

**Estimates Committee 2010**  
**Questions Taken On Notice**

( 11/06/2010 to 18/06/2010 )

Date: 17/06/2010 Output:  
Subject: Taskforce Rules and Regulations Sub Output:

**From:**Hon Alison Anderson to Hon Kon Vatskalis  
Child Protection

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**Question:** 7-5  
I am just asking off the cuff. So the question would be: is there anything written for the task force to adhere to, rules and regulations and views of an interpreter?

**Answer:**  
Answered On: 12/08/2010  
Answer: QUESTION 7.5

Is there anything written for the task force to adhere to, rules and regulations and views of an interpreter?

ANSWER

There is no formal Department of Health and Families policy in place that requires staff to use interpreters while undertaking their duties with clients. In general practice the department uses the Aboriginal Interpreter Service where it is assessed that there is an appropriate need to use them.

Departmental staff are strongly encouraged to access the Aboriginal Interpreter Service as they act in the best interests of the child.

The Child Abuse Taskforce (CAT) has a team of Aboriginal Community Workers attached to it that provides advice in relation to cultural issues and the need for interpreters.

Attachment A provides background information on how to book an interpreter.

Northern Territory Police members are guided by a number of General Orders relating to questioning of persons and the use of interpreters. Specifically there is:

General Order Q2 - Questioning People Who Have Difficulties With The English Language - The "Anunga" Guidelines.

General Order I4 - Interpreters and Translators.

Police Officers are provided training on these General Orders during

Recruit Training and follow up training during courses such as the Operational Investigators Course and the Detective Training Course.

Overarching any consideration to interview an Aboriginal victim or offender is the Supreme Court decision *R v Anunga* (1976) 11 ALR 412.

This decision formed what is now known as the Anunga Guidelines, which are referred to and articulated in General Order Q2. They provide clear guidance on matters to consider before interview and reinforce the vulnerable position of Aboriginal persons. These guidelines focus mainly on persons who are being questioned as a suspect but apply in principle to the interviewing of victims or witnesses.

General Order 14 states in part, in any situation where evidence is obtained from a victim or witness by interview, and English is not the first language of the victim or witness, the use of an interpreter may enhance the quality and accuracy of the evidence. It also makes it clear that recognised or accredited interpreters should be used.

It is established practice to obtain the services of an interpreter for CAT interviews. Interpreters who speak the same language as the victim are used and CAT members work extensively with Aboriginal Community Workers and Aboriginal Case Workers.



## Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services

### Booking an Interpreter

Where possible the Aboriginal Interpreter Service ask that bookings be made well in advance to ensure all interpreting requirements are met and to allow for travel and accommodation arrangements to be made if required.

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) also requests that the client be available to meet with the interpreter before the assignment begins to provide a briefing on the topic of interpreting. The client is also required to confirm start and finish times of the interpreting assignment to the AIS as soon as possible on completion of job. (see Useful Hints)

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service also requests that clients be available to meet with the interpreter before the assignment begins and confirm start and finish times to be worked by the interpreter.

You can make a booking by completing the [Booking Request](#) (pdf 518Kb) and forwarding to the Aboriginal Interpreter Service, submitting the [online booking request](#), or contacting the Aboriginal Interpreter Service office closest to the region where the service is required.

[Time Sheet/Evaluation](#) (pdf 3.8Mb)

Clients must provide the following information when booking an interpreter:

- name of the organisation/section requesting the service;
- name, skin name, age and gender of the Aboriginal person/persons requiring the service
- name, age and gender of the Aboriginal person/s requiring the service
- Aboriginal language required (Please note the AIS can assist with determining the correct language);
- location, date and time the service is needed; and
- topic of assignment.

Acrobat Reader is required to open and print Portable Document Files (PDF) and is free to download from the [Adobe website](#).

