

# **Limited English Proficiency Report and Language Assistance Plan**

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Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
May, 2006

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**Acknowledgements:**

The authors wish to acknowledge with appreciation and gratitude the members of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Language Assistance Program Committee for their valuable contributions to this report: Miss Gail Allato, Messrs. Jimmy Anthony, David Dousay, and Jason Duet, Ms. Joan Goings, Messrs. Thomas Gresham and Mike Landrum, Ms. Janis Landry, Major Jeff Mayne, Mr. Tim Morrison, Ms. Charlotte Naquin, Messrs. Brandt Savoie and Joey Shepard, and Ms. Marie Starns.

The authors also are thankful to all of the people who assisted in the initial internal assessment of the Department's language assistance resources and the hundreds of employees who assisted with the telephone survey.

Other people who helped along the way and deserve a word of thanks are Messrs. Marty Bourgeois and Paul Cook, Dr. Yeong-Nain Chi, and Mr. Herb Holloway.

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**Cost Statement**

Fifty (50) copies of this report were printed at a cost of \$136.62. This document was compiled, prepared, and printed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Office of Management and Finance, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries follows a non-discriminatory policy in programs and employment.

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## **Limited English Proficiency Report and Language Assistance Plan**

In furtherance of its mission to conserve the state's wildlife and fishery resources for future and current generations, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (the Department) affects the lives and livelihoods of a diverse array of people. The Department issued over 500 thousand recreational fishing licenses, 250 thousand recreational hunting licenses, and 68 thousand commercial licenses and permits to Louisiana state residents, plus approximately 155 thousand recreational hunting and fishing licenses and five thousand commercial licenses and permits to non-residents. It trains young men and women in hunting and boating safety, educates the public about wildlife and ecology, and maintains 1.4 million acres of wildlife management areas and wildlife refuges for the conservation of nature and the benefit of wildlife recreators. It deploys enforcement agents who enforce hunting, fishing, and boating regulations and provide aid and assistance to recreators in need. Through these and other means, the Department impacts most people who depend upon Louisiana's renewable biotic resources for their pleasure or livelihoods.

The Department is committed to serving all of its public regardless of race, gender, religion, or national origin. Occasionally, however, some Department personnel may face challenges in achieving the Department's standards for fair and equitable service when interacting with users and stakeholders whose English language skills are so limited as to affect communication. The purpose of this report is to assess the prevalence of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries users and stakeholders with limited English language skills and to discuss the Department's plans to address their needs.

English is the only language spoken by the overwhelming majority of the population (Table 1), five years and over, in Louisiana (90.8 percent) and the U.S. (82.1 percent). The remaining portion of the population, however, represents a substantial population, 382,365 people in Louisiana and 46,951,595 in the United States, who speak some language other than English in the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004).

Beginning in 1980, the U.S. Census Bureau began a deeper investigation into the ability of individuals in households with a non-English primary language to communicate in English. Individuals in these households were classified by their self-identified ability to speak English: very well, well, not well, or not at all (Kominski, 1989). The latest Census figures estimate that in 2000, 1.01 percent of the Louisiana, and 4.19 percent of the U.S. population, five years and over, speak English “less than well” or “not at all” (Table 2).

This segment of the population was the targeted beneficiaries of Executive Order 13166 (Appendix 1), signed on August 11, 2000, which, under obligations set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, directed all federal agencies and all entities receiving federal funds to improve access to service for those with “limited English proficiency (L.E.P.).” Such entities were required to examine its services and to devise means by which to improve accessibility among L.E.P. persons “consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agencies.”

**Table 1. Language Spoken at Home for Population Five Years and Over, 2000:  
Louisiana and United States**

	Louisiana		United States	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population 5 Years and Over	4,153,365	100.00	262,375,150	100.00
English Only	3,771,005	90.79	215,423,555	82.11
Other than English	382,365	9.21	46,951,595	17.89
<b>Source:</b> United States Census Bureau, Census 2000, Internet Release October 29, 2004				

**Table 2. Ability to Speak English among Population, Five Years and Over, who Speak a Language Other than English at Home, 2000: Louisiana and United States**

	Louisiana			United States		
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
Speaks English		of Other than English Pop.	of Total Pop.		of Other than English Pop.	of Total Pop.
Very Well	265,455	69.4	6.39	25,631,190	54.6	9.77
Well	74,700	19.5	1.80	10,333,555	22.0	3.94
Not Well	36,750	9.6	0.88	7,620,720	16.2	2.90
Not at All	5,460	1.4	0.13	3,366,130	7.2	1.28
<b>Source:</b> United States Census Bureau, Census 2000, Internet Release October 29, 2004						

The United States Department of Justice (D.O.J.) published in the August 16, 2000 Federal Register a set of policy guidelines for agencies in the implementation of the L.E.P. Executive Order. It identified as “limited English proficient” those individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. All recipients of federal funds (“recipient agencies”) were directed to take “reasonable steps to provide meaningful access” to L.E.P. applicants and beneficiaries.

The determination of “reasonable steps” and “meaningful access” was based on four factors: the number of L.E.P. individuals; frequency of contact with the program; the nature and importance of the program; and available resources. Recipient agencies were instructed to develop language assistance plans under the principals set forth in the D.O.J. guidelines.

*Language Assistance Initiatives*

Recipient agencies are not required to provide language assistance to all L.E.P. individuals in all the language groups that may be encountered because doing so would be prohibitively expensive. Nevertheless, if there exists within a selected language community a significant portion of L.E.P.-classified individuals, the agency is asked to provide some sort of translation service, written or oral, such as the posting of signs or the publication of at least a portion of its documents in specific foreign languages.

The D.O.J. has described a “twenty-five percent standard” for signage, outreach materials, and important documents. Agencies are requested to provide - at a minimum signs - posted in the two most common non-English languages where more than twenty-five percent of the people in that language group speak English less than well. (Agencies are not required to post signs in two non-English languages when there are fewer than two non-English language groups that meet the “twenty-five percent standard.”)

A similar standard applies to selected essential printed materials, such as forms, rules, and regulations, that materially affect the individual’s rights or welfare and his or her relationship to the agency. Such materials should be published in translations in any language group for which more than twenty-five percent of the speakers speak English less than well, as long as doing so is not cost prohibitive.

#### *Safe Harbor Guidelines*

The Safe Harbor Guidelines are an optional stricter set of standards that agencies may adopt if they wish to meet the language needs of non-English language speakers with “greater certainty.” They are additional voluntary efforts to demonstrate “strong evidence of compliance with written-translation obligations.” The Safe Harbor Guidelines state that (a) the recipient agency should provide written translations of vital documents for each L.E.P. language group that constitutes five percent or 1,000 – whichever is less – of the potentially affected population. (Oral translations should be provided for non-English speakers of other language groups.) If there are fewer than fifty people in a language group that meets the five percent standard,” the recipient agency is not obliged to provide written translations but should inform the non-English speakers in that language group that they are entitled to free oral translations of written materials.

On December 24, 2003, the United States Department of the Interior (D.O.I.) published its own specific guidelines in this effort: “Limited English Proficiency Guidance for Recipients of Federal Assistance.” This document specifies state fish and wildlife agencies as “recipients of federal aid” that must adhere to these guidelines in the commission of all its programs and activities, not just those particular programs and activities receiving federal aid.

Following the D.O.J. instructions, the D.O.I. guidelines regarding reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to L.E.P. persons provide a flexible standard balancing four factors:

1. the number or proportion of L.E.P. persons likely to be encountered by the program;
2. the frequency with which L.E.P. persons come in contact with the program;
3. the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service to the L.E.P. people’s lives; and,
4. the resources available to the recipient agency and costs.

The D.O.I. guidelines repeat the D.O.J. twenty-five percent standard for signage and important publications and also describe the optional Safe Harbor Guidelines.

In January, 2004, in response to a civil rights complaint, the U.S. Department of Interior enjoined the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, a recipient of federal aid through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal programs, to assess the needs of its users and stakeholders with limited English speaking ability. In response to the D.O.I.’s request, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Socioeconomic Research and Development Section organized the Language Assistance Program (L.A.P.) Committee, a collection of employees throughout the Department charged with investigating

the status of the Department's language resources and the needs of its L.E.P. users and stakeholders. The L.A.P. Committee was composed of representatives from a diversity of administrative units: the Enforcement, Fur and Refuge, Inland Fisheries, Marine Fisheries, and Wildlife Divisions, and the Fiscal, Human Resources, Licensing, Property Control, Public Information, Purchasing, and Socioeconomic Research and Development Sections.

Members met eight times between March, 2004 and March, 2005 to discuss a strategy for framing a Language Assistance Plan for the Department. The Committee followed the L.E.P. guidelines described by the D.O.I. and the D.O.J. by focusing on four items: estimating the number or proportion of L.E.P. individuals among the Department's users and stakeholders; estimating the frequency of contact by L.E.P. individuals with the Department; describing the nature and importance of various programs to L.E.P. individuals; and identifying the available and appropriate amount of resources for L.E.P. persons participating in Department activities.

Among other topics, the Committee discussed the difficulty in defining the terms, "reasonable steps" and "meaningful access" in context of the Department's services, its stakeholders, and resource base. They also discussed the vagueness of the term, "limited English proficiency." As Department personnel may be unable to judge a person's English-language fluency, it was decided that the classification of an individual stakeholder as L.E.P. would depend upon his or her self-identified English-speaking abilities. (This metric resembles the U.S. Census Bureau's L.E.P. classification standard.)

The assessment began with an examination of available Census Bureau data. While these data framed a telling picture of the state's ethnic composition and English language

capacity, they did not necessarily portray accurately the Department's users and stakeholder base which may differ from the overall population.

Since existing published data was inadequate for the Department's needs, the Committee recognized the necessity of implementing its own surveys, first to measure the availability of language resources and then to measure the prevalence of L.E.P. individuals among the Department's users and stakeholders and to assess the nature of their relationship to the Department.

### **The Language Assistance Available Resources Identification Survey**

The L.A.P. Committee designed a one-page questionnaire (Appendix 2) that was sent to program heads and supervisors throughout the Department in March, 2004. The survey asked whether his or her section "encounter(ed), serve(d), or deal(t) with any individual whose primary language was not English and who may have needed language assistance" between January, 2003 and the 2004 survey date. The respondent was also asked to identify Department employees who were fluent in language other than English plus outside resources for interpretation and community outreach.

The survey received 45 responses from individuals in programs at Headquarters and regional offices throughout the Department. Most came from program heads. One Enforcement Region in south Louisiana responded to the survey in a unique way. Instead of submitting a single response from a regional captain reporting on behalf of all the agents under his or her direction, this region provided multiple responses from thirteen Enforcement agents who described their individual experiences with people of limited English communication skills.

Thirty respondents reported no contacts between the employees in their administrative units and individuals who needed English language assistance. One respondent was uncertain whether employees in his or her administrative unit had had contact with anybody who needed language assistance. Fourteen respondents in six different administrative units reported contact with at least one person who needed English language assistance. (Nine of these respondents were Enforcement agents assigned to one Enforcement region in south Louisiana.)

Fifteen respondents identified at least one Department employee who was fluent in a language other than English (Table 3). Nine identified interpretation services and four identified outreach programs outside the Department (Table 4).

This initial internal assessment, the Language Assistance Available Resources Identification Survey, revealed that encounters with L.E.P. individuals, mainly of Vietnamese and Hispanic origin, were not uncommon among Department personnel, especially among Enforcement agents. Respondents did not say how frequently they provided service to non-English speakers nor how often non-English speakers needed to contact the Department and what role the agency played in their livelihoods.

Though Department personnel have existing - if irregular - sources for interpretation assistance, there is no measure of the reliability, accuracy, and accessibility of these translation services and no measure of the portion of the staff that knows how to utilize them when they are needed.

**Table 3. Louisiana Department Of Wildlife and Fisheries Employees  
(Names withheld) who Have Volunteered as Interpreters, March, 2004**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Administrative Unit</b>	<b>Location</b>
French	Enforcement	Alexandria
Vietnamese	Enforcement	Opelousas
French	Enforcement	Lake Charles
Cajun French	Enforcement	Lake Charles
French	Enforcement	Opelousas
French	Enforcement	Hessmer
French	Fur and Refuge	New Iberia
French	Fur and Refuge	New Iberia
Spanish*	Fur and Refuge	Baton Rouge
French	Fur and Refuge	New Iberia
French	Inland Fisheries	Opelousas
Cajun French	Marine Fisheries	Statewide
Cajun French	Marine Fisheries	Bourg
Cajun French	Marine Fisheries	Statewide
Spanish	Marine Fisheries	Bourg
German	Marine Fisheries	Marine Fisheries Lab.
Spanish	Marine Fisheries	New Orleans
Taiwanese, Mandarin	Socioeconomics	Baton Rouge
French, German, Greek, Italian	Licensing	Baton Rouge
Hindi	Computers	Baton Rouge
Spanish, Russian, German*	Socioeconomics	Baton Rouge
French	Wildlife	Opelousas
French	Wildlife	Opelousas

\* Persons who were employed by the Department at the time of the survey but who are no longer employed by the Department as of April, 2006.

**Table 4. Outside Interpretation Services and Outreach Programs**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Location</b>
Unknown	15 <sup>th</sup> J.D.C., Vermilion Parish District Attorney's Office	Abbeville
Korean	Private citizen (Name withheld)	Washington, D.C.
Unknown	International Visitor Program	
Spanish	Louisiana State Police – Troop F	Monroe
Several	U.L.M. Dept. of Foreign Languages	Monroe
Unknown	Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office	Alexandria
Spanish	U.S. Border Patrol	Several
Several	U.S. Department of State	Several
Unknown	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs	Unknown
Several	University of New Orleans	New Orleans
Vietnamese	Vietnamese Public Radio and Radio Free Vietnam	New Orleans
Vietnamese	Vietnamese-American Commercial Fisherman Ass'n	New Orleans

Though this effort generated a revealing overview of the status of the Department's language assistance needs, it provides at best an outline and not a detailed rendering. The respondents to this survey, principally program managers, may not have had a complete awareness of or recollection of all of the language assistance incidents within their administrative units.

This L.A.P. Committee recommended a more thorough investigation of the Department's language assistance based on the experiences of a broad array of employees and the perspectives of individual users and stakeholders. The former was captured in the employee telephone survey and the latter in a license renewal survey, both of which are described in the remainder of this report.

### **The Employee Telephone Survey**

The employee telephone survey was an effort to assess the English language skills of users and stakeholders from outside the agency who contacted the Department by telephone. Employees in the Office of Fisheries, Office of Wildlife, and Office of Management and Finance were asked to complete a voluntary, periodic summary of all telephone contacts, recording each speaker's primary language plus the English language skills and other characteristics of those respondents for whom English was not the primary language.

Two survey dates, typically the first two consecutive business days, were identified for each month between November, 2004 and November, 2005, inclusive. (Survey collection was essentially suspended during September, 2005, as a result of the disruptions associated with Hurricane Katrina.) Notification of each month's survey dates was distributed to Department employees by e-mail.

The data collection tool used in the telephone survey was the L.E.P. individual assessment sheet (Appendix 3). Participating employees were asked to fill in a separate sheet for each survey date. Each assessment sheet contained a line for the pertinent date and employees' name and 30 survey lines, each one representing an individual separate telephone contact, with a person from outside the Department. Participating employees were given a choice regarding the number of individual telephone contacts to survey. They could conduct a survey with all outside telephone contacts or for only the first 30 telephone contacts if they received a large number of calls during the survey day.

Each of the 30 survey lines contained six survey questions or items. The first item on the questionnaire asked the individual telephone respondent if he or she agreed to participate in the survey. Those refusing to participate were asked no further questions.

The second item on the questionnaire asked the individual telephone respondent to identify his or her primary language. Respondents who named English as his or her primary language were asked no further questions.

The third item on the questionnaire, posed only to those respondents whose primary language was not English, asked respondents to rate his or her own capacity in speaking English as "very well", "well", "less than well", and "not at all." This was the critical question in the telephone contact survey.

Non-English primary language speakers who spoke English "well" or "very well" were asked no further questions in this survey. On the other hand, those respondents with a non-English primary language and whose English skills were "less than well" or "not at all" were rated "limited English proficient" (L.E.P.), a category of special concern for the

Department. The L.E.P. respondents were then asked three additional questions to discern more about the nature of their interaction with the Department.

In the fourth questionnaire item, L.E.P. respondents were asked to describe their relationship with the Department as commercial, recreational, or other. Joint designations, i.e. commercial and recreational, were permitted. In the fifth survey item, L.E.P. respondents were asked to estimate the number of contacts with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries they had had in the year prior to taking the survey.

Lastly, limited English proficient respondents were invited to supply their names and other contact information to assist in the compilation of a database of users and stakeholders with special language needs.

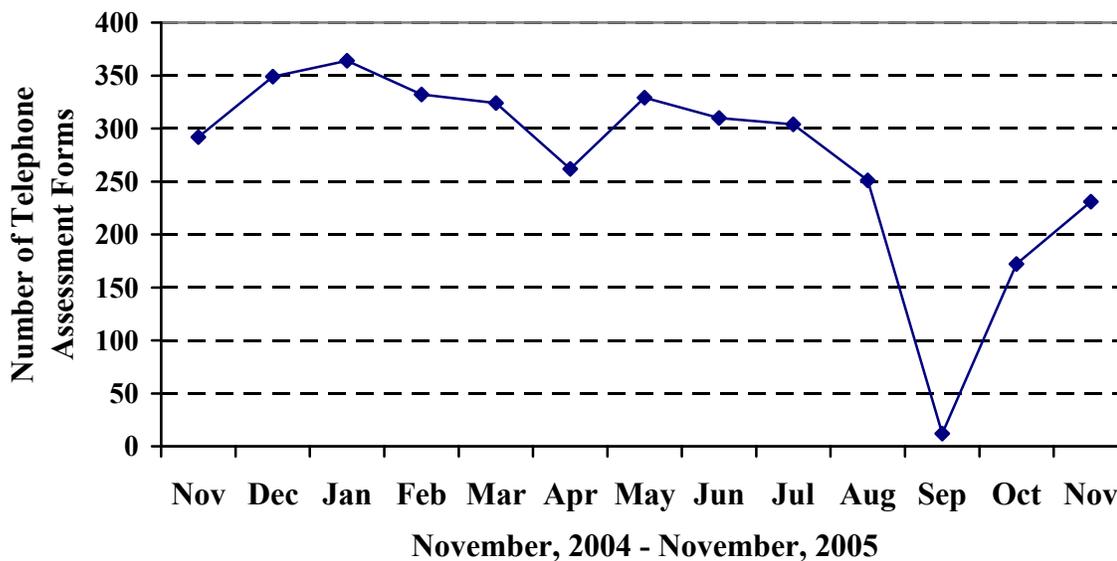
#### *Telephone Survey Results*

The telephone contact survey received 3,533 completed L.E.P. individual assessment sheets from Department employees between November, 2004, and November, 2005, inclusive. The monthly numbers of completed sheets ranged from a high of 364 in January, 2005 to a low of 12 in September, 2005 and 172 in October, 2005, shortly after the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (Figure 1).

The 3,533 completed individual assessment sheets contained the records of 15,464 telephone contacts with an average of 4.38 telephone contacts per sheet. More than half of the sheets (1,842) came from employees who encountered no telephone contacts with people from outside the Department on the survey date.

Omitting the 364 telephone contacts who refused to take the survey, this analysis reflects the English language proficiency of 15,100 telephone contacts with people from outside the Department. The vast majority of telephone contacts were made with people

**Figure 1. Number of Telephone Assessment Forms Received by Month:  
November, 2004 - November, 2005**

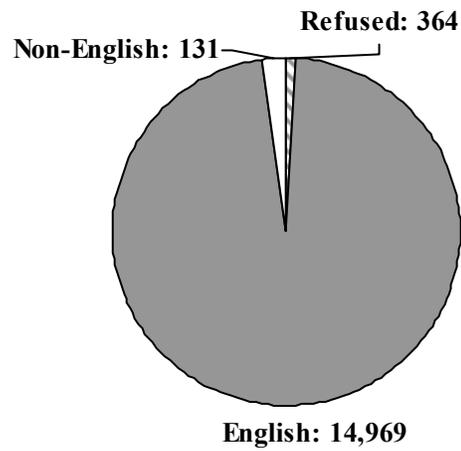


whose primary language was English (Figure 2). Indeed, only 131 telephone contacts (0.868 percent of those who took the survey) indicated that their primary language was not English (Figure 3). Among these, Vietnamese (59) and Spanish (51) were the most common. Four respondents did not identify their non-English primary language.

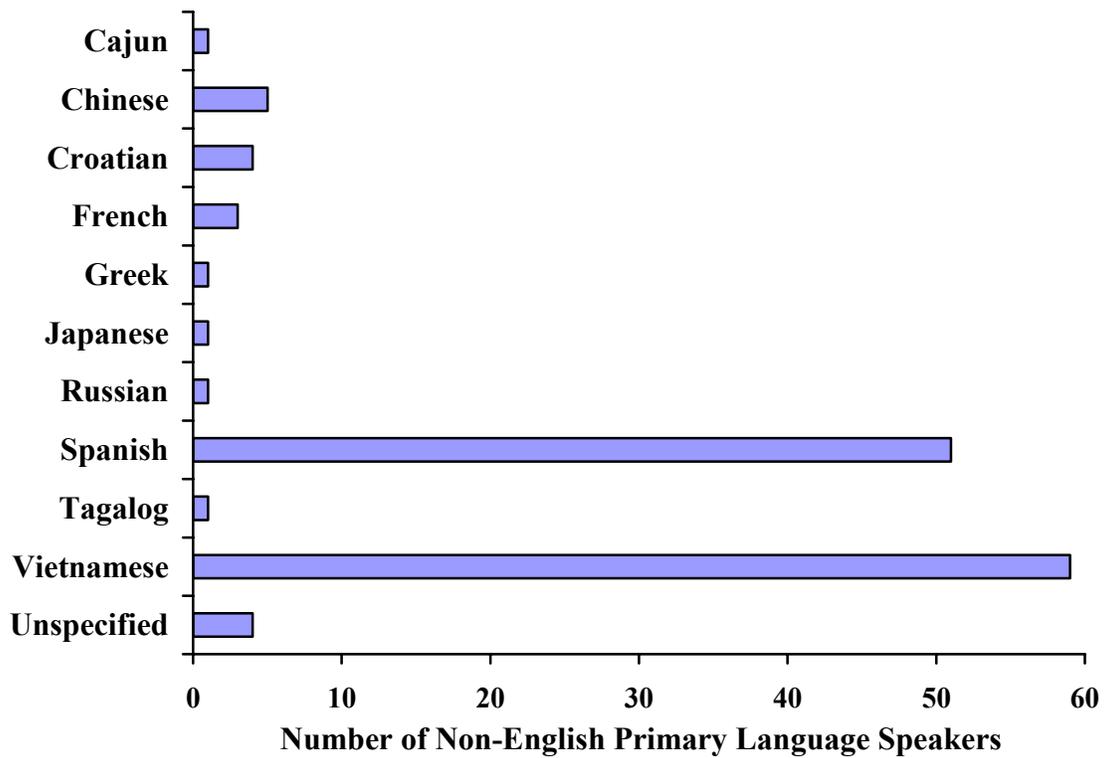
Three respondents identified their primary language as “French” and one as “Cajun”. Due to the linguistic similarities in these idioms, these may or may not be referring to the same language.

December, 2004, (Figure 4) was the month with the largest number of non-English primary language telephone contacts, 36. March and April, 2005 each received 16 non-English primary language contacts. February and July, 2005 recorded 12 such contacts each.

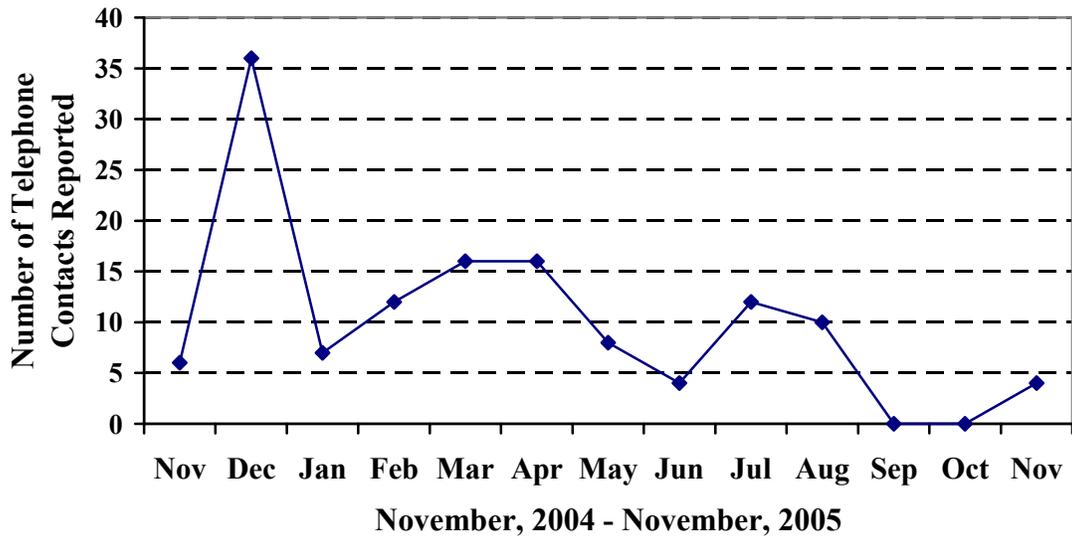
**Figure 2. Primary Language of Telephone Contacts: English and Non-English**



**Figure 3. Primary Language of Telephone Contacts among Non-English Primary Language Speakers**



**Figure 4. Number of Telephone Contacts with Non-English Primary Language Speakers: November, 2004 - November, 2005**

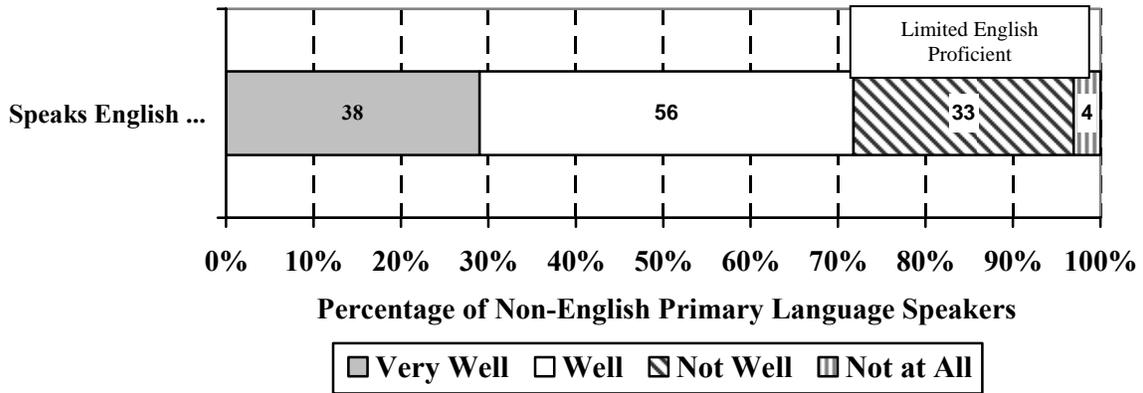


*L.E.P. Status of Telephone Contacts*

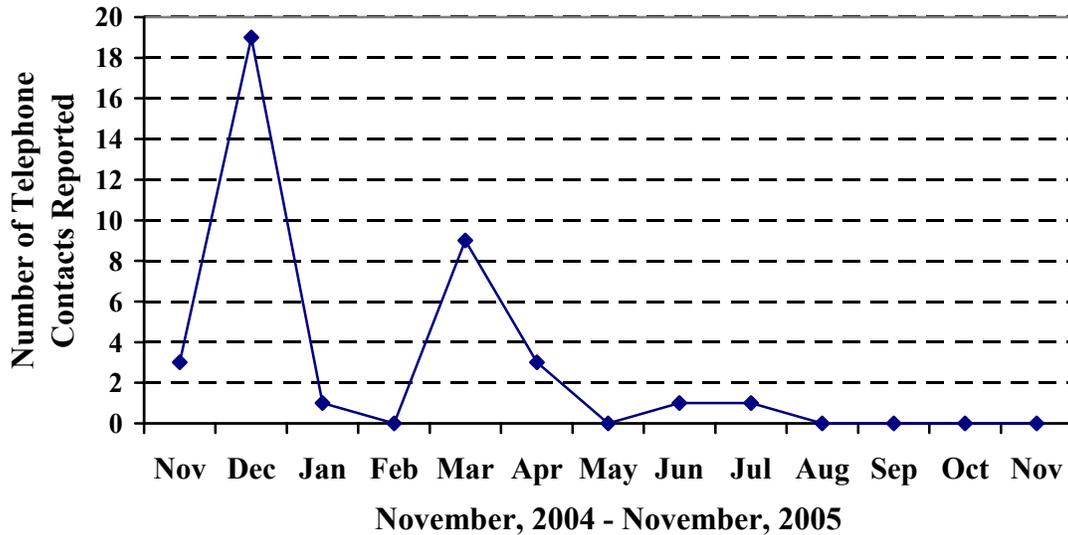
Most of the non-English primary language respondents, 94, claimed to be able to speak English “well” or “very well” (Figure 5). The remaining 37 non-English primary language respondents, having rated their ability to speak English as “less than well” or “not at all”, were classified as “L.E.P.” respondents. All together, L.E.P. respondents represent 0.245 percent of the 15,100 telephone contacts who responded to this survey.

More than half of the L.E.P. telephone contacts (19) arrived in December, 2004 (Figure 6). Three months of the survey period (January, June, and July, 2005) each received only a single L.E.P. telephone contact. No L.E.P. telephone contacts at all were reported during six months of the survey, February and March and August through November, 2005.

**Figure 5. Ability to Speak English of Non-English Primary Language Speakers in Telephone Survey**

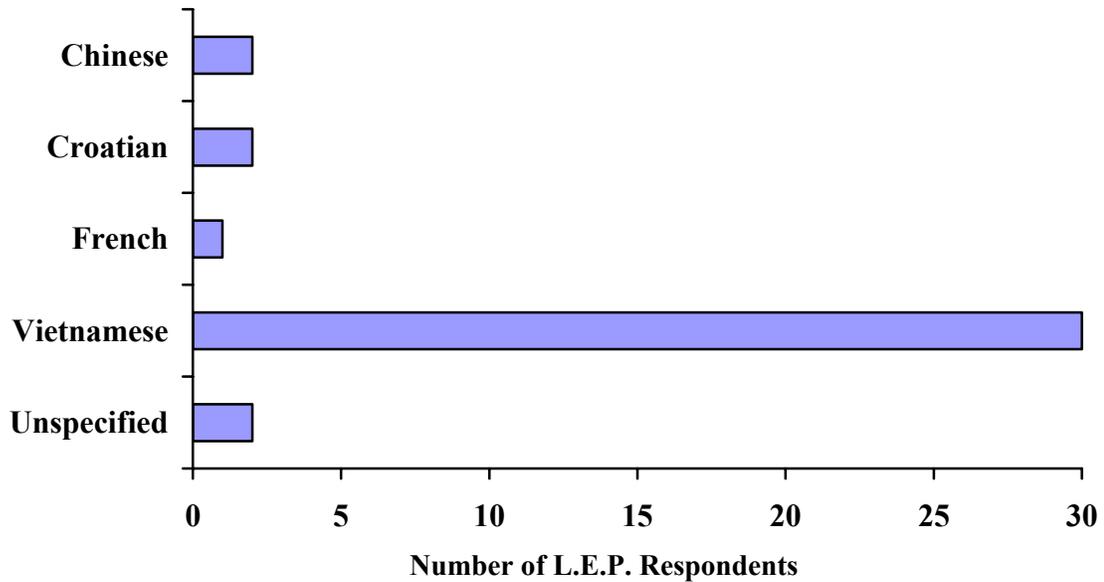


**Figure 6. Number of Telephone Contacts with Limited English Proficient Respondents: November, 2004 - November, 2005**



The vast majority of L.E.P. telephone contacts, 30, identified Vietnamese as their primary language (Figure 7). Two L.E.P. contacts identified their primary language as Chinese and two as Croatian. One L.E.P. respondent claimed his primary language was Cajun French. Two L.E.P. respondents did not name their non-English primary language.

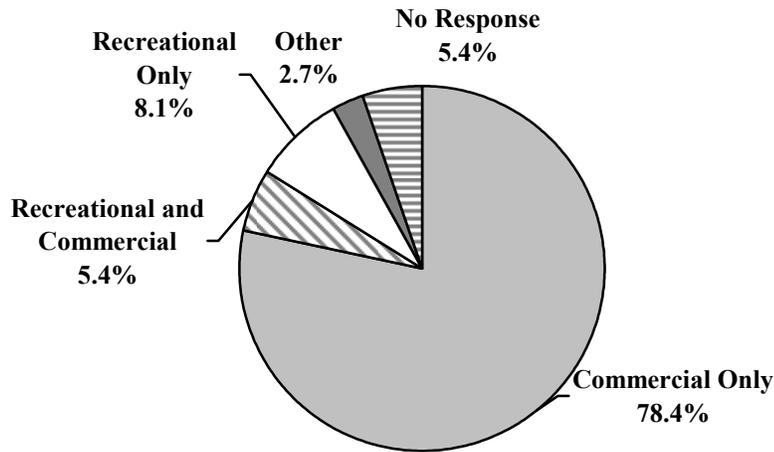
**Figure 7. Primary Language of Limited English Proficient Telephone Survey Respondents**



Thirty-one (78.4 percent) of the L.E.P. telephone contacts described their relationship with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as solely commercial (Figure 8). Five had a recreational relationship with the Department (3 solely recreational and 2 both recreational and commercial.) One described his relationship with the Department as something “other” than recreational or commercial: a consultant. Two L.E.P. respondents did not answer the question.

The questionnaire item asking respondents to estimate the number of contacts they had had with the Department in the previous year had a fairly high non-response rate (43.24 percent). Three provided a non-numeric response that could not be used in calculating statistical measure. Among the 18 L.E.P. respondents who supplied a usable number, the average number of contacts with the Department was 0.94.

**Figure 8. Relationship with the Department of Limited English Proficient Telephone Survey Respondents**

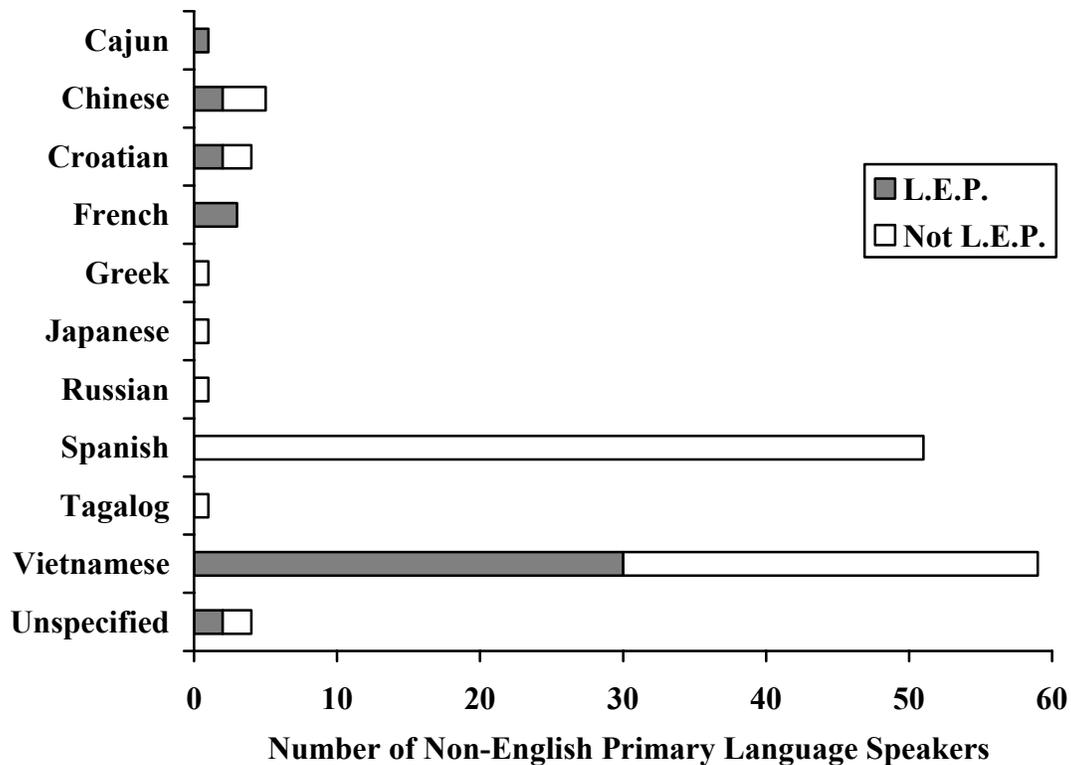


*Telephone Contact Survey Results by Non-English Primary Language Group*

Figure 9 shows the L.E.P. status of the telephone contacts segregated by language type. Most notably, 30 of the 59 Vietnamese-speaking respondents (50.85 percent) were classified as L.E.P. While none of the Spanish-speaking respondents was classified as L.E.P., two of the five Chinese-speaking respondents and two of the four Croatian-speaking respondents held L.E.P. status. Though the Chinese-speaking and Croatian-speaking samples are too small to use for the basis of a firm conclusion, the sample Vietnamese-speaking respondents (59) is sufficiently large as to merit consideration.

Both of the Chinese L.E.P. respondents had a commercial relationship (Table 5) with the Department and both of the Croatian L.E.P. respondents had a joint commercial and recreational relationship. Of the 30 Vietnamese L.E.P. respondents, 26 had a solely commercial relationship and 3 a solely recreational relationship with the Department. One Vietnamese L.E.P. respondent did not provide an answer for this question.

**Figure 9. Classification of Non-English Primary Language Speakers: L.E.P. & Not L.E.P.**



**Table 5. Relationship with the Department by Limited English Proficient Telephone Survey Respondents, By Language**

	Commercial	Recreational	Other	No Response
Cajun	0	0	1	0
Chinese	2	0	0	0
Croatian	2	2	0	0
Vietnamese	26	3	0	1
Unspecified	1	0	0	1

Eighty percent of the 30 Vietnamese telephone contacts arrived during two months (Table 6): 18 in December, 2004 and six in March, 2005. Both Croatian L.E.P. telephone contacts came in November, 2004. Both of the unspecified language L.E.P. telephone contacts were received in March, 2005. One Chinese L.E.P. telephone contact arrived in December, 2004, and one in March, 2005.

**Table 6. Month of Contact by Limited English Proficient Telephone Survey Respondents, By Language**

	<b>Cajun</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Croatian</b>	<b>Vietnamese</b>	<b>Unspecified</b>
November, 2004	1	0	2	0	0
December	0	1	0	18	0
January	0	0	0	1	0
February	0	0	0	0	0
March	0	1	0	6	2
April	0	0	0	3	0
May	0	0	0	0	0
June	0	0	0	1	0
July	0	0	0	1	0
August	0	0	0	0	0
September	0	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0	0
November, 2005	0	0	0	0	0

The average number of contacts with the Department among Vietnamese L.E.P. respondents was 0.875. Among Croatian L.E.P. respondents, the average number of contacts was 8.5. Neither the Chinese nor the unspecified language L.E.P. respondents provided answers that could be used in calculating an average number of Departmental contacts for these two groups.

According to the telephone survey, telephone contact between Department personnel and L.E.P. individuals are relatively uncommon. Individuals who have difficulty speaking English may be relatively unlikely to initiate telephone calls to Department personnel who are unlikely to speak their language.

Though the telephone survey may not generate an accurate assessment of the population of the Department's L.E.P. users and stakeholders, it does offer a depiction of those who have contacted the agency by telephone. It suggests that access to some sort of telephone translation service may assist the Department in communicating with a portion of L.E.P. individuals.

## **Commercial License Renewal Survey**

The second portion of the L.E.P. assessment project consisted of a survey of 19,780 individuals who received commercial license renewal notices from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in the mail. A mail survey, it was believed, may be more likely to contact users and stakeholders who need language assistance than a telephone survey.

Though it did not generate a representative sample of all the Department's users and stakeholders, this methodology was more likely than standard random sampling techniques to attract respondents whose economic well-being would be affected by the Department's policies and activities, an important consideration in the provision of the agency's services. Though consisting mostly of commercial fishermen, the sample was likely to contain some recreational anglers who obtained commercial licenses in order to use commercial gear for recreational purposes.

The Language Assessment Plan Committee developed a one-page questionnaire (Appendix 4) containing six questions or items and a three-paragraph introduction and explanation of the survey and its purposes. The first item asked respondents to identify their primary language. All who indicated English were asked no further questions. Respondents who identified a non-English primary language were asked to proceed to the second question.

The second question asked non-English primary language respondents to rate how well they speak English. All who marked "well" or "very well" were asked no further questions. Those who marked "not well" or "not at all" were classified as "limited English proficient" (L.E.P.).

These L.E.P. respondents were also asked to describe their relationship with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as commercial, recreational, or other. These

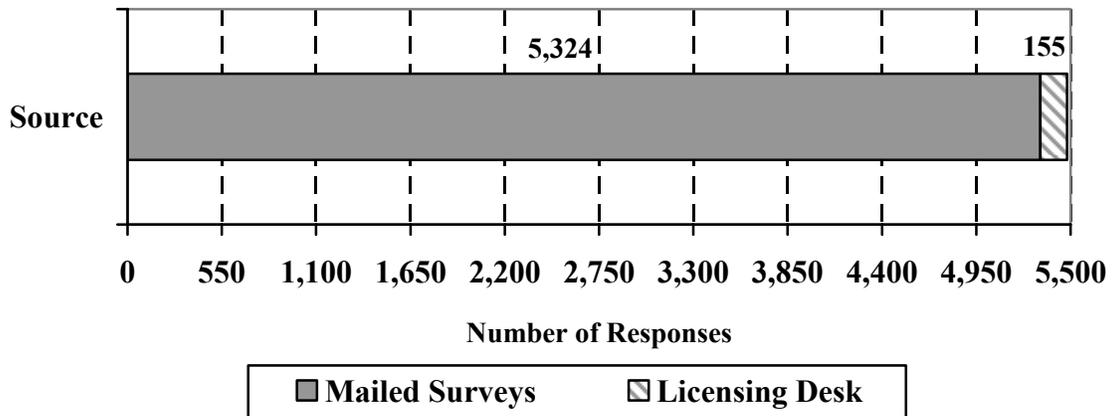
categories were not mutually exclusive. A single respondent could use more than one of these terms to describe his or her relationship with the agency.

Questionnaires were inserted in the envelopes of 19,780 commercial license renewal notices mailed in November, 2004. Most of the returned surveys were mailed along with their license renewals to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Licensing Section. Others were delivered in person by individuals visiting Wildlife and Fisheries facilities. A supplemental sample included people purchasing commercial licenses at Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries offices. The people who completed questionnaires at Department offices included people who received a questionnaire in the mail but forgot to bring it with them when they came to renew their licenses as well as people who did not receive a survey in the mail with their commercial license renewal notices. All completed questionnaires were delivered to the Socioeconomic Research and Development Section personnel for analysis.

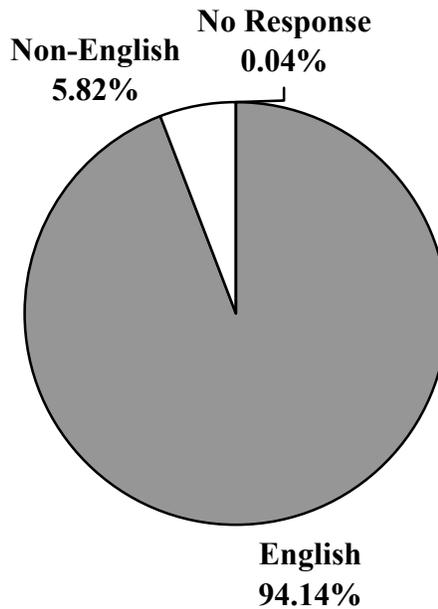
The survey received 5,324 completed questionnaires in response to the surveys sent by mail, (Figure 10) representing a 26.9 percent response rate to the mail survey. It also received an additional 155 questionnaire completed at the Department's licensing desk. This report will be based on the responses of all 5,479 (5,324 + 155) respondents who completed a questionnaire.

Approximately six percent (5.82 percent) of the license renewal sample, 319 respondents, spoke a primary language other than English (Figure 11). The most common non-English primary language (Figure 12) was Vietnamese (245 respondents). Spanish,

**Figure 10. Source of Questionnaires Used in License Renewal Survey Analysis**

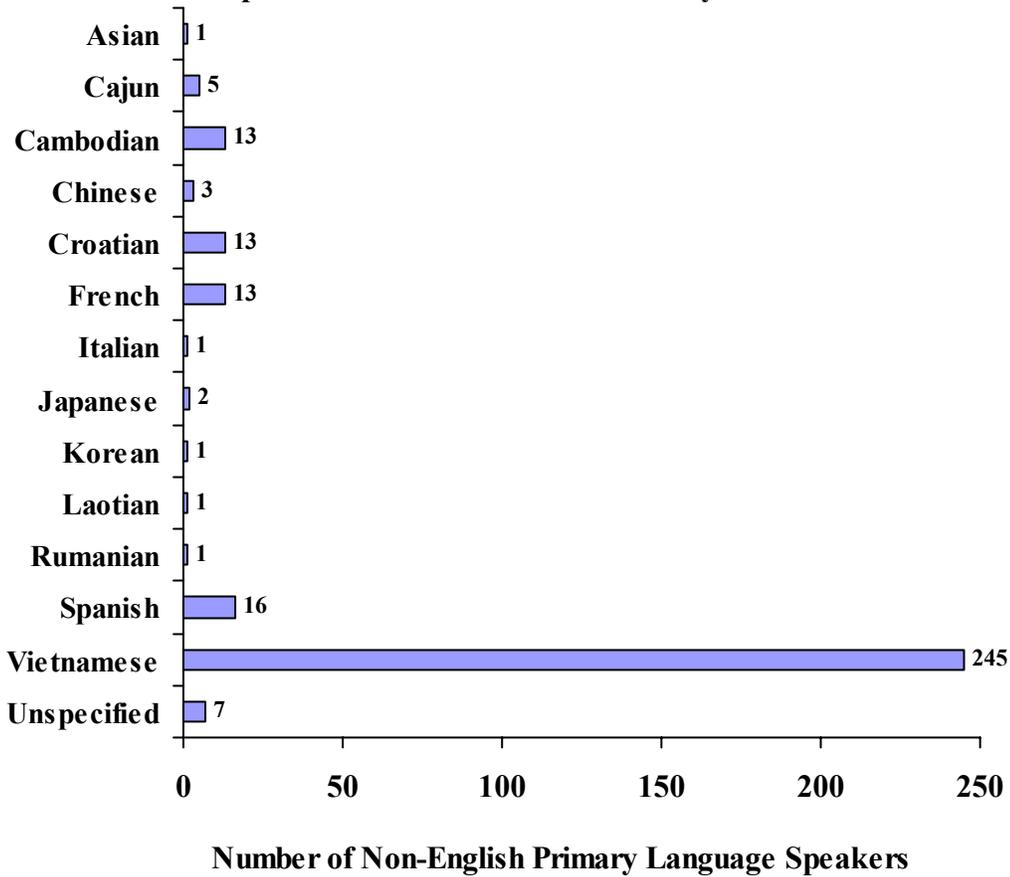


**Figure 11. Primary Language of License Renewal Respondents: English and Non-English**



spoken by 16 respondents, was a distant second. French was the primary language for 13 respondents and Cajun for another five. Though treated as separate language categories in this report, it is possible that some respondents may use the term “French” and “Cajun” interchangeably.

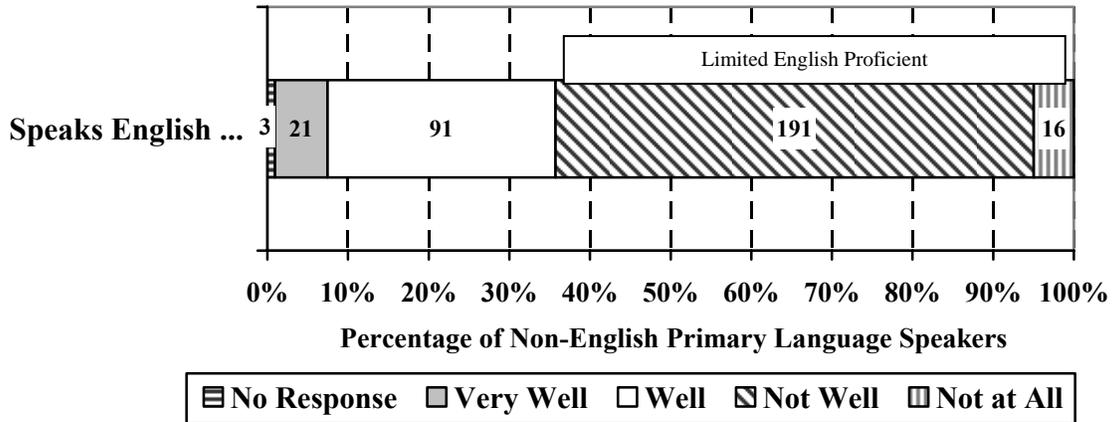
**Figure 12. Primary Language of Non-English Primary Language Speakers in License Renewal Survey**



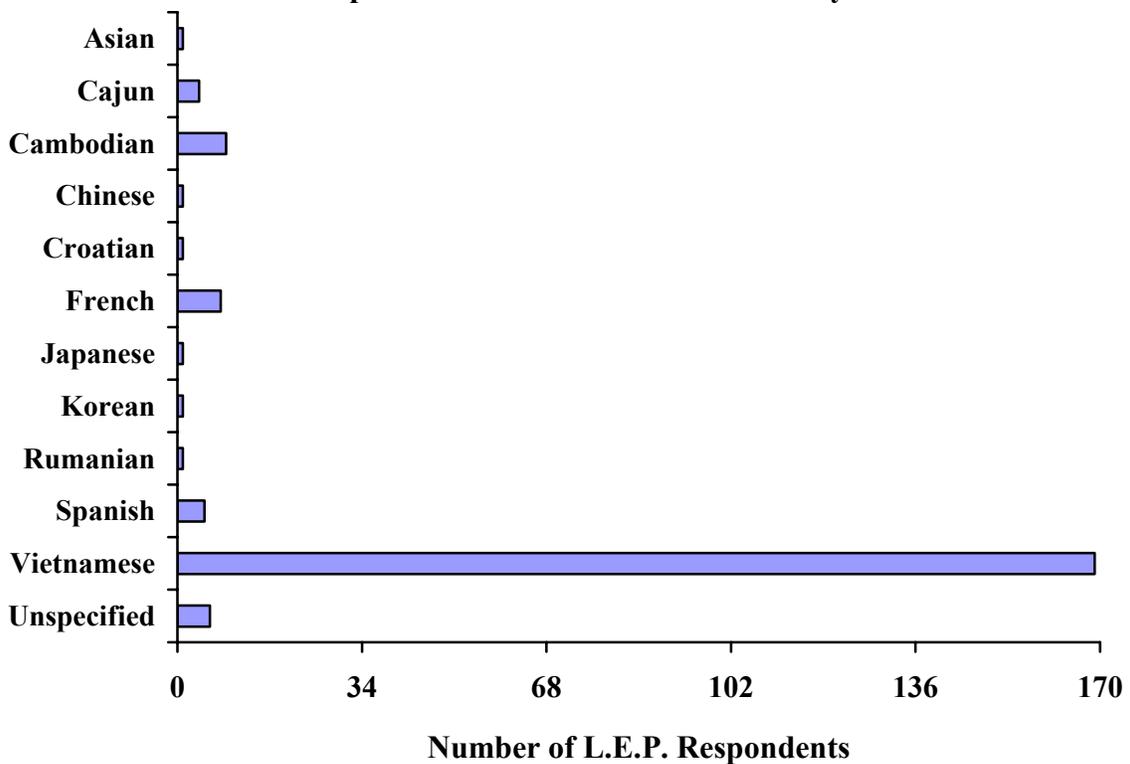
A majority, 207, of the non-English primary language speakers described their ability to speak English as “not well” or “not at all” (Figure 13) and were thus classified as being “limited English proficient” (L.E.P.) These L.E.P. respondents represent 3.78 percent of the commercial license renewal sample. (Three non-English primary language speakers did not provide an assessment of how well they spoke English.)

The vast majority (169) of the L.E.P. respondents spoke Vietnamese (Figure 14). Nine of the L.E.P. respondents spoke Cambodian and five spoke Spanish as a primary language. The eight L.E.P. respondents who identified French and another four identified Cajun as their primary language. There were single occurrences of Rumanian, Korean,

**Figure 13. Ability to Speak English of Non-English Primary Language Speakers in License Renewal Survey**



**Figure 14. Primary Language of Limited English Proficient Respondents to License Renewal Survey**

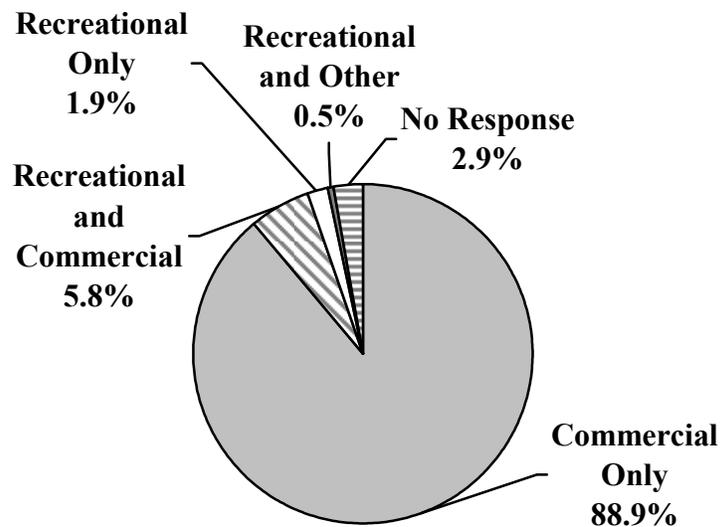


Japanese, Croatian, and “Asian” as primary languages among L.E.P. respondents. Six L.E.P. respondents did not specify their non-English primary language.

One hundred eighty-four (88.9 percent) of the L.E.P. respondents had a solely commercial relationship with the Department (Figure 15). Of the 17 who held a recreational relationship with the Department, four had a strictly recreational relationship and twelve maintained a relationship that was both commercial and recreational. One of those with a recreational relationship also had a relationship described as “other”, specifically identified by the respondent as “boating.” Six L.E.P. respondents did not answer the question describing their relationship with the Department.

L.E.P. respondents were asked to estimate the number of times they had made contact with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in the year before the survey. Fifty-one (24.6 percent) did not respond to the question. Six provided non-numeric answers, such as “several” or “quite often”, that could not be used in statistical analysis. Of the 150 who provided usable numeric responses, the average number of contacts was 2.12.

**Figure 15. Relationship with Department of Limited English Proficient License Renewal Survey Respondents**



Since a large portion of the L.E.P. respondents – all but seven- complied with the survey’s request for a personal address, this report could discern geographic patterns in the respondents’ place of residence at the time of the survey (Figure 16). It is unknown how Hurricanes Katrina and Rita affected the geographic distribution of L.E.P. users and stakeholders.

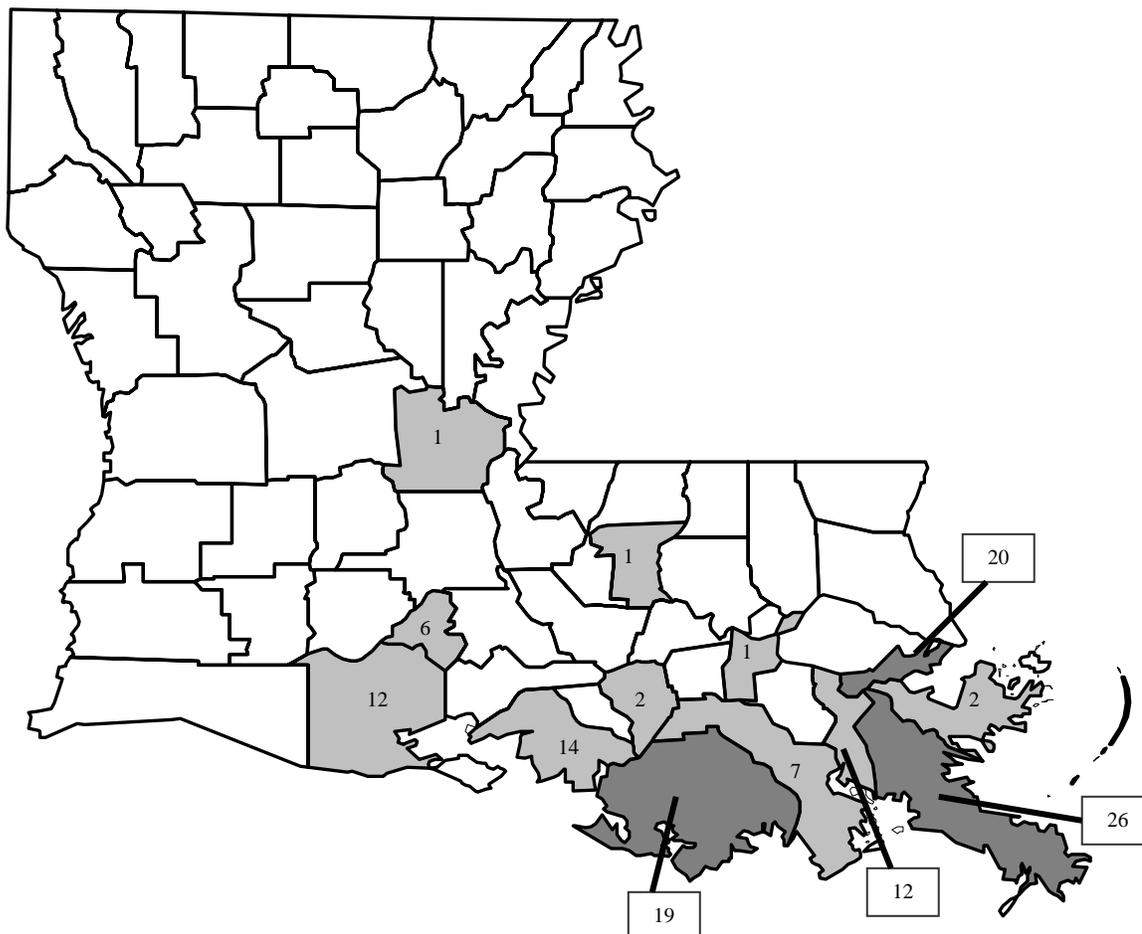
Over one-third of the L.E.P. license renewal survey respondents, 73, provided an address outside Louisiana. Sixty were situated in Texas, 10 in Mississippi, and one each in Alabama, Florida, and Virginia.

Of the 127 L.E.P. respondents who lived in Louisiana (Figure 17), most lived in coastal Parishes: Plaquemines (26), Terrebonne (19), Iberia (14), Vermilion (12), Lafourche (7), and St. Bernard (2). About one quarter of the Louisiana-resident L.E.P. respondents lived in the New Orleans area: Orleans (21) and Jefferson (12) Parishes. Certain individual cities or communities are distinguished by a notably large number of L.E.P. respondents, particularly New Orleans (21), Buras (17), Houma (13), New Iberia (12), and Abbeville (10).

**Figure 16. State of Residence of L.E.P. Respondents to License Renewal Survey**



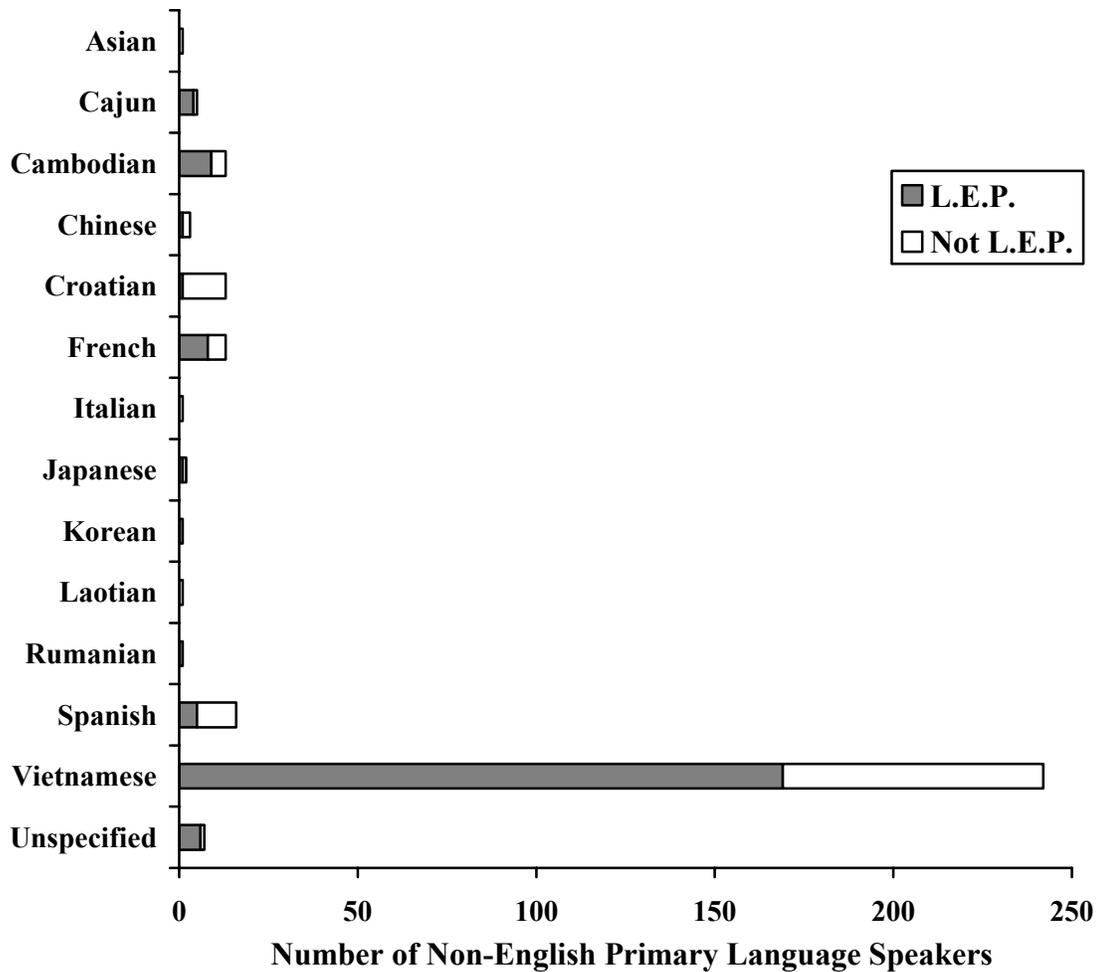
**Figure 17. Parish of Residence of Louisiana-Resident L.E.P. License Renewal Survey Respondents**



*Patterns by Non-English Primary Language Groups*

Figure 18 shows the distribution of non-English primary language speakers, distinguished by their English language skills: L.E.P. (speaking English “not well” or “not at all”) or not L.E.P. (speaking English “well” or “very well”). For most language groups, the number of respondents is too low to make any broad conclusions. Projections regarding the prevalence of L.E.P. individuals would be highly speculative for language groups, like “Asian”, Cajun, Cambodian, Chinese, Croatian, French and Cajun, Italian, Korean, Laotian, Romanian, and Spanish speakers, for which there are fewer than twenty - in most cases only one, two, or three – respondents.

**Figure 18. Classification among Non-English Primary Language License Renewal Respondents: L.E.P. & Not L.E.P.**



Respondents of who speak Vietnamese as their primary language, however, stand out as having a large number of speakers (245, in all) and a large number of L.E.P. classified respondents (169 respondents or 68.98 percent of all Vietnamese respondents). Three Vietnamese speakers did not indicate how well they spoke English.

A breakdown of the respondents' relationships with the Department by language group (Table 7) reveals that most in each category had a commercial relationship with the

**Table 7. Relationship with the Department by Limited English Proficient License Renewal Survey Respondents, By Language**

	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>No Response</b>
Asian	1	1	0	0
Cajun	4	1	0	0
Cambodian	8	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0	0
Croatian	1	0	0	0
French	7	4	0	0
Japanese	1	0	0	0
Korean	1	0	0	0
Rumanian	1	1	0	0
Spanish	5	1	0	0
Vietnamese	160	9	1	6
Unspecified	6	0	0	0

agency. Further, there was little sign of differences in the number of contacts with the Department by non-English primary language group. Most had an average in the range of two such contacts in the year prior to the license renewal survey.

An examination of the respondents' address reveals a relatively large number of Cambodians in Buras (8) in Plaquemines Parish at the time of the survey. There were also notable numbers of Vietnamese L.E.P. speakers in New Orleans (20); Vermilion Parish (10); Terrebonne Parish (12); and Plaquemines Parish (15). In Texas, there were relatively large numbers of Vietnamese L.E.P. respondents in Beaumont (11), Houston (9), and Port Arthur (11).

**The Vietnamese Language Group: A Community of Special Concern**

The Vietnamese language group warrants special attention both in terms of the proportion of Vietnamese speakers among non-English speakers and the proportion of all Vietnamese speakers who are considered limited English proficient. In both the telephone survey and the license renewal survey, more than half of all Vietnamese speakers spoke English less than well. As this exceeds the D.O.J. and D.O.I. "twenty-five percent standard",

the Department should give special consideration to making special language assistance tools available to this group of users and stakeholders.

Since the majority of respondents to both the telephone and license renewal surveys maintain a commercial relationship with the Department, many depend at least partially upon the Department for their individual well-being or livelihood. The majority of Vietnamese respondents to the license renewal survey were clustered in communities in south Louisiana in proximity to the commercial fishery resource. Most of the telephone calls from Vietnamese L.E.P. individuals were made in December, the month coinciding with the commercial license renewal date that may necessitate efforts to contact the Department.

To address this language group's needs in a cost effective manner, the Department should continue its outreach efforts to the Vietnamese commercial fishing community in coastal Louisiana. The Department should be aware that there may be a heightened call for language assistance in select times of the year, notably during the commercial license renewal period and commercial shrimp harvest season.

### **The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Language Assistance Actions**

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has a long history of interacting with people of diverse cultural backgrounds. Whether speaking to fishermen and trappers in the indigenous Cajun dialectic or communicating with Croatian oystermen through a bilingual community member, Department personnel have found any number of ways to serve the public, regardless of their English language skills.

In recent years, the Department's Marine Fisheries Division has made repeated efforts to serve the Vietnamese community by contacting the Vietnamese-American Commercial Fisherman's Association and distributing announcements on Vietnamese-language radio

programs regarding important changes in seasons, regulations, and other developments in the commercial shrimping and crabbing fisheries.

In 2004, the Department's Shellfish Management Program, in cooperation with personnel in the L.S.U. Sea Grant Program, made a special effort to publicize a temporary closing of the Vermilion Bay crab season among Vietnamese shrimpers and crabbers. Maps and pamphlets describing the closed areas and relevant details were translated into Vietnamese by a fluent Vietnamese speaker and proof-read by a member of the Vietnamese-American Commercial Fisherman's Association. These items, in English and Vietnamese translations, were then distributed at various locations where Vietnamese speakers might be encountered (docks, ice stations, etc.) and publicized through radio announcements and other outlets.

Though these and similar efforts have demonstrated the Department's willingness to reach out to people who have difficulty in speaking English, the investigation described in this report showed the need for more formal translation service beyond the informal networks previously in place. Shortly after the internal Language Assistance Available Resources Identification Survey and before the completion of the telephone and license renewal surveys, the Department initiated efforts to improve access to translation services for all of its employees.

Hiring full-time employees to act as translators would be prohibitively expensive. Though hiring employees who may be able to act as translators in addition to the commission of their regular duties would certainly be of benefit, finding candidates who are fully qualified for the usual job requirements and also fluent in foreign languages may be difficult to accomplish. Furthermore, even if the Department could hire qualified, multilingual

personnel, there is no guarantee that they would be available when and where the situation calls for their language interface skills.

A telephone-based translation service was considered the most practical, cost-effective means of addressing the language assistance needs of L.E.P. individuals. The Socioeconomic Research and Development Section, having compared several translation services, selected Tele-Interpreters, a California corporation that provides telephone-based interpreters, twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week in 150 languages. The Department is charged a flat fee per minute whenever a translator is used.

The company provided a variety of helpful resources: four-inch by six-inch cards containing the service's telephone number and access code and a brief series of instructions; adhesive labels with the telephone number and access code that may be posted on employees' telephones; and – consistent with D.O.J. and D.O.I. recommendations - a variety of "I speak" cards that customers may use to identify the languages in which they wish to communicate.

The L.A.P. Committee provided training in how to use the interpretation service at six meetings in cities around the state: New Orleans, Monroe, New Iberia, Lake Charles, Baton Rouge, and the Booker Fowler fish hatchery in Forest Hill. Attendees were given pamphlets describing the service and enough copies of the aforementioned instruction cards, adhesive labels, and "I speak" cards for distribution to co-workers who were unable to attend the training session. Special laminated "I speak" cards were prepared for Enforcement agents for use in the field.

In the first 12 months during which it has been available, the Tele-Interpreters Service has been used once, during a four-minute telephone call on September 18, 2005. An

Enforcement agent was able to contact an interpreter when he encountered a Korean speaker who was not proficient in English.

**The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries’ Language Assistance Plan**

The Department has developed a language assistance plan (Table 8). The majority of the items included in the plan have already been implemented.

Employees have been informed through a variety of means of the need to serve users and stakeholders with a limited English proficiency (item 1). (One of the benefits of the telephone contact survey beyond the information it gathered was to raise employee awareness of the L.E.P. issue.) New employees are taught to serve L.E.P. individuals during new employee orientation sessions (item 2).

The Department has signed a contract with a telephone interpretation service (item 3) and disseminated instruction cards, adhesive labels, and “I speak” cards to assist employees in reaching the service when it is needed (item 4). The Department has also developed a list of employees who speak languages other than English (item 5).

**Table 8. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Language Assistance Plan**

Employee Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote internal awareness of Executive Order 13166</li> <li>2. Include a language assistance training module in new employee training</li> </ol>
Written and Oral Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Provide access to telephone interpretation services</li> <li>4. Provide written procedures for accessing telephone language assistance resources</li> <li>5. Provide a list of staff members for temporary language assistance</li> <li>6. Provide translations of commonly requested information for language communities with critical numbers of L.E.P. individuals when feasible</li> <li>7. Provide selected signs in languages other than English</li> <li>8. Provide information on the availability of language assistance through the Department’s Internet website</li> </ol>
Outreach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Notify L.E.P. individuals of the availability of language assistance resources</li> <li>10. Communicate with community organizations that serve language communities with critical numbers of L.E.P. individuals</li> </ol>

Personnel from the administrative units that have the highest likelihood of contact with L.E.P. individuals, particularly the Enforcement Division, the Division of Marine Fisheries, and the Licensing Section, will determine what signs and other printed materials can be feasibly produced and made available in other languages, principally Vietnamese, the language of the only community determined to have a significant portion of L.E.P. individuals (items 6 and 7). Once translations of these materials have been made available, front-line employees will be notified of their availability. Notice regarding how to obtain them will be posted on the Department's web site (item 8).

The Department has demonstrated an ability to work with community groups, like the Vietnamese-American Commercial Fisherman's Association, that serve language communities with special needs (item 10). It will continue to use these and other appropriate means to inform L.E.P. individuals of the Department's desire to serve them (item 9).

## **Conclusion**

By undertaking a thorough review of the status of its language assistance needs, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has learned a great deal about the nature of its users and stakeholders from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Though most are able to communicate in English, there are a number of people who require special assistance. The Department has established access to telephone-based interpreters who should be able to aid the Department in its interactions with individuals of limited English proficiency. The Department will continue to seek cost-effective ways of reaching out to various language groups who require attention - particularly the Vietnamese community - and periodically assess its language-assistance initiatives to discern if they are adequate to and consistent with the Department's mission.

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**Appendix 1.**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 13166  
IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH  
PROFICIENCY**

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
(Aboard Air Force One)

For Immediate Release

August 11, 2000

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13166

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to improve access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency (LEP), it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Goals.

The Federal Government provides and funds an array of services that can be made accessible to otherwise eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language. The Federal Government is committed to improving the accessibility of these services to eligible LEP persons, a goal that reinforces its equally important commitment to promoting programs and activities designed to help individuals learn English. To this end, each Federal agency shall examine the services it provides and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons can meaningfully access those services consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. Each Federal agency shall also work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance (recipients) provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries. To assist the agencies with this endeavor, the Department of Justice has today issued a general guidance document (LEP Guidance), which sets forth the compliance standards that recipients must follow to ensure that the programs and activities they normally provide in English are accessible to LEP persons and thus do not discriminate on the basis of national origin in violation of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and its implementing regulations. As described in the LEP Guidance, recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons.

Sec. 2. Federally Conducted Programs and Activities.

Each Federal agency shall prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons. Each plan shall be consistent with the standards set forth in the LEP Guidance, and shall include the steps the agency will take to ensure that eligible LEP persons can meaningfully access the agency's programs and activities. Agencies shall develop and begin to implement these plans within 120 days of the date of this order, and shall send copies of their plans to the Department of Justice, which shall serve as the central repository of the agencies' plans.

### Sec. 3. Federally Assisted Programs and Activities.

Each agency providing Federal financial assistance shall draft title VI guidance specifically tailored to its recipients that is consistent with the LEP Guidance issued by the Department of Justice. This agency-specific guidance shall detail how the general standards established in the LEP Guidance will be applied to the agency's recipients. The agency-specific guidance shall take into account the types of services provided by the recipients, the individuals served by the recipients, and other factors set out in the LEP Guidance. Agencies that already have developed title VI guidance that the Department of Justice determines is consistent with the LEP Guidance shall examine their existing guidance, as well as their programs and activities, to determine if additional guidance as necessary to comply with this order. The Department of Justice shall consult with the agencies in creating their guidance and, within 120 days of the date of this order, each agency shall submit its specific guidance to the Department of Justice for review and approval. Following approval by the Department of Justice, each agency shall publish its guidance document in the Federal Register for public comment.

### Sec. 4. Consultations.

In carrying out this order, agencies shall ensure that stakeholders, such as LEP persons and their representative organizations, recipients, and other appropriate individuals or entities, have an adequate opportunity to provide input. Agencies will evaluate the particular needs of the LEP persons they and their recipients serve and the burdens of compliance on the agency and its recipients. This input from stakeholders will assist the agencies in developing an approach to ensuring meaningful access by LEP persons that is practical and effective, fiscally responsible, responsive to the particular circumstances of each agency, and can be readily implemented.

### Sec. 5. Judicial Review.

This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers or employees, or any person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
August 11, 2000.

**Appendix 2.**

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE RESOURCES IDENTIFICATION  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

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**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE RESOURCES IDENTIFICATION**

Name of the program or section:

Program Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ (if other than manager)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.- In the period between January 1, 2003 and today, Did your section or program encounter, serve, or deal with any individual whose primary language was not English and who may have needed language assistance (interpretation)? Yes\_\_ No X

1.2.- What steps did you take to handle the situation(s)? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.- Identify employees fluent in languages other than English and whether they can be used for language assistance purposes

Name	Location	Language(s)	Available*
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Note \*:** Answer "yes" or "no" whether the employee would be willing to serve as interpreter

3.- What outside resources for interpretation are you aware of:

Contract interpreters, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone services, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Community-based organizations, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Governmental organizations, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Language banks, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

Other, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

**Note \*\*:** Provide the name and contact information of the organization(s).

4.- What outreach resources are you aware of:

\_\_ Newspapers, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Community-based organizations, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Governmental organizations, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Other information publishers, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Other, specify\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

**Note \*\*:** Provide the name and contact information of the organization(s).

5.- Other Resources not included in 2,3, or 4: (Attached sheets if additional space is required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix 3.**

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
L.E.P. INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT SHEET  
QUESTIONNAIRE:  
The Telephone Survey**

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Primary Language is Other Than English

#	Primary Language is English (Not LEP)	Language	Speaks English		Type of Relationship			# of Contacts	Contact Information				
			Very Well	Not Well	Speaks English LEP	Com-mercial	Recreati-onal		Other *	Name	Address	Phone	e-mail
			Not LEP	Very Well	Not LEP	Less Than Well	Not at all						
1	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
3	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
4	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
5	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
6	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
7	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
8	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
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27	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
28	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
29	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
30	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>										
Summary													

\*Note: If "other" Please specify by writing it in the cell, otherwise mark an X in the cell.

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**Appendix 4.**

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SURVEY  
QUESTIONNAIRE:  
The Commercial License Renewal Survey**

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# LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

## ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SURVEY

Most people living in Louisiana read, write, speak and understand English. However, there are some individuals for whom English is not their primary language. The inability to read, speak or understand English can be a barrier to accessing important benefits or services, understanding and exercising important rights, complying with applicable responsibilities, or understanding information provided.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has required the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to improve access to its programs for individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. This survey will help us determine the need for language interpretation, document translation, and signage services.

This survey will only take a few minutes of your time, and your response will assist us in meeting the needs of our customers. So please complete and return the survey at your earliest convenience. All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

1. What is your primary language? (Please check only one)

- English** (Skip to item 6)
- Other** (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. In your opinion, how well do you speak English? (Please check only one)

- Very well** (Skip to item 6)
- Well** (Skip to item 6)
- Not well**
- Not at all**

3. What type of relationship do you have with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries?

(Please check all that apply)

- Commercial** (Commercial license purchaser, commercial vessel registration, wholesale/retail seafood dealer, charter service, vendor, etc.)
- Recreational** (Recreational license purchaser, boat registration, hunter education, etc.)
- Other** Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Continued on back)**

4. As best as you can recall, how many times have you been in contact with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in the last twelve (12) months (including phone calls, letters, personal encounters with employees, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_ **times**

5. Please provide the following information in case we need to contact you or provide you with additional information in the future.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

6. That completes our survey. Please return the survey with your license renewal application form or bring it to our offices, if you come in personally to renew your license(s).

**Thank you for participating in our survey.**

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