

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Housing and Community Development:

Aboriginal interpreters services

1. What is being done to increase the numbers of interpreters and translators in Aboriginal languages for the purpose of achieving better communication, understanding and equality for all Aboriginal speaking Territorians?

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service recruits interpreters through a structured recruitment process involving a language assessment, induction training, shadowing and on-the-job observations.

Language assessments are recorded assessments of the ability of people to speak English at the standard required and to convert English to their own language and back again. These language assessments are assessed by staff of the Aboriginal Interpreter Service, including language speakers. Provided language skills and interpreting ability are assessed at the right level, these people will be recruited to undertake an induction program.

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service induction program is delivered through a three-day intensive course, delivered by in-house trainers, and covers how to interpret, how to be a public servant and the interpreter's code of ethics.

Provided potential interpreters pass the induction program, through attendance throughout the program and a demonstration of interpreting ability, a contract of employment with the Northern Territory Public Service will be signed.

Before interpreters commence their first interpreting assignment, they will be asked to shadow and observe interpreting in action and then during their initial interpreting assignments. An experienced interpreter will observe and guide their interpreting.

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service's Training and Liaison Officers are constantly visiting remote communities and always attempting to recruit potential new interpreters, especially those people who have spoken with an existing interpreter and expressed an interest in becoming involved in the interpreting business.

During 2017-18, there were 47 recruited interpreters who commenced or recommenced with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service.

2. Are there any regional and remote offices for interpreting services as well as providing interpreting training?

The Aboriginal Interpreter Service has full-time offices in Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Wurrumiyanga, Wadeye and Alyangula. Training and Liaison Officers and/or staff interpreters attend all bush courts in remote communities. Training for interpreters is most often provided in major centres where there are Aboriginal Interpreter Service offices, but some training is delivered while these staff are visiting remote communities.
