Improving the Use of Translating and Interpreting Services:

A Guide to Victorian Government Policy and Procedures

Quick Reference Guide

Language Services Provider: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Pin/Booking Number: _____

Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Language Services Provider: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Pin/Booking Number: _____

Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CONTENTS

Statement from Ministers

Victoria has a remarkably diverse population and this diversity is central to Victoria's vibrant cultural life. The Government values Victoria's rich cultural mix and believes everyone should share the benefits of Victoria's economic, social and cultural strengths, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

There are over 180 languages and dialects in Victoria, from established languages like Greek and Italian to newer languages like Somali and Dari. One in five Victorians uses a language other than English at home.

While the majority of Victorians who use other languages also speak English, at least four per cent may not be able to communicate effectively in English.

This proportion is expected to increase as the Victorian migrant population ages, since ageing and illness can often result in the loss of second language skills.

It is important that clients who are not proficient in English are able to access services and essential information available to all other Victorians. Professional interpreting and translating services delivered by qualified practitioners can overcome language barriers and help clients communicate with Victorian Government departments, local governments and funded agencies.

This guide to Victorian Government policy and procedures has been developed by the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs with the assistance of the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Justice, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

It is important that all Victorian Government departments and agencies use these policies and procedures to ensure their own services are responsive to the communities they serve.

Improving the way we use interpreting and translating services is an important step toward meeting the Government's commitment to diversity, and ensuring all Victorians are able to access the information and services they need to fully participate in the Victorian community.

Steve Bracks MP

Steve Bracks.

Premier of Victoria
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

John Pandazopoulos MP

John Pandazopoulos

Minister Assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs

April 2003

VOMA

The Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs (VOMA) would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following organisations in the development of this guide: the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc., Central Health Interpreting Service Inc., Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Department of Education and Training, Department of Human Services, Department of Justice, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd. (Melbourne Office), RMIT (Faculty of Language, Education and Community Services), Victorian Multicultural Commission and VITS LanguageLink.

Further information about VOMA is outlined in Appendix A.

Comments

• **Do you have any comments about this guide?**
• **Do you think there is additional information that should be included?**

If so, please forwarded your comments in writing to:

The Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs

Email: multicultural.affairs@dpc.vic.gov.au

Fax: (03) 9651 5944

Post: Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs
          Department for Victorian Communities
          GPO Box 4912 VV
          Melbourne Victoria 3002