

Victorian Public Service Language Allowance Guidelines 2009-10

1. Eligibility Criteria

1.1 To receive the Language Allowance, staff will be required to meet all of the following criteria:

- (a)
 - Be employed under Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*, which covers departmental employees and employees of certain statutory bodies; or
 - Be a member of the Victoria police pursuant to the *Police Regulation Act 1958*; or
 - Be employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade under the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*; or
 - Be employed by the Country Fire Authority or State Emergency Services under the *Country Fire Act 1958*; or
 - Be employed as non-teaching staff by the Adult Multicultural Education Service which operates under the *Adult, Community and Further Education Act 1991*; and
- (b) Undertake work involving direct contact with speakers of the language other than English (LOTE) spoken by the staff member, including Auslan. Examples of these positions could include receptionists, telephonists, information officers, field officers and social workers. Part-time and temporary staff will be eligible on a pro-rata basis; and
- (c) Passed the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) Language Aide Test, Paraprofessional Interpreter or Professional Interpreter test.
- (d) Applications for payment of Language Allowance for languages where testing is not available should in the first instance be referred the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC). The VMC will consider the level of demand for the language in conjunction with the language needs assessment of the applicant's position prepared under Section 6.2 of the guidelines.

1.2 The following staff will not be eligible:

- (a) Staff employed as interpreters and translators;
- (b) Staff employed in positions in which language skills are an integral part of the job profile and the remuneration of such staff already reflects their language ability; and
- (c) Public sector workers who are not covered by Part 3 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*, with the exceptions outlined above at 1.1 (a). While certain provisions of the *Public Administration Act 2004* apply to teachers, teachers will not be eligible for the Allowance.

2. What are the NAATI Qualifications?

2.1 The Language Allowance offers three levels of payment, tied to different NAATI awards and accreditations. They are:

- Language Aide
- Paraprofessional Interpreter Accreditation
- Professional Interpreter Accreditation

Language Aide is suitable for people who require minimal knowledge of a language for the purposes of simple communication. Tasks may involve counter work, answering general enquiries, assisting people with low English proficiency to complete simple forms in English or assisting people from non English-speaking backgrounds by giving instructions in the LOTE.

Paraprofessional Interpreter accreditation represents a level of competence in interpreting appropriate for general conversations, generally in the form of non-specialist dialogue. Tasks include interpreting general conversations, interpreting in situations where specialised terminology or more sophisticated conceptual information is not required, or interpreting in situations where depth of linguistic ability is not required.

Professional **Interpreter** accreditation is regarded as the Australian professional standard for interpreters. People with this qualification are capable of interpreting across a wide range of subjects including dialogues at specialist consultations. They are also able to interpret presentations in the consecutive mode. Tasks may include interpreting across a wide range of subject areas usually involving specialist consultations with other professionals (doctors, solicitors, in court), or interpreting in situations where some depth of linguistic ability in both languages is necessary.

See the attached list of languages offered at the Language Aide, Paraprofessional and Professional Interpreter levels.

3. Payment Levels

The amount of Allowance payable is as follows:

Level	Date of effect			
	4 May 2009	1 July 2009	1 February 2010	1 October 2010
Language aide accreditation	\$800	\$816	\$826	\$853
Paraprofessional interpreter accreditation	\$1,100	\$1,122	\$1,136	\$1,173
Interpreter accreditation or higher	\$1,500	\$1,530	\$1,549	\$1,599

4. Testing

- 4.1 **NAATI Language Aide** tests are available at any time throughout the year. Departments and agencies are to contact NAATI directly (see below) to arrange times for testing of applicants.

Accreditation tests may be arranged throughout the year at the mutual convenience of the candidate and the NAATI testing venue. Candidates who decide to apply for an accreditation test need to complete the Form A 'Application for Accreditation by Testing' which can be downloaded from the NAATI website www.naati.com.au

Compulsory pre-testing workshops

Language Aide pre-test workshops are available throughout the year on demand. Departments and agencies should arrange workshop times directly with NAATI.

Paraprofessional Interpreter and **Interpreter** pre-test workshops and workshop schedules are available on the NAATI website or directly from the Victorian NAATI office.

4.2 Test Formats

Language Aide Test

The test comprises two sections, one examining the candidate's Oral/Aural Comprehension and a second, optional, written comprehension section.

Paraprofessional Interpreter Tests

The test comprises three sections. The first examines the candidate's knowledge of cultural and social factors and socio-political issues that affect situations where an interpreter would typically be used. The second tests a candidate's knowledge of the Code of Ethics and the final section tests proficiency in dialogue interpreting using two dialogues.

Professional Interpreter Tests

The test comprises two sections, the first involving a dialogue interpreting test (using two dialogues), questions on social and cultural awareness and ethics and sight translation. The second section involves consecutive interpreting of two passages.

Further information on all of the tests is available from NAATI.

- 4.3 The pass mark for all tests is 70 per cent.
- 4.4 NAATI will forward advice to Departments and agencies about pre-test workshops.

5. Fees

- 5.1 Pre-test workshops are compulsory for all applicants for the Allowance.

The cost of **Language Aide** workshops is \$55 per applicant, to be covered by Departments and agencies.

The cost of **Paraprofessional Interpreter** and **Interpreter** workshops depends on the workshop being undertaken. Further details can be obtained from NAATI. The cost of these workshops is to be covered by Departments and agencies.

5.2 Language Aide

The **Language Aide** testing fee is \$330. This includes the application fee, a sample test and the actual test. The VMC will fund the fee for the test.

Paraprofessional Interpreter and Interpreter

An application fee of \$95 applies for the **Paraprofessional Interpreter** and **Professional Interpreter** tests.

The **Paraprofessional Interpreter** test fee is \$398.

The **Professional Interpreter** test fee is \$497.

Please note that the fees stated are correct for the 2009/10 financial year.

5.3 VMC Funding

The VMC will fund the application fee and full cost of paraprofessional and professional interpreter tests.

- 5.4 Each candidate is eligible to sit accreditation tests twice under the VMC subsidy, as described above.

6. Application Process

- 6.1 Departments and agencies are required to provide information to all staff about the Language Allowance, and managers should specifically inform members of staff who have relevant language skills. Staff should discuss with their supervisor the possibility of applying for the Allowance.

- 6.2 If the supervisor agrees that there is a continuing need in the workplace for the officer's language skills, they will recommend the staff member to a person who has been nominated in the Department or agency to handle applications for the Allowance (usually in the Human Resources area). When assessing the need for a particular language in the workplace, Departments and agencies should have regard to the frequency of demand, the average amount of time spent using the language and the importance of providing language services.

- 6.3 Payment of the Allowance to staff who have passed a NAATI test should commence as soon as practicable.

- 6.4 Candidates will receive a Language Aide sample test in the language in which they are being tested from NAATI following their application. Paraprofessional Interpreter and Interpreter sample tests are available for purchase separately from

the NAATI office, as is the publication: *Ethics of Translation & Interpreting: A Guide to Professional Conduct in Australia*.

- 6.5 Departments and agencies are to obtain copies of the test application forms directly from NAATI.
- 6.6 Each Department or agency is to co-ordinate applications and deliver them to NAATI. NAATI will invoice the VMC for the tests on application, making refunds according to policy for candidates who apply for testing but do not subsequently sit the test. NAATI will invoice Departments and agencies for pre-testing workshops.

7. Administration of Allowance

- 7.1 Departments and agencies will pay the Allowance fortnightly to staff in addition to salary. The Allowance is payable during paid sick leave, recreation leave, long service leave and maternity leave (pro rata, where appropriate). Once a staff member has passed a NAATI accreditation test the Allowance is to be back-paid from the date of accreditation by NAATI.
- 7.2 Payment of the Allowance is to be reviewed by the manager of each recipient of the Allowance, annually and whenever the employment status or work requirements of staff receiving the Allowance change (for example, on promotion, transfer or temporary transfer). Reviews should address whether there is a continuing need for communication in the particular language. The Allowance is not automatically transferable when staff members move to new positions.
- 7.3 Staff members receiving the Allowance who have not used their language skills regularly in the past year may have their Allowance entitlements removed. Managers are required to verify annually that there is need for the language skills in the recipient's workplace to the extent that payment of the Allowance is warranted.
- 7.4 Departments and agencies will be required to report annually to the VMC on the Allowance, indicating expenditure on the Allowance, the number of people receiving the Allowance, and in which languages. Departments and agencies will also be required to submit an annual funding request to the VMC along with an invoice for the total amount requested.
- 7.5 The Allowance does not attract Goods and Services Tax (GST) and GST therefore should not be claimed as a part of Departments' or agencies' funding requests or invoices.
- 7.6 Allowance allocations do not cover any salary on-costs, such as any payroll tax or administrative costs, and therefore these costs should not be claimed as part of Departments' or agencies' funding requests.
- 7.7 Where Departments and agencies do not use all funds allocated, remaining funds will be rolled over to the subsequent financial year, with new allocations downwardly adjusted. Amounts expended over the yearly allocation will be met from within Departments' or agencies' existing budgets.

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- 7.8 Managers are required to ensure that members of staff receiving the Allowance are readily identifiable to all staff in the office by identifying such officers on staff telephone lists / central register.

For further information on the Language Allowance, please contact the VMC on 9208 3156.

To obtain information on accreditation testing and pre-testing workshops, please see the NAATI website – www.naati.com.au, or contact NAATI on 9642 3301 or meroff@naati.com.au

Languages offered at each level of NAATI testing

Language Aide	Paraprofessional Interpreter		Professional Interpreter	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arabic ▪ Bosnian ▪ Cantonese ▪ Croatian ▪ Filipino ▪ French ▪ German ▪ Greek ▪ Hindi ▪ Indonesian ▪ Italian ▪ Japanese ▪ Khmer ▪ Korean ▪ Lao ▪ Macedonian ▪ Mandarin ▪ Persian ▪ Polish ▪ Portuguese ▪ Russian ▪ Serbian ▪ Spanish ▪ Thai ▪ Turkish ▪ Vietnamese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Albanian ▪ Amharic ▪ Arabic ▪ Armenian ▪ Auslan ▪ Bangla ▪ Bosnian ▪ Bulgarian ▪ Burmese ▪ Cantonese ▪ Croatian ▪ Czech ▪ Dari ▪ Dinka ▪ Dutch ▪ Filipino ▪ Finnish ▪ French ▪ German ▪ Greek ▪ Hakka (Chinese) ▪ Hindi ▪ Hungarian ▪ Indonesian ▪ Italian ▪ Japanese ▪ Khmer ▪ Korean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lao ▪ Macedonian ▪ Malay ▪ Maltese ▪ Mandarin ▪ Nuer ▪ Oromo ▪ Persian ▪ Polish ▪ Portuguese ▪ Punjabi ▪ Pushto ▪ Romanian ▪ Russian ▪ Samoan ▪ Serbian ▪ Sinhalese ▪ Somali ▪ Spanish ▪ Swahili ▪ Tamil ▪ Tetum ▪ Thai ▪ Tigrinya ▪ Tongan ▪ Turkish ▪ Ukrainian ▪ Urdu ▪ Vietnamese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Albanian ▪ Amharic ▪ Arabic ▪ Auslan ▪ Bangla ▪ Bosnian ▪ Bulgarian ▪ Burmese ▪ Cantonese ▪ Croatian ▪ Czech ▪ Dari ▪ Dutch ▪ Filipino ▪ Finnish ▪ French ▪ German ▪ Greek ▪ Hindi ▪ Hungarian ▪ Indonesian ▪ Italian ▪ Japanese ▪ Korean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lao ▪ Macedonian ▪ Malay ▪ Maltese ▪ Mandarin ▪ Persian ▪ Polish ▪ Portuguese ▪ Punjabi ▪ Romanian ▪ Russian ▪ Samoan ▪ Serbian ▪ Sinhalese ▪ Somali ▪ Spanish ▪ Tamil ▪ Thai ▪ Tongan ▪ Turkish ▪ Ukrainian ▪ Urdu ▪ Vietnamese