

Queensland Language Services Policy

**Data Dictionaries
2023-24**

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1 Reporting and performance monitoring

1.1 Background

- The Queensland Language Services Policy (the Policy) was released on 17 July 2014. The Policy commits Queensland Government agencies to use qualified interpreters and translators certified through the National Accreditation Authority for Translating and Interpreting (NAATI).
- The Policy applies to all Queensland Government departments (including funded services, that is, non-Government organisations that are funded to deliver services on behalf of those departments). The Policy also applies to Government organisations that were covered by the preceding Language Services Policy - these include Hospital and Health Services, TAFE Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

The Policy identifies two performance measures for Queensland Government agencies to monitor and report on. The performance measures are:

- Performance measure 1 - *Percentage of Queensland population with limited proficiency in English compared with percentage of Queensland Government clients with limited proficiency in English.*
- Performance measure 2 - *Use of interpreters across the Queensland Government.*

The following data dictionaries:

- define what data is required to evaluate performance; and
- ensure consistency across Queensland Government agencies in the way data is captured.

1.2 Implementation

Agencies will be required to report when they commence using interpreters and/or translators (e.g. if an agency does not use interpreters and/or translators they will not be required to report).

Given the complexity surrounding the capture of this data, qualitative explanation against each indicator should also be reported to provide a richer measure of performance.

Each agency is responsible for ensuring that mechanisms are in place to collect and report on the required data. To do this, each agency should assign a Data Owner for each performance indicator. The role of the Data Owner should include:

- coordinating the collection of data for the particular performance indicator across the whole agency;
- ensuring that the data collected is consistent with the definitions and counting rules provided in these data dictionaries; and
- maintaining appropriate records to account for the final measure provided by the agency for the particular performance indicator.

Agencies should also be aware of privacy and cultural sensitivities when capturing client demographic data, which should only be provided on a voluntary basis from the client. All data collected by the Queensland Government must comply with the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#), Information Privacy Principles 1-3, Collection of Personal Information.

1.3 Reporting period/timeframe

Agencies are required to report against the performance measures annually, aligning with the financial year annual reporting cycle.

1.4 Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services role

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) will be responsible for analysing relevant Census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for Performance Measure 1, which will be used to review relevant targets.

DCSSDS will also monitor agencies published data on an annual basis to calculate the whole-of-Government:

- spend on interpreters; and
- number of occasions interpreters are engaged.

1.5 References/further information

The Queensland Language Services Policy can be accessed via the DCSSDS website at [Language Services Policy - Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services \(dcssds.qld.gov.au\)](#)

The Queensland Language Services Guidelines include information and suggestions for other performance measures and data collection which agencies may find useful in assessing effective culturally responsive service delivery. The Guidelines are also available on the website.

2 Data dictionaries

2.1 Performance Measure 1– *Percentage of Queensland population with limited proficiency in English compared with percentage of Queensland Government clients with limited proficiency in English.*

KPI Owner: DCSSDS

Program Owners: Queensland Government agencies

Assumptions:

- Everyone who is eligible for a Queensland Government service has the same right to access the service.
- For the target client group (people with limited proficiency in English) some Queensland Government services are more likely to be used than others.
- Definition of client and how data is captured will differ across agencies.

Summary Section:

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| Performance Measure: | Percentage of Queensland population with limited proficiency in English compared with percentage of Queensland Government clients with limited proficiency in English. |
| Scope: | Queensland Government includes all departments and non-Government organisations funded to provide services on behalf of departments including Hospital and Health Services, TAFE Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission (refer to page 10 of the Queensland Language Services Policy). |
| Strategic Objective: | The aim of the Queensland Language Services Policy is to enhance access to interpreters and translated information to improve access to the full range of Government and Government-funded services for people requiring language support. |
| Purpose: | The purpose of this measure is to compare the state population-based figure for people with limited English language proficiency with the percentage of Queensland Government clients who require language support. If the Queensland Government is providing services that are responsive to the language needs of clients, it would be assumed that the percentage of clients with limited English language proficiency is comparable to the respective baseline population percentage. |

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| | <p>With due consideration given to the potential margin of error in reported figures (e.g. in the Census, where a significant percentage of people who identify as speaking a language other than English at home do not nominate a level of English proficiency), a disparity between the two figures could indicate that people with limited English language proficiency are either under or over-represented when accessing Queensland Government services. This may encourage an investigation of possible causes and, where appropriate, identification of potential solutions.</p> |
| <p>Definitions:</p> | <p>Limited proficiency in English – the ability to speak English “Not well” or “Not at all” in everyday situations (as defined by people who self-assess their proficiency). The assumption is that if an individual identifies as speaking English well the person will not require an interpreter.</p> <p>Source: ABS, Language Standards, 2016, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/language-standards/latest-release</p> <p>It is assumed that clients with a limited proficiency in English will request an interpreter either by producing a Queensland Interpreter Card or another method. Therefore, a client requesting an interpreter is considered to have limited proficiency in English (refer to calculation section below).</p> <p>Queensland Government clients – broadly means clients who reside in Queensland. The data should only capture permanent or temporary residents, not tourists. Therefore, those services that are primarily targeted towards tourists are excluded from this measure (see below <i>identified services</i>).</p> <p>It is the agency’s responsibility to further prescribe its definition of clients. Agencies should also consider including the clients of non-Government organisations funded to deliver services on their behalf.</p> <p>Identified services - Identified services are those most likely to be used by the target client group. These include hospital and health services, education and training, disability services, child safety, domestic violence services, police, courts and justice, TAFE Queensland, transport, fire and emergency services, and housing.</p> <p>Agencies are responsible for identifying relevant client-focused services or programs within these identified services for the purposes of reporting. Queensland Government services excluded from this performance measure include those services primarily targeted towards tourists and other visitors to the state e.g. National Parks services.</p> <p>Language support – assistance to communicate in English through an interpreter.</p> <p>For the year – means financial year (1 July - 30 June).</p> |

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| <p>Data Collection Methodology:</p> | <p>For the first part of the performance measure (percentage of the Queensland population with limited proficiency in English), DCSSDS will source data from the most recent Census data held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/).</p> <p>This data dictionary is primarily focused on the second part of the performance measure (percentage of Queensland Government clients who require language support). Data to assess performance against this part of the measure will be collected from Queensland Government agencies as outlined below under “Data presentation”.</p> |
| <p>Calculation:</p> | <p>The unit of measure is the percentage of Queensland Government clients who require language support during a financial year (which equals the number of clients who require language support divided by the total number of clients of the service provider multiplied by 100).</p> $\frac{\text{Number of clients who require language support} \times 100}{\text{Total number of clients of the service provider}} = \%$ <p>The calculation is informed by the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A count of each client who requests an interpreter (regardless of whether an interpreter is able to be provided or not) for an identified service (as defined above). • If interpreters are required at multiple times for the same client, then count the client only once. • If the client is part of a group meeting where more than one interpreter is engaged (e.g. where interpreters are needed in different languages) then count each client who has indicated they need an interpreter (e.g. through RSVPs). • A count of clients who have requested interpreters in any language, including Auslan (Australian Sign Language) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. • A count of clients not needing an interpreter. • Add the number of clients needing an interpreter with the number of clients not needing an interpreter to determine the total number of clients for calculating the percentage. |
| <p>Data Presentation:</p> | <p>Queensland Government agencies are to use the <i>annual-report-20XX-XX-qld-language-services-policy-reporting-template.csv</i> provided each year by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The completed file should be saved in the .csv format.</p> <p>The first part of this measure, the percentage of the Queensland population that does not speak English well or at all, will be pre-inserted by DCSSDS in the first column of the reporting template under the heading – <i>PM1a QLD pop. does not speak English well or at all (%)</i>.</p> <p>The second part, the percentage of Queensland Government clients who require language support during the financial year, will be added by agencies to the second column of the reporting template under the</p> |

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| | heading – <i>PM1b Clients requiring language support (%)</i> . Do not add a % symbol to the data. In Excel, the column should have the format 'General'. |
| Reporting Frequency: | <p>Queensland Government agencies are to report annually through their annual reporting process with data published to the Queensland Government open data portal.</p> <p>Agencies may provide a separate report (separate saved .csv file based on the reporting template) for each administrative data collection reported on.</p> <p>In a separate published document, agencies should include further notes, caveats or qualitative data they deem necessary to explain the performance measure data, including rationales for methodology used or issues identified.</p> |
| Contact Officer: | <p>Multicultural Affairs</p> <p>Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services</p> <p>MAsecretariat@cyjma.qld.gov.au</p> |

Targets/Tolerances:

| Performance Measure | Target | Tolerance |
|---|---------|-----------|
| | 2023-24 | |
| Percentage of Queensland Government clients with limited proficiency in English. | 1.8% | N/A |
| <p><i>Target/Tolerance Rationale:</i></p> <p>Target is based on the 2021 ABS Census for the state's total population identified that speak a language other than English and do not speak English, or do not speak it well (1.8%). <i>This includes Auslan and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.</i> It also includes people who do not speak English well or at all but did not state which language other than English they speak.</p> | | |
| <p><i>Preferred performance outcome:</i></p> <p>The gap between the percentage of the Queensland population and target (percentage of Queensland Government clients) is non-existent or small. Note: Due consideration should be given to the potential margin of error in reported figures (e.g. in the Census, where a significant percentage of people who identify as speaking a language other than English at home do not nominate a level of English proficiency).</p> | | |

Data Collection:

| Data Source | Data Storage | Data Quality Considerations |
|--|---|--|
| Queensland Government agencies (Percentage of clients who required language support for the year) | All data collected by the Queensland Government must comply with the <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i> , Information Privacy Principles 1-3, Collection of Personal Information | Agency to determine whether there are data quality issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency of data capture during intake procedures.• Ability for some agencies to capture total number of clients.• Definition of a client will be different for different agencies. |

2.2 Performance Measure 2 – Use of interpreters across the Queensland Government.

KPI Owner: DCSSDS

Program Owners: Queensland Government agencies

Summary Section:

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| Performance Measure: | Use of interpreters across the Queensland Government. |
| Scope: | Queensland Government includes all departments and non-Government organisations funded to provide services on behalf of departments including Hospital and Health Services, TAFE Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission (refer to page 10 of the Queensland Language Services Policy). |
| Strategic Objective: | The aim of the Queensland Language Services Policy is to enhance access to interpreters and translated information to improve access to the full range of Government and Government-funded services for people requiring language support. |
| Purpose: | The purpose of this measure is to track the Queensland Government usage and expenditure on interpreter services. It identifies whether changes to Queensland Government procurement arrangements for interpreters (e.g. Standing Offer Arrangement introduced in 2018), amongst other influences, has had a positive or negative impact on use of interpreter services across Government, including efficiencies and/or cost savings. |
| Definitions: | <p>Limited proficiency in English – the ability to speak English “Not well” or “Not at all” in everyday situations (as defined by people who self-assess their proficiency). The assumption is that if an individual identifies as speaking English well the person will not require an interpreter.</p> <p>Source: ABS, Language Standards, 2016, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/language-standards/latest-release</p> <p>It is assumed that clients with a limited proficiency in English will request an interpreter either by producing a Queensland Interpreter Card or another method. Therefore, a client requesting an interpreter is considered to have limited proficiency in English (refer to calculation section below).</p> <p>For the year – means financial year (1 July - 30 June).</p> <p>Interpreters engaged by agencies - Interpreters are defined in the Queensland Language Services Policy. Interpreters do not include relatives, friends or advocates of a client or non-accredited bilingual staff</p> |

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| | <p>of the department or other agencies. Interpreters for this performance measure include interpreters in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Auslan.</p> <p>This performance measure includes on-site interpreting, telephone interpreting and video-conference interpreting. This category may also include translation spending.</p> <p>These definitions are the same as the definitions in Performance Measure 1.</p> |
| <p>Data Collection Methodology:</p> | <p>Data to assess performance against this measure will be collected from Queensland Government agencies on an annual basis (reporting for each financial year) on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amount spent annually on interpreters engaged by agencies. 2. Number of occasions interpreters are engaged annually by the agency. <p>Data should be sourced from agency files and should not impose additional reporting requirements on non-Government organisations. However, departments should consider including relevant data collection requirements in funded non-Government organisations' service agreements or procurement arrangements.</p> |
| <p>Calculation:</p> | <p><i>Amount spent annually on interpreters engaged by agencies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unit of measure is the total amount (ex GST) spent (rounded up to the nearest dollar) on engaging qualified interpreters for clients accessing agencies' services and the services of non-Government organisations funded by the agency. • Data from agencies is added together to determine the whole-of-Government spend on interpreters. <p><i>Number of occasions interpreters are engaged annually by the agency</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unit of measure is the number of occasions an interpreter is engaged. • Count each occasion where an interpreter is engaged, irrespective of whether the same interpreter is engaged for the same client/s on a number of different occasions or if the interpreter is engaged for another client/s. • If more than one interpreter is engaged for a group meeting (e.g. where interpreters are needed in different languages) count each interpreter that is engaged for that meeting. • Data from agencies is added together to determine the total number of occasions interpreters are engaged across the whole of the Queensland Government. |
| <p>Data Presentation:</p> | <p>Queensland Government agencies are to use the <i>annual-report-20XX-XX-qld-language-services-policy-reporting-template.csv</i> provided each year by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The completed file should be saved in the .csv format.</p> |

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| | <p>The first part of this measure, the dollar 'Amount spent annually on interpreters engaged by agencies' will be added by agencies to the third column of the reporting template under the heading – <i>PM2a Interpreter engagement expenditure (\$)</i>. Do not add a \$ symbol to the data. In Excel, the column should have the format 'General.</p> <p>The second part, the 'Number of occasions interpreters are engaged annually by the agency' will be added by agencies to the fourth column of the reporting template under the heading – <i>PM2b Interpreter engagement occasions (#)</i>.</p> <p>In a separate published document, Agencies should include further notes, caveats or qualitative data they deem necessary to explain the performance measure data, including rationales for methodology used or issues identified.</p> |
| Reporting Frequency: | Queensland Government agencies are to report annually through their annual reporting process with data published to the Queensland Government open data portal . |
| Contact Officer: | Multicultural Affairs DCSSDS MAsecretariat@cyjma.qld.gov.au |

Data Collection:

| Data Source | Data Storage | Data Quality Considerations |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Queensland Government agencies | All data collected by the Queensland Government must comply with the <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i> , Information Privacy Principles 1-3, Collection of Personal Information | Agency to determine whether there are data quality issues. |

3 Publishing to the Open Data portal

The Queensland Language Services Policy annual reporting is published to the [Queensland Government open data portal](#). Within an Agency, this may be undertaken by a dedicated publisher or publishing team. If this is the case, please ensure they are made aware of these requirements.

The [Open Data Portal Publishing Guide](#) provides instruction on the publishing process. Further instruction specific to the Queensland Language Services Policy annual reporting is as follows:

3.1 Adding the file/resource

On the Add Resource page, the following text must be copied and pasted into the Description field (Markdown formatting is included here to ensure this text displays as intended) and the Department/Agency and the reporting financial year then edited/added:

Queensland Language Services Policy Annual Reporting for the
[Department/Agency name] 20XX-XX.

Please note: The data for each performance measure (PM1 and PM2) should be read independently from each other as the methods of calculation intentionally differ i.e. 'Client' and 'Occasion' are not synonymous terms.

3.2 Additional information

- Where additional information (notes, caveats, methodology) is to accompany the reported data, a separate resource/file is to be published to the open data portal within the dataset (.txt is the preferred format for open data explanatory files). The title and description fields, when adding the resource, should reflect the content of the document, tying it to the related reporting data.

Issues/Comments:

Nil.