

TRANSLATING & INTERPRETING TASKFORCE REPORT



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THE FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TRAINING COUNCIL INC

Foreword

The Translating and Interpreting Industry Report was produced by the Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council, Inc. in consultation with representatives of key industry groups. These representatives formed an Industry Taskforce, chaired by the Training Council, with the aim of gaining an in-depth picture of the industry and its workforce in WA for the purposes of:

- Having the Interpreter and Translator occupations placed back on the State Priority Occupation List at a priority level sufficient to attract training subsidisation via the Priority Industry Qualification List
- Determining a model for the re-establishment of training in the state, utilising Nationally Recognised Qualifications, that is viable in the long term and accessible to and meets the needs of the workforce and workforce entrants across the State.

The contribution of the following organisations and their Taskforce representative to this report is acknowledged:

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- **Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters, Inc.**
Ms Heather Glass – Secretary
- **National Accreditation Authority for Interpreters and Translators Ltd**
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DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to ensure the information and analyses provided in this report are accurate and up to date at the time of writing.

Executive Summary

This report provides an analysis of the current workforce of interpreters and translators, as well as the demand for services. The specific purpose and focus of the research undertaken being to identify how to best re-establish training in the state, in a way that best meets the needs of potential students while being viable in the longer term. This was achieved through the analysis of survey responses from practitioners as well as relevant ABS census data and feedback from industry, employers, relevant government agencies and training stakeholders.

The Interpreting and Translating industry in WA comprises a relatively small number of individuals who provide critical services that enable culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous West Australians to gain equitable access to services. While the most recent census data suggests the workforce numbers less than 500 individuals, it is more likely to be between 500 and 1000, with a significant proportion of practitioners holding down other, often primary occupations.

The demand for language services is driven by the almost 50,000 West Australians who do not speak English well, or at all. This population grew by a staggering 34% between 2006 and 2011, a rate more than double the State population growth rate. However it is not the number of individuals requiring language services that is problematic per se. Rather it is the unique specificity with which services are required and delivered; namely language. Among these 50,000 individuals requiring language services, approximately 175 languages are spoken. As the diversity of the State's population continues to grow, this number can not only be expected to increase, but the languages spoken and by extension that services are required in will change.

While other industries have the option of upskilling workers to meet new niche markets, this is not a viable strategy for interpreters and translators. Skilling an individual to the point of being proficient in another language to the level required in these occupations would be time consuming and costly at best, but impossible in most cases.

The industry therefore requires a pool of highly skilled workers to meet current demands, and a mechanism to upskill individuals to meet anticipated demand. With four industry specific vocational qualifications, the Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Interpreting and the Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Translating, as well as a small number of post-graduate tertiary qualifications, training should provide this mechanism. However, while training has been available on and off in WA previously, with the exception of Auslan, there are no vocational qualifications currently available to WA residents, with the exception of a handful of fully online courses. Fully online courses are however, for reasons discussed within this report, not considered appropriate for training in this industry.

Based on the findings of this research a number of recommendations are made, focussing on interstate collaboration to create a blended, flexible training strategy that incorporates face to face training in both the metropolitan area and the Kimberley, promotion of training to a broader range of West Australians, the production of marketing and information products to improve understanding of the industry, qualifications and accreditation and the establishment, based on existing taskforce members, of an industry working group to drive the establishment of the proposed training model.

Critical to the success of training in the state is the ongoing recognition of the critical nature of these occupations and the complex service demand, such that both occupations remain on the State Priority Occupation List at an appropriate priority level.

A Note on the Coding of Languages

Throughout the report, languages have been presented either individually, or in regional groups. These groupings are based on those used by the ABS for Census data. To assist those readers who may not be familiar with the vast number of languages spoken in WA, colour coding has been used throughout this report, as shown below.

Eastern Asian Languages

Southeast Asian Languages

Southern Asian Languages

South West and Central Asian Languages

Northern European Languages

Eastern European Languages

Southern European Languages

African Languages

Australian Indigenous Languages

Sign Languages

Other Languages

Summary of Findings

The translating and interpreting industry faces a number of significant challenges. Although the role it plays in the WA community is critical, it is a very small workforce that is highly feminised, casualised, centralised and aging. In addition it is regionalised for Indigenous languages. These factors provide a concerning outlook for the industry in both the short and long term, particularly as experienced workers retire and are not replaced. Casualisation makes the occupation unattractive for males in particular, making it hard to address the gender imbalance in the workforce. In addition, it also makes the industry less enticing for young entrants.

For the majority of interpreters and translators, the cost (both financial and in terms of time, given many work in other occupations as well) of obtaining a qualification, a credential and then maintaining their currency through PD are difficult to justify, given the limited income the occupations offer. Combined with the inability to access training locally, these are significant barriers to the skilling of a critical workforce that has expressed the desire to access training.

Qualifications focus on the development of both specific interpreting and translating skills and complementary language and skill development, whereas NAATI credentialing only sets a language specific benchmark for interpreting and translating in a limited range of languages. While there appears to be recognition, and good uptake of NAATI credentials, they do not, and are not designed to skill the workforce.

Given the complex and critical service provided, in contexts with legal

ramifications (informed consent, court proceedings, government service access), individuals ideally, should be both qualified and hold credentials. However, for the majority of practitioners, the cost of training, relative to their remuneration means that gaining a qualification is not an option. It also impacts uptake of PD, which is an ongoing requirement for many professional memberships, and to retain NAATI credentials. A significant number of survey respondents relied on self-directed study for PD, or did no PD at all.

Training is highly valued and desired by industry and strategies need to be put in place that address the key barriers to access, namely cost and local availability.

The current situation can be counteracted by the provision of flexible, low-cost training. Industry and NAATI both reiterate the complementary role of testing/credentialing and training/qualifications in creating and sustaining a skilled, professional workforce. For this reason, the re-establishment of training should ideally be via a NAATI approved course. While this adds to the cost of the qualification, overall, it remains cheaper, and more straightforward for the individual, than if the two are disconnected.

In addition the occupations of interpreter and translator, must remain on the SPOL, at a level that ensures the inclusion of the nationally recognised qualifications on the PIQL. Given concerns regarding the English proficiency of some individuals seeking to access training, and the fact that only the Diploma of Interpreting is currently only qualification on the scope of a WA based training provider, it is felt that the Diplomas should be listed on the PIQL at this time.

Addressing workforce issues around employment type and pay rates are beyond the scope of the Taskforce, but work by the relevant union, Professionals Australia, is

ongoing. However, in these professional occupations, the lack of formal educational requirements by the credentialing body and its government owners does appear to add to the perception that work and skill are under-valued, or not valued at all. Creating an accessible, defined pathway into the industry should help alleviate this perception.

A Note on Indigenous Interpreting

While the participation rate for Indigenous interpreters in this project was low, it is clear from stakeholders that access to qualified Indigenous language interpreters is problematic. Currently Indigenous West Australians who do not speak English well, or at all, are 'getting by' and this situation is compounded by the mistaking of Aboriginal English and Kriol with Standard Australian English, where words are shared but hold completely different meanings, based on different world views and concepts.

More work is required to understand the Indigenous interpreting workforce, the specific demands on their services (in terms of context, location and language) and how to best facilitate training for them. Specifically, training that is affordable, culturally appropriate and inclusive of face to face delivery and support in the regions.

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Background

According to the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) Western Australia is becoming a state of super-diversity.^{1,2} Residents born overseas increased by almost 22% between 2006 and 2011 and now make up over 30% of the WA population.³

West Australians come from all corners of the globe, as highlighted in Table 1. While there was a small decline between 2006 and 2011 in residents born in Southern and Eastern Europe, there were significant increases in those born in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and New Zealand, with the fastest growth from Southern and Central Asia. Over the same period, in contrast to 14% growth in the WA

population overall, the Australian-born portion of the population increased by only 10%.

As shown below, traditional European migration has contributed to the largest population base (14% of the WA total), however, growth from Northwest Europe is less than a third that of the next fastest growing region, the Americas, and migration from Southern and Eastern European sources is declining. Excluding New Zealand and Oceania, by far the fastest growing sources of population growth (up by 58%) are the regions of Asia and the countries of Africa and the Middle East, which together are growing off a similar population base as the European WA community, accounting for 11% of the total State population.

Table 1: Region/Country of birth - WA residents (2011)⁴

Country or Region of Birth	2011 Census		Growth (2006 – 2011)
	#	% of WA pop'n	
Australia <i>(Indigenous Australians)</i>	1 411 500 (69,600)	63.0% (3.1%)	10.3% (18.7%)
Outside Australia	827 600	30.6%	21.7%
• Northwest Europe	276 00	12.3%	12.1%
• Southeast Asia	94 800	4.2%	39.5%
• New Zealand and Oceania	74 700	3.3%	49.6%
• Sub-Saharan Africa	65 200	2.9%	59.1%
• Southern and Eastern Europe	55 200	2.5%	-1.6%
• Southern and Central Asia	44 800	2.0%	102.2%
• Northeast Asia	31 100	1.4%	69.2%
• Americas	22 900	1.0%	37.0%
• North Africa and Middle East	18 600	0.8%	53.1%
• Other ⁵	1200	<0.0%	2.4%
Not Stated	144 400	6.4%	-3.4%
Overall State Population Growth			14.3%

¹ Minister's Message, OMI Strategic Plan 2014-18,

² Office of Multicultural Interests Strategic Plan 2014-18 Consultation Report

³ All population data is based on ABS Census 2006 and 2011 data, accessed via ABS Census TableBuilder Basic. This figure does not include

non-responders to the census question regarding country of birth.

⁴ Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Percentages are calculated using raw data.

⁵ Census country of birth category 'Supplementary Codes'.

Table 2: Top 20 WA growth communities, by number – country of birth (2006-2011)⁶

Growth Populations (# Increase)					
CaLD Countries			English Speaking Countries		
Country of Birth	Rank	# Increase (2006 – 2011)	Country of Birth	Rank	# Increase (2006 – 2011)
India	3	14 800	New Zealand	1	23 400
Philippines	5	10 400	England	2	17 700
China	6	8700	South Africa	4	13 300
Malaysia	8	5200	Ireland	7	5300
Afghanistan	11	2500	Zimbabwe	9	3700
Indonesia	12	2300	Scotland	10	2800
Thailand	13	2200	USA	16	2100
Viet Nam	14	2200			
Singapore	15	2200			
Sri Lanka	17	2100			
Rep. of Korea (South)	18	1900			
Burma	19	1900			
Mauritius	20	1500			
TOTAL		57 800 (46%)	TOTAL		68 300 (54%)
TOP 20 COMBINED TOTAL			126 100		

As shown in Table 2 over the period 2006 to 2011, the top 20 countries of origin of new migrants to WA accounted for just over 126,000 individuals; just under 15% of the total growth in new residents born outside Australia. Of these individuals, at least 46% might be expected to speak a LOTE (language other than English) as their first language.

(This proportion is an underestimate, given a small percentage of South Africans and Zimbabweans will speak English as their first language). In addition it should be noted that when Indigenous Australians are considered as a cohort distinct from other Australian born residents, their population growth rate outstrips that of all the top 20 growth communities shown in Table 2, with the exception of India.

The overwhelming shift in languages of need was away from the traditional languages of Europe to the many and diverse languages and dialects of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. It is notable that in terms of percent growth, the most rapidly growing populations in WA (including those born in Australia) are all CaLD.

The degree of linguistic diversity in WA is clear when one considers that almost 21% of the population speaks a LOTE at home⁷. The growth in this demographic has been dramatic, with an increase of 43%, compared to an increase of just under 11% in the number of residents speaking English at home between 2006 and 2011⁸.

Additional information on the increasing linguistic diversity in the State is shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

⁶

⁷ Based on ABS 2011 Census Data

⁸ Based on ABS 2006 and 2011 Census data

Table 3: Languages spoken at home by WA residents⁹

Language Spoken At Home (Group)	2011 Census		Growth (2006 – 2011)
	#	% of WA pop'n	
English	1775951	79.3%	10.8%
Language other than English	325052	20.7%	43.3%
• Eastern Asian	59057	2.6%	44.0%
• Southeast Asian	58211	2.6%	59.7%
• Southern European	58108	2.6%	10.1%
• Southern Asian	33219	1.5%	185.9%
• Eastern European	33141	1.5%	6.4%
• Northern European (excl. English)	28679	1.3%	47.7%
• South West and Central Asian	22328	1.0%	60.0%
• African	13656	0.6%	146.6%
• Australian Indigenous	9589	0.4%	20.6%
• Sign Languages	848	0.0%	44.1%
• Other	4266	0.2	152.7%

There are many more West Australians who speak a LOTE at home than those who are newly arrived: (325,000 versus 147,800¹⁰) Among them are Australian indigenous languages and the sign languages of the Deaf, but again, of the 325,000 West Australians who use a LOTE at home, 53% are speaking the languages of Asia, compared to established European migrant languages which account for 37%. For Indigenous Australians, census data indicates almost 10,000 spoke an Indigenous language at home. However, this is likely a significant underestimate, as many will indicate they speak English, assuming this includes Kriols

that they actually speak, or for cultural reasons, such as pride. To get an overview of where language demand may come from going forward we need to look at those sections of the WA community from sources of migration that, while as a proportion of total State population may still account for small numbers, grew, at rapid rates in the period from 2006 to 2011, such as Nepal.

As shown in Table 5, several of these countries represent speakers of languages such as Spanish or Chinese (people from Columbia, Venezuela, Mexico, Peru and China itself), but even among these two broad language groups the countries of origin represent multiple possible dialects and language varieties, and the others in this top group of 20 growth sources represent much more diverse language groups. For this reason, a breakdown of the most common LOTEs spoken in WA homes, and those that have grown most rapidly from 2006 to 2011 are shown in Figure 1 (Indigenous Australian being a combined total of all such languages), and Table 6 and Table 7 respectively.

Table 4: Region share of LOTE spoken at home by WA residents

Region/Type	Share of LOTE Spoken at Home (2011)
Asia	53.2%
Europe	36.9%
Africa	4.2%
Australian Indigenous	2.9%
Sign	0.3%
Other	1.3%

⁹ Excludes Not Stated and Supplementary Code categories.

¹⁰ Calculated from ABS 2006 and 2011 Census data

Table 5: Top 20 WA growth communities - country of birth (% increase 2006-2011)¹¹

Country of Birth	% Increase (2006 – 2011)	Country of Birth	% Increase (2006 – 2011)
Nepal	673.1%	Brazil	156.5%
Bhutan	400.0%	Saudi Arabia	152.7%
Burundi	206.6%	Philippines	152.2%
Columbia	202.0%	Tonga	146.0%
Venezuela	191.6%	Mexico	131.5%
Cook Islands	182.5%	Nigeria	123.8%
Libya	174.8%	Bangladesh	118.7%
Afghanistan	168.7%	Pakistan	115.0%
Rwanda	166.7%	China ¹²	108.5%
Dem. Republic of Congo	160.5%	Peru	102.4%

Table 6: Top 20 fastest growing languages spoken in WA homes (2006 - 2011)

Growth Languages	
Language spoken at home	# Increase (2006 – 2011)
English	172907
Mandarin	11482
Afrikaans	6666
Tagalog	5952
Arabic	4263
Punjabi	3804
Filipino	3673
Vietnamese	3275
Gujarati	3134
Hindi	3082
French	2672
Spanish	2505
Indonesian	2476
Malayalam	2363
Tamil	2181
Korean	2022
Cantonese	1960
Thai	1738
Shona	1672
Persian	1574

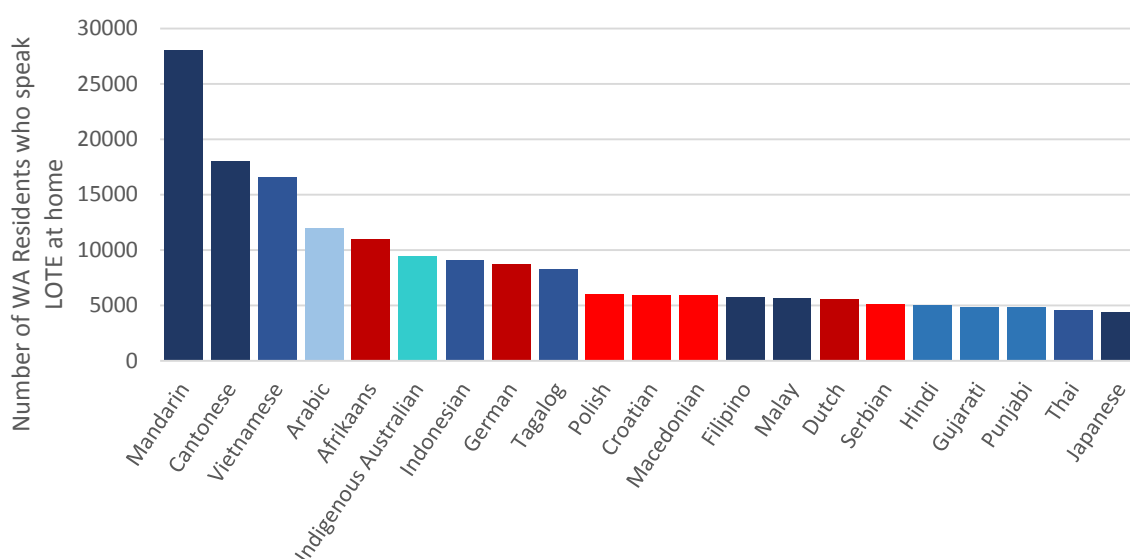
Table 7: Top 20 fastest growing languages spoken in WA homes (% increase 2006 - 2011)

Growth Languages	
Language spoken at home	% Increase (2006 – 2011)
Karen	883.0%
Nepali	682.8%
Shona	433.2%
Malayalam	430.4%
Telegu	391.6%
Marathi	382.7%
Punjabi	374.8%
Irish	314.8%
Kannada	259.5%
Tagalog	254.8%
Estonian	237.0%
Krio	207.9%
Pitjantjatjara	192.7%
Gujarati	185.1%
Filipino	182.9%
Bisaya	182.6%
Samoan	162.5%
Urdu	162.3%
Hindi	160.0%
Bemba	159.6%

¹¹ Tables 5, 6 and 7 exclude countries of birth reported by fewer than 100 individuals at both the 2006 and 2011 Censuses

¹² Excludes SARs and Taiwan

Figure 1: Most common LOTEs spoken at home by WA residents (2011 Census)



Meeting the Language Service Needs of CaLD¹³ West Australians

The OMI Strategic Plan 2014-18 highlights three key issues facing the State arising from the increasing diversity of its population:

- Settlement of migrant cohorts from an increasing number of countries.
- Supporting second and third generation and established CaLD communities.
- Ensuring participation in education, training and employment, as well as civic life.

For the majority of migrants, who do speak English, language is not a barrier to settlement, employment, government and other services and wider engagement with the community. At the last census, however, over 45,000 West Australians reported either not speaking English at all, or not speaking it well. This is an increase of 34%, or almost 12,000 individuals, since 2006.

To engage with these residents, the State requires a workforce of skilled interpreters

and translators, able to provide services in a

vast range of contexts, including banking, children's services, education, employment, allied and mainstream health, housing and the police and legal system. This is complicated by the ever-increasing number of languages in which services are required; those individuals who reported not speaking English well, or at all in 2011 spoke over 170 different languages at home, this number includes a number of Indigenous languages and Kriols.

Census data for this period indicates the interpreting workforce numbered 320 (38 languages), and the translating workforce 104 (12 languages)¹⁴. Industry indicates however, that the workforce is significantly larger than this. Most likely this discrepancy is due to the fact that many workers have other, primary occupations and would have reported these, rather than interpreting or translating. In addition, the State's largest employer of interpreters currently provides in up to 90 languages¹⁵, while the state's professional association has members who cover more than the 12 languages reported by translators¹⁶.

¹³ Culturally and linguistically diverse

¹⁴ Disaggregated occupation data was provided by the ABS for both the 2006 and 2011 censuses.

¹⁵ Data provided by WA Interpreters

¹⁶ Data provided by WAITI

In addition, industry stakeholders¹⁷ have indicated that language demand is increasing in the aged care sector, as some longer term residents whose first language is not English revert to their mother tongue as they age. This phenomenon is presenting unanticipated challenges in aged care in particular and interaction by former migrant elderly with the wider community in general, as established European, Vietnamese and Chinese migrant populations age.

Challenges Facing the WA Interpreting and Translating Industry

Language services provided by skilled practitioners are critical in supporting non-English speaking migrants, new and old, as well as Indigenous language speakers and others with limited English proficiency, and are required in a wide range of contexts. Practitioners need not only to have high proficiency in a LOTE and English and cultural awareness, but also a strong working knowledge of ethics and of the legislation and policies relevant to the contexts in which they are working.

Language Diversity

The sheer number of languages spoken by WA residents with little or no English proficiency is a major challenge for the industry. While some practitioners do have the ability to work in more than one LOTE, many do not. In other industries upskilling may be a viable method to fill gaps in the workforce, but it is not a realistic option for the interpreting and translating industry. A person able to work in a particular language cannot be quickly upskilled to work in another language to meet demand.

Languages in which services are in demand change, based on waves of migration from

particular regions and in response to a variety of economic and political factors and events, including civil unrest. As already discussed, some older West Australians revert to their first language, or have declining English proficiency, often related to conditions associated with aging. The aging of first generation migrants is therefore driving increased demand for services in languages that are often not the same as those spoken by newly arrived migrants.

The breakdown of West Australians who reported being unable to speak English, or speak it well is shown in Table 8. It is this cohort that drives demand for language services, and low spoken English proficiency is more common among speakers of some languages than others. For example, over 20% of individuals who spoke an Eastern Asian language at home reported having low or no spoken English proficiency, however less than 3% of those speaking a Northern European language at home reported the same. Those using sign languages were most likely to report low or no spoken English proficiency.

Residents with low, or no spoken English proficiency drive demand for language services in the State and the number of residents in this demographic grew by 34% from 2006 to 2011, significantly faster than the population growth rate for the same period. The most commonly spoken languages among residents who reported not speaking English well, or at all are shown in Figure 2. Beyond these 20 languages and 33,000 individuals there are another 14,000 West Australians who speak at least 154 other languages who do not speak English well or at all¹⁸.

Languages that have experienced the greatest growth from 2006 to 2011 in the number of speakers with little or no English proficiency are shown in Table 9 and Table 10.

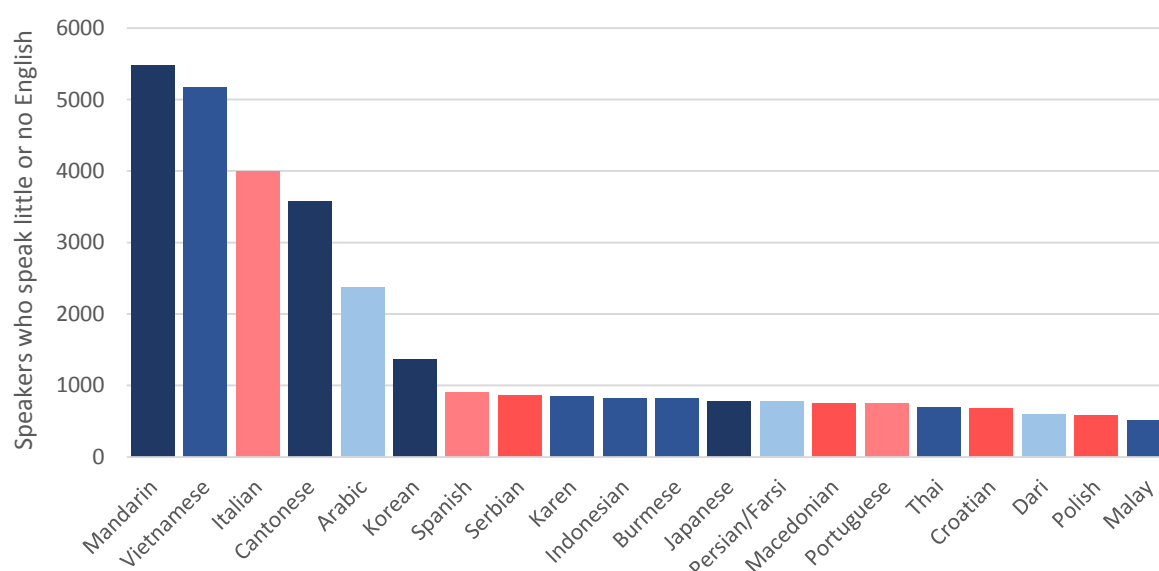
¹⁷ Based on feedback from Taskforce members

¹⁸ Based on 2011 Census data.

Table 8: Languages spoken by West Australians who do not speak English well, or at all

Language Spoken At Home (Group)	2011 Census		Growth (2006 – 2011)
	#	% of those speaking these languages at home	
Eastern Asian	12 100	20.4%	57.7%
Southeast Asian	10 300	17.7%	46.9%
Southern European	6500	11.2%	- 4.0%
South West and Central Asian	4600	20.7%	59.3%
Eastern European	4000	12.0%	- 9.1%
Southern Asian	2300	6.9%	336.7%
African	1800	13.0%	70.2%
Australian Indigenous	1100	11.5%	1.9%
Northern European (excl. English)	800	2.8%	28.6%
Sign Languages	200	28.3%	904.2%
Other ¹⁹	3200	3.2%	-17.8%
Number of West Australians who do not speak English, or do not speak it well	46,900		
Growth of West Australians who do not speak English, or do not speak it well	34.0%		
Overall State Population Growth	14.3%		

Figure 2: Most common languages spoken by WA residents who do not speak English well or at all (2011 Census)



¹⁹ Includes Other Languages, Supplementary Codes and Language Spoken at Home Not-Stated Census categories

Table 9: Top 20 fastest growing languages spoken by West Australians who do not speak English well, or at all (2006-2011)

Growth Populations	
Language spoken at home	Increase (2006 – 2011)
Mandarin	2887
Vietnamese	814
French	801
Arabic	759
Karen	764
Afrikaans	681
Korean	656
Burmese	369
Tagalog	358
Chinese, nfd	308
Cantonese	261
Dari	252
Tamil	252
Thai	252
Punjabi	250
Gujarati	244
Malayalam	230
Indonesian	223
Persian/Farsi ²⁰	212
Spanish	199

Emerging Languages

In addition to the languages listed in the foregoing, there are a number spoken by small, but rapidly growing communities. Industry stakeholders indicate that emerging languages with high demand for services, or where suitably skilled practitioners have been difficult to source, include:

- Dinka
- Khmer
- Rohingya
- Tigrinya

Table 10: Top 20 fastest growing languages spoken by West Australians who do not speak English well, or at all (% Increase 2006 - 2011)

Growth Populations (% Increase)	
Language spoken at home	% Increase ²¹ (2006 – 2011)
Auslan	4350.0%
Malayalam	1150.0%
Karen	898.8%
Punjabi	568.2%
Tagalog	402.2%
Tamil	393.8%
Gujarati	343.7%
Bengali	325.0%
Sinhalese	240.7%
Hindi	218.4%
Filipino	209.2%
Urdu	161.8%
Kukatja	157.7%
Chinese, nfd	149.5%
Afrikaans	139.5%
Mandarin	111.2%
Korean	92.7%
Burmese	82.2%
Somali	77.2%
Dari	71.8%

In the period 2006 to 2011 there were also significant increases seen in the, albeit small, number of West Australians who speak Indigenous languages at home, specifically:

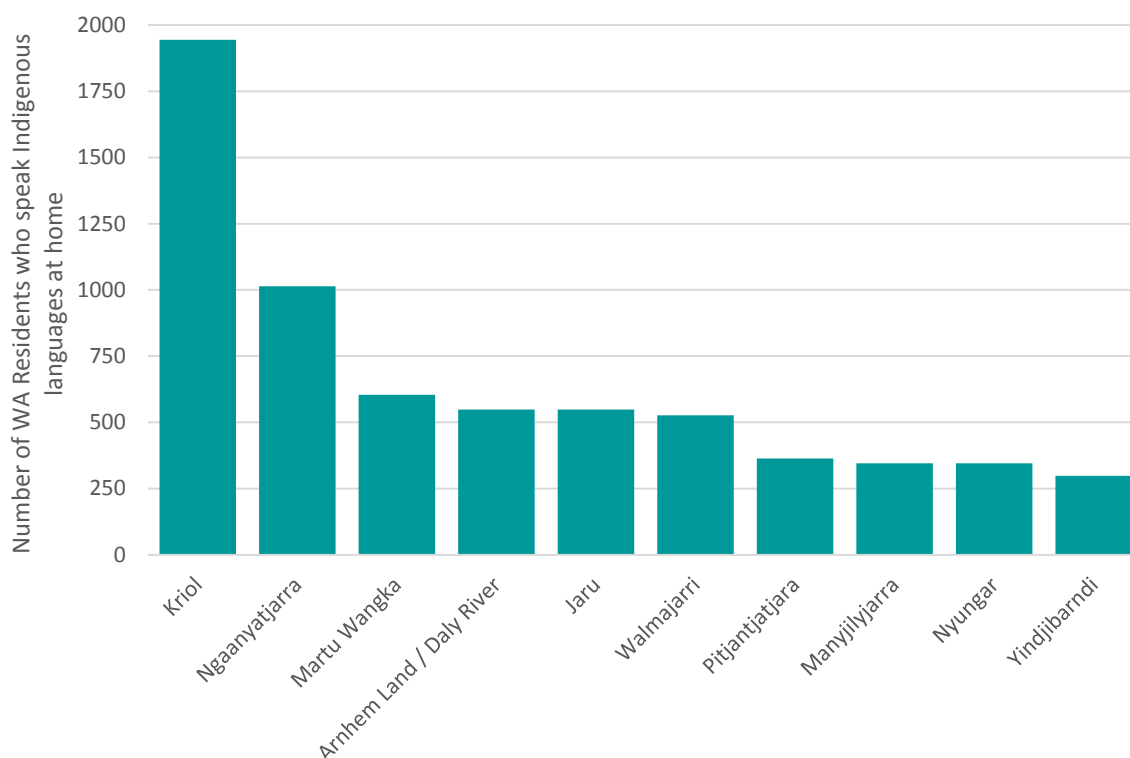
- Bardi
- Kartujarra
- Mangala
- Murrinh Patha
- Pintupi
- Torres Strait Creole
- Warlpiri
- Yawuru

Industry also noted the increase in Kukatja speakers.

²⁰ Excludes Dari

²¹ Excludes languages spoken at home reported by less than 100 individuals (2006 and 2011 censuses)

Figure 3: Most common Indigenous languages spoken by WA residents (Census 2011)



While the number of individuals who require language services in each Indigenous language may be very small by comparison to other languages, as a group there is a high need for interpreters across many languages, as evidenced by KIS's delivery of services in over 30 such languages. However, the perception that many Indigenous Australians speak English results in the true demand not being fully appreciated. In addition this cohort lives primarily in regional and remote areas and are reliant on interpreters in particular, to ensure equitable access to services. The most commonly spoken Indigenous languages are shown in Figure 3, above.

Workforce Training

The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI) provides a recognised mechanism for testing and credentialing practitioners in a range of languages. In addition, the industry has four

nationally recognised vocational qualifications and a small number of post-graduate courses to workforce skilling and industry entry.

There are short courses run by the WA professional association, WAITI, and by some hospitals that employ casual interpreters. KIS has also provided in-house training and NAATI test preparation courses via a DPMC grant²². However neither substitute for the nationally recognised Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications, which provide a holistic set of units of competency to skill individuals in the competencies industry both desires and deems necessary for quality service provision.

NAATI do not currently mandate²³ pre-test training, nor do they require individuals to hold an industry specific qualification prior to testing. NAATI testing is not a training mechanism, and is not designed to skill individuals. The testing is specifically aimed at confirming an individual demonstrates a

²² Information provided by KIS

²³ As detailed in the current NAATI Application for Accreditation by Testing form, which can be accessed at www.naati.com.au

benchmark level of skill in the competencies required to interpret or translate in a particular language. Credentials and the industry qualifications serve complementary, but different purposes.

While NAATI credentials are relatively well utilised in WA, training is currently unavailable for spoken languages. Those with existing skills at a high enough level can therefore obtain a credential, but those who require industry specific occupational training through a nationally recognised qualification cannot²⁴, other than through study online with an interstate provider.

WA industry stakeholders, however, have identified several reasons for not favouring training delivered exclusively online, and particularly by an interstate provider:

- The anticipated training cohort is diverse, and a variety of issues, including the poor track record of online training for regional Indigenous interpreters²⁵, and the fact some units of competency require individuals to demonstrate the physical and interpersonal competence of effective discourse management means that for most, exclusively online training is unsuitable.
- Practitioners suffer from professional isolation, lack of supervision and lack of training. State accredited training was a significant contributor to professional socialisation, with associated improved occupational practice.
- WA practitioners, particularly those facilitating communication between government agencies and their clients, must be familiar with the WA health, legal and policy contexts.

Industry therefore considers it important practitioners and would-be practitioners in WA have access to flexible, face-to-face training as a first priority, with a blended delivery model being a less desirable, but ultimately suitable alternative. For Indigenous workers, this must include at least some training delivered on location but in clear blocks where individuals are away from their regular home/community distractions.

Taskforce Establishment

The Interpreting and Translating Industry Taskforce was formed at the request of WAITI, in response to concerns raised and forwarded to the State Training Board by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) regarding the lack of nationally recognised training available in WA for interpreters and translators. Although the size of the industry is small, the need for skilled workers is clear.

Training is not only important in ensuring the quality of service provision, but in providing a clear, readily accessible pathway into the industry for new workers. The lack of locally available training is considered to be a significant barrier to the upskilling of current practitioners and makes it extremely challenging to attract new workforce entrants. Entry into the interpreting and translating professions by those already working in other, related roles, such as bilingual work and advocacy, is effectively closed in WA.

Service provision is complicated by the number of contexts and languages in which services are required; each could be considered a speciality in itself. Consistently available, local training is a necessity for the industry to be able to respond to changing demand with suitably skilled practitioners.

²⁴ CIT currently offers three units from the Diploma of Interpreting, however they do not deliver the full qualification.

²⁵ Feedback provided by Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS)

Without it, the long-term stability of service provision is compromised and the ability of the sector to respond to changing demand critically hampered.

The industry is dominated by older workers, and has a clear gender imbalance. In addition, most practitioners are not engaged full time, and either have relatively low incomes, or work in other, primary occupations. Training therefore needs to be both affordable, flexible and accessible, otherwise it is simply not possible for individuals to participate.

The Taskforce took a dual approach to the issue of training availability. The first initiative was to have the occupations identified as critical, in order to attract government funding to subsidise training costs. Second, a comprehensive survey of practitioners was undertaken. This was considered essential to prepare an accurate, objective picture of the size and nature of the workforce, including service capability, educational profile, employment conditions, desire for qualifications and barriers to accessing training.

In the interim, Central Institute of Technology (CIT), the previous provider of several State accredited translating and interpreting qualifications, as well as nationally recognised qualifications elected to run a short Introduction to Interpreting course, comprising three units of competency from the nationally recognised Diplomas in Interpreting and Translating.

- PSPTIS501A – Negotiate translating and interpreting assignments
- PSPTIS502A – Prepare to translate and interpret
- PSPTIS503A – Apply codes and standards to ethical practice

Based on feedback from industry via the Taskforce members, data from the workforce via the survey, and evidence from CIT regarding their short course, a proposed model for the re-establishment of a viable,

sustainable training model for WA practitioners has been developed. It is hoped that with further work by the Taskforce and appropriate support in the form of ongoing recognition of the criticality of these occupations and training subsidisation, training can be re-established to support the industry in the long term.

The Taskforce was chaired by the Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council (FAPS TC) and included representatives from the following organisations:

- Office of Multicultural Interests
- Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters, Inc.
- National Accreditation Authority for Interpreters and Translators Ltd
- WA Interpreters Pty Ltd
- Burmese Interpreting and Translating Services
- Kimberley Interpreting Service
- Central Institute of Technology
- Electrical, Utilities and Public Administration Training Council
- Community Services, Health and Education Industries Training Council.

WA Interpreter and Translator Workforce Survey

In order to better understand the size and nature of the workforce that currently provides interpreting and translating services in WA, a survey of industry was conducted in January 2015. 191 responses were received from a workforce that at last census numbered 424. This was an extremely pleasing outcome, given a nation-wide survey in 2012 received responses from 226 respondents, with only 41 of those from WA²⁶.

Sources of Variance

Industry feedback indicates *full-time* roles in interpreting and translating are extremely rare, being found almost exclusively at Royal Perth Hospital and perhaps for one or two individuals in the resources sector. There was nevertheless a relatively high number of respondents who indicated they are *working full time*. It is assumed many have understood 'full-time' to mean where interpreting or translating are the sole occupation or source of income, rather than full-time employment with associated legislated and negotiated benefits and conditions as it is more widely understood.

The survey was sent out to the workforce via OMI, professional associations, employers and to those on the NAATI register. The cohort responding to the survey is therefore skewed towards those with formal qualifications and credentials. The majority of survey respondents indicated that they held a NAATI credential. Those who indicated they did, but

supplied no information on the language or type, were excluded from analysis.

Auslan practitioners are particularly highly represented among survey respondents; higher than is the case in the wider industry workforce. Auslan practitioners are typically both formally qualified and have credentials. The cohort has set arrangements with the WA Deaf Society and NABS and under ASLIA's Code of Ethics that stipulate credentials as mandatory. Conversely, Indigenous workers and their languages are significantly underrepresented in the survey population. Although the survey was provided via key stakeholders, it is apparent that the workforce in the regions, particularly for the Kimberley, is under represented in the results. This is due to the online nature of the survey, necessary as no funds could be sourced for a surveyor to attend the regions. Additional information was therefore sourced from KIS.

Survey results were compared to disaggregated Census data to confirm the validity of the findings. There are several anomalies, both within the survey data, and between Census and survey findings, particularly in relation to responses about qualifications in translating and interpreting.

It is common for industry stakeholders and practitioners themselves to misconstrue NAATI credentials, and accreditation in particular, as being the same, or equivalent to a qualification. The wording and structure of survey questions were specifically designed to try and eliminate variance attributable to this confusion, but the strategy appears to have been only partially successful.

Finally, not all of the respondents completed the survey. Within the report, data has therefore been analysed using the number of respondents for the question or questions being reported on

²⁶ Improvements to NAATI testing, School of International Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social

Sciences, The University of New South Wales (2012)

Workforce Characteristics

Data from this survey show a workforce that is **centralised, feminised, aging, casualised and also culturally and linguistically diverse**. Earnings are, on average very poor. Each of these factors presents challenges in maintaining a workforce that is suitably qualified, skilled and stable in the long term.

Centralised Workforce

The vast majority of the workforce are based in the Perth metropolitan region. The 2011 Census²⁷ indicates a larger share of the workforce based outside the metropolitan area, predominantly in the north-west of the State, however, interpreters in those regions worked almost exclusively in Indigenous languages. The survey data may therefore be considered a fair reflection of workforce localisation for other languages.

Table 11: WA workforce localisation

Location	Percent of Workforce
Metropolitan	97.1%
≤ 10km from CBD	50.0%
10 - 20km from CBD	32.9%
20 – 30km from CBD	7.6%
30 – 50km from CBD	2.9%
> 50 km from CBD	0.0%
Other (PO Boxes, etc.)	6.5%
Regional	2.9%
Regional (2011 Census)	10.6%

Feminised Workforce

Survey responses confirmed the industry remains highly feminised, with women accounting for almost three in four workers. This far exceeds the state average proportion of female workers, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12: WA workforce gender demographics

Industry	Gender Share of Workforce	
	Female	Male
Interpreting & Translating Industry (2015 Survey)	73.8%	25.7%
Interpreting & Translating Industry (2011 Census)	72.2%	27.8%
State Average²⁸ (All Industries)	43.7%	56.3%

Aging Workforce

Almost 78% of interpreters and translators are aged 45 or older. More alarmingly, over half are 55 or older.

ABS quarterly labour force data from the same period as the survey indicates that just 38% and only 17% of the State workforce were aged 45 and over and 55 and over respectively. Census data is not available for this criterion.

Table 13: WA workforce age demographics

Industry	Age Bracket (Years) Share of Workforce					
	<25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	≥65
Interpreting & Translating	1.0%	11.5%	9.9%	24.6%	34.6%	18.3%
State Average²⁹ (All Industries)	16.0%	25.2%	20.7%	20.3%	13.8%	3.9%

²⁷ ABS Census 2011 – disaggregated data for WA Interpreter and Translator occupations, provided on request by the ABS.

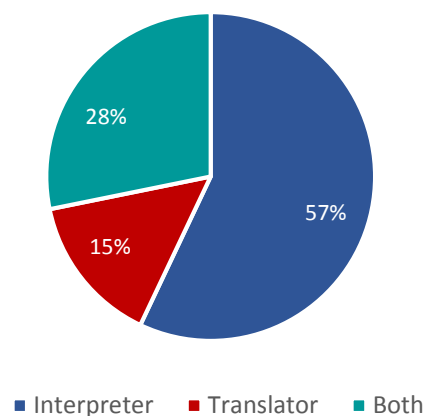
²⁸ Data source: ABS Catalogue 6291.0.55.003 – Feb 2015, Datacube E12

²⁹ Data source: ABS Catalogue 6291.0.55.003 – Feb 2015, Datacube E12

Casualised Workforce

The interpreting and translating Industry comprises individuals who work either as interpreters or translators, or who are dual professionals undertaking both types of work.

Figure 4: WA workforce by occupation



Only a small proportion of respondents indicated they were employed in the occupations full time (refer Figure 5) and for reasons discussed in Sources of Variance that number should still be considered anomalous. The proportion of the workforce engaged full-time is significantly less than the average across all industries in the State. For the majority, employment is casual, or workers operate as self-employed contractors or subcontractors.

2011 Census data is in line with the survey findings, with the mean average hours worked by interpreters and translators being 22 and 24 hours per week respectively. Data on the reported hours worked by practitioners is shown in Table 14.

Figure 5: Employment type by occupation

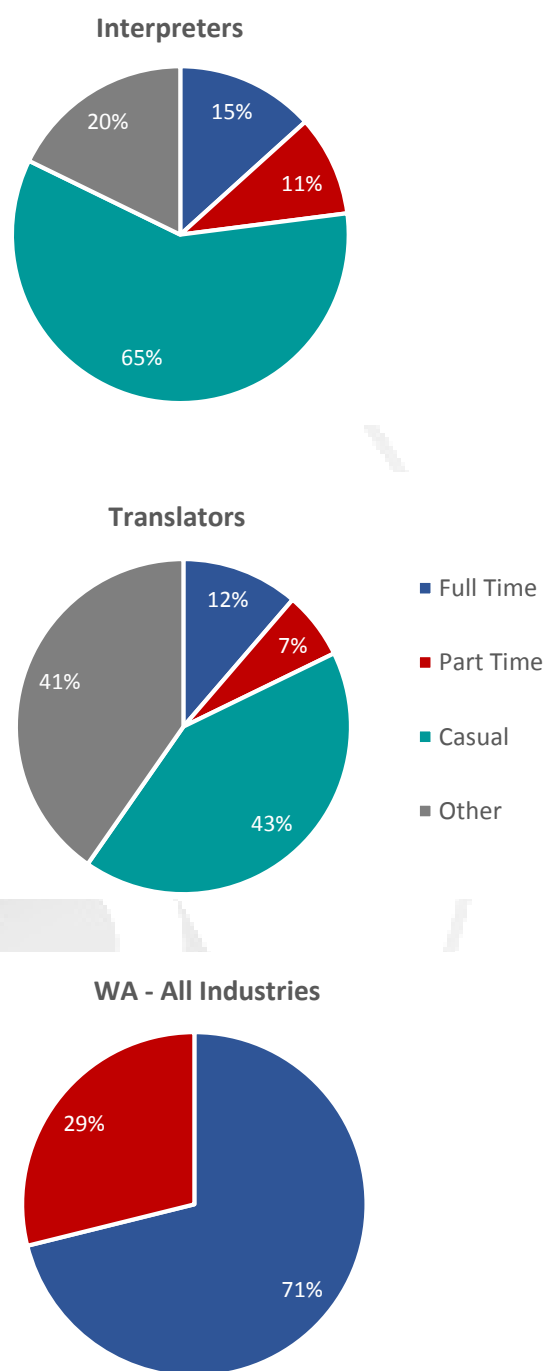


Table 14: Reported average hours worked per week in interpreting/translating

Ave. Hours Worked Per Week	Percent of Respondents by Occupation			Ave. Hours Worked Per Week (WA, All Industries)
	Interpreter	Translator	Dual Professionals	37.4 hours³⁰
<10	45.0%	50.0%	16.7%	
10 – 19	26.3%	5.0%	19.0%	
20 - 29	12.5%	25.0%	23.8%	
30+	16.3%	20.0%	40.5%	
Mean hours worked/week (Census 2011)	22	24	***	

One effect of the lack of full-time employment is that a significant proportion of respondents reported earning only a meagre gross average income from their work in the interpreting and translating industry. While dual professionals did, on average, earn more than their counterparts, the difference was not of the same magnitude as the higher average hours worked each week. Translators in particular reported very low average incomes.

Of those working only in interpreting, 15% earned \$100 or less each week. Over 30% of those working only in translating reported the same average weekly earnings. For those working in both occupations, earnings were slightly higher, but there remained over 40% of respondents who, when their interpreting

and translating incomes are combined, were still earning on average less than \$500 a week. The reported income for individuals from interpreting and translation practice is shown in Table 15.

In contrast to survey findings, 2011 Census data shows the median weekly income for interpreters to be \$630 per week, while translators fared better at \$850 per week. Industry stakeholders suggest that earnings for some provide a supplement to family income while allowing a parent to meet their family commitments, and it is not unusual for translating or interpreting to be only a secondary source of income, with practitioners having a second, primary job to sustain a living.

Table 15: Reported average gross weekly income from interpreting/translating work

Gross Income Bracket	Percent of Respondents by Occupation			Ave. Gross Weekly Income (WA, All Industries)
	Interpreters	Translators	Dual Professionals	\$1344.70³¹
<\$500	59.3%	57.9%	42.1%	
\$500-1000	32.1%	26.3%	28.9%	
\$1000-2000	7.4%	10.5%	21.1%	
>\$2000	1.2%	5.3%	7.9%	

³⁰ ABS Catalogue 6291.0.55.003, Feb 2015 (Datacube E12)

³¹ ABS Catalogue 6302.0, Nov 2014 (Table 11E)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Workforce

Over 75% of survey respondents were born overseas, with the majority of those migrating from countries across Asia and Europe. By contrast, 2011 census data indicates that only 31% of West Australians were born overseas³².

As could be expected, a much greater percentage of this workforce speak languages other than English at home; 66% compared to 15% of the general WA population. This is slightly less than the 73% of WA interpreters and translators who indicated they spoke languages other than English at home in the 2011 Census. The regions and most common countries of birth of this workforce are shown in Table 16 and Table 17.

The most commonly reported LOTE spoken at home by respondents were Farsi (Persian) and Burmese, followed by Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish and Vietnamese. This is a shift from the most common languages other than English spoken at home by this

workforce reported in the 2011 Census, which were Mandarin, Auslan, Vietnamese, Arabic and Cantonese.³³ Combined, survey respondents spoke at total of 47 LOTEs at home.

In the 2011 census the most common places of birth reported for workers in the sector were China, Vietnam, Iran, Afghanistan and Burma. However, disaggregated data provided by the ABS shows that by occupation there is some variance, with, for example, 23% of translators were born in China, a significantly higher proportion than that seen in the interpreting workforce.³⁴ Detailed data on languages spoken by the workforce at home is shown in Table 18 and Table 19.

Data provided by KIS shows in 2014/15 alone they engaged approximately 30 staff to undertake contract interpreting and translating work in a combined 14 languages, most commonly Kriol, Miriwoong and Walmajarri. Indigenous Australians clearly make up a significant share of the workforce.

Table 16: Region of birth of interpreters and translators

Interpreter & Translator Workforce				WA residents born in Australia (2011 Census)
Region of Birth	Percent of Respondents			
	2006 Census	2011 Census	2015 Survey	
Australia	27.8%	22.6%	23.9%	63.0%
Outside Australia	72.2%	77.4%	76.1%	
Oceania	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	
North West Europe	8.8%	8.3%	10.3%	
Southern and Eastern Europe	11.9%	9.7%	13.0%	
North Africa and Middle East	13.4%	14.2%	12.5%	
South East Asia	13.4%	16.3%	16.8%	
North East Asia	10.9%	13.9%	10.9%	
Southern and Central Asia	1.3%	7.5%	4.9%	
Americas	4.7%	0.7%	3.8%	
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.1%	4.0%	3.8%	

³² The discrepancy between this figure and that listed in Table 16 is due to the almost 7% of the population who did not provide a country of birth in the Census.

³³ Data source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011

³⁴ Custom disaggregated data for the interpreting and translating occupations was supplied on request by the ABS

Table 17: Top 5 countries of birth of interpreters and translators

Interpreter & Translator Workforce						Top 5 Countries of Birth of WA Residents	
2006 Census		2011 Census		2015 Survey			
Country	% of w/force	Country	% of w/force	Country	% of w/force		
Australia	27.8%	Australia	22.6%	Australia	23.9%	Australia	63.0%
Japan	5.9%	China	7.5%	Iran	7.6%	UK	10.3%
Vietnam	5.9%	Vietnam	5.7%	Myanmar	6.5%	New Zealand	3.2%
England	5.6%	Iran	5.0%	Vietnam	3.8%	South Africa	1.6%
Iran	3.4%	Afghanistan	5.0%	(Multiple)	3.3%	India	1.3%
Other 34 countries	51.3%	Other 45 countries	54.3%	Other 45 countries	54.9%	Other	20.6%

Table 18: Languages spoken at home by interpreters – by language region

Interpreter & Translator Workforce ³⁵		Percent of WA Residents who Speak English Only at Home ³⁶
Language/Region	% of w/force	
English only	32.8%	79.3%
Southwest & Central Asian	13.9%	
Southeast Asian	12.2%	
East Asian	12.2%	
Southern European	10.6%	
Eastern European	8.3%	
Northern European (Excl. English)	3.3%	
African	3.3%	
Southern Asian	2.8%	
Auslan	2.8%	
Australian Indigenous	0.6%	

Table 19: Most common languages spoken at home by interpreters and translators

Interpreter & Translator Workforce						Top Languages Spoken by WA Residents ³⁷	
2006 Census		2011 Census		2015 Survey			
Language	% of w/force	Language	% of w/force	Language	% of w/force		
English	35.0%	English	22.6%	English	33.1%	English	79.3%
Japanese	6.9%	Mandarin	7.5%	Farsi	7.2%	Italian	1.4%
Arabic	6.6%	Auslan	5.7%	Burmese	6.7%	Mandarin	1.3%
Vietnamese	5.9%	Vietnamese	5.0%	Arabic	6.1%	Cantonese	0.8%
Cantonese	5.6%	Arabic	5.0%	Cantonese	5.6%	Vietnamese	0.7%
Other		Other		Other		Filipino ³⁸	
24 languages	40.0%	37 languages	47.2%	42 languages	41.3%		0.6%

³⁵ Percent of workforce column does not equal 100%, as respondents were able to select more than one language

³⁶ Data source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011

³⁷ Data source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011

³⁸ Includes Tagalog

Workforce Characteristics, Barriers and Shortages

Survey results suggest workforce shortages exist or are likely to exist in all regional areas, given only 3% of the workforce appears to be based in regional WA (although this is acknowledged as an underestimate, as noted in *Sources of Variance*).

Regional and particularly remote WA also has a significantly higher proportion of Indigenous Australians, many of whom speak an Indigenous language as their first language, and some who do not speak English well, or at all. On site services are provided by KIS (Kimberley Interpreting Service), but they are underfunded and underutilised. Services are provided across the state, including in remote locations³⁹. In some cases on site services may be supplemented by telephone, video and Skype interpreting. Such service provision necessarily relies on technology being available in the regions however both internet and technology can be problematic in more remote areas. Situations in the regions requiring face-to-face services are at times difficult to provide for with cultural conflicts and lack of a large enough pool of trained interpreters and translators meaning that in some cases interpreters must travel long distances and some are at risk of burning out. This is particularly true for male workers, who are in high demand for services in legal settings.

Users of interpreting services may in some cases come from religious or cultural backgrounds which restrict interaction between genders. It may therefore be problematic to find an interpreter for a male, given the workforce is so dominantly female. Ethically, culturally and legally, the use of family members is problematic and a non-related, a practitioner⁴⁰ is always preferable to a family member, who may speak both

languages, but not have any interpreting skills or familiarity with relevant legislation, policies and who may have a natural bias. This may further restrict available interpreters for some clients.

A number of female respondents indicated that they had entered and chosen to remain in the industry as it provided them with flexibility to meet family commitments. Others also indicated the flexibility was a valued aspect of their occupation. However, the highly casualised nature of the work also limits its attractiveness to those who are the primary income earners in households.

Anecdotally, it appears that many individuals are employed in roles outside the industry, and others are considering leaving the industry altogether due to incomes being insufficient, something indicated by several survey respondents.

In addition to existing language and region-specific shortages, the industry is at risk of significant shortages due to workforce exit by those retiring. This will strip out a large number of the most highly experienced and skilled workers, with very few young people coming into the industry to replace them.

All of this is complicated by the fact that demand is language specific. The result is that while work is not available for some, other languages are in such high demand, with so few workers, that demand cannot be met.

Service Provision Characteristics

Language Coverage

Survey respondents provided services in almost 50 languages, with interpreters and translators working in 48 and 34 languages respectively. The workforce is dominated by

other requirements pertaining to the use of the term by health practitioners have been met.

³⁹ Based on feedback from KIS

⁴⁰ This refers to an Interpreting and/Translating professional only, and does not imply licensing or

interpreters, however, almost a third of workers are dual professionals.

Across both occupations there were more individuals working in Asian languages than any other language group, and particularly the languages of Southwest and Central and Eastern Asia. The most common working language of interpreters was Auslan, followed by Farsi (Persian), with Japanese the most common working language of translators, followed by German.

Overall, translators worked primarily in European languages, particularly the languages of Northern and Southern Europe, while interpreters worked across a range of languages, although few provided Northern European language services (Refer Figure 6 below).

Services provided

Translators and interpreters provide a variety of services, the most common being

translation of personal documents and general, non-specialised translation, and community and telephone interpreting. Workers routinely provide an average of three different services, and most appear to involve assisting individuals, particularly in accessing and utilising government services (Refer Table 20: Service provision by occupation and service type).

Services are also provided to the business sector (advertising, marketing, business/legal documentation) and to the legal, education and science/health sectors (technical documentation, specialist interpreting).

Service Context

Translating and interpreting services are provided across a range of contexts, supporting access to and use of government services (e.g. Human Services, immigration, health, education, and courts), event support and assisting the business sector.

Figure 6: Workforce service capability by language group

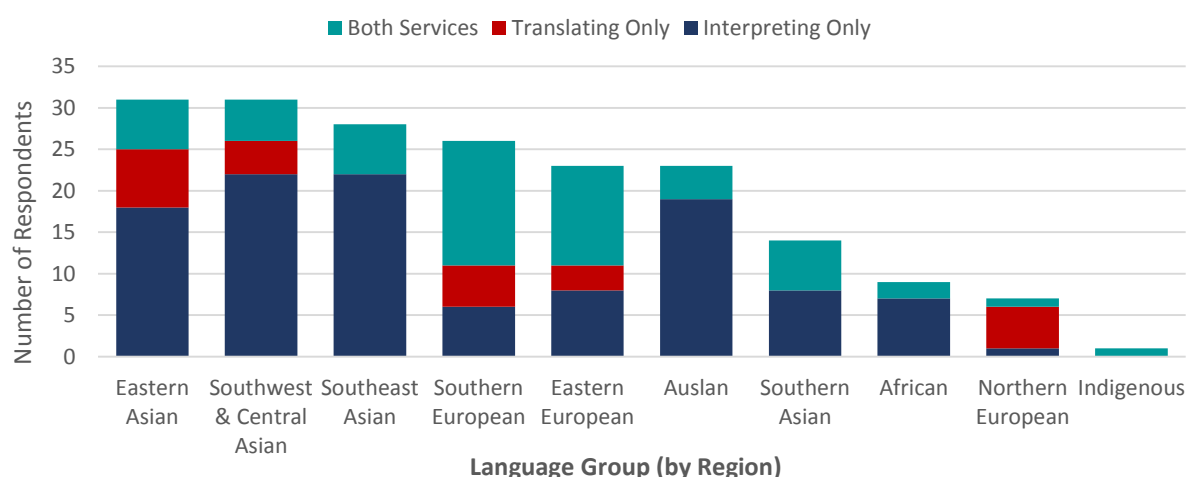


Figure 7: Most common working languages by occupation

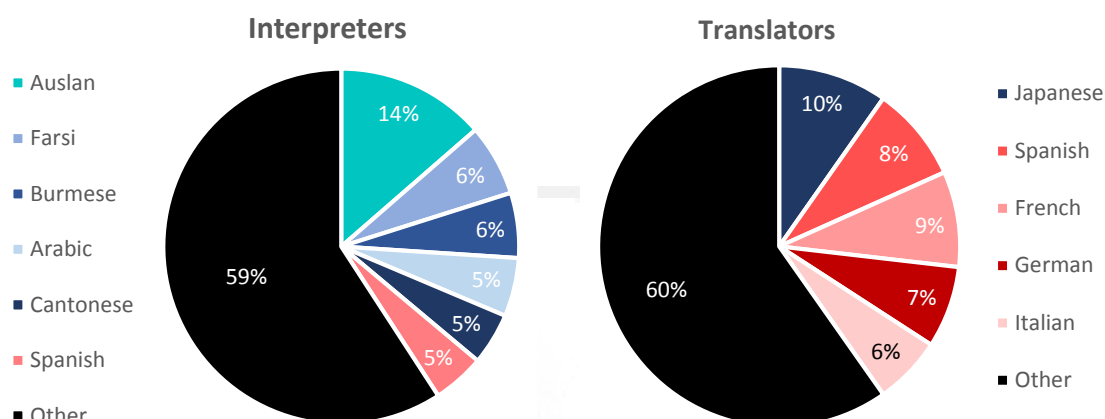


Table 20: Service provision by occupation and service type

Interpreters		Translators	
Service Type	Percent providing service	Service Type	Percent providing service
Community interpreting	99.1%	General/non-specialised	100.0%
Telephone interpreting	70.9%	Personal documents	96.2%
Business interpreting	36.8%	Specialised	75.5%
Conference interpreting ⁴¹	31.6%	Literary	39.6%
Other interpreting	25.6%	Other	3.8%
Diplomatic interpreting	11.1%		
Ave. number of services provided per respondent	3.2	Ave. number of services provided per respondent	2.75

For interpreters, other services reported covered education, medical/health (including mental health), court, general face to face interpreting and events⁴².

For translators, specialist and other services reported included academic/technical documents, letters/fact sheets, medical, legal documents and contracts, marketing/advertising and religious text translation.

⁴¹ Conference interpreting in WA is primarily provided by Auslan interpreters, according to industry feedback

⁴² Event interpreting in WA is primarily provided by Auslan interpreters, according to industry feedback

Table 21: Service provision by context and occupation

Service Type	Percent of interpreters providing services in this context	Percent of translators providing services in this context
Government – Commonwealth	70.5%	32.1%
Government – State	91.8%	39.3%
Government – Local	44.3%	16.1%
Non-government service providers	65.6%	53.6%
Settlement & community services	42.6%	30.4%
Business	32.8%	53.6%
Conference	24.6%	10.7%
Media	9.0%	21.4%
Private / Individual	59.0%	94.6%
International	12.3%	26.8%

As highlighted in Table 21, there was a significant difference in the contexts in which services were provided by translators compared to interpreters. Specifically, interpreters are much more likely to provide services related to government agencies than translators, who in turn are more likely to provide their services to private individuals, or in business, international and media contexts.

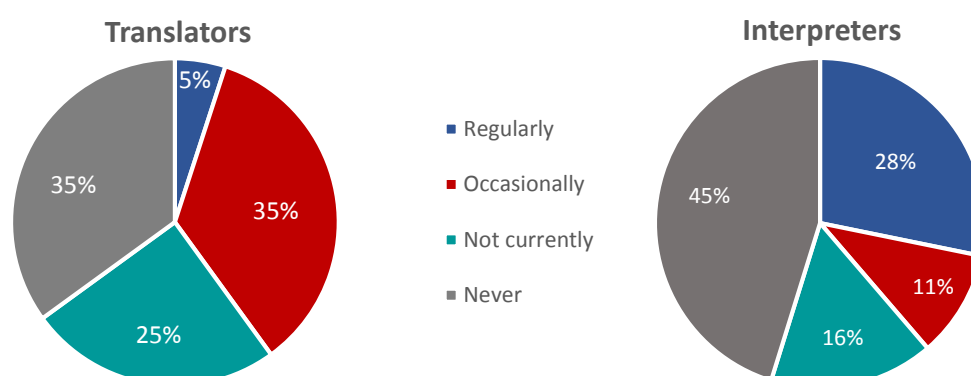
Voluntary Work

Voluntary services are provided by 40% and 39% of translators and interpreters respectively. This is not limited to those earning higher incomes from their occupation, as more than 50% of those earning less than \$500 a week from translating indicated they offered services in a volunteer capacity. Almost 35% of interpreters reporting the same income bracket volunteered their services.

A larger proportion of interpreters did not offer voluntary services compared to translators. It is possible there is simply not the same demand for voluntary interpreting services as there is for translating services, or greater use of family members to 'interpret', something less likely to occur with translation as this is often done for official purposes and informal family member translations would not be accepted by the relevant authorities.

Further consultation with industry suggests that individuals see that voluntary work is an altruistic service provided to support friends or family and communities. This is in keeping with a significant number of respondents who indicated they entered their profession out of a desire to help people or specific their community and its members.

Figure 8: Voluntary service provision by occupation



Workforce Education Profile

Industry Specific Qualifications

Figure 9 shows a highly educated workforce overall, with almost 70% holding a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. However, only 10% indicated that they held a qualification at this level that was directly related to interpreting or translating, indicating that most qualifications are held in other fields. The majority of industry specific qualifications held at this level also appear to be from overseas institutions.

Just under half of respondents indicated that they held one or more of the four nationally recognised qualifications available for the industry. This is significantly higher than WA respondents to the 2006 (18%) and 2011 Census (19%) who indicated they held a VET qualification. It appears that many translators and interpreters identify as being 'qualified' on the basis of their NAATI credential and not on the completion of an industry qualification. Additional reasons for this discrepancy between the survey and Census data are discussed in *Sources of Variance*.

VET qualifications for interpreting and translating were offered consistently every year in several languages of industry need by

the sole State provider at at least Diploma of Interpreting level until 2013. Until the national qualifications were endorsed in 2010 and a Diploma of Translating was established, the training entry level to translating was the Advanced Diploma. However, training has not been available in WA at Advanced Diploma level for either occupation since 2007, and the Diploma of Interpreting was last offered in spoken languages in 2013. Central Institute of Technology continues to offer the Diploma of Interpreting in Auslan. The Diploma of Interpreting is therefore, unsurprisingly, the most commonly held qualification.

A significant number of respondents held more than one qualification. Interpreting qualifications were more common than translating qualifications, again reflecting the pattern of pre-Training Package training. Census data also indicated that a larger proportion of those identifying as interpreters held interpreting and translating qualifications than did those who identified as translators. In fact, in 2006, less than 4% of translators indicated they held a Diploma or higher in translating or interpreting, although this increased to just over 14% in 2011. Notably, the increase was in contrast to the cessation of delivery of vocational qualifications in translating in WA. The reason for this is not clear.

Figure 9: Workforce education profile - highest level obtained

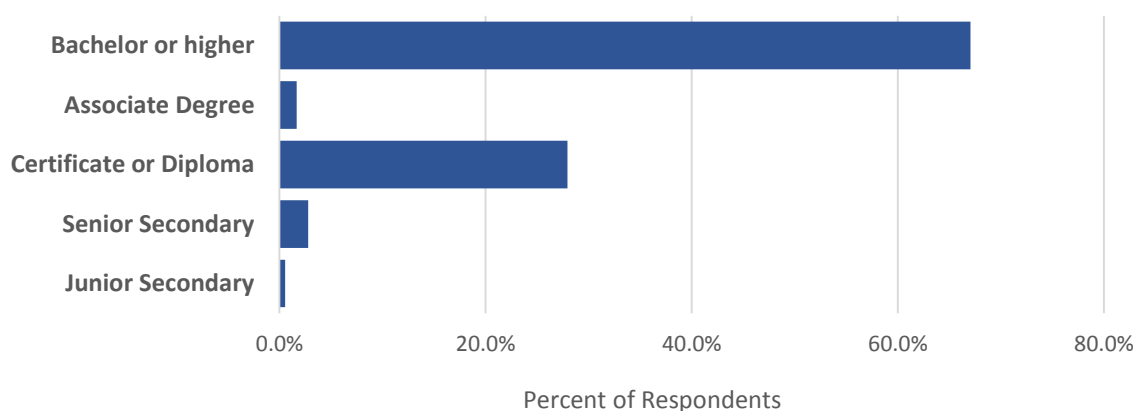


Table 22: Workforce education profile - industry qualifications only

2015 Industry Survey	Percent of Respondents
Bachelor Degree or Higher	10.4%
• PhD	1.2%
• Masters Degree	2.3%
• Graduate Diploma or Certificate	2.3%
• Bachelor Degree	6.9%
• Associate Degree	0.0%
Nationally Recognised (Vocational) Qualification	46.9%
• Advanced Diploma of Translating	6.1%
• Advanced Diploma of Interpreting	12.3%
• Diploma of Translating	5.6%
• Diploma of Interpreting	35.8%
2011 Census	
Diploma or Higher	18.6%
2006 Census	
Diploma or Higher	18.1%

35% of survey respondents had no formal qualifications (vocational or tertiary) relevant to the industry. This is a significantly lower proportion than that reported in the 2006 and 2011 Censuses.

Workforce Credentials

Although government agencies and many other organisations attempt to engage interpreters and translators with a NAATI credential, it is still possible for those without credentials to gain employment if a credentialed practitioner is not available. This situation may arise for a number of reasons:

- NAATI testing is available in 60 migrant and 10 Indigenous languages and accreditation has been awarded in 117 languages⁴³. This does not provide full coverage of LOTEs spoken in WA by those who report having low or no English

proficiency. Recognition can be obtained in other languages in some cases⁴⁴.

- Testing and ongoing revalidation are relatively expensive for individuals who are earning a minimal income from interpreting and/or translating work⁴⁵. Test fail rates are approximately 80%; most individuals will have to pay the testing fee more than once⁴⁶. Revalidation is required every three years in order for an individual to retain their credential, and requires the meeting of set PD requirements⁴⁷.

⁴³ 2013/14 NAATI Annual Report, page 23

⁴⁴ Criteria must be met. Unlike other credentials, no level of proficiency is specified when an individual obtains NAATI accreditation via recognition.

⁴⁵ Currently testing costs between \$469 and \$733, depending on the credential sought, plus a once off application fee of \$139.

Applications for accreditation based on completion of an approved course cost \$252 plus the application fee. Revalidation costs \$260 every three years.

⁴⁶ NAATI indicates that failure rates are not as high among individuals who have undertaken training (not necessarily qualifications) pre-test.

⁴⁷ Based on the 2013/14 NAATI Annual Report, in 2013/14 31 West Australians revalidated their

- There is no income incentive: the remuneration benefit for no or low credential is non-existent, and for higher over lower credential is negligible.
- Indigenous interpreters in regional and remote WA face test access issues due to technological and other barriers.

This results in a relatively large number of individuals not being able, or willing to obtain a credential. In such a small workforce, providing services in such a large number of languages, this necessarily results in situations where workers without a credential must be engaged.

Anecdotally, this has been a specific concern among practitioners, some of whom believe that those with credentials miss out on work as cheaper, unaccredited, unqualified practitioners are engaged instead. This was borne out in a number of comments made by individual respondents. However employers have staunchly refuted this claim, indicating that unaccredited practitioners are engaged only when credentialed practitioners cannot be secured. Further, employers on the taskforce stated that the risk of using an unaccredited, unqualified practitioner when a credentialed and qualified one was available was too great to outweigh any purported cost saving.

Breakdown of Credentials

Survey respondents held NAATI credentials in a wide variety of languages, with Auslan being the most common. This reflects the variance discussed under the section on Sources of Variance. Translators were more likely to hold the higher Professional credential, while interpreters were more likely to hold the Paraprofessional credential. This is not surprising given paraprofessional credentials in translating exist only for 'languages of special community need for recent migrant and refugee arrivals'.⁴⁸

The most common languages in which credentials were held matched well with the most common working languages reported, however, there were some inconsistencies in the information provided by respondents. For example, some indicated NAATI credentials are not available in their language, when this is not in fact the case. Only a very small number of respondents indicated that they received credentials based on an overseas qualification. It is also apparent that a small, but significant proportion held industry-specific vocational qualifications, but not a NAATI credential, and that a small number of individuals hold credentials, but not in all of their working languages.

This data clearly shows that despite the range of languages for which testing is available, there are a significant number of languages where credentialed interpreters are not available.

56% of individuals who did not hold a NAATI credential did hold one or more formal vocational qualifications in Interpreting and/or Translating

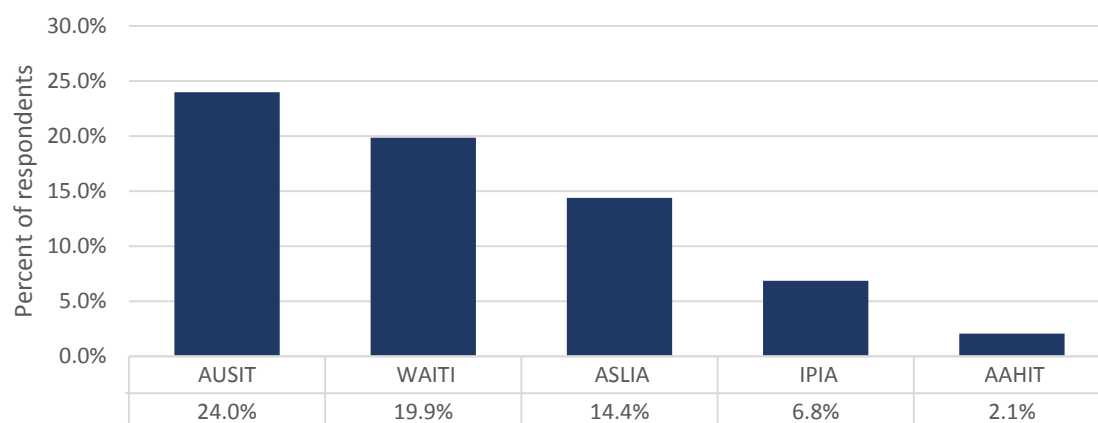
credentials, and nationwide the proportion of those revalidating favours interpreters (55.1%) and those with professional level credentials (61.3%).

⁴⁸ NAATI Accreditation by Testing booklet, www.naati.com.au/PDF/Booklets/Accreditation_by_Testing_booklet.pdf

Table 23: Workforce credential profile by occupation

Interpreting Credentials				
	Conference Senior / Conference	Professional	Para-professional	Recognition
Number of Interpreters	3	38	79	16
Number of Languages	2	14	25	12
Most Common Languages	Greek Arabic	Auslan Spanish Italian Farsi/Persian	Auslan Cantonese Farsi/Persian Spanish Mandarin	Auslan ⁴⁹ Kiswahili/Swahili Vietnamese
Translating Credentials				
	Advanced Senior / Advanced	Professional	Para-professional	Recognition
Number of Translators	9	54	26	11
Number of Languages	8	22	17	9
Most Common Languages	French Arabic Farsi/Persian Swahili Italian Japanese Polish Vietnamese	Japanese Spanish French Italian German	Kiswahili Burmese Spanish	Arabic Greek Kiswahili/Swahili

Figure 10: Professional membership levels



- **AUSIT** – Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Incorporated
- **WAITI** – Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters
- **ASLIA** – Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association
- **IPIA** – Independent Practising Interpreters Association
- **AAHIT** – Australian Association of Health Interpreters and Translators

⁴⁹ Recognition in language listed in *italics* lapsed 20+ years ago. These responses are either in error, or representative of credentials received prior to this, when credentialing was permanent.

Professional Memberships

Just over half of survey respondents indicated that they were members of at least one professional body or organisation. The national body, AUSIT, had the highest membership levels, followed by the WA body, WAITI. This is shown in Figure 10.

A small number were members of other organisations. Of those relevant to the industry, the union, Professionals Australia, was the most commonly cited. 12% of respondents to this question held multiple memberships with industry associations.

Ongoing Professional Development

The majority of respondents indicated that they had participated in at least one form of professional development (PD) in the past 12 months, with face-to-face workshops or seminars the most commonly reported. However, almost one-quarter did no professional development at all.

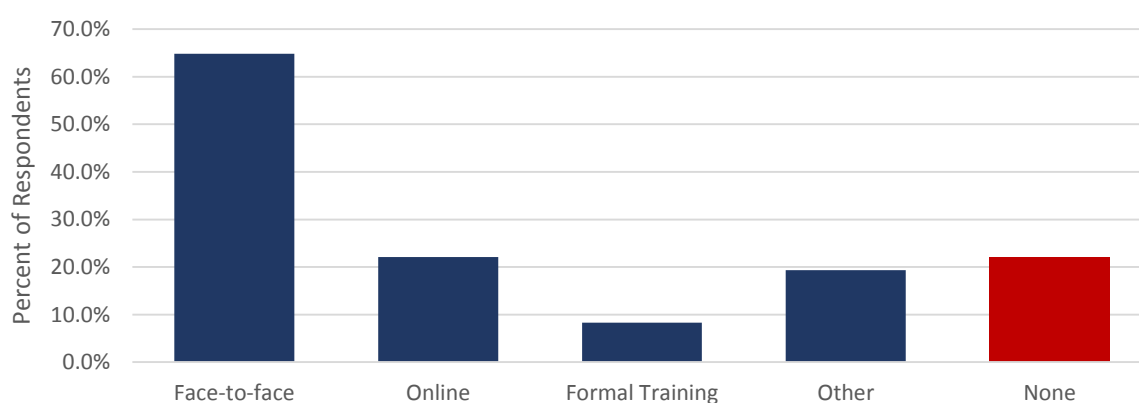
A small number of respondents indicated that they undertook other types of PD, including using the internet or media, general reading, mentoring and self-education. The concern is not that practitioners undertake self-directed

PD, but rather that for some, it appears to be the only PD undertaken. Alone such activities are tenuous at best and could not be considered sufficient for skill development and maintenance.

While they are accepted by NAATI⁵⁰, AUSIT⁵¹, and others as evidence toward PD requirements, in most cases this is limited to professional ethics, or has set maximums in place to prevent this being the only type of PD being undertaken. NAATI's re-validation requirements for credentialed workers, and AUSIT's PD Logbook mandate PD in ethics, language maintenance and interpreting or translating skill development.

The majority of the PD accessed was delivered by professional organisations, and a small number involved individuals travelling interstate to conferences. Government and translating and interpreting agency-run training was also common. For those in the health sector, hospital-based PD was available, while others utilised a number of online providers offering short courses, contests (for example, in translation, or practitioner excellence)⁵², events and networking opportunities.

Figure 11: Professional development activities (previous 12 months)



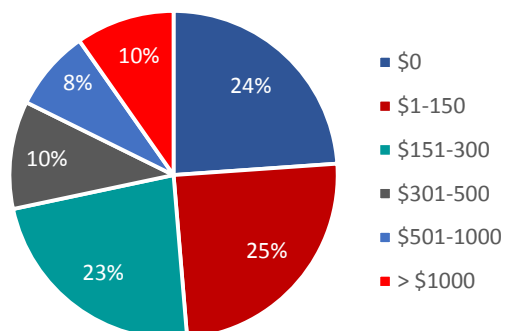
⁵⁰ NAATI Revalidation Catalogue, www.naati.com.au/PDF/revalidation/PD_CATALOGUE.pdf

⁵¹ AUSIT PD Logbook <http://www.ausitatwork.com.au/files/pd/pdlogbook.pdf>

⁵² It is unclear what such a contest involves or how/why it might be considered professional development

As noted in Table 15, the majority of respondents earn significantly less than the average gross weekly income (WA) for their interpreting and translating work. It is therefore unsurprising that almost three quarters spent \$150 or less in the last 12 months on their professional development.

Figure 12: PD expenditure (previous 12 months)



Demand for Formal Qualifications

Survey respondents were asked whether or not they would be interested in obtaining a formal qualification (Diploma or Advanced Diploma in either Interpreting or Translating).

Overall, 71% indicated that they were, or may be interested in obtaining a formal translating or interpreting qualification. Those who held no formal qualifications were more likely to have no interest in gaining any (28%), but the highest level of interest in further qualification came from those who already held Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas in Interpreting or Translating (46%).

Respondents who held a higher education qualification were the most equivocal in their desire to obtain further qualification. This is potentially a concern, as it appears a number of those with higher education qualifications obtained them overseas. A Diploma or Advanced Diploma (or units of competency within those qualifications) obtained in Australia would likely be beneficial to provide local context and knowledge of Australian legislation and policy.

In addition, some of the higher education qualifications listed were in linguistics and languages, rather than specifically in interpreting and translating. The practical application of language in translating and interpreting is at the core of the Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications.

Type of Qualifications

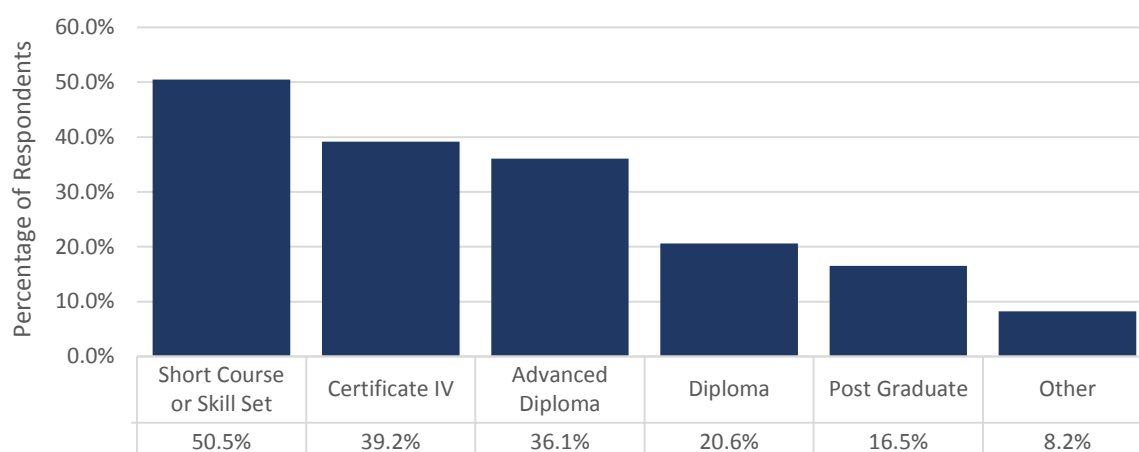
Survey respondents interested in obtaining qualifications showed a preference for short courses comprised of units of competency from VET qualifications (Refer Figure 13). A large number also expressed interest in the Advanced Diploma and post-graduate qualifications. Short courses would be ideal for those who hold overseas or higher education qualifications to gain formal, industry specific training in an Australian context. They could also be a suitable stepping-stone, allowing progression from short courses into full qualifications.

Table 24: Workforce interest in obtaining formal qualifications

Existing Qualifications	Yes	Maybe	No
Respondents with no formal qualifications	34.4%	37.7%	27.9%
Respondents with a vocational qualification⁵³	45.5%	27.3%	27.3%
Respondents with a tertiary qualification	26.7%	53.3%	20.0%
OVERALL	38.7%	31.7%	29.6%

⁵³ Specifically a Diploma or Advanced Diploma in Interpreting or Translating

Figure 13: Practitioner preferred formal training options



Approximately 20% of respondents expressed an interest in an interpreting and translating specific qualification at Certificate IV level. The extensive research conducted to develop the existing four nationally recognised qualifications demonstrated, however, that the Diploma is the only valid entry level to the occupations, and that the occupational role at Certificate IV is not that of interpreter or translator. A Certificate IV qualification in adjacent roles, such as bilingual worker or language aide, would nevertheless be suitable for those who have not engaged in vocational training previously, or who may wish to utilise the adjacent roles to build their language skills prior to undertaking a Diploma or Advanced Diploma and progressing to an interpreter or translator role.

Barriers to Training Uptake

Although there was interest in formal qualifications, respondents identified a number of potential barriers to access. As indicated in Figure 14, the two key issues were the cost of courses and the lack of courses in Perth. KIS indicates that cost as well as lack of regional and culturally appropriate training are

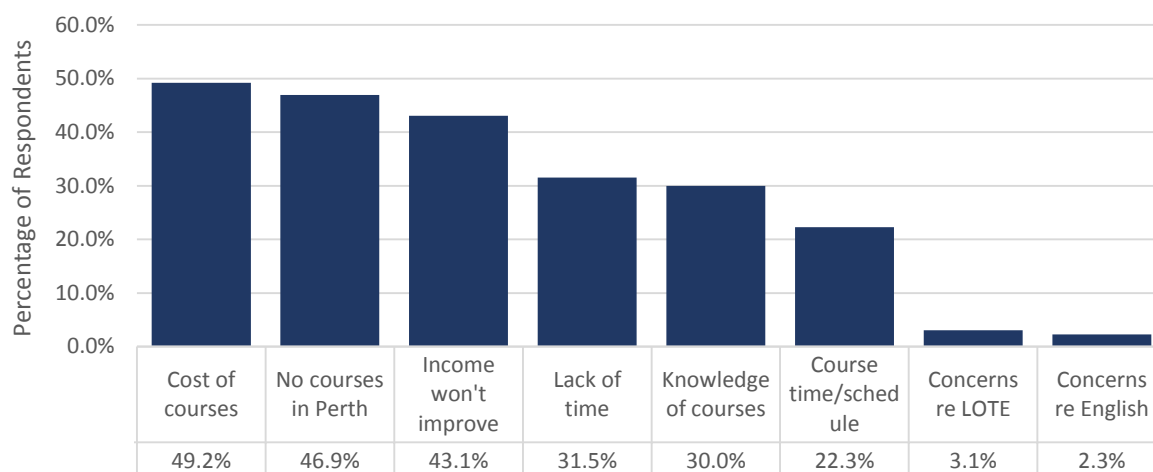
Currently, none of the industry specific vocational qualifications are available in WA. During previous delivery of the Diploma of Interpreting, and now with delivery of a three unit short course, CIT has noted significant issues around English language proficiency among those attempting their course, with at least half of those undertaking English testing not passing⁵⁴.

In contrast, only 2% of respondents felt this might be a barrier to their successfully completing an interpreting or translating qualification. This bears out what some in industry report, namely that there is a general failure to understand not just the range of skills necessary for competent occupational performance, but the difference between language skill per se and the ability to move competently between two languages.

Feedback from KIS indicates that that lack of training availability in their region (aside from some NAATI pre-test training) is a critical barrier to their workforce completing qualifications. , there is no training currently available in the region.

⁵⁴ Information provided by Central Institute of Technology (Tourism and Languages Portfolio)

Figure 14: Perceived barriers to accessing formal qualifications



Perspectives from the Workforce

Respondents were asked what feedback they would like to provide regarding training availability and any other issues they perceived in their industry. The most common feedback around training centered on:

- Lack of formal training and qualifications locally – individuals need to use online options or travel interstate.
- Lack of PD opportunities locally, especially as this is a revalidation requirement for those with NAATI credentials, and a membership requirement with at least some professional bodies.
- High cost of accessing any training or PD that is available.
- High costs associated with NAATI credentials.
- General lack of support in the state by way of affordable, accessible training and services to increase skills and maintain currency

General feedback from respondents indicated concerns around:

- Perceived lack of value being placed on practitioners and their services - bilingual workers and those without a credential or qualification are given interpreting and translating assignments to save costs.⁵⁵
- Ability of those requesting services for clients to work effectively with interpreters. Training for agency and other staff requesting interpreters for clients was suggested by some as a way to improve service provision.
- Lack of pre-assignment information. Interpreters felt ill-prepared, particularly in court/legal settings and in emotional situations where they had little to no context or background on the situation and the individual they were to provide service for.
- Inadequate remuneration. Interpreters were more likely to be dissatisfied (62%) than translators (53%) who were more likely to indicate that they set their own rates.

⁵⁵ It should be noted that this perception is refuted by some industry stakeholders, particularly those contracting interpreters/translators out for

assignments who state that this is only an issue in emerging languages where no qualified staff are available.

Overall, feedback indicates that poor remuneration combined with unreliable workflow pose serious risks to the long-term stability of an experienced workforce. Service quality was of high importance to respondents and there was evident frustration regarding the barriers to enhanced professionalism and service quality in the industry.

A significant number of respondents indicated that they felt training and PD opportunities in the State, at a reasonable price point, with out of business hours options, would be well received and utilised.

Issues Surrounding the Establishment of Training in WA

Industry has identified the lack of a local training provider offering interpreting and translating qualifications as a critical issue for workforce development, service delivery and quality. The industry is in many ways unique, providing a range of challenges to the re-establishment and long-term viability of training in WA. If the issue of training is not addressed, however, there is a very real possibility that service users will either be forced to engage individuals with little or no experience in the provision of interpreting and translating services, or that government agencies requiring services in high profile languages and issues will become increasingly reliant on flying in interstate professionals for assignments, at significant expense.

The ability to speak a LOTE is not in and of itself sufficient to provide quality interpreting or translating services. Work is done across a range of critical sectors, including health care, policing and legal and government services. Workers need to be familiar with the cultural and industry contexts in which they work, including their legal and ethical responsibilities.

The four established industry qualifications are an industry informed and supported mechanism for ensuring those with LOTE competence are also competent in the hard and soft skills specific to interpreting and translating. They can and should provide a pathway for bilingual workers, for example, to upskill and enter the interpreting and translating workforce, or for those with a second language to gain the competencies required to enter the industry.

Desire for Qualifications

Survey results are indicative of a relatively highly educated workforce. Over half of respondents indicated they held a translating or interpreting specific qualification and a number indicated they held more than one. It should be noted, however, that CIT delivered the nationally recognised Diploma of Interpreting in only one spoken language only once. Therefore, the majority of the qualifications held by the respondents were obtained outside Australia, or pre-date the Training Package qualifications. These facts no doubt contributed to over 70% of respondents expressing definite or possible interest in further occupation-specific qualification.

Taking into account also that survey respondents are potentially atypical of the general practitioner population in their level of qualification and credentialing, and that credentialing does not mandate qualification, the majority of the workforce are likely to have not undertaken any nationally recognised interpreter or translator training.

The survey provided some key insights into the preferred options for training. Specifically, workers showed a preference for:

- short courses
- higher level qualifications.

In terms of the barriers to training, the most common cited were:

- no courses available in WA/Perth
- cost of training
- no improvement in income.

In 2015, CIT ran training utilising a three unit set from the Diploma of Interpreting. Interestingly, they identified two other barriers to sustainable delivery (sufficient enrolments and completions to make the program viable):

- English proficiency
- Inability to obtain a NAATI credential based on completion of the units.

While the number of expressions of interest was good (69) and supported the identified desire for training, very few attended entry testing (12) only seven were able to demonstrate the level of proficiency to enter the training. The primary reason so few attended testing appears to be the fact that the three units is not sufficient to obtain a NAATI credential.

Combined, these factors have led to minimal enrolments in the three unit training program, at levels insufficient to make the program in its current form financially viable.

Consultation with NAATI has however indicated that this three unit set would be considered suitable for meeting the training requirement for those seeking NAATI recognition (an option only where there is no testing currently available in the individual's working language). This three unit set may therefore attract individuals in these languages, many of which are emerging languages.

Credential versus Qualification

Although not mandated, the Western Australian Language Services Policy states that

practitioners should ideally have both an interpreting and translating qualification and a NAATI credential.

While uptake of the Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications has not been universal, NAATI credentialing has been available for longer and enjoys relatively high usage. The NAATI data in Tables 21, 22 and Figure 14 shows not only the level of uptake by language, but provides an interesting insight into changing language demand.

Over the 25 years since 1980, NAATI has issued 2650 credentials: an average of 380 every five years. As shown in Table 25 and Figure 15 the proportion of credentials awarded by language group reflects the same trends described in Census data: demand for European languages has given way to demand for Asian languages. The top five languages in which credentials have been awarded in any five year period have changed constantly, though Auslan and Mandarin feature consistently (refer Table 27)

While credentials have been issued increasingly in Asian languages, within this language group there has been a significant shift, with increases in Southwest and Central Asian languages (for example Farsi/Persian, Arabic and Hazaragi), and to a lesser extent more recently by Southern Asian languages (those spoken in and around the Indian subcontinent). Southeast Asian languages have declined significantly since the turn of the century.

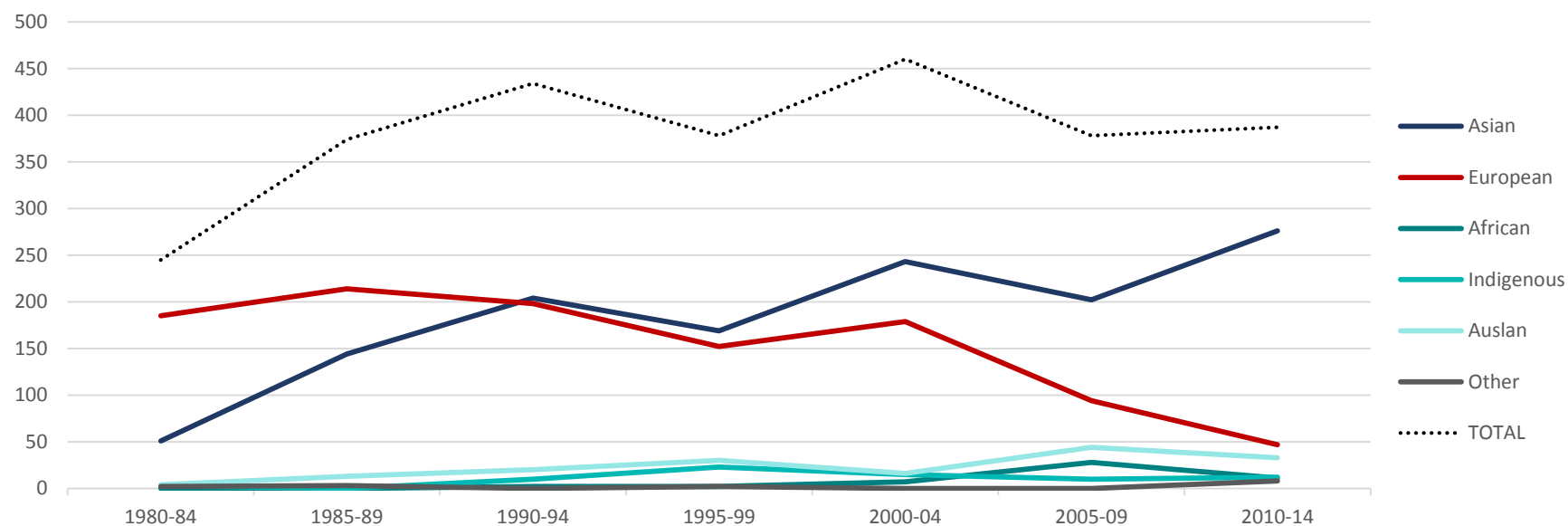
A comprehensive breakdown on credentialing by language region is provided in Table 25 and Table 26 as well as Figure 15: NAATI credentials issues in WA, by language group (1980-2014) and Figure 16. Table 27 indicates the most common credentials issued by language, in five year blocks since 1980.

The data provides additional evidence of the need for the industry to be able to skill up new workers to meet new language needs as they emerge.

Table 25: Language group share of NAATI credentials issued in WA (1980 - 2014)⁵⁶

Language Group	Share of NAATI Credentials Issued						
	1980-84	1985-89	1990-94	1995-99	2000-04	2005-09	2010-14
Asian Languages	20.8%	38.5%	47.0%	44.8%	52.8%	53.4%	71.3%
European Languages	75.6%	57.2%	45.7%	40.2%	38.9%	24.8%	12.2%
African Languages	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	1.5%	7.4%	2.8%
Indigenous Languages	1.2%	0.0%	2.3%	6.1%	3.3%	2.6%	3.1%
AUSLAN	1.6%	3.5%	4.6%	7.9%	3.5%	11.6%	8.5%
Other Languages	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 15: NAATI credentials issues in WA, by language group (1980-2014)



⁵⁶ Tables 25 – 27 and Figures 15-16 are based on raw data provided by to FAPS TC by NAATI

Table 26: NAATI credentials issued in WA - by language group

Language Group	NAATI Credentials Issued													
	1980-84		1985-89		1990-94		1995-99		2000-2004		2005-2009		2010-14	
	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share
ASIAN LANGUAGES	51	20.8%	144	38.5%	204	47.0%	169	44.8%	243	52.8%	202	53.4	276	71.3%
• Eastern Asian	24	9.8%	64	17.1%	97	22.4%	71	18.8%	70	15.2%	76	20.1%	74	19.1%
• Southeast Asian	13	5.3%	52	13.9%	67	15.4%	77	20.4%	45	9.8%	32	8.5%	16	4.1%
• Southern Asian	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	3.2%	4	1.1%	24	5.2%	30	7.9%	53	13.7%
• SW & Central Asian	14	5.7%	28	7.5%	26	6.0%	17	4.5%	104	22.6%	64	16.9%	133	34.4%
EUROPEAN LANGUAGES	185	75.6%	214	57.2%	198	45.7%	152	40.2%	179	38.9%	94	24.8%	47	12.2%
• Northern European	72	29.4%	45	12.0%	25	5.8%	14	3.7%	18	3.9%	16	4.2%	10	2.6%
• Eastern European	43	17.6%	52	13.9%	74	17.1%	77	20.4%	103	22.4%	19	5.0%	15	3.9%
• Southern European	70	28.6%	117	31.3%	99	22.8%	61	16.1%	58	12.6%	59	15.6%	22	5.7%
AFRICAN LANGUAGES	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.5%	2	0.5%	7	1.5%	28	7.4%	11	2.8%
AUS INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES	3	1.2%	0	0.0%	10	2.3%	23	6.1%	15	3.3%	10	2.6%	12	3.1%
OTHER LANGUAGES	6	2.4%	16	4.3%	20	4.6%	32	8.5%	16	3.5%	44	11.6%	41	10.6%
• AUSLAN	4	1.6%	13	3.5%	20	4.6%	30	7.9%	16	3.5%	44	11.6%	33	8.5%
• Other	2	0.8%	3	0.8%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	2.1%
TOTAL	245		374		434		378		460		378		387	

Figure 16: NAATI credentials issued in WA - trends within language groups

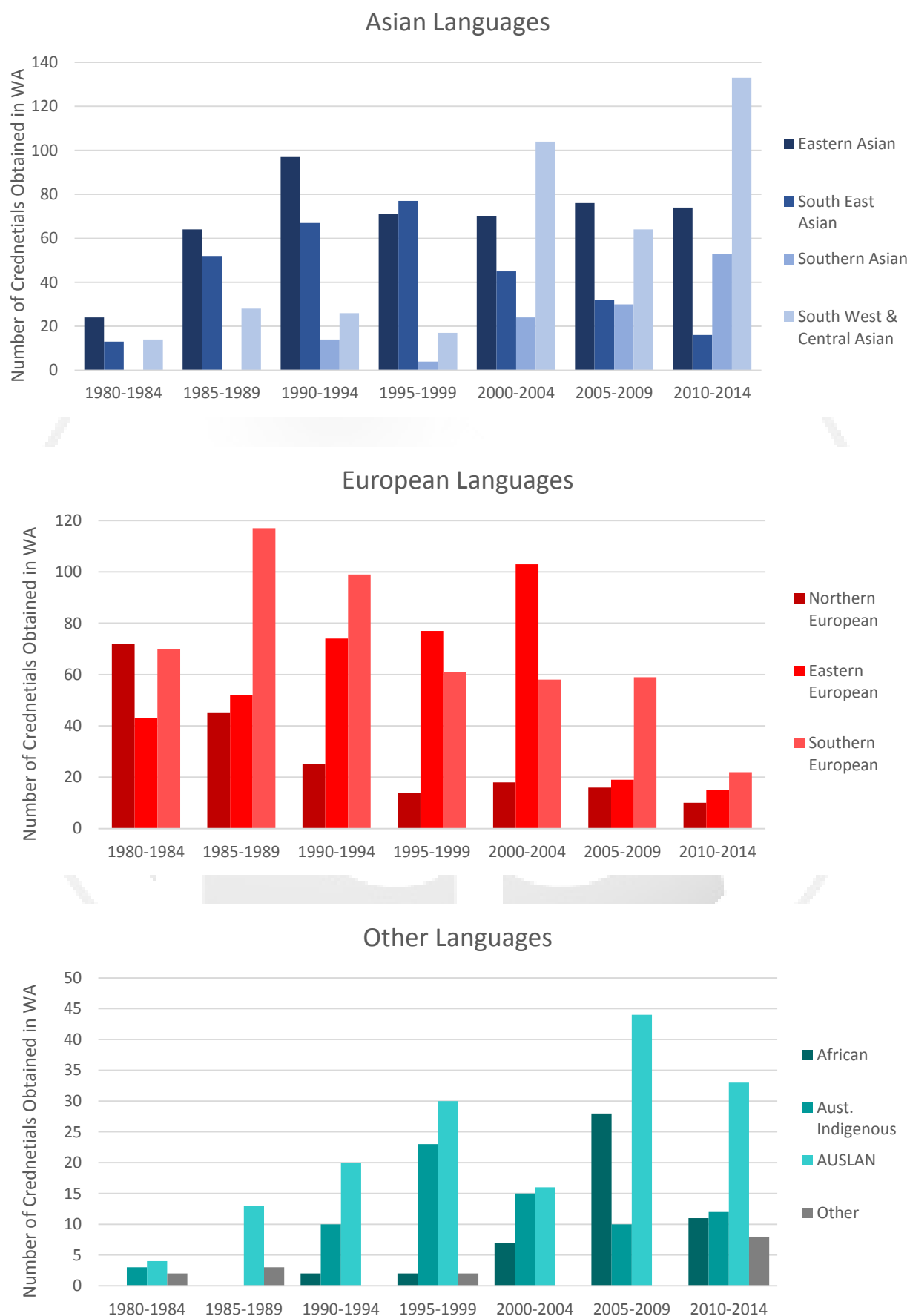


Table 27: Top languages in which NAATI credentials have been obtained – 5 year brackets (1980 – 2014)

NAATI Credentials Issued in WA							
1980-84		1985-89		1990-94		1995-99	
Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued
German	27.3%	German	11.0%	Mandarin	12.7%	Auslan	7.9%
French	11.8%	Vietnamese	9.9%	Italian	8.3%	Vietnamese	6.9%
Polish	9.8%	Spanish	9.1%	Spanish	8.1%	Mandarin	6.6%
Italian	8.2%	Portuguese	5.6%	Vietnamese	7.6%	Indonesian	6.3%
Mandarin	6.5%	Mandarin	5.3%	French	4.8%	French	5.6%
COMBINED SHARE	63.6%	COMBINED SHARE	40.9%	COMBINED SHARE	41.5%	COMBINED SHARE	33.3%

NAATI Credentials Issued in WA							
2000-04		2005-09		2010-14		OVERALL	
Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued	Top 5 Languages	% of credentials issued
Farsi	7.6%	Auslan	11.6%	Farsi	23.5%	Farsi	7.5%
Arabic	7.2%	Farsi	10.3%	Chinese	10.1%	Mandarin	6.8%
Dari	6.7%	Chinese	9.8%	Auslan	8.5%	German	6.2%
Japanese	5.7%	Mandarin	6.9%	Mandarin	7.2%	Auslan	6.0%
Bosnian							
Croatian	4.6%	French	6.6%	Hazaragi	6.2%	French	5.2%
Spanish							
COMBINED SHARE	41.0%	COMBINED SHARE	45.2%	COMBINED SHARE	55.5%	COMBINED SHARE	31.7%

As mentioned previously a NAATI credential is not a substitute for training, nor can it be seen as sufficient as a standalone indicator of the spectrum of competencies required by practitioners.

Currently it is more straightforward, quicker, and even if unsuccessful on the first and second attempts, less costly for those wishing to work in the industry to undertake NAATI testing and obtain a credential, than it is to undertake and complete a full qualification. This is a significant barrier to training uptake, as individuals are readily employed with a credential only, despite testing not confirming competency in the full range of skills and knowledge areas, at the level industry desires.

While not being able to gain a NAATI credential based on completion of the three unit course run by CIT has been identified as a significant barrier to training uptake in WA, NAATI have indicated that mandating qualifications for generalist qualifications is not being considered at this time. The reasoning for this, at least in part, being the lack of availability of translating and interpreting training.⁵⁷

In response to concerns regarding the current system of accreditation NAATI commenced and is progressing through a large scale Improvements to NAATI Testing (INT) project to review and improve testing and accreditation practices. Currently in its second phase this is a broad reaching project that is currently considered 17 recommendations.

It is NAATI's preference that practitioners obtain both a credential and a qualification, given these serve different purposes. Currently, 70% of accreditations are awarded for completion of a NAATI-approved course at a tertiary institution to the standard required

by NAATI. Vocational training is designed specifically to enable individuals to learn, practice and develop industry-desired competencies, and a qualification signifies the ability to demonstrate all of these competencies to an industry designated standard. The VET system is industry driven and industry responsive, making it able to respond to changing skill and knowledge requirements. NAATI credentials provide a single common standard across Australia, which all credentialed practitioners must meet. A credential also indicates that a practitioner is in good standing in the profession, since a credential can be revoked should a credentialed practitioner be found guilty of misconduct, for example.

As with other industries and professions, it is considered that entry into interpreting and translating professions should be based around completion of industry-specific training to ensure individuals develop a holistic set of skills and knowledge, with competencies then tested and confirmed in a language and profession (interpreting or translating) specific manner by the accrediting body. Where both qualifications and credentials are linked, uptake of both can be reasonably expected to increase and this is a desirable outcome for industry.

To achieve this moving forward, qualification delivery for West Australian practitioners should be NAATI approved, to streamline the process and reduce the cost burden⁵⁸. Initial discussions with NAATI have indicated their willingness to consider proposed training models for WA practitioners, and their strong support for the complementary roles of credentialing and training. In addition to the participation of the NAATI WA Branch on the Taskforce, this provides a promising platform for the development of a training model in

⁵⁷ INT Project Discussion Paper, November 2013 accessed via www.naati.com.au

⁵⁸ Should a provider pass on the full cost to students of NAATI Professional approval, this

would result in an increase of approximately \$210 per student, based on 10 students. This is significantly cheaper than the cost to sit a test external to a qualification.

WA that incorporates a credential, that is in line with the way the majority of individuals achieve their credential/s.⁵⁹ (Although it is important to note that the majority of individuals obtaining a credential via an approved course are Chinese language speakers completing courses at tertiary institutions.⁶⁰)

Language and Context

Language is the key complicating factor in addressing supply and demand issues in the sector. It is the reason why a short term, or one-off solution to upskill a cohort of practitioners, or those seeking to become practitioners, will not be sufficient.

Mechanisms such as the State Priority Occupation List (SPOL) are applied at the level of an occupation, however, they do not distinguish between, nor address issues pertaining to specific languages. Service context also changes, and with each context comes differing knowledge requirements and requisite skills.

Waves of immigration, driven by global and economic factors, drive changing language demand. The industry needs to be responsive to surges in demand, an example being the anticipated intake of Syrian refugees, many, if not most of whom, will require Arabic interpreting and translating services and may bring with them unique issues for government services attributable to displacement and trauma.

Interpreters in particular may be in demand in particular languages, and other languages may have an oversupply. Where demand is now high among new migrants for Farsi, Arabic and languages from Central Asia, other

languages were previously in greater demand. The effect overall is a workforce that appears sufficient in number, but is actually not able to meet demand in a range of languages. Individuals also leave the industry as demand in their working language or languages diminishes. It is exactly this phenomenon that is now causing interpreter shortages in aged care.

As mentioned previously, Indigenous interpreting is a special case where the misconceptions around the similarities between Standard Australian English, Kriols and Aboriginal English result in services being provided without interpreters when an interpreter should be used. Awareness of the need for Indigenous interpreting services is improving especially since the widely publicised Gibson/Warnake case. However male workers in particular are at considerable risk of burn out, as the pool of interpreters is too small to meet the increasing demand. Training is considered imperative, particularly as a mechanism to train existing male workers and to bring new men into the workforce, as well as supporting the general upskilling of the entire workforce.

Migration Pathways to Support the Workforce

A number of mechanisms are available in the State to assist with workforce development, such as the SPOL and the Western Australian State Migration Occupation List (WASMOL).

Currently both Interpreters and Translators are included on the WASMOL. At Schedule 2, skilled migrants wishing to access this pathway must have a 12-month contract of employment prior to entry⁶¹. Industry did not

⁵⁹ NAATI 2013/14 Annual Report, page 22

⁶⁰ Reinventing CITEAA: Are professional and academic interests in T&I diverging? Dr Uldis Ozolins, University of Sydney. Also noted in the Improvements to NAATI Testing (INT) Report

⁶¹ This and subsequent WASMOL information is sourced from the Department of Training and Workforce Development's Migration website: www.migration.wa.gov.au

and does not support this mechanism, based on a number of factors.

The most fundamental is the assumption that demand for interpreters and translators is universal and non-language specific. Obviously migration is not a solution for Australian indigenous languages and Auslan. For all the same arguments in support of the need for responsive training put in the previous section *Language and Context*, the State nomination migration program is also unlikely to meet the requirements of the languages spoken by refugees. In addition, humanitarian migrants are typically unable to meet the minimum work experience requirements, and do not have the required funds for settlement and initial living expenses.

A key requirement for a Schedule 2 occupation is a 12-month employment contract. As demonstrated in the section *Casualised Workforce*, interpreters and translators typically do not earn the 'minimum compulsory wages' and the few employers will typically not commit to any engagement other than casual, to meet specific requests.

Industry stakeholders report that the only demand for translators or interpreters in full-time occupations apparent in the public domain is labour market testing by Chinese-owned firms seeking to bring personnel into Australia. Support for this anecdotal information is seen in the fact that only 7 of the almost 60 NAATI approved courses do not include either Chinese or Mandarin, and 16 of them are exclusively Chinese and/or Mandarin.⁶²As highlighted in the *WA Interpreter and Translator Workforce Survey* this is not reflective of the specific language demands of the CaLD community.

It is also worth noting that in some cases individuals seeking to settle in Australia permanently will undertake a NAATI approved qualification, as the award of the NAATI credential guarantees five migration points. This creates a situation where the credential is used for migration purposes, but where in reality, the skill is unlikely to be contributed to the labour force. Again this is reflected in the languages of NAATI approved courses, and the fact that newly approved courses include Southern Asian languages such as Hindi and Punjabi. As shown in Table 1, in WA alone, the fastest growing population, by region of birth is Southern and Central Asia.

In addition to being unable to guarantee the minimum compulsory wages, employers have argued against the inclusion of translator and interpreter occupations on the WASMOL for other reasons, chiefly:

- Cost – application fees, agent fees, compensation for importing labour.
- Process – cumbersome and time consuming.
- Risk – applicant deciding to return to their home country, for example, after significant time and financial investment from the employer.

Cost of Training

Following feedback from the FAPS Training Council based on the advice of the Taskforce, both Interpreter and Translator have been listed on the 2015 SPOL, at priority 2A. This ranking recognises the criticality of the occupations and will hopefully lead to the relevant qualifications being State priority training courses. This would result in guaranteed, subsidised places for all eligible

⁶² NAATI Approved Australian Courses (as at 24 November 2015). There are two approved courses in WA – Diploma of Interpreting (Auslan only) at

CIT and Master in Translation Studies (Chinese, French, German and Italian) at UWA.

students, helping to counter one of the key barriers to training uptake; cost.

In addition, if the qualifications are listed on the Priority Industry Qualifications List (PIQL), and attract government funding and guaranteed places, courses are much more likely to attract the numbers required to make local training viable.

It remains an issue, however, that the only training provider in the State has only the Diploma of Interpreting on scope.

Proposed Training Model

As shown in Figure 11 the PD of respondents was primarily done via face to face options, with a smaller number accessing online PD as well as formal training provided by employers such as hospitals.

Combined, with the preferred education options and findings from CIT's three unit course this information suggests an appropriate model for delivery of training would be:

- Blended delivery (face-to-face and online)
- Delivered as chunks (sets of units)
- Potentially utilising Advanced Diplomas
- Approved by NAATI

At this time however, it appears more appropriate to establish training at Diploma level, for a number of reasons:

- This is the only qualification on scope with a WA provider.
- Pre-course English testing by CIT, for their three unit offering found that a significant number of potential students for their

three unit course were unable to meet their English literacy requirements for Diploma level study. A Diploma level course will be more accessible to more people.

- Cost and time are serious considerations for this cohort, a Diploma is cheaper and typically requires less study time to complete. In addition, NAATI approval would be for the Para-Professional credential, and this approval is cheaper than approval for Professional level credentials.
- The most popular nationally recognised qualification respondents were interested in completing was a Certificate IV⁶³ (nothing exists at this level for these occupations, this would be a bilingual worker level qualification) followed by the Advanced Diploma. The Diploma sits in between these two options and would be more attractive and accessible for the individuals who expressed an interest in a Certificate IV level course. As a thin market, consideration does need to be given to maximising training cohorts, for long term viability and stability of training.

It is therefore proposed that an appropriate training model would be:

1. Face to face delivery in both Perth and the Kimberley region of an initial set of units from the Diploma of Interpreting by either a registered training organisation, or by another organisation under auspicing arrangements. The example being the current three unit offering of CIT. Unit selection would be based on assessment of the four industry qualifications, which are currently under review which is expected to result in significant content and structural changes to each.

⁶³ Refer Figure 13.

2. Delivery of the remaining units of competency by an interstate provider, who can either:
 - a. Liaise with the local professional body (WAITI) and/or Central Institute to create an appropriate arrangement to support local, face-to-face delivery by a series of workshops in Perth, and in consultation with KIS, in the Kimberley.
 - b. For units or cohorts where it is appropriate, deliver training via a flexible, e-learning model, enabling students to study at their own pace, online. In consultation with KIS, this would need to include appropriate on-site support
3. Where appropriate, for those already working in the industry training should make use of logbooks and other tools designed to satisfy third party evidence requirements for particular units of competency, to allow students to utilise the tasks undertaken in their work as examples of their competencies, i.e. a work-integrated learning approach.
4. The current Taskforce to act as a working group in the longer term, providing ongoing industry support to the training provider/s.
5. Developed in consultation with NAATI, with a view to, where possible, leveraging an existing approved course, or credit transfer arrangements for WA students into an approved course following completion of face to face units, to facilitate the achievement of both a qualification and a credential.

Advantages of such a model include:

- Providing an inexpensive, face-to-face 'taster' and introduction to the qualification, and of vocational education and competency based training which provides qualification pathways.
- Taking advantage of established and broader language training delivery and expertise available via providers who have been able to offer training on a continuous basis. Such providers will have an established student cohort and WA students should be a welcome addition rather than a thin cohort that is currently not viable on its own. In addition training could be made available to skill individuals in a wider range of languages.
- Establishing relationships and networks between the local provider and those interstate, fostering collaboration and reducing professional isolation.
- Creating a sustainable, ongoing role for industry in the delivery of training, which could include early indication of training needs, specifically around emerging languages and languages otherwise experiencing increased demand, or in decline.
- Allowing individuals to gain a qualification and credential.

Discussion

This model is at least partially reliant on the current listing of the two occupations on the SPOL, and ideally, their ongoing inclusion. Where this does not occur, VET-FEE HELP will be an option for some (those who are residents, or permanent humanitarian visa

holders).⁶⁴ It would, however, leave individuals with a significant loan to be repaid, and given industry income levels, unlikely to be repaid for as long as workers remain in the occupations.

Alternatively, under a model in which delivery is done in chunks, smaller financial outlays would be required over a longer period, and those engaged in the delivery of training would need to consider payment plans and options that recognise the cohort's needs in this area. For some candidates, fees could be considerably less if they hold Health Care Cards, a benefit that should be made known to the workforce and those seeking to train to enter it.

Thin Market

Interpreting and translating is a thin market for training providers. The workforce is small, with a number of unique challenges around niche service provision (namely language), English language competency (which must be higher than in many other occupations) and constantly changing language-specific demand.

It is unlikely a single provider in WA would be able to train in all required languages, or in most emerging languages. Not only would it not be possible to get suitably qualified staff to deliver training in many of the languages required, but to get a sufficiently large cohort to at least cover the cost of providing the training.

The proposed strategy takes advantage of expertise available interstate where the workforce is larger and training is established with viable cohorts. Instead of continuing to struggle with the thin market issues that are currently hampering CIT's efforts to provide training: namely, the constraints preventing their delivery of a full qualification, and the lack of NAATI approval, under this model, WA

students would be an addition to an existing student cohort, providing financial benefit to a training provider. From this position, the industry has more negotiating power and should be able to create a training option that is most suitable and cost-effective for WA students.

CIT currently offers a number of courses aimed at improving the English proficiency and job readiness (through Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training) of those from non-English speaking backgrounds, with eligible individuals able to access options free of charge via the Adult Migrant English Program. As an institute, there is the potential for CIT or any other provider with such capability to work with industry and under the proposed model, provide a pathway for migrants through English language and job readiness training into a face to face, introductory course comprised of units of competence from the Diploma of Interpreting, and ideally, if not in the first iteration, into the translating qualifications and the Advanced Diploma of Interpreting.

Addressing Workforce Issues

As already discussed, there is evidence that interpreting and translating are often an adjunct to primary occupations and sources of income. Many survey respondents also cited altruistic reasons for working in the industry, out of a desire to support equal access for minority communities.

Professionals in a primary occupation who speak a LOTE as their first language might therefore be interested in providing interpreting or translating services on a casual basis, and could be expected to have sufficient English proficiency and communication skills to undertake study and provide services. It is particularly important

⁶⁴ Student eligibility for VET FEE-HELP.
www.education.gov.au/student-eligibility-vet-fee-help

that such workers are trained to manage issues of confidentiality, impartiality and potential conflicts of interest that are part and parcel of the practitioner Code of Ethics.

A flexible model, supported by online resources, and on ground support (especially for Indigenous students), available at low cost to student would likely be attractive both to this cohort and to new workforce entrants in general. It may also provide a mechanism to attract younger workers and men into the industry, something which is hampered by the lack of full-time work opportunities.

For those migrants who enter the interpreting and translating workforce as their primary occupation, the skills developed through completion of a qualification and work experience stand them in good stead to find additional employment when interpreting or translating work is not sufficient to meet their needs. Again, low cost, flexible training could provide a pathway into employment for some and provides a meaningful way for them to become established and financially independent. In some cases it may even provide a pathway into tertiary education.

Finally, utilising a local training provider to provide face-to-face, classroom based core unit delivery, a balance can be found between the accessibility and flexibility of online training and the industry preference (and potentially that of some individuals) for face-to-face training and assessment.

Conclusions

The Taskforce asserts the need for locally available, nationally recognised training for existing interpreters and translators and those wishing to enter the industry.

Based on ABS data, it is clear that WA's CaLD population is growing, and that there is an ongoing and strong need for quality language services for a significant number of residents.

In addition, the services are required in a large and increasing number of languages.

Survey findings and ABS data indicate that a significant proportion of the current workforce does not hold industry-specific qualifications. There is nevertheless keen interest in the workforce to obtain them. A number of concerns and barriers have been identified and a model for re-establishment of training has been developed with a focus on minimising these barriers and making training as accessible and equitable as possible.

As an industry that employs a much higher proportion of individuals either not born in Australia, or who speak a LOTE at home, as well as a dominantly mature and female workforce, the sector supports individuals who are typically from multiple equity groups. Establishing an industry-supported, cost-effective and flexible training pathway for this industry not only supports best practice and a culture of high quality service provision, but enhances the perception of the occupations and provides CaLD individuals access to an in-demand occupation that allows them to continue developing highly transferable skills.

Taskforce Recommendations

1. Interpreting and translating occupations remain on the SPOL, at a level that sees the industry qualifications (both Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas) listed on the PIQL.
2. Interpreter and Translator be immediately and permanently removed from the WAMSOL unless demand in a specific language or languages can be proven and accommodated for under this mechanism.
3. Training be established based on an introductory course comprised of units from the Diploma of Interpreting, with articulation via a formal, established agreement and pathway into a Diploma course with an interstate provider. This is with a view to creating similar options and pathways into the other three industry qualifications as soon as possible.
4. The above should be achieved via articulation into a NAATI approved course if possible, to allow WA practitioners to graduate with both a qualification and a NAATI credential.
5. Interpreting and translating be promoted to migrants undertaking English courses and training programs in WA.
6. The current industry Taskforce continue into the future as a working group, to support the establishment and implementation of qualification delivery, as well as providing ongoing industry input and support.
7. That information be developed in appropriate formats to inform current and potential practitioners and other relevant stakeholders in WA about qualifications and credentials, relevant professional bodies and the industry and occupations in general.

Such materials should clarify the role and relationship between qualifications and credentials and should be distributed to a broad audience, including but not limited to: university students with proficiency in a LOTE, CaLD communities and organisations, in career guidance materials provided to secondary students from non-English speaking backgrounds or who are studying a LOTE, agencies working with migrants and refugees requiring education and employment support, and the current interpreting and translating workforce.

Appendix

Glossary of Terms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ASLIA	Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association, Inc.
AUSIT	Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators, Inc.
Auslan	Australian Sign Language
CaLD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CIT	Central Institute of Technology
CSHEI TC	Community Services, Health and Education Training Council
EUPA TC	Electrical, Utilities and Public Administration Training Council
FAPS TC	Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council
KIS	Kimberley Interpreting Service
LOTE	Language other than English
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters, Ltd
NABS	National Auslan Interpreter Booking Service
OMI	Office of Multicultural Interests
PD	Professional development
PIQL	Priority Industry Qualifications List
SPOL	State Priority Occupations List
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAITI	Western Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters, Inc.
WASMOL	Western Australian State Migration Occupation List

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