for the remaining 62 per cent.[6]

Australia's culturally diverse society is made up of migrants from every corner of the world. This diversity is reflected in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021 Census data. According to this data, over a quarter (29.3 per cent) of Australians are first generation (born overseas), and just under another quarter (22.2 per cent) are second generation (Australian born with one or both parents born overseas); in turn, nearly half (48.5 per cent) are third+ generation (Australian born with both parents born in Australia). Our diversity makes us immeasurably stronger and this strength has endured throughout our history.

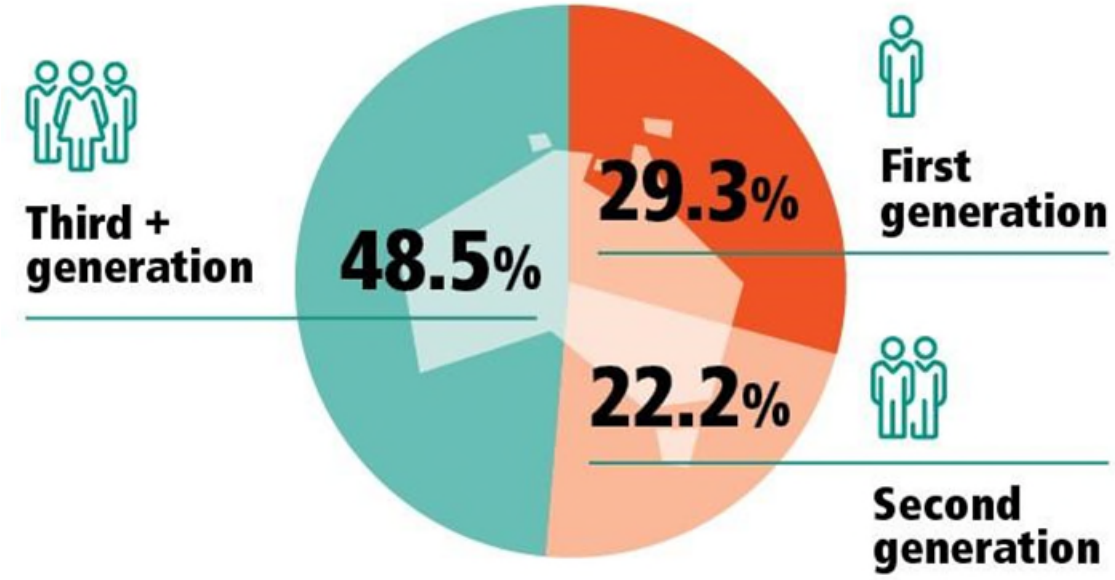


Figure 1: Snapshot of Australia – 2021 Census[7]

Amid the rich diversity of our cultural and religious groups, we have found a way to forge an inclusive Australian identity. We have been successful, in part, because social integration policies and programs have contributed to the development of our contemporary multicultural identity. Resilience is embedded in our foundations – we unify during times of crisis and look after each other and are protected by our shared values, democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Australia's social cohesion strengthened in 2020, despite the unprecedented disruption caused by the twin health and economic challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 Scanlon Mapping Social Cohesion Survey revealed a positive trend in Australians' attitudes despite 2020 being a difficult and challenging year.[8]

[6] Adapted from Australian Government, 'National projections', 6 January 2023, accessed 1 February 2024.
[7] ABS, 'Snapshot of Australia'.
[8] Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, *Mapping Social Cohesion 2020*, 4 February 2021, accessed 24 January 2024.

Social cohesion declined between 2020 and 2022, as the 2022 Scanlon Mapping Social Cohesion Survey shows, primarily with regard to satisfaction with pride, justice, and sense of belonging and worth within Australian society.[9] Economic and financial concerns contributed to these trends, with economic inequality, for instance, weighing down our social cohesion.

Despite these negative trends, we remain connected to multiculturalism and our communities. For example, in 2022, as the Scanlon Mapping Social Cohesion Survey for the year shows, 88 per cent of people agreed that multiculturalism has been good for Australia, and 82 per cent of people agreed that they feel a sense of community in their neighbourhood.

Multicultural access and equity – ensuring government services are accessible to all Australians

Access to services and equitable outcomes for CALD Australians have long been a feature of Australia's successful multicultural society. Government programs and services that meet the needs of a diverse community will be critical to ensuring this continued success. The MA&E Policy is the overarching framework to this commitment.

As a distinct government policy, MA&E has been in existence for nearly 40 years. Successive Australian governments have maintained their commitment to MA&E, ensuring that departments and agencies implement MA&E initiatives. The genesis of the MA&E Policy can be found in the 1978 *Migrant Services and Programs: Report of the Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services to Migrants*, known as the Galbally Report, which identified guiding principles for multicultural policies that included equal access to mainstream government services for migrants. The government of the day endorsed these principles and accepted all 57 recommendations of the Galbally Report.[10]

In 1985, the Australian Government announced the Access and Equity Strategy. In 1986, a report to Parliament, *Access and Equity in the Delivery of Federal Government Services and Programs to Migrants*, became the first government access and equity report.

A detailed timeline of access and equity reporting is at **Appendix C**.

The current MA&E Policy is based on the following 6 commitments that are considered to be central to achieving the policy's objectives.

[9] Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, *Mapping Social Cohesion 2022*, 23 November 2022, accessed 31 January 2024.
[10] The Hon Malcolm Fraser MP, Prime Minister, *AIMA Evaluation of Galbally Report* [Media Release], 25 July 1982, accessed 24 January 2024.



Leadership
Australian Government departments and agencies will demonstrate a commitment to MA&E and take responsibility for its implementation.



Engagement
Australian Government departments and agencies will identify and strategically engage with CALD clients, stakeholders and communities.



Responsiveness
Australian Government departments and agencies will have strategies in place to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are responsive to CALD Australians.



Performance
Australian Government departments and agencies will have strong and clear mechanisms in place to measure their MA&E performance.



Capability
Australian Government departments and agencies will understand, and have the capacity to respond to, the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia's population.



Openness
Australian Government departments and agencies will be transparent in their implementation of MA&E.

Departments and agencies are required to apply these 6 commitments to their daily activities. Given the broad range of objectives and activities delivered across the Government, how each commitment applies to individual departments and agencies will vary. Depending on business imperative and clients, each organisation has the responsibility to determine the practical actions it will take and the focus it will give each commitment.

Departments and agencies were asked to rate their progress against the 6 commitments in the MA&E Policy. The ratings are 'Not started', 'Started', 'Early progress', 'Progress is clear', 'Working well' and 'Not applicable'.

The proportion of applicable responses with a rating of 'Working well', 'Progress is clear', 'Early progress' or 'Started' is graphed for each commitment in **Part 3**.

PART 2. Supporting culturally and linguistically diverse Australians in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The Australian Government stepped up its response to COVID-19 across a range of areas affecting CALD Australians. Critical to the response was a comprehensive promotion and engagement strategy to disseminate the information on the range of services and programs. Targeted support for CALD Australians was a major priority for Government.

The case studies below illustrate the breadth and depth of the Government's response at the height of the pandemic and during the post-pandemic phase across the Australian population. In particular, the case studies show that the departments and agencies took concrete steps to provide CALD Australians with critically important government advice and information in a wide range of languages. Although the main focus of the MA&E Policy is on CALD Australians and does not extend to First Nations people or people with a disability, in Part 2 we acknowledge the diversity of CALD Australians and the important work done by departments and agencies to address the range of their needs.

Department of Education

Review of the impact of COVID-19 on school students with disability

The *Review of the impact of COVID-19 on school students with disability* (the Review) was an election commitment announced by (now Prime Minister) the Hon Anthony Albanese MP in his speech to the National Press Club on 25 January 2022. The Review was conducted by the Department of Education in 2022 and 2023.

The Review examined:

a. the educational experiences of school students with disability throughout the pandemic
b. the impact of those educational experiences on the wellbeing and education-related outcomes of school students with disability
c. how support for school students with disability was managed by governments, education authorities and schools.

The Review heard directly from students with disability, parents/carers, educators and other stakeholders with lived experience of the COVID-19 period about how it affected the education of students with disability. To support accessibility, the discussion paper was translated into Easy English, Auslan and 8 commonly used community languages (Arabic, Dari, Korean, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese, Thai, Traditional Chinese and Vietnamese). The video stories included a visible Auslan translator; the student survey was in Easy English; the questionnaire included an option of Easy English; and the webinar included a visible Auslan interpreter.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Smartraveller Campaign is the Australian Government's key instrument for protecting the security and welfare of Australians travelling overseas by promoting understanding and use of consular travel advice. Smartraveller content is written to government accessibility standards, aiming for a plain English reading level of year 7 or 8.

In 2020, Smartraveller launched 'Check your travel smarts' (Phase V) and COVID-19-related advertising that aimed to raise awareness of 'do not travel' advice and the support available to Australians overseas. As restrictions eased, the campaign moved to educating Australians about the risks of travelling in a COVID-19 environment. It targeted prospective travellers over 18 years, including those from CALD backgrounds. It concluded on 30 June 2022.

A Communities Hub containing translated general travel advice content was developed as part of the Phase V campaign in early 2020. Translated COVID-19 content was added to the Communities Hub during the pandemic. Specific CALD responses to COVID-19 included:

- engaging a specialist communications agency to develop and implement CALD advertising and communication activities for Smartraveller Phase V and COVID-19-related campaigns
- translating advertising material (online, social media and outdoor) and adapting campaign executions for CALD-specific press and online

- translating the COVID-19 travel ban information into multiple languages* and disseminating it through social media and digital advertising
- translating the Consular Services Charter and key COVID-19 advice for Australian travellers into multiple languages*
- translating the COVID-19 Global Health Advisory into multiple languages*
- undertaking research among CALD audiences to help evaluate the effectiveness of communication activities.

*Languages included Arabic, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Indonesian, Thai and Vietnamese.

Department of Health

COVID-19 public information

The Department of Health led the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In developing communication materials on current health advice and actions Australians should be taking, the department developed material in plain English to improve accessibility for people with low English literacy.

Where materials required translation, National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited professional translators – as a minimum – were used and the material was checked by a second, independent NAATI-accredited professional translator. The department developed approximately 2928 translated COVID-19 resources, publishing 2684 on its website.

The whole-of-government advertising agency, Universal McCann, used their multicultural agency, Identity, to recommend appropriate media channels. Identity engaged with peak CALD community bodies, such as the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) and Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care, for assistance in engaging CALD communities as part of the media buy.

Public relations efforts extended and amplified the paid media component of the campaign. These included dissemination of stakeholder packs with translated resources to multicultural communities; translated editorials for the ethnic press; in-language radio advertisements and videos developed in partnership with the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) in over 60 languages; and factsheets, videos and posters available on the department's website in up to 67 languages.

The Department of Health established a CALD Communities COVID-19 Health Advisory Group in recognition of the challenges of some individuals and communities in relation to public health interfaces and access to health services in the context of the pandemic. The advisory group gave input into the Australian Government's evidence-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic and advised on its impacts on multicultural populations in terms of health. The advisory group included members of peak organisations representing migrant, refugee and CALD Australians, such as FECCA, the Migration Council of Australia, Multicultural Aged Care, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH), Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) and the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA).

Health worked closely with Home Affairs and its state/territory-based Community Liaison Officers to distribute information to CALD Australians. The two departments regularly discussed the information needs of CALD Australians and shared information across jurisdictions at state/territory health department meetings.

COVID-19 vaccine program funding for CALD Australians

From February 2021 to 31 December 2022, the Australian Government invested $18.4 million to support CALD Australians during the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. This support ensured that the COVID-19 vaccine public information campaign reached CALD Australians at the grassroots level through targeted and tailored community-led activities.

- Funding was provided to peak multicultural organisations (FECCA, MYAN, SCOA and Social Policy Group) to:
  - lead grassroots community consultation and forums
  - help develop culturally appropriate and effective communication materials and policy
  - administer a small grants program to support community organisations in delivering tailored COVID-19 vaccination campaigns.
- The CALD COVID-19 Small Grants Fund, administered by FECCA, supported grassroots multicultural community groups in designing and delivering tailored COVID-19 vaccine consultations for their communities.

- The national COVID-19 vaccine bicultural health educator program, called Health in My Language (HIML), was established and implemented by the MCWH.
  - The MCWH worked with partner organisations to recruit, train and coordinate a team of more than 40 bicultural health educators, speaking more than 30 languages and reaching CALD Australians of all genders and ages in each jurisdiction.
  - The program delivered on the commitment of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program CALD Implementation Plan, which was developed in partnership with, and endorsed by, Advisory Group members to ensure that bicultural workers were embedded in the National COVID-19 Vaccine Program to render it culturally safe and equitable in access for everyone.

Commonwealth Home Support Programme and COVID-19

In early 2020, a number of Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) COVID-19 measures were introduced to enable CHSP providers to redirect their activities to COVID-19 priorities, where required.

- Providers were given full flexibility to reallocate their 2019–20 and 2020–21 funds across services and regions for which they are funded. Providers also received authority to carry unspent funds forward into 2020–21.
- An additional $50 million in funding was allocated to existing CHSP meal providers to meet anticipated increases in demand for prepared meals.
- Providers were permitted to use unspent 2019–20 funds to purchase home monitoring technology for at-risk clients to ensure they remained safe in their homes.
- An additional $70.2 million ($40 million in 2020–21 and $30.2 million in 2021–22) was made available, and providers were invited to submit proposals for additional funds to assist with their service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding was to help providers maintain and expand service delivery to address increased demand for services; trial new and innovative ways of delivering safe and effective aged care services; retain key workforce; and cover the cost of necessary personal protective equipment.

CHSP service delivery to clients – including CALD CHSP clients – was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic: providers noted that CALD clients in particular were socially isolated by the COVID-19 restrictions due to their limited support networks and differing language and cultural needs.

Examples of CHSP service delivery to CALD clients adapted for the pandemic were:

- Social Support Group activities where providers conducted online video/zoom sessions instead of face-to-face group sessions
- purchase of IT equipment to conduct online activities, maintain social connections during isolation and take part in digital activities for education sessions
- regular phone wellbeing checks to remain connected with clients
- delivery of online or telehealth Allied Health and Therapy services
- assistance for clients purchase groceries online, providing pick-up and delivery of groceries and pharmacy items to clients' homes
- telephone and web-based social support to maintain community connectedness, including the provision of virtual arts and crafts, 3-way group chats, and virtual group activities such as dancing, choir and technology learning
- purchase of personal alarms for clients who are socially isolated
- employment of bilingual workers to conduct online in-language activities with clients with limited English
- transport services to assist participants attend medical appointments and go shopping, as well as delivering meals and running errands
- accompanied physical activities such as a walk in the park and in-home exercises
- telephone support to help older CALD clients experiencing barriers to accessing community services to find out about available pathways and supports in their local area.

Mental health response

The Mental Health Division (MHD) of the Department of Health sought assistance from Home Affairs' Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National to translate Beyond Blue advice into 63 languages. MHD also ran initiatives to ensure people from CALD backgrounds were able to access mental health information, support and services.

As part of the mental health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 15 May 2020 the Australian Government committed additional funding to support access to services for vulnerable people in the community who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

- This included funding of $1.1 million over 2020–21 through Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to support the enhanced delivery of existing and targeted mental health services to CALD Australians. This funding recognised that people from CALD backgrounds may have experienced additional barriers to accessing information and services, including digital services, as a result of the pandemic.
- Information about the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service was made available in over 63 languages. The service was available on the Beyond Blue website or on 1800 512 348.

Department of Home Affairs

Home Affairs played a key role in the Australian Government's response in support of CALD Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic, through:

- promoting Government advisory warnings
- countering misinformation and disinformation by providing national and community-based messaging on health advice, including information on testing and vaccines.

Through extensive engagements, multicultural community representatives were equipped with information to assist their communities. These community-initiated responses continue to be critical in supporting communities at the grassroots level to access government information.

Multilingual COVID-19 resources

From March 2020, Home Affairs and the Department of Health collaborated with SBS to publish in-language information online and through SBS media. SBS translated public health messaging provided by the Department of Health. The materials listed on the SBS Coronavirus web page include audio, videos and online messages and link to the www.australia.gov.au web page and Home Affairs' *COVID-19 In your language* website.

The *COVID-19 In your language* website, launched on 29 April 2020, hosted whole-of-government COVID-19-related information in 63 languages, and made a valuable contribution to social cohesion in the Australian community by providing an authoritative source of trusted information across multiple government services. In 2020–21, the website attracted almost 1 million unique page views. The most popular languages accessed on the website during 2020–21 were Simplified Chinese, German, Traditional Chinese, Spanish and Japanese.

To support the Department of Health, Home Affairs also translated documents to support CALD Australians' use of the COVIDSafe app, such as translating the:

- User Guide for the COVIDSafe app into 63 languages (3 July 2020)
- COVIDSafe app content into 9 languages: Arabic, Greek, Italian, Korean, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Turkish and Vietnamese (from 18 August 2020).

Regional Directors and Community Liaison Officers – Increased engagement with CALD Australians

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Home Affairs refocused community engagement with CALD stakeholders through the work of Regional Directors covering each state and territory – and their respective Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Network, to increase engagement with community representatives. This included distributing key government resources and translated materials on COVID-19 and feeding back community concerns to Government.

Regional Directors and the CLO Network significantly stepped up engagement with CALD Australians to regularly assess community requirements and to identify the best communication channels, including to ensure information reached community members who did not have access to the internet. They worked collaboratively with multicultural community leaders, state and territory government counterparts, and service providers to ensure COVID-19 information was disseminated as quickly and widely as possible.

Relevant translated COVID-19 materials, including radio scripts and links to materials that can be printed, were then distributed via identified and targeted channels. Regional Directors and CLOs worked closely with state and territory counterparts to ensure consistency in messaging.

Regional Directors and the CLO Network undertook more than 9400 engagements with community stakeholders in 2020–21. This is a 42 per cent increase on the more than 6600 engagements in 2019–20 and a 510 per cent increase on the more than 1500 engagements undertaken in 2018–19.

Home Affairs continued its close engagement with communities throughout 2021–22, with Regional Directors and the CLO Network undertaking more than 9500 engagements.

Interpreting services

Home Affairs provided targeted interpreting services in response to COVID-19.

- Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National delivered dedicated interpreting services for the National Corona Virus Health Information Hotline and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Corona Hotline.
- TIS National launched the new services channel *Telehealth Video Interpreting* in August 2020, initially made available to general practitioners, medical specialists, nurse practitioners and allied health professionals.
- TIS National completed a major system enhancement on 3 July 2022. All TIS National clients can now request pre-booked telephone, onsite and video remote interpreting using the one self-service booking tool, TIS Online. This provides greater flexibility and accessibility for TIS National clients and interpreters, including for those in remote areas.

In-person interpreting services

In order to respond to the changing needs of the community and public health advice at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Home Affairs progressively shifted from on-demand in-person services to an appointment-only model. Appointments were scheduled by Home Affairs only in situations where a client was required to be physically present in the office. Scheduled appointments allowed Home Affairs to better prepare for, and comprehensively respond to, individual needs. When CALD clients were requested to attend an interview, they were given the option to use TIS National.

Online citizenship ceremonies

Online ceremonies were introduced from 31 March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and were conducted by Home Affairs officials, federal members of parliament and senators, and local government councils.

At 30 June 2020, 45,597 people had acquired Australian citizenship through online ceremonies.

Online citizenship ceremonies assisted in reducing the number of approved applicants awaiting ceremonies from a peak of 97,655 people in the week ending 24 April 2020 (soon after restrictions on in-person ceremonies were introduced due to COVID-19 risks) to 60,053 at 30 June 2020. This is a reduction of 37,602 people (39 per cent) in a 3-month period.

Department of Social Services

A key initiative of the Department of Social Services' (DSS) response to impacts on accessibility and equity during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–22 was the Cashless Debit Card (CDC).

- During this period, DSS continued to work closely with local stakeholders in CDC sites, even when unable to engage on-the-ground due to COVID-19 restrictions. The department explored alternative ways to engage on the CDC, such as:
  - implementing outbound call strategies
  - emailing factsheets, letters and links to website information to community service providers
  - disseminating information and discussing concerns in existing (virtual) community forums/meetings
  - holding virtual engagement activities, including established Community Reference Group meetings, to strengthen collaboration with community stakeholders.

- A small percentage of CALD CDC participants and other CDC participants live with disability, and the communication strategy reflected this. Plain English, graphics, Auslan and Easy to Read products were developed to make messaging fit for purpose and covered a range of participants in different regions.

Department of the Treasury

- The Treasury led work on the national COVID Response campaign. There were 3 tranches of activity under this campaign banner:

    1. COVID-19 Economic Response Phase 1 (3 April – 16 May) outlining the financial support available, in particular JobKeeper and Income Support payments
    2. COVIDSafe Economy (16 June – 25 July) designed to build confidence in the community about businesses opening up and restarting the economy
    3. COVID-19 Economic Response Phase 2 (26 July – 17 October), informing the community of the extension of economic support measures, in particular changes to timing and eligibility.

- Treasury developed the campaigns in accordance with the principles of the *Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by non-corporate Commonwealth entities* – specifically, Principle 2.
- The CALD advertising used mass media channels: television, print, radio, digital and online.
- The advertisements were translated into 14 languages: Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese.
- Low English proficiency social media advertisements were also moderated in 5 languages: Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin and Vietnamese.
- During this period, Treasury also worked with Home Affairs, who led a project to translate all 'major' COVID-19 announcements across government. Treasury also fed content into the whole-of-government channels www.australia.gov.au, the Australia Government app and @AusGov social media channels.

Translations – lessons learned

Feedback from community stakeholders on the quality and reach of the translated material submitted through a number of channels, such as Home Affairs' CLO Network, is recorded here for reference. Many of these recommendations have been adopted in departments' communication strategies. Some of the recommendations were as follows:

- Use a mix of traditional and digital communication channels.
- Supplement the use of digital platforms with traditional communication means such as radio, television, ethnic newspapers and person-to-person communications (teleconferences with Community Leaders or one-on-one outreach activities with community members).
- Keep information simple, succinct, and only include practical and essential information.
- Ensure all sectors, gender and age demographics in a community receive key information in a targeted and timely way.
- Work together across agencies and sectors to deliver information that is consistently and accurately translated.
- Coordinate between Australian Government departments and state and territory government departments to time the release of information to maintain a regular flow of consistent communications while ensuring that target communities are not overwhelmed with information.
- Counter misinformation and disinformation fed to target communities with credible information from trusted and respected sources.
- Consult with communities and advocacy groups to elicit feedback to develop tailored information for target groups.

PART 3. Consolidated results against the 6 Multicultural Access and Equity Policy commitments

Leadership

Demonstrate a commitment to multicultural access and equity and take responsibility for its implementation

Requirements

The Leadership commitment requires Australian Government departments and agencies to demonstrate their commitment to forward planning for achieving MA&E and to take responsibility for its implementation. It also sets out the role of senior leaders to influence, motivate and empower staff to implement MA&E principles. Additionally, it notes that internal governance processes to monitor delivery against MA&E objectives can also encompass steering committees or reference groups.

Response

Many departments and agencies reported having an SES officer champion MA&E within their departments and agencies. MA&E SES champions within departments and agencies held various positions, with a majority from corporate services and human resources areas.

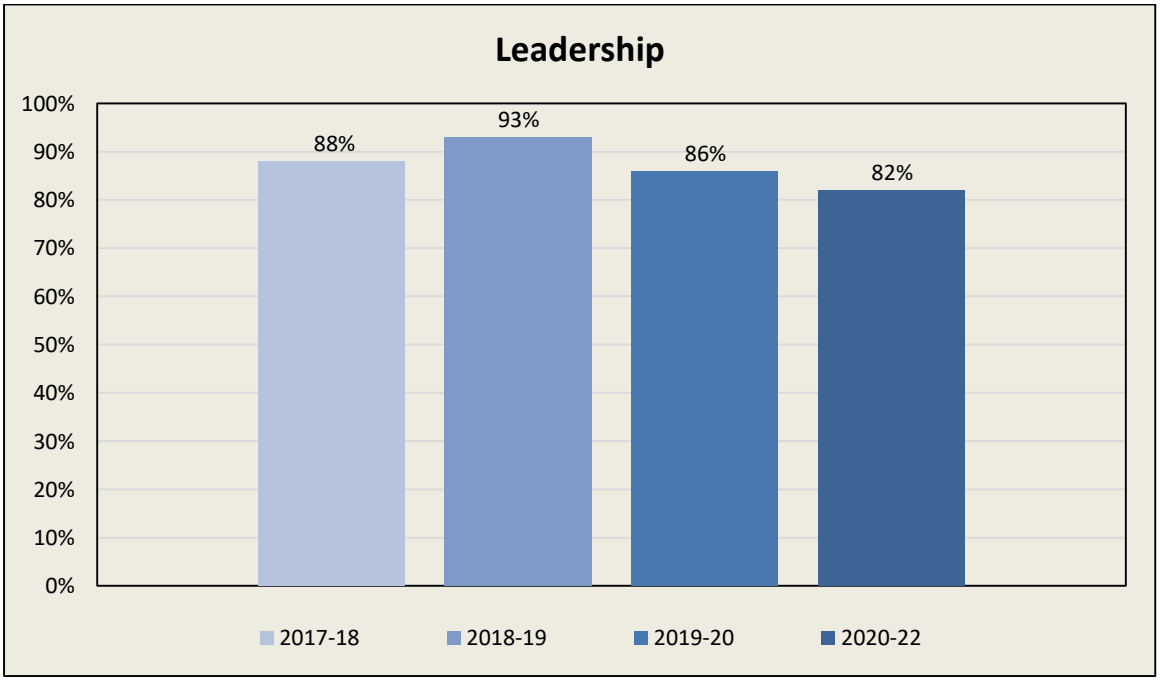


Figure 2: Year-on-year comparison of departments and agencies where an SES officer is the dedicated point of leadership for MA&E implementation during the reporting period

Leadership: good practice examples

It is notable that departments and agencies with MA&E SES champions took steps to support staff with the development and implementation of MA&E principles in planning documentation. This documentation ranged from workplace diversity plans and CALD action plans to MA&E operational plans and annual reports.

2020–22

The **Australian Competition and Consumer Commission** (ACCC) launched a Diversity Demographic form for the purposes of collecting its workforce's data and compiled a list of people from ACCC's diversity networks (including its CALD Network) who agreed to be independent panel members for recruitment processes. In 2022, ACCC's Speak Up, Listen Up reverse mentoring program commenced whereby, in contrast to traditional mentoring, employees from CALD backgrounds share their experiences with a senior leader.

The **Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency** endorsed its Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Plan 2022–25. This plan outlined specific target outcomes and measures to maintain and continue to build an increasingly diverse organisation where all employees belong and feel they can bring their whole selves to work.

The **Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's** CALD Network gave staff from CALD backgrounds and those interested in CALD matters an opportunity to discuss issues in the workplace. The network aims to create an inclusive environment for CALD employees and community members. The network is supported by a deputy secretary as champion and a senior executive co-champion to provide strategic direction and work closely with the Chair, Co-Chair, Regional Ambassadors, network members and the Culture, Diversity and Inclusion Team to understand barriers to inclusion and develop strategies to foster supportive work environments.

The **Department of Home Affairs** appointed 3 SES as dedicated points of contact for MA&E implementation, and established a CALD staff network, which provides an interactive platform for staff from all backgrounds to collaborate. All staff, both nationally and internationally, have access via an internal social network at Home Affairs. Staff were encouraged to share ideas, collaborate on CALD initiatives, host meetings and plan events. During COVID network meetings were virtual rather than in person.

The **Department of Industry, Science and Resources** appointed 2 CALD SES champions, who are committed to contributing to and cultivating diversity and inclusivity principles. This was in addition to the department's CALD Network, which aims to:

- promote cultural diversity and awareness in the department
- support employees with a CALD background
- create a diverse, safe and inclusive workplace.

The **Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts** launched its Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy 2021–24, which underpins the work of the department's D&I Committee. The department's CALD network is led by an SES champion who is a representative on the committee. The strategy supports CALD staff to access training and mentoring in their careers. EL2 and SES staff are also required to complete mandatory cultural awareness training, which is regularly reported on.

Geoscience Australia has a high proportion of staff identifying as CALD, and CALD is one of the 5 core themes of the organisation's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021–25. In implementing the strategy, Geoscience Australia began to identify and remove or reduce barriers to the attraction, retention and progression of CALD staff at all levels. This commenced with appointing an SES woman with a CALD background as CALD champion and conducting a panel discussion, survey and listen-and-learn sessions to better understand the experience of CALD staff.

IP Australia established a CALD employee network in 2022, with an SES champion and approximately 100 members. The network engaged with the Clean Energy Regulator to deliver cultural events and improve connection and support across agencies.

2019–20

The **Australian Skills Quality Authority** (ASQA) established the ASQA Diversity Working Group, comprising 11 volunteers from across ASQA, with the purpose of implementing wide-scale diversity initiatives. ASQA appointed its first Diversity Champion after the launch of its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–22.

The **Department of Education, Skills and Employment** established the MA&E Policy Working Group, under the Policy and Strategy Committee, to plan and execute the effective implementation of the department's objectives. The working group was resourced with a minimum of 2 representatives from each area, and drew especially on areas with programs or a service delivery focus. The working group compiled useful resources on best practice to share within the department and developed the following fact sheets:

- What is the MA&E Policy?
- Communicating with stakeholders from CALD backgrounds
- Collecting data on cultural and linguistic diversity.

The **Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources** appointed 3 new SES CALD champions to contribute and cultivate diversity and inclusivity principles within the department.

The **Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications** established a team of SES Diversity Champions (7 in total, including a CALD champion) who drive and promote a culture of inclusion to enhance work performance and wellbeing by helping create a safe and inclusive workplace for all staff.

The **National Archives of Australia** set out a 2-year forward plan of initiatives under the MA&E Policy for 2019–21. The initiatives identified a clear commitment to maturing compliance with the policy and improving practices and foundational support in order to enhance accessibility for CALD clients and employees. The planned initiatives aim to increase MA&E over this period with a focus on fostering staff awareness of cultural diversity.

Services Australia, formerly the Department of Human Services (DHS), appointed 2 senior executive Multicultural Champions. The agency also implemented the MA&E Policy during 2019–20 through its 2019–20 Corporate Plan, 2019–22 Multicultural Servicing Strategy and Workplace Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2019–23.

2018–19

The **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission** formed a Diversity Strategy working party to collaborate with employees across the organisation to develop a robust and meaningful Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The strategy included MA&E requirements concerning CALD employees and clients. The project had an SES-level sponsor. The commission documented its commitment to MA&E in its Operational Plan and Annual Report.

The **Department of Health** appointed SES Multicultural Champions and established an internal Health CALD Staff Network, with assistance from the Attorney-General's Department staff network and the CALD Champion from the Department of Communications and the Arts.

The **Department of Social Services** (DSS) developed its MA&E Action Plan 2018–20. The activities in the action plan were developed to ensure DSS is able to engage and support all Australians.

The **Workplace Gender Equality Agency** implemented the MA&E Policy as part of the agency's Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2017–19.

2017–18

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) established the CALD Network in late 2017 to support ABS employees from CALD backgrounds. The network was open to ABS employees of all classification levels, particularly employees from CALD backgrounds, and included the senior executive CALD Champion.

Network members met on a regular basis in a 'friendly informal environment' to share knowledge, information and experiences, and build sustainable relationships to support one another in the workplace. Network members received updates on ABS and APS projects, forums and initiatives relating to CALD, and provided input into ABS and external diversity-related strategies as opportunities arose.

The **Department of Defence** appointed 3 Diversity Champions to promote awareness of diversity.

The **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet** (PM&C) launched their CALD Network of about 200 staff, which played a key role in developing the department's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.

A CALD Champion provided visible leadership, promoted and represented CALD staff and facilitated engagement between the PM&C CALD Network and PM&C Executive. The CALD Champion was appointed at SES level, and the role was held by a staff member with a CALD background.

The **National Archives of Australia** appointed a new MA&E Champion from within the Archives' senior executive.

The **Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman** (OCO) set up an internal committee to monitor delivery of MA&E activities and ensure OCO was promoting awareness of, and adherence to, access and equity principles. Of the actions listed in the OCO's MA&E Plan, 70 per cent were delivered and at least 4 events, presentations or training programs were conducted throughout the year.

Case study: Attorney-General's Department

In 2019, the department undertook an independent review of its diversity strategy, which suggested that staff from diversity cohorts were best placed to know what should be included in future strategies. Following the review, staff workshops and an all-staff survey were conducted to capture the needs of the department's workforce. The draft strategy was provided for consultation and a final version was launched in 2022.

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy has 5 pillars: recruitment and progression, data, culture, education and wellbeing. The strategy is supported by a robust governance framework overseen by the Secretary. The strategy reflects the views of all staff, and supports inclusion through the introduction of measurable commitments and targets that will have a lasting positive impact on the experience of the department's staff and stakeholders.

In 2021, the CALD Network conducted an external review into the progress being made towards a safe and inclusive environment for CALD-identifying staff at the department. The review recommended addressing cultural and psychological safety through training; auditing existing recruitment and career management processes to address barriers to recruitment and progression; and building the capacity of leaders to support CALD-identifying staff. The department implemented a number of priority recommendations, including:

- mandating unconscious bias training for all bulk recruitment round panels
- developing anti-racism training in consultation with the CALD Network
- improving data collection and analysis
- inviting the networks to provide a member to participate in all affirmative measures recruitment panels to ensure representation
- annual reporting of unacceptable behaviour complaints data to all staff.

Implementing the outstanding recommendations will be to invest in the cultural competency needed to engage effectively with CALD stakeholders.

Case study: Services Australia

Services Australia's Multicultural Servicing Strategy 2019–22 demonstrates a clear commitment to MA&E and how it will be achieved. The agency delivered 46 out of the 48 initiatives in the action plan over the life of the strategy. The agency's Multicultural Servicing Strategy 2023–25 was launched this year.

Services Australia's Workplace Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2019–23 [PDF 1542KB] outlines actions to improve the workforce participation, representation and retention of people from diverse groups. Actions include educating staff in inclusive workplace practices and recognising the value of working flexibly and removing barriers. The agency is currently developing a refreshed strategy and will incorporate related actions from the broader APS CALD Strategy.

Services Australia's Workplace Inclusion and Diversity Policy Statement [PDF 142KB] outlines the agency's commitment to bringing people together and achieving equal access for individuals from key diversity groups, including those from CALD backgrounds.

The responsible SES, Senior Multicultural Champions, SES Multicultural Reference Group and Executive Committee provide leadership, promote awareness and monitor Services Australia's MA&E implementation performance.

The Multicultural Program Teams, Inclusion and Diversity Team and Multicultural Service Officer network provide MA&E advice across the agency.

Case study: Department of Education, Skills and Employment

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) is committed to MA&E and takes responsibility for its implementation. Formal governance arrangements are in place to oversee the implementation of, and reinforce the principles underpinning, the MA&E Policy. Actions during 2019–20 included:

- appointing Diversity Co-Champions at the SES Band 3 level
- appointing CALD Co-Champions at the SES Band 1 and 2 levels
- assigning responsibility for administrative support, including the ongoing promotion of MA&E Policy; maintaining the policy's intranet page and resources; and coordinating DESE's input to whole-of-government reporting requirements
- highlighting DESE's commitment to diversity and inclusion – in the workplace, and policies and practices – in its Corporate Plan and Annual Report
- outlining DESE's commitment to diversity and inclusion in the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017–19 and implementing actions in the supporting Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2018–19. The strategy and action plan facilitate cultural capability within DESE and provide the overarching framework and direction for the diversity and inclusion initiatives undertaken by DESE.

‘Leadership’ in practice

In 2019–20, it was determined that the future direction and priorities for diversity and inclusion within the newly created DESE would be informed by input from employee diversity networks, including the CALD Employee Network, and the 2020 APS Employee Census results. Census results were analysed by diversity cohorts to help identify areas needing attention. Outcomes were captured in the new diversity and inclusion strategy and action plans.

DESE developed a new People Strategy to set the future direction and priorities for diversity and inclusion within the department. The strategy outlined DESE’s people priorities over the next 3 years – ensuring that plans and strategies are ‘fit for purpose’, promote diversity and inclusion and reflect DESE’s business priorities, desired operating environment, culture and preferred ways of working. Consultation commenced to seek views and ideas from the employee diversity networks, including the CALD Employee Network, on the initial draft of the strategy.

Engagement

Identify and strategically engage with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients, stakeholders and communities

Requirements

The Engagement commitment requires Australian Government departments and agencies to consider a range of communication techniques to engage with clients from different backgrounds, including the use of information in languages other than English, plain English and blended information delivery methods. It also requires agencies to consult with CALD Australians at all stages of developing policy, implementing programs and delivering services. Establishing forums for engaging with CALD stakeholders, including to disseminate important information to the wider community, is another initiative that would meet this commitment.

Response

Departments and agencies continue to complement traditional media channels (such as newspapers and their digital versions) with online channels to help overcome language and communication barriers for CALD Australians. Responses from departments and agencies show a focus on improving the usability of online channels – from the social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to new web-based services such as text-to-speech.

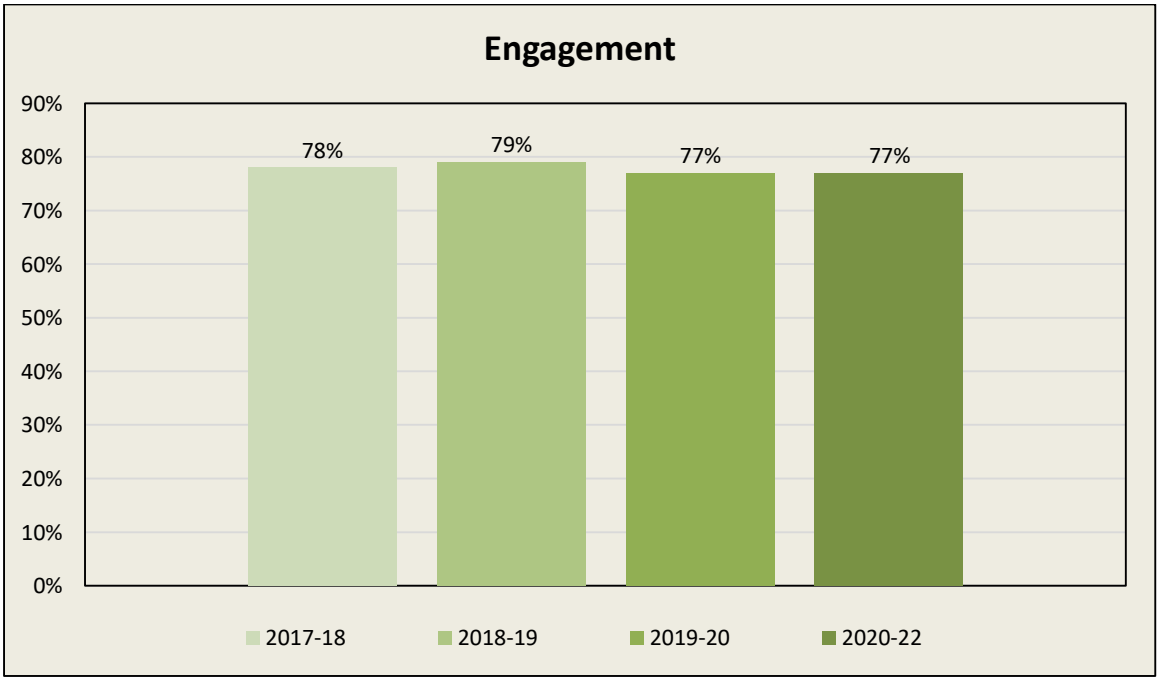


Figure 3: Year-on-year comparisons of departments and agencies meeting the Engagement commitment during the reporting period

Engagement: good practice examples

Across the reporting period, departments and agencies took steps to make information about their programs and services accessible to their CALD client groups. This included increased use of interpreters, development of plain English factsheets, and using external consultants with specialist expertise to develop more targeted communication methods. A number of agencies used interpreter services to ensure their clients and stakeholders had a comprehensive understanding of the information from the relevant agencies.

2020–22

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** (AAT) developed its Guideline on pronunciation of names and forms of address, which was published on its website in 2023. The guideline acknowledges that a person's name is integral to their sense of identity and can reflect their national, linguistic, religious and family roots. The AAT also established a panel of preferred interpreters to assist AAT's CALD users during AAT hearings and other case events. The panel was established following an open approach to market and its use began in late November 2021.

The **Australian Federal Police** (AFP) refreshed its website with numerous language options made available in accessible and user-friendly dropdown boxes. The AFP also provided options for people to access interpreter and translation services.

The **Australian Institute of Family Studies** (AIFS) undertook the Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA) study of humanitarian migrants. The BNLA study was a large-scale longitudinal study of almost 2400 recently arrived humanitarian migrants, surveyed intermittently. The project aimed to better understand the factors that influence a person's settlement journey and to provide a broad evidence base to assist programs and the improvement of policy development in regard to humanitarian migrants in Australia.

Measures taken by AIFS to ensure accessibility and equity for survey participants were as follows:

- Survey content and questions – these were informed by a wide-ranging stakeholder development phase (advocacy groups, government and refugee resettlement providers were consulted in the design phase of the study) to ensure questions asked were culturally appropriate. The study also had an advisory group that met yearly to consider the survey content. The group, comprising policy-makers, Refugee Council of Australia members, settlement service providers and longitudinal study experts, helped identify questions relevant to each stage of participants' settlement journeys and the appropriateness of questions.
- Conduct of research – the study's fieldwork interviewers were trained to conduct interviews in a culturally appropriate manner – for example, by providing breaks from interviewing to enable participants to observe prayer time.
- The BNLA survey questions were translated into the languages required for the participants in each wave of interviews. In previous waves, these included Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Chin Haka, Dari, Hazaragi, Nepali, Oromo, Pashto, Persian, Somali, Swahili, Tamil and Tigrinya.
- A participant BNLA website is available to participants in 6 languages.

The **Department of Education's** Strategic Communications Team in the Early Childhood and Youth Group produced a series of 9 animated videos specifically for child care operators whose first language was not English. The videos explained crucial aspects of a child care provider's obligations under family assistance law and aimed to encourage compliance. They addressed issues child care operators could get wrong or misunderstand, which might lead them to inadvertently break the law.

The videos were translated into 11 languages, chosen based on research into the early childhood sector about the most commonly spoken languages among staff who work in child care services. The videos broke down complex guidance into simple, clear information. The videos were published on the department's website in November 2021.

The **Department of Home Affairs** implemented the Global Service Centre (GSC) as a vital cog in the broader Portfolio service delivery machine. It provided an alternative to online/digital information and services – critical for vulnerable clients and those CALD clients for whom English is not a first language. Home Affairs' in-house language service, TIS National, provided interpreter services. TIS National offers interpreting services in more than 160 languages and is free of charge to anyone calling the GSC.

In 2021–22, Home Affairs undertook a project to transition to the GSC all offshore telephone enquiries managed by overseas Service Delivery Partners. Transition of these calls accounted for around 20 per cent of the overall offshore call volume. Given the continued border closures at the time, the low level of offshore call volumes did not materially affect services following the transition. The transition, along with existing GSC services, delivered consistency of service levels and the ability to rapidly develop and deploy holistic and consistent messaging in support of Australian Government programs during the COVID-19 response.

The **Department of Social Services** developed a suite of new communications materials to raise awareness and accessibility of the National Redress Scheme for those among CALD audiences and intermediaries who had experienced child sexual abuse.

The materials were translated into 10 languages: Arabic, Burmese, Cantonese (Traditional Chinese), Dari, Greek, Italian, Mandarin (Simplified Chinese), Tamil, Turkish and Vietnamese. They were developed with a specialist CALD public relations agency, using a co-design lens. Before being translated, the materials were informed by survivors and their families, community members, healthcare professionals and Redress Support Services.

The materials were concept-tested with people from CALD backgrounds to ensure they were accurate, easy to understand and culturally appropriate.

The **National Archives of Australia** assisted CALD clients in the open access period, giving them access to Commonwealth records such as immigration, passenger arrival and departure records. The Archives prioritised rights and entitlement enquiries from Australians requesting access to records that enabled them to seek government or other assistance necessitated by the impact of COVID-19. The Archives also prioritised other requests meeting high-priority (emergency access) criteria across the Archives' national and state and territory offices during the pandemic.

2019–20

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** developed an Interpreter Policy informed by the Judicial Council for Cultural Diversity's model rules and recommended standards for working with interpreters in courts and tribunals. The policy sets out high-level arrangements for using interpreters during hearings and case management proceedings.

The **Attorney-General's Department** reported that, where their target audience or stakeholders include CALD Australians, the relevant information was translated into a number of languages, using an interpreter or advertising in CALD media. A CALD consultant typically undertook this work, which included:

- translation and interpreting
- typesetting/design
- subtitling
- voiceovers
- research
- public relations
- media and cultural advice on specific communities.

The **Australian Building and Construction Commission** (ABCC) reported that they continued the review of their website, letters and presentations to ensure they were written in plain English. The ABCC provided a range of plain English communication materials for dissemination by third-party stakeholders such as industry associations and small business regulators.

The **Australian Skills Quality Authority** (ASQA) reported using translating and interpreter services when needed, otherwise ensuring publications and website material were easy to understand and written in plain English. Prior to releasing the last student survey, ASQA tested the survey questions to confirm that students from CALD backgrounds could understand the questions being asked.

The **Australian Taxation Office** (ATO) developed a range of communication strategies and information products to support and inform their CALD clients in times of crisis. These included:

- COVID-19 economic stimulus measures
  - Important information about the COVID-19 economic stimulus measures, including JobKeeper, was translated from English and published on the ATO's website in Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, Farsi/Persian, Greek, Hazaragi, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Nepali, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Thai, Traditional Chinese, Turkish and Vietnamese. The translated information was regularly updated and shared with a network of key CALD community leaders, organisations and government agencies.
- Bushfire support
  - Information about the help and support available, and how to contact the ATO, was translated from English and published on the ATO's website in Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, Farsi/Persian, Greek, Hazaragi, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Nepali, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Thai, Traditional Chinese and Vietnamese. The information was shared with a network of key CALD community leaders, organisations and government agencies.

The **Department of Health** reported that its Mental Health Division had a number of initiatives to ensure people from CALD backgrounds were able to access mental health information, support and services. This included having TIS National translate Beyond Blue advice into 63 languages.

The **Department of Home Affairs** operated TIS National, an interpreting service for use by all tiers of government, and private organisations and individuals. The continuing operation of a high-quality interpreting service was a major

enabler of the Government's commitment to MA&E. TIS National delivered immediate telephone, pre-booked telephone and onsite services. The service was accessible from anywhere in Australia.

- Telephone interpreting services were available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- Onsite interpreting service was available.

TIS National drew from a panel of more than 2300 interpreters who jointly provided services in 134 languages. In the 2019–20 financial year, TIS National delivered 1,070,187 telephone and 135,380 onsite services.

2018–19

The **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission** guidance material on the new Aged Care Quality Standards for providers and consumers was written in plain English; many related publications, for example, the Aged Care Quality Standards Consumer Outcomes Poster, were translated into 25 languages. The Commission provided a factsheet on using telephone and onsite interpreter services when dealing with complainants – that is, care recipients or other interested parties whose first language was not English. It also provided information on the National Relay Service.

The **Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources** introduced an 'other languages' page on their website www.business.gov.au, which delivered a whole-of-government digital entry point for information, services and support to help, start, run, grow and exit a business in Australia. This page provided information in 25 different languages on how to seek translating and interpreting assistance.

The **Workplace Gender Equality Agency** used a specialist company to assist with developing a plain English reference guide to enhance reader accessibility and ensure website accessibility for CALD clients. The company also assisted in reviewing reference and other public documentation to ensure it was available, accessible and compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.

2017–18

The **Australian Financial Security Authority** set a goal to use plain English in emails to clients as part of their future direction and initiatives planning.

The **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's** Smartraveller Campaign was the key policy instrument for the Australian Government to promote the security and welfare of Australians travelling overseas. The overarching aim of the campaign was to drive behavioural change and make more travellers self-reliant and personally responsible, including Australians from CALD backgrounds.

A designated CALD communications agency was engaged to provide services for the campaign. The scope of work included developing and implementing appropriate communication and advertising activities to target Australians from CALD backgrounds.

The campaign was supported by a range of outreach activities to CALD audiences and community leaders. The activities included:

- Smartraveller information sessions with Arabic community groups
- Smartraveller representation at community festivals (Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese)
- community-specific toolkits in language, including posters, brochures and merchandise.

Advertising material was translated and adapted for multicultural audiences and aligned with mainstream campaign execution in CALD-specific press, online platforms and radio.

The **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner** carried out a review of communication and guidance material, and new website development. The Office also made sure there were CALD representatives on the Consumer Privacy Network.

Safe Work Australia (SWA) implemented communication and engagement activities to provide publicly available information that was easy to understand for all users regardless of their background. The diverse tapestry of the Australian community was the primary consideration in SWA's engagement and communication activities. For example, SWA produced the 'Working safely in Australia' information sheet to provide workers with key information on work health and safety and workers' compensation in Australia. The information sheet, available in 22 different languages, was updated and published on the SWA website. Further, in recognition of the importance of all workers

having access to work health and safety information, the website promoted TIS National's translating service for assistance with the website or information published by SWA.

Case study: Australian Electoral Commission

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) provided a range of support for CALD Australians to ensure they were informed about, and able to participate in, the 2022 federal election.

- The AEC developed a national public information and advertising campaign for the 2022 federal election. The aim was to maximise enrolment, participation and correct completion of ballot papers, and to support delivery of a high-integrity election.
- Advertising was translated into 32 languages, and the media buy included CALD media across television, print, out of home, radio, social and digital video.
- A range of written, online, video and podcast information was available in 34 languages. This information was also promoted and distributed through over 700 CALD community contacts.
- A suite of in-language videos titled 'The Voter Story' was produced, featuring Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Mandarin and Vietnamese community members providing personal perspectives on why voting is important. There were over 10,000 downloads of CALD resources from the website.
- SBS translated 2 of the AEC videos into 40 languages and shared them on SBS in-language social media platforms.
- An extensive CALD media outreach program included over 70 media pieces.
- The AEC developed a practice voting tool so that voters could experience completing a ballot paper. The instructions were translated into 12 languages: Arabic, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Greek, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.
- The AEC provided every polling place with a flipbook with information in 34 languages on the process of voting and how to correctly complete a ballot paper.
- The AEC strove to ensure the staff at polling places reflect the diversity of the community and for the 2022 federal election employed 11,390 people from a CALD background.
- The AEC's over-the-phone interpreting service is available for people before and during electoral events.

Case study: Australian Securities and Investment Commission

The Australian Securities and Investment Commission's (ASIC) Corporate Plan for 2019–23 identified as a priority project the delivery of outreach and effective education to CALD small businesses. Working with teams across ASIC, its Small Business, Engagement and Compliance (SBE&C) team developed and implemented an outreach and education pilot program, which would engage and support small businesses in the Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese speaking communities in Victoria.

This was part of SBE&C's Small Business Outreach and Effective Education to CALD Communities Project (CALD Project). The CALD Project aimed to address the threat or harm that arises if small business owners do not understand, and therefore may not meet, their compliance obligations due to language or other barriers.

Highlights of this pilot program were:

- creation of the 'Small business resources in other languages' section of ASIC's website
- social media promotion of ASIC information and resources (viewed by almost 60,000 people)
- translating and printing ASIC's *Running a small business in Australia: What you need to know* booklet in Arabic and Vietnamese (alongside existing English and Simplified Chinese versions)
- forming new relationships with Australian Government and state agencies to build ASIC's expertise and networks
- working with the ATO and Victorian Small Business Commission to deliver small business workshops in languages other than English.

The Victorian pilot program delivered knowledge about how ASIC, other government agencies and stakeholder groups can best work with CALD business owners to understand barriers to their accessing information on small business issues and compliance obligations, and the strategies and resources to overcome the barriers.

Case study: Fair Work Ombudsman

In mid-February 2018, the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) launched its website translator, which enabled customers to view web pages in their own language, in real time. This feature was part of a suite of translated information and resources designed to make FWO information services available and accessible to the whole community. The tool used neural machine translation models, which incorporate professionally translated custom dictionaries of common Australian legal terms. Migrant communities and their intermediaries embraced this initiative.

The then Chairperson of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), Mary Patetsos, told *SBS News* that her organisation applauded the FWO's efforts. In mid-2020, the FWO added coronavirus-related terms, such as 'pandemic leave' and 'JobKeeper', to the language models and deployed the tool on the coronavirus page of the FWO website. This

provided customers with immediate access in 34 languages to new and evolving information about coronavirus and Australian workplace laws, including the then new JobKeeper legislation and award flexibility provisions.

In response to COVID-19, in 2020, FWO established a webinar program. In 2020–22 FWO hosted regular webinars tailored to different audience groups and industries on a variety of topics.

Specifically for CALD Australians, bilingual FWO staff delivered 'workplace basics' webinars in multiple languages, including Mandarin, Spanish and Vietnamese. Further, 'workplace essentials' webinars for CALD small business and migrant workers, including international students, were delivered in English.

From 2020 to 2022, the FWO also conducted community engagement activities to educate and support migrant workers and employers, and strengthen networks for CALD Australians. The FWO, for example:

- hosted several train-the-trainer workshops for community and student leaders, education providers and government staff working with CALD Australians
- delivered in-person and online presentations targeted at CALD employees and employers and their networks, including international and Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) students, community leaders, government employees and CALD small business operators and their representatives
- attended forums for CALD Australians, including Service Australia's Multicultural Advisory Forum and FECCA's National Conference, and met with key stakeholders and intermediaries for CALD Australians
- increased the number of subscribers to the FWO's Community Engagement Stakeholder Newsletter, which contains updates on workplace relations legislation and useful information about the FWO's tools and resources, along with upcoming webinars. A number of subscribers were intermediaries with CALD networks
- provided FWO written content through key partner stakeholders, including Insider Guides and Le Cordon Bleu.

All webinars and community engagement activities promoted the FWO's in-language resources, including education resources, web content and, when appropriate, the anonymous reporting tool.

Case study: Australian Taxation Office

The ATO delivered numerous communication strategies that included translated information for CALD audiences.

- Tax Time – each year the ATO developed a bespoke Tax Time communication strategy for CALD groups who may have been at an information disadvantage in terms of English language proficiency, cultural background, socioeconomic status, community infrastructure or confidence in navigating Australia's tax and superannuation systems. Translated resources were developed in over 20 languages and promoted throughout tax time.
- In-language audio guides – provided simple and relevant translated information in accessible audio formats in 12 languages to help overcome the language and literacy barriers often faced by this audience.
- Shadow economy – published translated web content about the ban on electronic sales suppression tools in December 2021. The languages were Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Punjabi and Vietnamese.
- Support for the Direction to Educate measure – translated the record-keeping content on the ATO's website.
- Scams and identity protection:
  - Advertising campaigns included messaging for Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese audiences.
  - In-language resources were shared with the Community Leaders Network.
  - An episode of the ATO's in-language podcast on scams and identity protection was recorded and published in 5 languages.
  - Scam alerts were sent through the diverse audience team to their networks to inform CALD audiences.
  - 'Verify and report a scam' web content was made available in 14 languages.

The ATO's telephony centres use interpreting services provided by TIS National when non-English speaking clients required language assistance. The TIS National service was of high quality; very few calls resulted in complaints.

During 2018–19, the ATO received 107,000 TIS calls, compared to 75,000 calls in 2018–19. The ATO experienced a huge spike in call volumes due to implementing COVID-19 stimulus measures – a spike that translated into TIS calls. Call volumes continued to be high until November 2020. During this high-demand period, TIS National was able to manage the increased call load without compromising quality of service.

During COVID-19, despite TIS interpreters transitioning to working from home and the challenges of onboarding new staff, the quality and efficiency of service did not decline and wait times to get through to an interpreter continued to be low and within the acceptable standards. The ATO was very satisfied with the level and quality of service received from TIS National, and the two parties continued to work together to maintain a high level of service for clients. Call volumes returned to normal pre-COVID-19 levels, with 66,000 calls in 2020–21 and 57,000 in 2021–22.

Case study: Department of Education, Skills and Employment

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) works to ensure all Australians experience the wellbeing and economic benefits that quality education, skills and employment bring. During 2019–20, to enhance the accessibility of the department's policies, programs and services for people from CALD backgrounds, DESE:

- consulted with CALD Australians at all stages of policy design, planning, delivery and evaluation
- used the consultative networks and communication channels of other agencies to improve efficiency and counter consultation fatigue
- involved people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds in advisory and review bodies, to reflect the diversity of the wider population in decision-making processes
- engaged with CALD suppliers, including those from the Services Australia panel, to develop communication products in CALD languages for policy and program areas
- provided program information, factsheets, online tools and other resources translated into appropriate languages
- sought interpreters accredited or recognised by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters to provide quality services
- ensured all program factsheets included a paragraph stating that free interpreter services are available
- considered the needs of CALD audiences in all communication activities, with a focus on plain English and tailored information wherever relevant
- worked in partnership with other government departments, offering interpreting services on the department's websites through TIS National to enable interpreting in 146 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Responsiveness

Strategies are in place to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are responsive to CALD Australians.

Requirements

The Responsiveness commitment is about Australian Government departments and agencies ensuring that the needs of Australians of CALD background are taken into consideration in all aspects of departmental or agency work, including strategic planning, policy development, program design, service delivery and assessment. To achieve this, costs associated with delivering culturally responsive and accessible policies, programs and services should be factored into budget planning documents.

Response

Departments and agencies with service delivery functions demonstrated a strong focus on the Responsiveness commitment. Other department and agencies responded according to the size, function and remit of the organisation. Approximately 53 per cent of respondents across the reporting period noted that this commitment was not applicable to their work, while approximately 16 per cent noted they had not started on the commitment (both are reflected in the Responsiveness rate, illustrated below). Only a small number of departments and agencies reported on addressing CALD requirements at the design and costing phase of their policy development work.

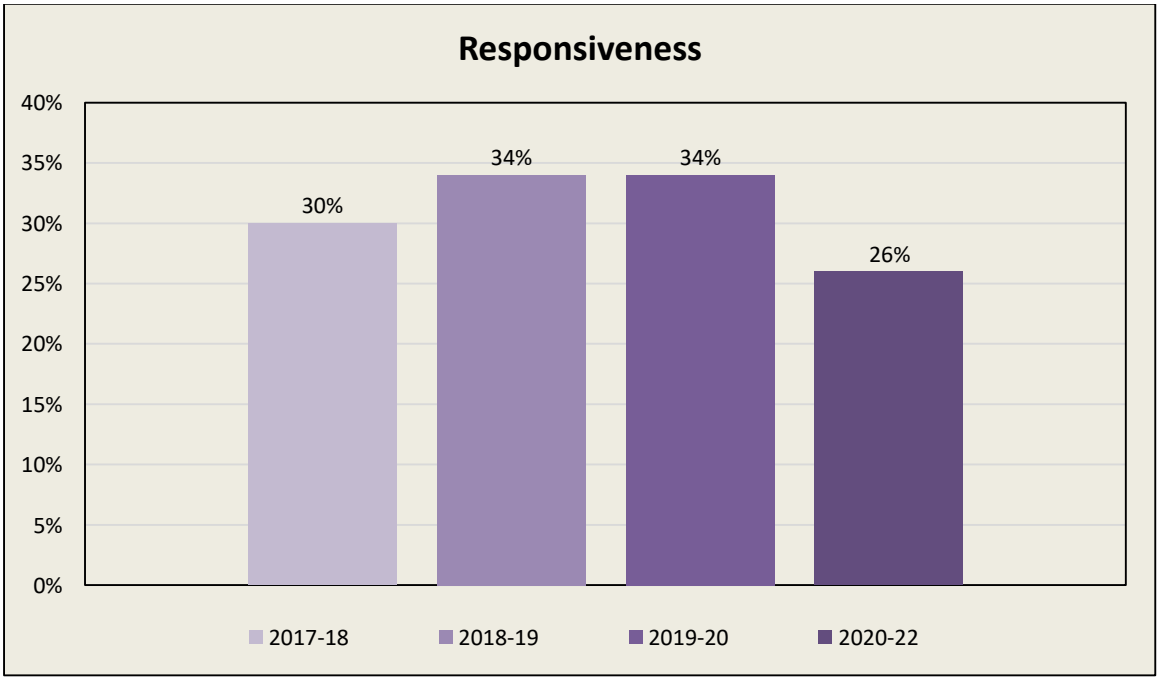


Figure 4: Year-on-year comparisons of departments and agencies meeting the Responsiveness commitment during the reporting period

Responsiveness: good practice examples

Across the reporting period, departments and agencies developed, implemented and evaluated measures to ensure that their activities promoted the needs of CALD Australians. This included the targeted use of online resources for CALD cohorts and making their needs a central focus of policy development.

2020–22

The **Attorney-General's Department** maintained a range of public-facing factsheets to help people understand their obligations under the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme. In the lead-up to the 2022 federal election, the department took steps to increase the readability and comprehension of its factsheet on the additional obligations that apply during voting periods, and translated the factsheet into 11 languages to support CALD cohorts.

The **Australian Taxation Office** offered educational support for CALD Australians, which included delivering tailored presentations on tax and superannuation in Australia to help people understand their responsibilities, obligations, and rights. During the COVID-19-impacted 2020–22 period, when there were limited opportunities for face-to-face interactions in the community, the ATO shifted its focus to online interactions. All the material used in ATO webinars and events was in plain English.

The **Australian Transactions Reports and Analysis Centre** (AUSTRAC) offered a free translation and interpreting service to help entities understand and meet their obligations to AUSTRAC. Entities accessed the service by calling the contact centre during operating hours.

Services Australia built MA&E costs, such as translating and interpreting services, automatically into costing templates it used to develop new policy proposals or other budget bids. The agency committed in its Multicultural Servicing Strategy 2023–25 to improving relevant approach to market documentation and contractual arrangements for procurements of outsourced service delivery requirements, including the use of MA&E clauses.

2019–20

The **Department of Home Affairs** provided TIS National services to Australian, state and territory government departments and agencies, and private organisations. TIS National delivered immediate telephone, pre-booked telephone, video remote interpreting and onsite services on a cost-recovery basis. Non-English speakers were able to initiate interpreting services with public and private sector service organisations, and TIS National recovered the cost on the client's behalf. TIS National's 24-hour service also covered emergency services calls and calls to 000.

Mental Health Australia was funded $4.29 million (GST inclusive) over 3 years to focus on national mental health and suicide prevention for people from CALD backgrounds through the Embrace Framework. It provided a national platform for Australian mental health services and CALD Australians to access resources, services and information in a culturally accessible format. The project aimed to:

- increase the participation of consumers and carers from CALD backgrounds in mental health services
- improve outcomes for CALD mental health consumers, carers and their families
- increase mental health awareness, knowledge and capacity on the part of CALD Australians
- improve the cultural responsiveness and diversity of the mental health workforce.

Mental Health Australia developed the Embrace Framework to help organisations and individuals evaluate their cultural responsiveness and enhance delivery of services for CALD Australians. The framework was promoted and implemented through community forums and webinars, and was supported by online resources.

The **Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman** updated its Project Management Framework to include reminders for staff to take into account translating and interpreting services, and the associated costs, when considering communications plans for new projects.

2018–19

The **Australian Federal Police** (AFP) included translating and interpreting costs in new policy proposals to Government, where relevant. The AFP developed new proposals and the associated costings in conjunction with the AFP business areas responsible for delivery of the new activities – using their expertise to determine the extent to which any translating and interpreting services were required.

The **Department of Health** continued its work with multicultural stakeholders, such as the Migrant Council of Australia, where appropriate taking into account the views of CALD Australians during policy development.

2017–18

The **Australian Financial Security Authority's** (AFSA) responsiveness to the needs of CALD Australians was underpinned by its commitment to service delivery. To enhance service delivery AFSA continued to listen to stakeholders and clients, assessing which services to develop or discontinue based on the outcomes required.

As services were digitised, AFSA ensured all service delivery channels were easy to access and helped clients to comply with their obligations under bankruptcy and personal property securities laws. This included clients having access to TIS National for over 170 languages. Translated material made available via their website home page helped make the information more accessible to people from CALD backgrounds. Printed material was made available in 14 languages.

The **Department of Education, Skills and Employment** consulted with CALD Australians at all stages of policy design, planning, delivery and evaluation and included people from different CALD backgrounds on advisory and review bodies to reflect the diversity of the wider population in decision-making processes.

The **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade** engaged a designated CALD communications agency to provide services for the Smartraveller Campaign, a key policy instrument for the Australian Government to promote the security and welfare of Australians travelling overseas. The scope of work included developing and implementing appropriate communication and advertising activities to reach Australians from CALD backgrounds.

Case study: Department of Health

Mental health services tailored to CALD backgrounds

On 15 May 2020, the Australian Government announced a $48.1 million package as part of the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan. The package contained funding to support vulnerable groups in the community, including those from CALD backgrounds.

- The Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT) received $1.9 million. This funding allowed PASTT agencies to better support their clients through the COVID-19 crisis and during their recovery. The funds were also used to build community connections following lockdowns and enable refugees to participate fully in the Australian community.
- One-off grant funding was provided over 2020–21 to 3 services (that had existing funding) to improve accessibility of digital mental health services for CALD Australians. These were ReachOut Australia, SANE Australia and the National LGBTI Health Alliance for the QLife service.
  - The ReachOut Australia funding was for developing resources to reduce access barriers for young CALD Australians and their parents; to engage with more CALD young people through the ReachOut Forums; and to engage in advertising activity to increase CALD Australians' awareness of ReachOut services.
  - The SANE Australia funding was to better understand experiences and needs unique to CALD Australians, and to train staff in cultural competence in order to reduce barriers to access and increase inclusion.
  - The QLife service funding was for improving accessibility for CALD Australians by undertaking a cultural responsiveness assessment and delivering culturally appropriate staff training in a co-design process. A portion of the funding was used to fund TIS National for QLife contacts requiring translation services.

Case study: Australian Taxation Office

The ATO's CALD audience engagement approach was underpinned by its 2024 Multicultural Access and Equity Action Plan and the previous 2018–20 MAP. This plan presented concrete steps to making the tax and super systems accessible to ATO clients with a CALD background.

As well as specific projects and strategies in any given year, the ATO had core services in place for CALD Australians. During 2019–20, core services and initiatives targeting CALD audiences were consistent, transparent and tailored to audiences' needs. For example, several translated products were delivered specifically to service CALD Australians, such as:

- in-language online presentations in Arabic and Chinese
- face-to-face meetings and webinars to CALD Australian community leaders and groups in plain English
- additional in-language versions of the *Tax in Australia* booklet to service marginalised community groups.

The ATO maintained communication with agencies dealing with small minorities and low levels of community support. It also delivered 271 community engagements reaching 10,981 community members, made up of:

- 185 CALD seminars presented to 5738 clients
- 22 workshops presented to 697 clients
- 64 community events, with 4546 in attendance.

Each year the ATO received a high number of calls where TIS National was helping with interpreting services for ATO clients through the ATO call centres. Before COVID-19 the ATO received on average approximately 75,000 calls with a TIS National interpreter per financial year; the number spiked in the 2019–20 financial to 107,000 calls, largely due to COVID-19 tax measures. Call numbers decreased in the following financial years: there were 66,000 calls in 2020–21 and 57,000 calls in 2021–22. The top 5 languages were Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish and Arabic.

The ATO delivered several advertising campaigns targeting CALD audiences with tailored, in-language information.

- The *Tax and super basics* campaign introduced emerging CALD Australian communities to the ATO and essential tax and super information to make them confident of being on the right track.
- The *Supporting our community* campaign informed the community about the ATO's products and services, where to go for help and assistance, and where to find further information on the ATO's website.
- The *Protecting our community* campaign informed the community about how to recognise the risk and warning signs of illegal activity, and the actions the ATO took to create a level playing field.
- The *Single Touch Payroll* (STP) campaign helped small employers (19 employees or fewer) transition to STP as the new way of reporting payroll information to the ATO.
- The *Targeted, in-language advertising* campaign was used throughout the year to encourage CALD attendance at face-to-face information sessions presented by the ATO.

- The *Super guarantee* (SG) *amnesty* campaign ran digital display advertisements in 4 languages to promote the SG amnesty to CALD Australians and direct them to translated amnesty web content (16 languages).

The ATO also delivered on communication strategies that targeted CALD audiences and translated information. These programs of work included:

- *Tax Time 2020* – a suite of new, translated resources and Easy Read documents to help CALD audiences complete their 2019–20 tax returns, made available in up to 18 languages
- *Tax time occupation guides* – to help people work out what expenses they can claim as deductions on tax returns
- *Business activity statements* (BAS) and *Fixing mistakes or making adjustments on BAS*.

Case study: Supporting migrant businesses – Department of Home Affairs, Australian Taxation Office, Department of Industry

People from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds are more entrepreneurial and show a greater propensity for setting up their own business than the Australian population as a whole.[11]

A number of Australian Government programs and services aimed to support the economic participation of first-generation migrants and refugees, whether they are entering the job market or seeking to start or grow their own business.

Home Affairs funded a suite of programs and activities supporting refugee and humanitarian entrants to learn English, become job ready, find employment and participate economically in Australian society. These included the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), Settlement Engagement and Transition Support, and Youth Transition Support services and Youth Hubs. Home Affairs also funded partnerships between:

- Settlement Services International and The Bread and Butter Project, an artisan bakery, to provide recognised skilled training, English language tuition and employment opportunities to refugees and humanitarian migrants
- AMES Australia and Thrive Refugee Enterprise to enable refugees and humanitarian migrants to start and grow their small business.

In 2018–19 and 2019–20, the ATO delivered small business education workshops with modules tailored to migrants, refugees, interpreters and translators. These included 15 'Starting a Small business' and 'Planning your regular financial commitments' workshops in Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese, delivered to 55 participants. Face-to-Face workshops were delivered in conjunction with Small Business Victoria and ASIC.

- The ATO provided education to small businesses through face-to-face workshops, webinars and digital education products. During 2019–20, the ATO provided small business education workshops and webinar sessions specifically for CALD audiences.
- Information on 'Supporting your Small Business' was translated from English and published on the ATO website in Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese, and the 'Supporting our Community' advertising campaign directed CALD audiences to this web content. This information was developed to support the small business webinar program run by the ATO's Small Business Education team in Chinese.

The Australian Government invested in employment creation initiatives and supported the economic participation of CALD Australians, including through:

- an $8 million grant to AMES Australia to partner with Thrive Refugee Enterprise to assist refugees to start and grow a small business through loans, training and business planning/management support
- the Department of Industry's Incubator Support Initiative, which included a focus on first-generation migrant and refugee business founders (to help them reach international markets).

[11] The 2016–17 Personal Income Tax and Migrants Integrated Dataset data shows:

- Of all humanitarian migrant taxpayers, 24 per cent reported income from their own incorporated business higher than that of migrant taxpayers from the skill, family and provisional business streams, and of all Australian taxpayers.
- Humanitarian migrant taxpayers also had a higher median unincorporated business income ($16,852) than that of other migrant taxpayers from the skill, family and provisional business streams.

Performance

Strong and clear mechanisms are in place to measure multicultural access and equity performance

Requirements

This commitment ensures that Australian Government departments and agencies measure their MA&E performance so they can track progress and identify opportunities for improvement. The Performance commitment requires that departments and agencies build effective review mechanisms by developing key performance indicators and ensuring that CALD clients can provide feedback on policies, programs and services. As part of this commitment, agencies are encouraged to engage directly with CALD Australians to obtain their views on policies, programs and services through targeted face-to-face consultations, online forums or other survey methods.

Response

Over the reporting period, departments and agencies continued to work towards meeting the Performance commitment and reported consistent results with slight variations.

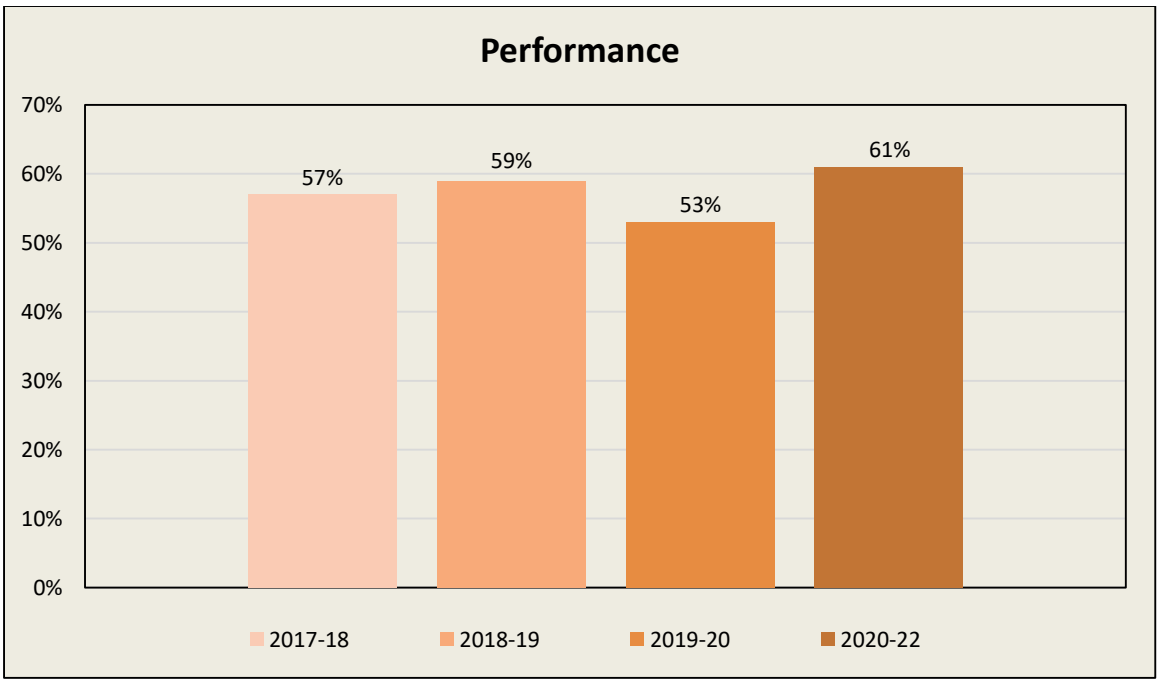


Figure 5: Year-on-year comparisons of departments and agencies meeting the Performance commitment during the reporting period

Performance: good practice examples

In working towards meeting the Performance commitment, departments and agencies consulted with CALD Australians to improve the efficacy of government programs and services. This included collecting qualitative and quantitative information from CALD Australians about ways to improve government program or service delivery.

2020–22

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) supported the integration of data from the Australia Immunisation Register with the Multi Agency Data Integration Project to facilitate accurate reporting of vaccine coverage in order to develop targeted communications about the COVID-19 vaccination program. This included accurate reporting on specific CALD groups and specific vaccine-hesitant groups. The ABS National Migrant Statistics Unit continued to improve survey and administrative data inclusive of CALD groups through actions such as partnering with Home Affairs on data development, standards and dissemination to integrate census records and visa information.

The **Department of Employment and Workplace Relations** undertook a range of actions to measure the effectiveness of its access and equity performance.

- The department routinely collected user data for CALD participants in employment services (such as program caseload, job placements and outcomes data), alongside data for a range of other cohorts of interest (such as Indigenous Australians, people with disability, females, youth, refugees and ex-offenders).

- Through the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) collection, the department collected limited information on the cultural and linguistic diversity of students undertaking VET courses in Australia. The AVETMISS asked whether students spoke a language other than English at home and for their country of birth.
- The National Student Outcomes Survey, a voluntary annual survey of students who completed or partially completed training in Australia during the previous calendar year, collected information on VET students' reasons for training, their employment outcomes, satisfaction with training, and further study outcomes. This survey collected information on students' country of birth, self-assessed proficiency of speaking English, and whether students speak a language other than English. Further, the survey asked students to rate their satisfaction with the support services offered by their training provider, including help with additional learning needs, English language assistance, career advice and counsellors.
- The department regularly reviewed and reported on the data, both internally and externally, to monitor the performance of programs or services.

The **Department of Home Affairs** developed a Refugee and Humanitarian Entrant Settlement and Integration Outcomes Framework as an overarching national framework to govern Australia's settlement and integration of refugee and humanitarian entrants. The framework was made up of 11 domains and 2 underpinning principles facilitating a structured approach to good settlement and integration outcomes and focusing on practical outcomes such as employment, housing, language skills, education and social connections.

The **National Mental Health Commission** regularly engaged with CALD stakeholders as part of its work to improve Australia's mental health and suicide prevention systems.

- The Commission held focused consultations with CALD stakeholders for the development of the first National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- The Commission engaged with CALD Australian community leaders on mental health and stigma reduction as part of the development of the National Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Strategy.
- The National Suicide Prevention Office conducted national targeted consultations to determine the most effective actions for reducing suicide within communities with disproportionately high suicide rates. This included feedback from CALD Australians.
- As part of its Connections for Your Mental Health and Wellbeing program of community conversations across Australia, the commission invited CALD Australians to share their experiences of the nation's mental health and suicide prevention systems.
- The Commission undertook consultations to develop the National Workplace Initiative, which provided a nationally consistent approach to creating mentally healthy workplaces. This included specific sampling of CALD Australians in audience user testing.

The **Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman** continued to improve the capture of data related to CALD Australians, as well as how this data was regularly used and shared across the agency. For example, the Behavioural Economics and Education team used research and insights obtained from the Migrant Worker Behavioural Insights Project to inform the development of a Workplace Rights Quiz, which was delivered to university students. The agency's Community Engagement team shared relevant information captured by external stakeholders such as Community Legal Centres and other government agencies.

2019–20

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** administered a user feedback survey to assess its performance against a range of measures, including the use and effectiveness of interpreters. CALD users were a specific focus group in the survey, their answers giving insights into how they perceive the services and how the Tribunal can improve them.

The **Bureau of Meterology** (BOM) continued to seek feedback on its services through quarterly community market surveys. These surveys reached approximately 1500 people representative of the Australian demographic. Survey data gave insights into people's experience accessing BOM information and services, and their preferences for particular products and services. Survey data included the cultural and linguistic background of respondents, which improved BOM's understanding of CALD Australians so they can deliver appropriate services.

The **Department of Home Affairs**' Regional Directors and Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Network held forums with a range of multicultural community representatives in response to feedback during COVID-19 engagements on the increase in domestic and family violence (DFV) and the challenges in accessing support. These forums presented a valuable opportunity for the CLOs to:

- improve understanding and awareness of DFV services among community representatives
- develop the capacity of community leaders to establish partnerships among service providers, lead government agencies and communities to engage in DFV prevention, education and response activities
- understand CALD-specific issues relating to DFV such as stigma and family obligations and to ensure these issues were understood by service providers and relevant government agencies such as the Department of Social Services.

The **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet** (PM&C) recognised that barriers to the attraction, recruitment and retention of CALD staff arise at times. It collected quantitative and qualitative data, as well as anecdotal feedback, to inform the department of any barriers facing its CALD staff. This included:

- data and feedback provided by the PM&C CALD Champion and the PM&C CALD Network
- data collected at Listen and Learn focus groups for CALD staff (facilitated by SES and run in 2018 and 2019)
- data collected through the APS Census – this included further analysis and the development of factsheets for each of the PM&C's diversity cohorts.

The **National Mental Health Commission** regularly engaged with CALD stakeholders as part of its work to improve Australia's mental health and suicide prevention systems – for example, through consultations with them for the development of the first National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Early consultations took in developing the National Workplace Initiative to provide a nationally consistent approach to mentally healthy workplaces, including the sampling of CALD groups as part of user testing.

2018–19

The **Australian Electoral Commission** partnered with the NSW Electoral Commission and the Ethnic Communities Council (ECCNSW), before the 2019 federal election, to deliver the Vote Talk program. Vote Talk was delivered using a cascade training model, whereby bilingual facilitators were trained to speak to their communities about enrolment and voting in-language. Facilitators generated content for ethnic radio stations by interviewing community members about their attitudes and experiences of enrolment and voting, and by participating in radio interviews. Content was broadcast in the lead-up to both the NSW state election (23 March 2019) and the federal election (18 May 2019). Edited podcasts were published on the *Vote Talk Live* website, hosted by the ECCNSW. Podcasts and radio broadcasts were recorded for a range of language and cultural groups.

The **Australian National Audit Office** developed auditing templates that ask auditors to consider MA&E in their approaches under the agency's Performance Audit Manual, including a decision hierarchy.

2017–18

The **Department of Home Affairs** redesigned its website to focus on user-centred content and improve ease of access to information. The redesign was informed by extensive user research and testing, which also involved CALD clients. Content was written in plain English, minimising legal, policy and technical jargon – in line with the Digital Transformation Agency's writing style guide. As a result, online services became simpler, clearer and faster.

The **Department of Social Services'** (DSS) Fourth Action Plan was the final part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022. DSS, in partnership with state and territory governments, delivered consultation workshops in each jurisdiction and ensured that key CALD stakeholders were invited. In addition, Harmony Alliance conducted a number of CALD-focused stakeholder consultations.

The **National Archives of Australia** regularly reported to its executive board on the facilitation of CALD clients' use of their free interpreting service in its feedback and complaints management mechanisms.

The **Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency** launched a website in November 2017 that contained information on complaint handling and translation services.

Case study: Community engagement – Australian Federal Police, Department of Home Affairs, Services Australia

Australian Federal Police

Community Liaison Teams (CLTs) are AFP's experts in building, supporting and managing productive, dynamic and complex stakeholder engagements, relationships and networks. Since the AFP's inception in 1979, it has recognised that proactive and respectful community engagement, and appropriate investment in this area, is vital to the policing mandate and its success. The AFP has CLTs located in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth.

The roles and responsibilities of CLTs are multifaceted, but their objectives centre on providing the whole of the Australian Government – in particular, the AFP leadership and management – with clear assessments and advice, as well as enhanced access to stakeholder mechanisms that achieve strategic and operational results. Notably, it was only in meetings and collaboration with CALD Australians that the CLTs were able to properly receive, interpret and understand dialogues, trends and sentiment.

CLTs ensured police legitimacy and trust while helping to strengthen cohesion, resilience and wellbeing in the vulnerable and at-risk and in the AFP's 5 priority diversity communities, which include CALD Australians.

ACT Policing's Community Safety, Community Engagement Team put in place a dedicated Multicultural Liaison Officer and committed to strengthening and building relationships with the CALD community in Canberra. The team focused on educating recently arrived migrants, refugees and international students in the role of police – in particular to build trust, as the personal experiences of these communities may have caused mistrust or fear of police.

Department of Home Affairs

The Home Affairs' Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Network had an ongoing and strong engagement with over 2000 multicultural community stakeholders, which included some ethnic media organisations. (For further information on the CLO Network, see above in Part 2.)

Home Affairs' Regional Directors and CLOs were in regular contact with state and territory peak multicultural bodies. The CLO Network also regularly organised forums with a range of multicultural stakeholders to discuss key issues and provide information and resources to assist CALD Australians. Information collected from these community engagements was assessed and fed back into related work, and measures were put in place to address concerns that were identified.

The Settlement Operations Network (SON) was established in its current form in August 2019, when settlement services moved to Home Affairs under machinery-of-government changes. Historically, several different models of state-based staff have existed in settlement services, and all roles included extensive settlement-based liaison and stakeholder engagement.

As at 30 June 2022, the SON had staff located in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide, and managed Tasmania and the Northern Territory remotely. Collectively, staff were responsible for all stakeholder engagement and research in settlement sites nationwide.

Settlement Network Officers (SNOs) provided an interface between government and settlement stakeholders such as local councils, settlement groups and funded agencies who work with humanitarian entrants in their first 5 years in Australia.

As a result of their engagement with refugees and organisations, SNOs achieved many positive outcomes: brokering connections between refugees and community gardens and sporting teams; educating local employers about the benefits of employing refugees; and giving community organisations access to the right tools and messaging about COVID-19 to disseminate to refugees. Post COVID-19, SNOs re-established their presence in regional settlement locations through campaign-led engagements with stakeholders, service providers and communities.

The SON hosted refugee client focus groups attended by local and national service providers. The focus groups gathered information on refugees' lived experience and settlement journeys. Information gathered from separate focus groups was used collectively in service provider forums to find solutions and make action plans.

Services Australia

The Multicultural Service Officer (MSO) program ensured Services Australia was responsive to the needs of CALD customers by providing targeted information, education and support in local communities.

The MSO program, which began in 1989, has up to 70 MSOs placed strategically in urban and regional areas with high CALD populations. MSOs were crucial in connecting refugees and migrants to agency payments and services. They delivered targeted and tailored information sessions to CALD customers about important topics such as their rights and payments obligations, debt prevention and how to connect digitally with the agency.

MSOs build strategic and meaningful relationships with community and third-party organisations in the areas they serve. These strong local connections opened up opportunities for MSOs to collaborate with community partners on addressing the needs of CALD people, and this collaboration gave Services Australia insights and feedback on issues affecting CALD Australians' access to payments and services.

MSOs also played an important role in building Services Australia staff's cultural capability. They provided specialist knowledge and cultural advice for complex cases, supported staff to use interpreter services, and promoted and encouraged completion of multicultural awareness training.

Case study: Services Australia

Multicultural Deep Dive Customer Satisfaction Survey

Services Australia developed and implemented various channels for CALD customers to submit feedback on their MA&E performance. Feedback was essential in assisting Services Australia in its understanding of CALD customer needs and enhancing service outcomes for customers.

One of the ways in which Services Australia gathered feedback was through a Multicultural Deep Dive Customer Satisfaction Survey. In 2018, a survey was undertaken with a targeted group of Arabic, Farsi and Mandarin speaking customers. Customers took part in one-hour face-to-face interviews, providing feedback on their service delivery experience, language services, channels and access to payments and services.

'I access the internet using my smart phone and upload photos and documents to report to Centrelink. It's easy, I like it and saves you time going to the office.' (Male, 31)

'They're doing their job well. I couldn't get anything done without interpreters. They make my visits at Centrelink much easier.' (Female, 59)

Given the qualitative nature of the survey, feedback was detailed and comprehensive. The findings and recommendations were shared with relevant parts of the agency and informed improvements to Services Australia's services.

As part of Services Australia's ongoing commitment to improving service outcomes and customer satisfaction, the agency committed to undertake Multicultural Deep Dive Customer Satisfaction Surveys biannually, as outlined in its 2019–22 Multicultural Servicing Strategy.

Capability

Understand, and have the capacity to respond to, the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia's population

Requirements

Capability in the MA&E 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 using CALD client data, including from the ABS, to achieve this understanding. It encourages departments to collect data on the key indicators of diversity – such as ancestry, country of birth and language preferences – from the clients they serve.

This commitment also asks that departments and agencies implement training and development measures to ensure their staff have the required cultural competency and cultural awareness skills and are fully aware of their MA&E responsibilities. Maintaining a register of staff diversity and language skills and encouraging use of their language skills where required is recommended.

Response

Many reporting departments and agencies provided a form of cultural awareness training to staff. Some provided face-to-face cultural training as part of staff induction; others provided cultural training for staff in specialist roles.

Other plans and strategies reported by departments and agencies to increase staff awareness and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity were:

- supporting internal CALD staff networks
- promoting a calendar of cultural and religious dates on internal and external websites
- participating in major awareness-raising events, such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week.

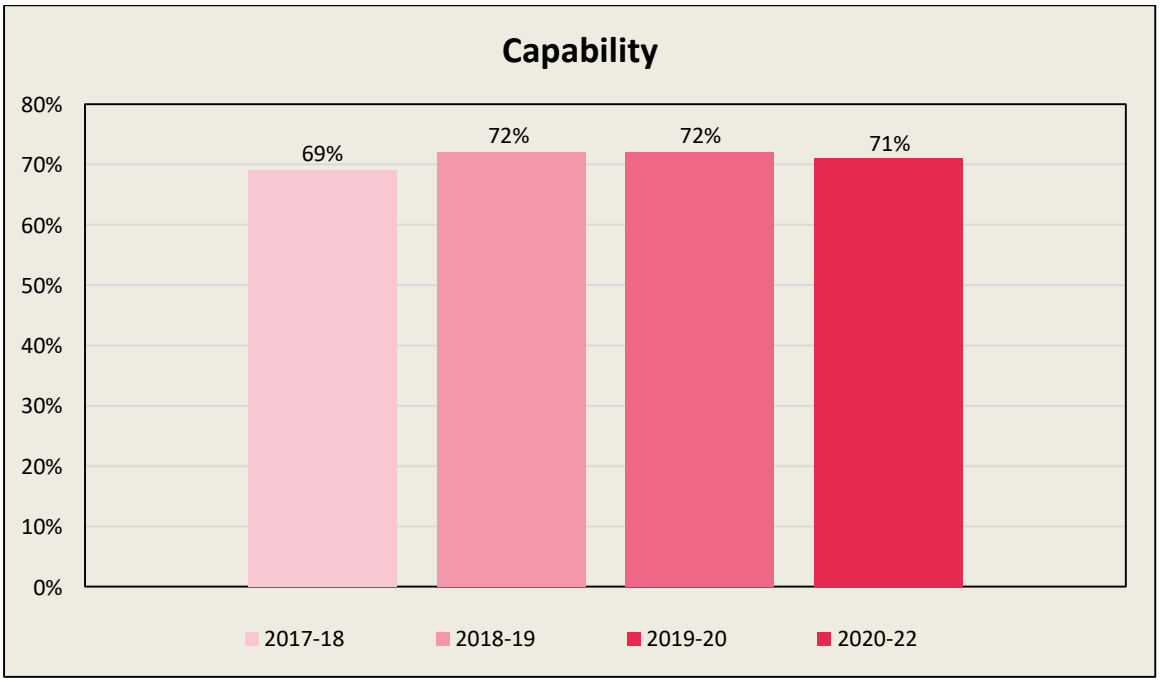


Figure 6: Year-on-year comparisons of departments and agencies meeting the Capability commitment during the reporting period

Capability: good practice examples

Across the reporting period, departments and agencies took steps to ensure they acknowledged the culturally and linguistically diverse aspects of CALD Australians. This included integrating diversity and inclusion outcomes into organisational decision-making, and establishing collaborative arrangements with SBS to help staff build cultural awareness and competency skills, including through the SBS Cultural Competency Course.

2020–22

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** (AAT) launched several cultural diversity e-learning programs for staff and members in 2021 and 2022, including on cultural awareness in the workplace, working across cultures and managing unconscious bias.

The **Attorney-General's Department** developed and published intranet resources on how to consider, inform and engage with CALD Australians. Guidelines included advice on how and when to use translation and interpreting services; advice on being mindful of cultural differences, including adapting communication; crafting nuanced language and visual elements; and considering dialect and literacy levels. This initiative was designed to equip staff with cultural awareness and competency skills.

The **Australian National Audit Office's** (ANAO) Diversity Contact Officer Network initiated and promoted diversity throughout the year, such as on International Women's Day, Harmony Day and R U OK? Day. The network helped develop and implement diversity and inclusion related policies (such as the ANAO Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021–23 and ANAO Recruitment Policy and Procedures). The network's several Diversity Contact Officers gave employees confidential support and advice on workplace issues, including discrimination.

The **Commonwealth Grants Commission** (CGC) implemented online training and development measures to ensure new and existing staff understood their MA&E responsibilities and were appropriately equipped with cultural awareness and competency skills. The CGC promoted cultural awareness and consulted appropriate members of the public on cultural issues, updating its work practices to consider MA&E and be culturally appropriate.

The **Department of Finance** undertook several MA&E initiatives in the 2020–22 period. The department:

- reinvigorated its staff-led CALD Network, with a membership of over 140 employees
- hosted face-to-face celebrations to acknowledge days of significance such as Lunar New Year, Harmony Week, Eurovision, the Mid-Autumn (Moon) Festival and the CALD Network Market Day stall (which attracted over 40 new members)
- held monthly language workshops – 'Learning new languages at Finance'
- delivered internal communications, such as the CALD Newsletter, published every two months with sections that highlighted new cultures and CALD people at Finance, as well as CALD Network participation in Finance's Ramadan and Refugee Week articles
- appointed a senior leadership CALD champion, who was actively engaged in the promotion of CALD commitments, internally and externally
- implemented training for employees, such as cultural appreciation, a Harmony Day panel event on CALD in the APS, and CORE cultural learning to further build capability in cultural diversity for all staff
- had a 'reflection' room for employees of all faiths and of no faith
- ensured its recruitment processes supported culturally diverse groups and provided reasonable adjustments when requested.

The **Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General** increased the cultural awareness and literacy of staff through the Yarning Circle at Government House, 'lunch and learn' sessions (including for National Reconciliation Week and the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia) and self-directed learning.

The **Productivity Commission** progressed actions outlined in its Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019–22, which has CALD staff and multicultural employment as a key focus area. Relevant activities included:

- officially launching a CALD Network in July 2020 – open to all employees interested in promoting and celebrating cultural awareness and diversity
- appointing 2 SES Inclusion and Diversity Champions
- forming an inclusion and diversity group of volunteers in 2022 – open to all employees interested in promoting and celebrating inclusion and diversity, including days/events of cultural significance
- providing access to tools and resources to support multicultural capability, awareness and understanding.

Safe Work Australia (SWA) established its Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020–23. This strategy included targeted action plans for 6 diversity groups, including people from CALD backgrounds. The strategy focused on building a diverse, culturally safe, confident and capable workplace, and embedding inclusivity in SWA work practices.

While SWA's senior leaders championed and modelled inclusive behaviours, everyone in the agency was responsible for driving and proactively contributing to a diverse and inclusive workplace. In SWA's recruitment activities, applicants from all backgrounds were encouraged to contribute to cultural diversity.

2019–20

A number of agencies[12] developed training packages for staff on cultural awareness or unconscious bias, or adopted the SBS Cultural Competence Program (CCP). This online training course aims to build capability around cultural diversity in the workplace and features multimedia learning modules and a wealth of resources. To complement the CCP, the Cultural Atlas is an interactive educational resource with comprehensive cultural information on the countries that Australia's biggest migrant populations originate from. A number of agencies undertook active recruitment measures to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds.

The **Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission** (ACIC) maintained an internal Foreign Language Skills register to utilise the multilingual capabilities of their staff. The register has over 37 languages. ACIC encouraged all staff who are native speakers of languages other than English to register.

The **Australian Financal Security Authority** collected data to review and inform recruitment and selection strategies and practices to ensure AFSA attracts and retains a diverse workforce.

The **Australian Taxation Office's** (ATO) Community Language Allowance (CLA) program comprised a network of ATO employees who assisted with general translating and interpreting work in 30 languages. The Community Language Officers went through language skill testing and certification to join the program. The program formed part of the ATO's access and equity initiatives to provide client-focused services for the ATO's CALD clients. During 2017–20, the CLA program assisted with:

- 1404 telephone interpreting calls
- 125 face-to-face interpreting services
- 847 written translations
- 218 proofreading activities
- 148 media activities.

The ATO continued to build a workforce reflecting the fact that differences and diversity at work lead to a better understanding of the community and that using this knowledge improves products and services. The ATO launched a 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (the strategy) as a formal commitment to continue to increase workforce diversity and offer an inclusive and welcoming environment to everyone. The strategy recognises that diversity and inclusion outcomes must be driven by all areas of an organisation and by all leaders, and integrated into business decision-making. The ATO achieved that by focusing on the:

- accountability of senior executives and of all leaders across business for diversity and inclusion
- awareness and skillset of staff, ensuring they understand the importance of diversity and inclusion and can practise inclusive behaviours effectively
- design of systems, tools, processes and the ways staff work together, ensuring these are inclusive and considerate so that they allow everyone to bring their unique and best selves to work.

The strategy also emphasises the creation of more opportunities for diversity focus areas, with some of the key priorities being:

- improved visibility of CALD representation at senior levels through senior executive champions and the CALD Employee Network
- increased ethnic and racial inclusion and with opportunities for staff to share lived experiences.

The **Department of Defence** noted that, in support of an ongoing commitment to recruiting a diverse workforce, the Australian Public Service Recruitment team drove improvements to Defence's Recruitment Management System:

[12] Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission; Australian Electoral Commission; Australian Financial Security Authority, Australian Skills Quality Authority; Australian Transport Safety Bureau; Bureau of Meteorology; Department of Defence; Fair Work Ombudsman; IP Australia; Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman; Office of the Inspector-General and Taxation Ombudsman.

the application process was made more efficient and the Information Pack simplified. Defence enhanced its online Merit and Selection course by having more information on conscious and unconscious bias, on affirmative measures for Indigenous Australians and people with disability, and on RecruitAbility. During planning sessions, recruitment advisors worked with customers to promote clear, inclusive language when advertising gazetted vacancies.

The **Department of Health's** Culture and Inclusion Team engaged with the department's CALD Staff Network to compile a list of key COVID-19 resources to benefit CALD staff and/or their families and friends. A Diversity and Inclusion COVID-19 intranet page was developed with links to translated COVID-19 information and mental health support options for CALD people. Staff were also encouraged to stay connected by joining or participating in the CALD Staff Network.

The **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet** (PM&C) reported the ongoing promotion of CALD-focused training and development for CALD and non-CALD staff, including through online training and development modules such as the SBS Inclusion program. Since 2017 staff have been able to learn about the lived experiences of staff from CALD backgrounds through yearly Listen and Learn focus groups facilitated by the PM&C senior executive.

The **Fair Work Ombudsman** (FWO) maintained a register of bilingual and multilingual staff, who were called on to help with translating documents and providing in-language support. The FWO's 2019–22 Enterprise Agreement allowed for its Community Language Allowance to increase annually in parallel with salary increases.

The **National Health and Medical Research Council** (NHMRC) revised information in the eRecruit system to ensure that potential recruits were aware of their workplace adjustment policy, diversity strategies and access to a translating and interpreting service. The NHMRC reported a steady increase in representation of CALD groups in its workforce, from 10 per cent in 2015–16 to 42 per cent in 2019–20.

2018–19

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** (AAT) completed a review of user data that led to improved reporting on user data, including data related to language. The AAT's Accessibility and Interpreter Advisory Groups analysed the data to improve organisational services. The AAT published its Workplace Diversity Plan, which included actions to attract, retain and support CALD staff, such as support for career progression through professional development and training in unconscious bias for managers involved in recruitment.

The **Australian Building and Construction Commission** reviewed and updated recruitment documentation, including job advertisment content, to encourage applications from Indigenous Australians, people with disability, people from CALD backgrounds and people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

The **Productivity Commission** offered cultural capability training (delivered by BlackCard) to all staff, which was met with a high level of interest and attendance. The commission maintained a register of staff diversity and language competency to identify staff able to assist with translating and interpreting (for internal purposes only).

The **Workplace Gender Equality Agency** introduced diversity training as part of the training and development schedule, which was available to all staff. The agency sought opportunities to increase the representation of people from diverse backgrounds in the workplace while putting in place measures to ensure the selection and promotion process was fair for all applicants.

2017–18

The **Administrative Appeals Tribunal** delivered training in cultural diversity and use of interpreters to members and staff as part of ongoing professional development programs. The tribunal acquired e-learning materials focusing on cultural awareness, equal opportunity and unconscious bias, new arrivals to Australia and cross-cultural communication.

The **Australian National Audit Office** (ANAO) reported that all staff were required to complete a mandatory e-learning module on Respect and Diversity, and that mandatory diversity and inclusion training was developed (for implementation in October 2018). This was part of a 2-year cultural competency training journey for ANAO leaders.

The **Department of Education, Skills and Employment** continued to collect CALD data for programs they manage.

The **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade** included images of CALD staff in its recruitment marketing material, which was written in plain English. To encourage a greater understanding of security practices at overseas posts, the department translated the security guard training video into 12 languages.

The **Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications** made the CCP available to staff of on LearnHub. The department's CALD Network launched 2 highly successful Harmony Week cookbooks containing recipes of cultural significance submitted by staff. These were accompanied by 'a story behind the dish'.

The **National Archives of Australia** purchased and implemented the SBS Cultural Competency Program (CCP) for its staff. The Archives also implemented a staff language skills register to better support interactions with external clients and capture the relevant skills of any new staff. The register was promoted and staff encouraged to update it.

The **Parliamentary Budget Office** (PBO) purchased the SBS CCP online training, which all staff completed by 30 June 2018. This training increased staff's understanding of communication with people from a CALD background, which led to more clarity in the organisation's written products. The PBO included cultural awareness training as part of its induction for new staff and requires all staff to complete this training every 2 years.

Safe Work Australia appointed a new CALD Champion, who launched the agency's inaugural WA Cultural Cookbook and hosted a Harmony Day lunch, among other initiatives.

Case study: Australian Bureau of Statistics

National Migrant Statistics Unit

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) continued to collect and disseminate extensive migrant and ethnicity data on CALD groups through the Population Census and household survey outputs, and published data on the ABS website. In accordance with Recommendation 7 of the 2012 Access and Equity Inquiry Report and the Australian Government's response, appropriate data and products were inclusive of CALD groups and made accessible to other agencies.

Extensive migrant and ethnicity data was provided through the ABS Migrant Data Matrices (cat no. 3415.0) compendium product, which was regularly updated. Data on the labour force outcomes of recent migrants was also made available in Characteristics of Recent Migrants (see cat. no. 6250.0). Microdata was made available in TableBuilder, which facilitated online data access to authorised researchers, including from Australian Government departments.

The ABS National Migrant Statistics Unit continued to improve survey and administrative data inclusive of CALD groups through actions such as partnering with Home Affairs on data development, standards and dissemination to integrate census records and visa information. The ABS completed a number of data integration projects – expanding the range of data available – with a particular focus on recent migrants from diverse backgrounds. These included the:

- 2016 Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset (see Understanding Migrant Outcomes – Insights from the Australian Census and Migrants Integrated Dataset, cat. no. 3417.0), with microdata available in TableBuilder. The compendium product included Education and Work 2019 and Marriages and Divorces 2018
- 2016 Australian Census and Temporary Entrants Integrated Dataset (see Insights from the Australian Census and Temporary Entrants Integrated Dataset, cat. no. 3419.0) with microdata available in TableBuilder.
- The Personal Income Tax and Migrants Integrated Dataset (see Personal Income of Migrants, Australia cat. no. 3418.0). Microdata is available in the ABS DataLab.
- The Person Linked Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA) (previously known as the Multi-Agency Data Integration Project, or MADIP) included migration and migrant data for permanent and temporary entrants. PLIDA allowed a number of analytical areas to be explored, which can address known migrant data gaps.

Census 2021

In preparation for the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, ABS employed Inclusive Strategy Managers to ensure appropriate stakeholder engagement with CALD Australians and accurate counting of CALD Australians during the census.

Post Census 2021, articles were released (see Cultural diversity of Australia and Understanding and using Ancestry data) to showcase the utility of ABS's cultural diversity measures. This was particularly pertinent when Census 21 was consulted during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing a rich snapshot of Australia's diversity and socioeconomic characteristics at that time.

Case study: Department of Defence

CALD initiatives and programs

Defence committed to leading from the top to strengthen the cultural intelligence of its workforce, facilitated by Senior Leadership Group diversity and inclusion champions. The CALD and Indigenous champions promoted awareness of the value and contribution of the department's CALD workforce to defence capability.

Additionally, at the enterprise level, Defence undertook a series of initiatives and programs to enhance diversity and inclusion, including:

- engaging regularly with departments and agencies to ensure best practice approaches are integrated into Defence
- raising cultural awareness through an online SBS Cultural Competence Course, a multifaceted program with a range of multimedia online clips and additional resources
- other training available through Defence's multiple online learning programs.

Of the 251 candidates recruited for the 2020 Defence Graduate Program, 35 per cent indicated they either spoke or wrote in a second language (other than English). Collectively, the cohort had a proficiency in 34 languages, including Cantonese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish.

Australian Defence Force initiatives

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) implemented a series of CALD initiatives specific to the military work environment, including:

- Defence Force Recruitment Strategic Plan 2020–25, which specified the requirement to engage a broader candidate pool, including CALD Australians, recognising a higher propensity among this demographic for participation in science, technology, engineering and maths-related areas of study

- launch of advertising material specifically addressing the unique issues CALD parents may have with their children joining the ADF, and promoting the ADF as an inclusive and supportive employer of Australians from all backgrounds, religions and beliefs
- research into a demographic comparison between Australia and the ADF in 2021 with the aim of removing barriers to recruitment for the broader Australian population
- diversification of ADF chaplaincy services to promote diversity and inclusion
- inclusion of other faiths in the ADF
- predeployment CALD briefs for personnel serving in the Middle East area of operations.

Case study: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

As part of the CALD Strategy 2018–21, DFAT implemented a number of initiatives in 2019–20 to promote and build understanding of CALD and enhance the accessibility of departmental policies, programs and services to people from CALD backgrounds. These included:

- continuing to celebrate and mark days of significance such as Harmony Day, Citizenship Day and International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- celebrating days/weeks of cultural significance at overseas Australian embassies and high commissions
- developing a diversity calendar with days of significance clearly marked to ensure that staff can adequately plan celebrations and to ensure they are culturally inclusive
- continuing to strengthen diversity outcomes in selection processes, including through:
  - unconscious bias and diversity briefings for recruitment, selection, placement (internal movements) and postings committees
  - reviewing recruitment programs and advertising statistics to underline the department's commitment to diversity recruitment and encourage people of CALD backgrounds to apply for positions
  - analysing CALD data from the recruitment system to identify the stages at which CALD candidates decline to proceed in selection processes, in order to institute remedial actions
- maintaining a CALD champion to work closely with the department's CALD network to raise awareness of CALD issues and promote the inclusion of CALD in departmental decisions, policies and processes
- promoting workplace diversity e-learning, supplemented with a range of specialist training designed to build staff understanding and knowledge of other cultures
- providing workplace diversity briefing to employees on their first overseas posting to ensure they are aware of the department's commitment to creating and maintaining an inclusive working environment.

A challenge facing DFAT was the collection, classification and use of CALD-related data. While the department worked to improve its data collection and use of key indices, the decision to declare diversity is rightly one for individuals. The department noted it hopes that measures indicating its CALD strategy will further enhance inclusiveness within the department and encourage staff to declare their diversity status. The internal and external e-recruitment system was configured to ask a set of diversity questions that includes CALD identifiers. This data was used for trend analysis and to set CALD employee targets for recruitment, selection, promotion and postings processes.

Openness

Be transparent in the implementation of multicultural access and equity

Requirements

The Openness requirement is about Australian Government departments and agencies being accountable to the public for their MA&E performance by incorporating outcomes of MA&E activities into corporate planning and reporting on access and equity performance (as part of their reporting obligations under the PGPA Act as non-corporate Commonwealth entities). Openness also includes departments and agencies working collaboratively with each other and sharing their resources, expertise and best practice with key stakeholders.

Response

Departments and agencies continued to demonstrate a commendable commitment to MA&E, as evidenced by the results provided and numbers self-reporting, which increased steadily from 71 per cent in 2017–18 to 95 per cent in 2020–22.

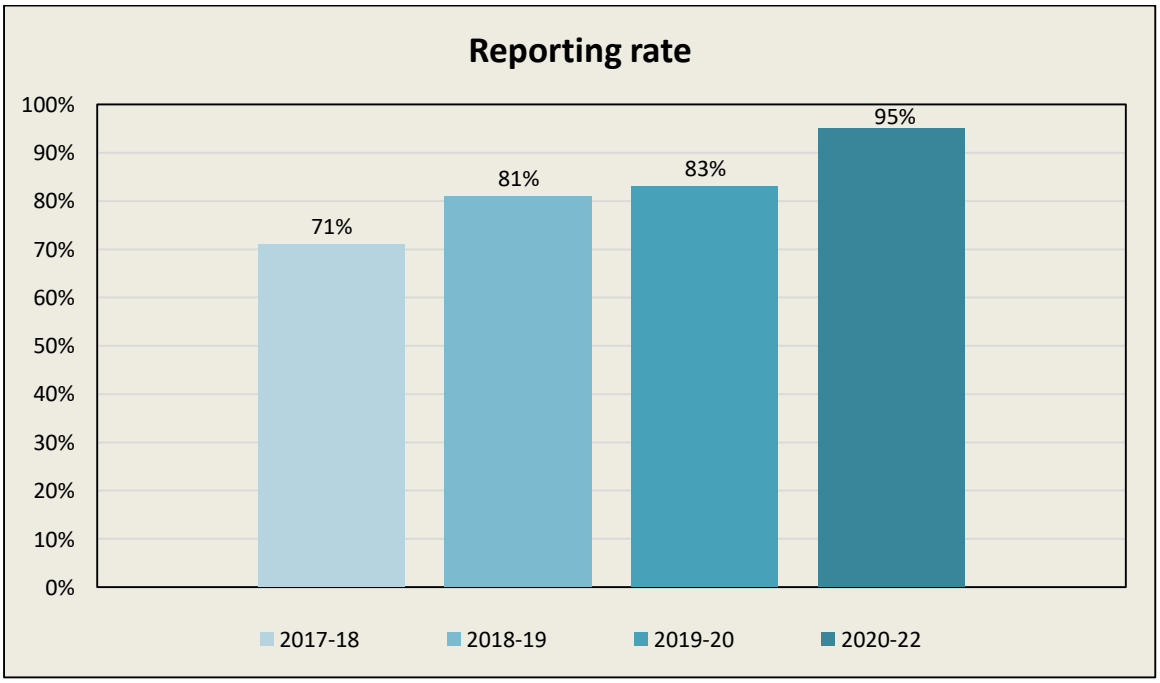


Figure 7: Year-on-year comparisons of departments and agencies self-reporting on their implementation of the MA&E Policy during the reporting period

Openness: good practice examples

As part of reporting on their MA&E performance, some departments and agencies took further steps – showcasing their activities through public-facing means, as outlined below.

2020–22

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) collaborated with Home Affairs to help understand multicultural populations. The ABS also refreshed their standards on their website (see Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity, Australia) to improve access, readability and encourage their use.

2019–20

The **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner** published its MA&E Plan 2019–20 on its website.

2018–19

The **Department of Education, Skills and Employment** developed the Data Management Strategy 2018–21 and Implementation Plan, which supported the Australian Government's commitment to data-sharing and highlighted the importance of creating evidence-based policy and service delivery.

2017–18

The **Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman** published its MA&E Plan on its intranet and internet. The Office's performance outcomes against the plan are published on the intranet and the Office's relevant annual reports.

Case study: Services Australia

Multicultural Servicing Strategy

Services Australia implemented the MA&E Policy through its Multicultural Servicing Strategy (the strategy), which aimed to make it simpler for clients to interact with Services Australia whether online, by phone or face-to-face.

The strategy positioned the agency to deliver culturally sensitive and appropriate services to CALD customers by making them more accessible, convenient and targeted.

To ensure the agency continued to meet its commitment to the Government's MA&E Policy, the agency consulted extensively on the strategy with CALD Australians internally and externally during 2018–19.

The multicultural servicing objective was to ensure services were responsive to the needs of CALD customers. This objective was achieved through clear actions that supported the 6 MA&E Policy commitments. The strategy also outlined challenges and opportunities to guide delivery of services:

- Understanding the changing demographics and needs of the increasingly diverse migrant, refugee and humanitarian entrant population and the impacts of regional settlement
- Providing a service to Australia's ageing CALD population
- Providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services for customers who may not have used them before
- Assisting CALD customers who have difficulty using digital services
- Exploring new technologies such as machine translation to improve access to digital services and the CALD customer experience
- Building the cultural capability of the agency's staff to ensure positive service outcomes for customers
- Using data and the customer experience to inform the current and future servicing of CALD customers and what the agency has to do better or differently to service them.

Services Australia outlined the following to encapsulate its Service Offer to CALD Australians:

- Community and customer engagement strategies
- Staff cultural capability strategies
- Language services
- Multicultural Service Officer Program.

The Multicultural Servicing Strategy set out clear actions and goals that Services Australia delivered against to give effect to the 6 MA&E Policy commitments.

PART 4. Community feedback

Feedback from CALD Australians provides a critical understanding of performance against the MA&E Policy and informs actions to improve performance.

FECCA, a national peak body representing CALD Australians, is a key Australian Government stakeholder. The Government, through Home Affairs, provides annual funding to FECCA for a number of activities, including to hold consultations across Australia to hear from CALD Australians about their experiences of Government service delivery. This part summarises the findings from FECCA's consultations.

Consultations

FECCA compiled community feedback through consultations with CALD Australians, interviews with FECCA's member organisations and input collected from public consultations and an online survey. FECCA's work took into account research and ongoing work with CALD Australians.

- In 2021, FECCA undertook consultation as part its COVID-19 initiatives – the COVID-19 Small Grants Program and the Community Communication and Consultation activities. These initiatives were launched in July 2021 to address barriers experienced by CALD Australians to accessing appropriate public health information regarding COVID-19 and vaccines.
- In 2020, FECCA captured substantial community perspectives, feedback and case studies from multicultural Australia, despite COVID-19 pandemic restrictions preventing the full schedule of planned community consultations.
- In the first half of 2020, FECCA held in-depth interviews with its members and with other stakeholders working in the areas of settlement, migration and refugee support. FECCA also undertook its annual online survey on access and equity in regard to government services.
- In 2019, FECCA consulted directly with communities across Australia on a regular basis, including between July and December 2019, with various multicultural and ethno-specific organisations, as well as with individuals from target communities in Sydney, Western Sydney, Newcastle and Darwin.

The key themes emerging from community feedback are outlined against each MA&E Policy commitment.

Leadership

2021 consultation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CALD Australians faced a range of barriers to the uptake of vaccines. Funding community organisations directly through the COVID-19 Small Grants Fund allowed them to tailor responses specific to community contexts to improve COVID-19 vaccine uptake within their community. Community leaders played an important role in this work, providing support as a trusted voice within their communities. The pandemic reinforced the crucial role of community leaders and the need to strengthen their capability in community engagement and mobilisation. In the aftermath of the pandemic, it was crucial for departments and agencies to prioritise strategic engagement and collaboration with multicultural organisations and continue investing in capability-building among community leaders.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, FECCA saw a rise in divisive discourse and racism aimed at CALD Australians. Such narratives had a severe impact on CALD Australians, who were already disproportionately affected by the pandemic. FECCA continued seeing this vilification of migrants and CALD Australians at times of crisis. FECCA called for strong leadership from government to ensure that such divisive narratives were not strengthened and that the benefits of multiculturalism and migration to Australia were acknowledged and celebrated.

2019–20 consultations

FECCA focused on people's experiences of interagency communication and coordination, as this was a recurring theme through all consultations. It looked at what effective leadership and decision-making mean when responding to a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

FECCA and member organisations highlighted the need for departments to prioritise strategic engagement and collaboration with multicultural organisations. Unlike larger mainstream providers, established multicultural service

providers have existing links to affected communities and can mobilise staff and community members quickly to engage the community, particularly during a crisis.

FECCA reported misunderstandings and confusion during the COVID-19 pandemic among Australia's diverse communities. Leadership through effective coordination across government departments and agencies is essential to ensuring successful service delivery.

Engagement

2021 consultation

Community-specific projects delivered through the COVID-19 Small Grants Program helped build the CALD community's trust in the Government and the Australian health system. For many organisations who were engaging with government departments and agencies for the first time, the program was a much-needed platform to voice community concerns, as well as the means to be part of the solutions. This cross community–government engagement helped build trust in the vaccination messaging and encouraged communities to line up to 'get the jab'. In the future, strategic partnerships between departments and community organisations should be a key component in building engagement with CALD Australians.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, FECCA observed CALD Australians using several channels to access information and engage with government departments. Projects funded through the COVID-19 Small Grants Program used relevant, varied and engaging communication channels with messages that were tailored to community and individual strengths, needs, interests and concerns. Building strategic partnerships with multicultural organisations was a key step to help departments deliver effective, tailored engagement with multicultural communities.

The pandemic saw a rapid shift to digital services. This digital shift was not seamless for everyone. Accessing services, building knowledge and engaging with departments through digital platforms was difficult for many people from multicultural communities, particularly older people. Such difficulties made them more dependent on others to navigate and access the services they required or in many cases caused them to not access the services at all. The option of in-person services must continue to be easily and swiftly available so that those who are unable to navigate digital platforms do not end up disengaged.

2019–20 consultations

Significant feedback on the 2020 Access and Equity survey noted how personalised engagement with staff increased people's experiences of departments and agencies, and their understanding of the information given. Positive engagement between community groups and agencies was essential to ensure diverse community groups built a positive relationship with government.

CALD Australians use various ways to find, process and respond to information. Communication and engagement strategies must be designed alongside CALD people and organisations to offer two-way engagement and multiple points of connection with government. While in-language and plain English communication is an essential first step to reach CALD Australians, two-way engagement is required to ensure communication is effective and understood as intended.

CALD Australians, especially new arrivals, reported being overwhelmed by the need to absorb large amounts of information and navigate multiple government processes simultaneously to live in Australia.

Factors that emerged in the 2020 survey and the 2019 consultation with community groups across Australia included the important role of trust, familiarity, experiences of welcome and positive responses to their concerns.

Increased engagement with community organisations, including small grassroots ethnic or cultural organisations and community representatives, increased government's awareness of the diversity in the communities and the challenges they face. This awareness can lead to improved services.

Responsiveness

2021 consultation

Language and translation issues were a significant concern identified in many of the reports from COVID-19 Small Grants Projects and raised consistently in FECCA's consultations. The translated information about COVID-19 and vaccines early in the pandemic were often not easily accessible or had translation errors. Even in some of the widely

spoken languages in Australia, basic errors persisted. These were even worse in languages that were new or emerging. FECCA provided ongoing advice to the Department of Health on its communications, based on the languages spoken by FECCA staff and feedback from CALD Australians; however, this was not always practicable or sufficient, given the complexity of public health communication when messages changed week to week. This is a challenge that may not be completely resolved, given the diverse range of languages spoken in Australia, particularly if strong relationships with communities are not made an ongoing priority.

The rise in family and domestic violence across the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic is well documented. FECCA heard from communities that the rise was significant in CALD families and households, and that there were considerable gaps and delays in culturally appropriate response and care services for victims from CALD backgrounds. Building strategic relationships with multicultural organisations is vital to delivering culturally safe and appropriate support and care to CALD victims of family and domestic violence.

2019–20 consultations

An online search conducted by FECCA found that translated information on many government department websites was hidden and not easy to navigate. FECCA and its members recommended community testing of translations to ensure content is accurate, the level of language is appropriate and cultural factors have been considered.

Flexibility was considered as key in several of the 2020 survey responses. This flexibility included the option of speaking to people face-to-face when needed; face-to-face interaction was highlighted by several respondents as the preferred way to gain information and access services.

FECCA heard from stakeholders and community consultation that the digital divide is real and must be considered when disseminating information about government services. FECCA heard how segments of the community have no access to the internet at all, some have no smart phone and others have limited data on their phone due to cost, making accessing information online difficult, if not impossible.

Many of the 2020 respondents reported how they used their friends to get information about government services. However, the use of friends and/or family as interpreters can be complicated when in direct communication with government services. While this may feel safe for many, it is important to consider issues of confidentiality, as well as the risk of exposing children to sensitive information if they are used to interpret between parents and doctors or other services.

Performance

2021 consultation

FECCA reported there was limited understanding of the specific mechanisms for departments and agencies to use to deliver and measure their MA&E performance. In addition to improving awareness of access and equity measures within departments and multicultural organisations, departments and agencies need to collaborate with multicultural organisations on monitoring service delivery for access and equity. Co-design with multicultural organisations can also help improve not only the delivery of culturally sensitive services but also what the measures of success look like.

2019–20 consultations

FECCA noted that robust feedback and complaint mechanisms that meet the needs of CALD people in Australia are essential to ensure that government services continue to adjust and adapt to the needs of their clients. Feedback and complaint mechanisms can help government services better understand the practical implications of their policies and practices for CALD people. Accessibility of feedback and complaint mechanisms must include the ability for people to provide input in their own language.

FECCA noted that collaboration with multicultural organisations is imperative for monitoring access and equity performance, and making valuable improvements. This includes involving communities in the design, and implementing and measuring performance during business-as-usual, as well as during crisis. Using existing consultative networks can mitigate consultation fatigue.

FECCA heard from member organisations that the amount of direct consultation is growing slowly across service providers, although providers are not compensated or staffed for the additional time required. Consultations must be carefully coordinated in order to avoid the over-consultation of target communities. For example, FECCA heard

that a small African community service with 2 volunteer staff and no funding or support had been contacted numerous times by government departments wanting to consult them to learn about their work, gaps and community. This consultation took the 2 volunteers away from their important work, without compensation or tangible results.

Capability

2021 consultation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the availability of reliable data on vaccination statistics from the Data Working Group allowed FECCA to understand which communities or cohorts were missing out on vaccines and to prioritise responses to these groups. But such reliable data is not always available; for instance, service delivery data for CALD Australians often does not exist or is not accessible. Departments and agencies must have accurate, consistent and comprehensive data to deliver a responsive service system based on a deep understanding of customers and their unique contexts and needs.

The COVID-19 Small Grants Program was delivered successfully due to a strong, strategic partnership between government, FECCA and funded community organisations. Designing policies and practices in partnership with multicultural organisations and their communities will lead to more equitable access to the services and programs essential for a thriving, resilient and successful nation. Delivering such co-designed policies and practices requires a shift in how government engages with CALD Australians and community organisations; genuine partnerships are needed, as well as stronger investment in building the capability of community organisations.

2019–20 consultations

FECCA stated that across most government departments and agencies there is a lack of consistency in the collection of statistics based on CALD indicators. Consequently, many issues of access facing CALD Australians remain under-documented, under-researched and easily ignored. While some quantitative research is being undertaken to highlight problems and solutions, better data collection and analysis will aid these efforts.

FECCA commented that current Australian data collection and reporting on cultural and linguistic diversity, particularly in relation to human services planning and delivery (including for health, mental health, aged care and disability), can be improved. FECCA suggested that, in order for Government and its services to respond to clients appropriately and to consider the diversity of clients and the challenges faced by their client base, they must have accurate and consistent administrative data to understand the communities they serve. This is essential for evidence-based policy, resource allocation and service planning. Only with disaggregated, consistent and comparable CALD data can Government ensure that services are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of all people in Australia.

Many of the people FECCA consulted in 2020 reiterated that improving individual and organisational cultural competency was crucial for CALD people to be treated with respect, compassion and understanding when accessing services.

Openness

2021 consultation

FECCA noted that transparency in reporting and accountability is needed to know that accessible and equitable services are delivered to all Australians. In its submission to the Multicultural Framework Review, FECCA recommended that a renewed, strengthened, well-informed and transparent approach to MA&E be implemented across federal, state and territory, and local governments. This applies also to outsourced services. The approach must include a comprehensive:

- access and equity framework
- access and equity standards
- access and equity accountability.

2019–20 consultations

FECCA emphasised that transparency and accountability around progress in achieving access and equity for CALD people in Australia is essential to a multicultural Australia. Without a stronger and more open framework for delivering the access and equity policy, including a robust mechanism for accountability, it is likely that progress will

remain disjointed. FECCA recommended that an MA&E framework be a prominent and celebrated part of all government departments and agencies if Australia and Australians are to continue to benefit from successful multiculturalism. Further, MA&E resources and experience, such as CALD data, consultative networks and best practice examples, could be shared among departments, agencies and the public.

FECCA further recommended that for organisations, departments, agencies and the public to engage with the MA&E Policy it must be transparent and open, and that reporting on the 6 principles must be publicly available each year and especially each third year.

PART 5. Future direction and recommendations

Review of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy

The MA&E Policy was last updated in 2016 and requires review to ensure that it remains in line with best practice and serves the needs of CALD Australians.

In June 2023, the Australian Government announced a Multicultural Framework Review (the Review) to consider whether its policy settings and institutional arrangements are fit for purpose to support Australia's growing multicultural society.

The Review's terms of reference included making recommendations on matters that address barriers to inclusion, as well as those that enhance the social, cultural and economic strengths brought by Australia's multicultural diversity.

The Government has considered the findings of the Review report, including how the focused application of its key principles - connection, identity and belonging, and inclusion - may strengthen the MA&E Policy to mainstream multiculturalism across government programs and services, and hold all government departments and agencies to account.

The Australian Government Response recognises the significant scale of the discussions, consultation and engagement undertaken through the Review, and commits to the long term and strategic investment in multicultural communities, including careful consideration of the Review Panel's recommendations.

The Government will draw from and embed the key features of the Review across all Commonwealth agencies and activities, now and into the future.

Future best practice case study – Multicultural Framework Review 2023–24

The process of conducting the Review provides an important case study for best practice engagement and consultation with CALD Australians moving forward.

The Review was led by a panel of 3 eminent Australians and consulted with more than 1400 Australians and 750 organisations or community groups in more than 216 consultation events.

Accessibility was a key focus of the Review. To enable all Australians to have a say, Home Affairs engaged a specialist multicultural communication and language services provider to design a bespoke functionality to accept submissions in all languages and in written, audio and video formats. The submissions platform itself was made available in English and 33 other languages, and included information on public, anonymous and confidential consent for the purpose of publishing each submission.

The Review received 796 submissions through a public online submissions process, of which 670 were submitted in English and 126 in languages other than English, including Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, Greek, Hokkien Taiwanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Serbian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese. Four submissions were made in an audio format and four in a video format. Of these, one video submission was made in a language other than English. Responses submitted in languages other than English were made available to the Review panel in English using machine translation. Where translations were ambiguous, translators accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters confirmed that the content of these submissions had been translated accurately and meaningfully.

Key messages about the Review were also translated and published on the Review website in 35 community languages, in both written and audio formats. Translated social media assets were used to promote the Review on Facebook, Instagram, Weibo and WeChat. The specialist service provider also disseminated this information and undertook promotional activities through its nationwide network of multicultural leaders, organisations, multicultural media and other key multicultural stakeholders.

Accepting submissions to an Australian Government review in languages other than English, and in different formats, was a departmental first, representing a new and imaginative way to communicate with multicultural communities, increasing access and promoting social inclusion.

Appendix A – Acronyms and initialisms

AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ABCC	Australian Building and Construction Commission
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCC	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
ACIC	Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AFSA	Australian Financial Security Authority
AIFS	Australian Institute of Family Studies
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
APSC	Australian Public Service Commission
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investment Commission
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
AUSTRAC	Australian Transactions Reports and Analysis Centre
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard
BAS	business activity statement
BNLA	Building a New Life in Australia
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
CDC	Cashless Debit Card
CGC	Commonwealth Grant Commission
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Programme
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CLT	Community Liaison Teams
D&I	diversity and inclusion
DCO	Diversity Contact Officer
DESE	Department of Education, Skills and Employment
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DHS	Department of Human Services
DSS	Department of Social Services
ECCNSW	Ethnic Communities Council NSW
FECCA	Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
FWO	Fair Work Ombudsman

GSC	Global Service Centre
HIML	Health in My Language
MA&E	multicultural access and equity
MADIP	Multi-Agency Data Integration Project
MCWH	Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
MHD	Mental Health Division
MSO	Multicultural Service Officer
MYAN	Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
OCO	Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
PASTT	Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma
PBO	Parliamentary Budget Office
PGPA Act	*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
PHN	primary health network
PLIDA	Person Linked Integrated Data Asset
PM&C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
SBE&C	Small Business, Engagement and Compliance
SCOA	Settlement Council of Australia
SDP	service delivery partner
SES	senior executive service
SG	super guarantee
SNO	Settlement Network Officer
SON	Settlement Operations Network
STP	single touch payroll
SWA	Safe Work Australia
TIS	Translating and Interpreting Service

Appendix B – Reporting departments and agencies

Non-corporate Commonwealth entities[13]

2020–22

Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian Communications and Media Authority
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Crime Commission (Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission)
Australian Electoral Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Security Authority
Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Australian Institute of Criminology
Australian Institute of Family Studies
Australian National Audit Office
Australian Office of Financial Management
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
Australian Public Service Commission
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
Australian Research Council
Australian Secret Intelligence Service
Australian Securities and Investments Commission
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
Australian Signals Directorate
Australian Skills Quality Authority
Australian Taxation Office
Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade)
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre
Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Bureau of Meteorology
Cancer Australia
Clean Energy Regulator
Climate Change Authority
Commonwealth Grants Commission
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Department of Defence
Department of Education
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Health
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
Department of Parliamentary Services
Department of Social Services
Department of the House of Representatives
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

[13] This Report summarises the performance of Australian Government departments and agencies that reported on their implementation of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy. This Policy applies to all non-corporate Commonwealth entities under the PGPA Act.

Department of the Senate
Department of the Treasury
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Digital Transformation Agency
Fair Work Commission
Federal Court of Australia
Future Fund Management Agency
Geoscience Australia
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Inspector-General of Taxation
IP Australia
National Archives of Australia
National Blood Authority
National Capital Authority
National Health and Medical Research Council
National Health Funding Body
National Indigenous Australians Agency
National Mental Health Commission
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
Office of Parliamentary Counsel
Office of the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board
Office of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman
Office of the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General
Office of the Special Investigator
Organ and Tissue Authority
Parliamentary Budget Office
Productivity Commission
Professional Services Review
Royal Australian Mint
Safe Work Australia
Services Australia
Sport Integrity Australia
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
Workplace Gender Equality Agency

2019–20

Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Building and Construction Commission
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity
Australian Communications and Media Authority
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Australian Electoral Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Security Authority
Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Australian Institute of Family Studies
Australian National Audit Office

Australian Office of Financial Management
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
Australian Research Council
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
Australian Signals Directorate
Australian Skills Quality Authority
Australian Taxation Office
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre
Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Bureau of Meteorology
Cancer Australia
Clean Energy Regulator
Commonwealth Grants Commission
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
Department of Defence
Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Health
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
Department of Parliamentary Services
Department of Social Services
Department of the House of Representatives
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Department of the Senate
Digital Transformation Agency
Fair Work Commission
Fair Work Ombudsman
Federal Court of Australia
Future Fund Management Agency
Geoscience Australia
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency
Inspector-General of Taxation
IP Australia
National Archives of Australia
National Disability Insurance Agency
National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency
National Health and Medical Research Council
National Health Funding Body
National Indigenous Australians Agency
National Mental Health Commission
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
Office of Parliamentary Counsel
Office of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General
Organ and Tissue Authority
Parliamentary Budget Office
Productivity Commission
Professional Services Review Scheme

Registered Organisations Commission Entity
Royal Australian Mint
Safe Work Australia
Services Australia
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
Workplace Gender Equality Agency

2018–19

Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Accounting Standards Board and Auditing and Assurance Standards Board
Australian Aged Care Quality Agency
Australian Building and Construction Commission
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity
Australian Communications and Media Authority
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Australian Electoral Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Security Authority
Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Australian National Audit Office
Australian Office of Financial Management
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
Australian Research Council
Australian Skills Quality Authority
Australian Taxation Office
Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade)
Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Bureau of Meteorology
Cancer Australia
Climate Change Authority
Commonwealth Grants Commission
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Department of Communications and the Arts
Department of Defence
Department of Education and Training
Department of Employment
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Health
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Human Services
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
Department of Social Services
Department of the Environment and Energy
Department of the Senate
Department of the Treasury
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Digital Transformation Agency
Fair Work Commission
Fair Work Ombudsman
Future Fund Management Agency

Geoscience Australia
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency
Inspector-General of Taxation
IP Australia
National Archives of Australia
National Capital Authority
National Health and Medical Research Council
National Health Funding Body
National Mental Health Commission
Office of Parliamentary Counsel
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General
Organ and Tissue Authority
Parliamentary Budget Office
Productivity Commission
Professional Services Review Scheme
Royal Australian Mint
Safe Work Australia
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
Workplace Gender Equality Agency

2017–18

Administrative Appeals Tribunal
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity
Australian Communications and Media Authority
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Australian Electoral Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Security Authority
Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Australian National Audit Office
Australian Office of Financial Management
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
Australian Securities and Investments Commission
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
Australian Skills Quality Authority
Australian Taxation Office
Australian Trade and Investments Commission (Austrade)
Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Bureau of Meteorology
Cancer Australia
Commonwealth Grants Commission
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Department of Communications and the Arts
Department of Defence
Department of Education and Training
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Home Affairs
Department of Human Services
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
Department of Jobs and Small Business
Department of Social Services
Department of the Environment and Energy
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Department of the Senate
Department of the Treasury
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Fair Work Ombudsman and Registered Organisations Commission Entity
Future Fund Management Agency
Geoscience Australia
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority
Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency
Inspector-General of Taxation
National Archives of Australia
National Competition Council
National Health and Medical Research Council
National Health Funding Body
National Mental Health Commission
Office of Parliamentary Counsel
Office of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General
Parliamentary Budget Office
Productivity Commission
Safe Work Australia
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Appendix C – History of the Australian Government's multicultural access and equity reporting

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's principles and recommendations. 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 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 peoples, 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 peoples and second-generation Australians. It also highlights the double disadvantage experienced by women of non-English-speaking background (NESB) and NESB people with disability.

1992 – The Australian 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 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 Australian 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 migrant access and equity so that affected government entities can more easily understand its purpose and application.

1996 – The Australian 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 Australian Government officially launches the charter nationwide.

2001 – The Australian 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 1996 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 Australian 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 Australian 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 CALD Australians. It does not extend to other sectors of the community (for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or people with disability), as there are separate policy and reporting obligations to address the distinct needs of those 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.

2018 – The responsibility for the policy transfers to the Department of Home Affairs.

2020 – The 2017–20 triennial report was not released. While the Department of Home Affairs distributed its first policy reporting survey to Australian Government departments and agencies in August 2018 to collect reporting data, further surveys and finalisation of this report were impacted by the diversion of resources to other priority issues and activities supporting CALD Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic.



