



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

JACS No. 67

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

JEREMY HANSON CSC MLA (CHAIR), MARISA PATERSON MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), JO CLAY MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA: To the Attorney-General

In relation to: **Interpreter Protocols**

[Ref: JACS Annual Report p107]

1. How many people are registered for working as interpreters in the ACT Court system?
 - a. Typically how often is an interpreter required?
 - b. What languages are covered by the panel of interpreters?
 - a. Has there been an inability to provide an interpreter for any language or at a particular time?
 - i. If so, what language/s?
 - ii. How was the issue addressed?
 - c. How does this program fit within COVID protocols?

Shane Rattenbury MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. ACT Courts and Tribunal does not register interpreters.
 - a. ACT Court and Tribunal can arrange for an interpreter. However, it is not the only participant in court or tribunal proceedings that does so. For example, the Police or the DPP may arrange for interpreters for witnesses or defendants in criminal proceedings. Further information on when interpreters are arranged by other organisations is available at <https://www.courts.act.gov.au/coming-to-court/get-support/interpreters>

This financial year, ACT Courts and Tribunal has arranged for:

- the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal to use interpreters in 14 matters; and
 - the Courts to used interpreters on 84 occasions across 21 languages.
- b. ACT Courts and Tribunal use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>. TIS provides immediate phone interpreting as well as pre-booked phone interpreting and on-site interpreting.

From time to time there are issues with availability when seeking to pre-book on-site interpreting. In these cases, remote attendance by telephone or audio-visual facilities can often be used. If an interpreter is unavailable to attend either in person or remotely, the judicial officer or member of the tribunal may decide to use other options such as adjourning the matter until an interpreter is available.



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- c. The Court and Tribunal have COVID protocols in place. Further, TIS includes information on their website about their COVID protocols. The ACT Courts and Tribunal use phone or audio-visual facilities for interpreting if there are concerns about on-site attendance.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "S. Rattenbury", written over a horizontal line.

Date:

15/3/21

By the Attorney-General, Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA