



Member organisation
Federation Internationale
des Traducteurs
International Federation of
Translators

Quarterly Newsletter of the
Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc

AUSIT

in touch

Volume 19, number 4 — Summer 2011-12



Excellence Awards round-up
Court interpreters under
pressure
Interpreters & translators
unionise
Aid efforts hampered by
language barrier

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Front cover photo: The hall where the Excellence Awards took place in November.

From the editor

The deadline for the Autumn 2011 issue is **1 February 2012**. Thanks to all contributors for their submissions.

Please send any letters, articles or images for forthcoming editions to:

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From the helm

Annamaria Arnall outlines the principles which will guide her role as National President

Dear AUSIT Members,

My name is Annamaria Arnall. I was elected to the position of National President of our institute at the national AGM in Canberra in November 2011. Many of you know me well by now, because my involvement with AUSIT dates back to 2002. Over the years I have become actively involved in the organisation, serving in various capacities and posting many comments on the e-Bulletin.

In this, my first letter to AUSIT members written as president, I feel I need to make a 'credo' so that all of you can see clearly where I stand and the direction I intend to take as president, while continuing to be guided by and supporting the majority view of the National Council.

- I believe the main purpose of our institute is to promote and advance the translation and interpreting profession. Setting and supporting standards is an important part of this, and so is representing the collective interests of our members.

- I believe no major decisions should be made about our profession without our participation.

- I believe membership in AUSIT is a privilege and the hallmark of a professional translator or interpreter. AUSIT membership signals standards, ethics, reliability and quality. AUSIT Senior Professionals are the topmost industry experts.

- I believe AUSIT should project professionalism as its institutional image. To this end, we made another great step forward with recent structural changes. As a corporate body, our association is now managed by professional administrators. The corporate heart of our association, the volunteer National Council, will now be able to direct more energy towards actions that directly serve our main purpose. However, we should also keep in mind that there are still serious human and financial resource limitations. We should raise our expectations only slowly and with caution.

I believe actions speak louder than words. In the coming anniversary year (AUSIT turns 25 in 2012), you will see AUSIT do the following:

- o Continue to offer access to products and services at discounted member rates and increase their range; e.g. insurance, advertising, software and various resources.

- o Continue to provide information and advice regarding industrial issues, if they affect a large proportion of our members.

- o Publish a new Code of Ethics.

- o Organise a substantial conference and publish another DVD and book of conference proceedings.

- o Offer professional development opportunities to all members via webinars.

- o Define the details of our relationship with the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI).

- o Maintain our presence on the world stage and strengthen our involvement in the International Federation of Translators (FIT).

- o Define the requirements for our corporate membership category.

- o Continue work on the AUSIT Constitution.

- o Continue to perfect the website, which is our virtual headquarters, home, office and lecture theatre.

- o Continue to provide opportunities for professional and social interactions in a safe, friendly atmosphere.

I wish I could say to each member that I will work to satisfy all of your expectations. I hope to, but cannot. Some of your expectations may directly clash with the expectations of other members. The diversity of our community in terms of culture, language, educational and socio-demographic background is incredibly huge, and our individual needs, priorities and expectations are varied. I appeal to your empathy and tolerance, and I ask you to support a majority decision, even though it may not accord with your preferred direction. This boat can only go forward when we all row in unison.

I trust that during the next year you will see AUSIT grow and deliver action and services that will respond to most of your expectations and that you will find these satisfying.

Your views and comments are always welcome.

AUSIT Executive Officer

Daniel Muller explains the new role

The Executive Officer's role is to manage the operational matters of AUSIT, and free the National Council from the day-to-day management burden so that it can focus on setting strategies and making a difference in the T&I industry. At the moment, the day-to-day administration continues to be handled by PAMS, whilst the Executive Officer is working on improving our systems and processes, with the ultimate aim to increase membership and provide our members with better service at less cost to AUSIT. This includes reviewing the current website and administration facilities, membership application processes, membership retention, administering projects and providing

value added services.

As time is limited — the Executive Officer officially works two days a week — priorities need to be set. Aside from attending to urgent matters (such as renewals not being sent out), the first priority is to redefine the scope of PAMS' involvement in AUSIT and making the best use of their systems. A second priority is to redesign the membership application process. Once this is in place, there will be a thorough review of the membership retention strategies and renewal processes.

Is all this necessary? Yes, it is. The workload for PAMS has become unbearable, in light of the hours we

purchase from them, which has led to an inevitable deterioration of services, for which we cannot really blame them. Accordingly, a choice had to be made between higher fees to cover the additional work, while maintaining inefficient processes, or improve the processes. While the second option requires a lot more work, it is clearly the preferred way to go.

What are some of the symptoms that not all is well in the AUSIT administration? Had the National Council and Executive Officer not intervened in the renewal process starting from mid-July 2011, we would have easily lost 50 members who did not receive renewal notices and who would not have contacted AUSIT of their own accord. Also, our membership application processes currently cost AUSIT around \$10,000 per year — this figure does not even include the volunteer hours put in by the branches to approve the applications!

AUSIT farewells In-Touch editor

Bradley Dawson, editor of In-Touch for the past seven years, will be finishing up on the newsletter at the end of 2011. Bradley recently gained employment as an online editor for the company Media Giants and has his own busy design business to run. He has enjoyed his time as editor, but feels he no longer has the time to commit to the newsletter.

AUSIT would like to thank Bradley for his many years of hard work. Bradley has improved the design and quality of the publication and has been a hardworking, patient and approachable editor, with a strong commitment to the translating and interpreting industry.

I will be taking over as editor in 2012. My background is in journalism and editing and I have also worked as an ESL teacher. I look forward to working with AUSIT members in 2012. In-Touch is your publication and it can be whatever you want it to be — I am keen to hear from members and will need your input and guidance about content in the coming year.

Rachel Judd



From left:
Dalia Matar,
Barbara
McGilvray,
Tea Dietherich
and Daniel
Muller at the
Excellence
Awards

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AUSIT Excellence Awards

Barbara McGilvray reports on the award winners for 2010-11

These awards, held every second year, continue to build a significant profile in our industry. This year AUSIT received 21 submissions and most were of a very high quality. The jury, consisting of Associate Professor Rita Wilson, Mr Adolfo Gentile, Ms Silke Gebauer, Mr Max Doerfler and Mr Vadim Doubine, selected the following winners:

Excellence in interpreting

Winner: **Ms Xin JIN** (NSW) for leading the interpreting team at the Australian Pavilion, World Expo 2010, Shanghai. Language: Mandarin.

In this six-month project Xin Jin's work exemplified best practice in interpreting as she performed consistently at a very high level, covering over 200 events over the period of the Expo. She won praise from diplomats and interpreting colleagues alike for her technical proficiency, professional approach and high standard of presentation.

Runner-up (1): **Mr Nadesan SUNDARESAN** (Vic), for a series of interpreting assignments in a detention facility for asylum seekers. Language: Tamil.

The challenges faced in the notoriously difficult circumstances of working in this particular context included, in addition to the linguistic ones, the mental health setting, a politically and emotionally charged environment, and limited access to resources. The jury also noted the sensitivity to cultural nuances demonstrated by the interpreter.

Runner-up (2): **Ms Rona ZHANG** (Qld), for interpreting at the Australian Pavilion, World Expo 2010, Shanghai. Language: Mandarin.

The jury noted Rona's thorough preparation for her assignments in a wide range of subject areas during the Expo, from architecture and astronomy

to nanotechnology, and her polished interpreting performance in what were often challenging situations. These included presentations by challenging speakers, interpreting for corporate business guests and negotiating outcomes with Chinese authorities, occasionally in difficult legal situations.

Excellence in translation

The jury had difficulty deciding between two outstanding finalists in this category and deliberated at great length before announcing one as the winner and the other as runner-up.

Winner: **Ms Dalia MATAR** (NSW), for her translating and subtitling work on the award-winning SBS Dateline program 'Iraq's Deadly Legacy'. Language: Arabic.

Two translators worked on this project, but one chose not to participate in the awards submission and so the jury evaluated Dalia's work only. The assignment involved translating the material and then subtitling portions selected by the producer. It also included dealing with some horrific images and resolving dialect and register issues, all under considerable time pressure. One of the two independent reviewers of the translation said, 'The translator wades skilfully and unobtrusively through [...] subtle and thorny issues to furnish the English [language] audience with a lively and accurate picture of the state of mind of the speakers. She managed remarkably to render the supra-segmental features of speech which cannot be documented on screen ...'

Runner-up: **Ms Rekha RAJVANSHI** (NSW), for the translation from English into Hindi of Dreaming Stories.

Rekha has translated 13 stories based on indigenous oral histories, rendered as animations. Her very specific and challenging brief was

to produce translations of culturally sensitive material for use as subtitles and narration in the target language. As one of her referees said, 'Rekha's attention to the detail and the structure of the original English text meant that the rhythms and flow of the translation into Hindi allowed for Hindi voice-over narration to mimic the original and thus keep the integrity of the original work.'

Outstanding contribution to the T&I industry

Winner: **Transcultural & Language Service (TALS) Department at Northern Health** (Vic) for its centralised language service model, including improving local access to quality interpreters, and transcultural training for Northern Health staff in how better to work with interpreters.

The jury felt that TALS' innovative approach offers an excellent role model for good practice in the health sector. Ample evidence of successful outcomes was provided in the submission, which described the multiple dimensions of the project and demonstrated its significant impact. Gaps and areas needing improvement were noted and corresponding practical strategies identified, in a systematic and integrated approach.

Highly Commended: **Sign Language Communications (SLC)** (NSW) for the John Ferris Interpreter Internship, pairing newly accredited sign language interpreters with experienced mentors. Language: Auslan.

The submission described thorough mentoring, structured feedback mechanisms and close pair work between an experienced mentor and trainee. This was an example of best practice with the benefits and value of the initiative confirmed by feedback from participants. The jury also commended the project for building on previous initiatives.



Outstanding contribution to Indigenous interpreting/translating

Winner: **TAFE SA (SA)** for the Diploma of Interpreting course designed specifically for Anangu-speaking students living in remote communities in South Australia.

This was seen as a good and eminently feasible model for interpreter education in remote locations. The course was specifically tailored to suit the geographically isolated and unique social and cultural context of the indigenous students, acknowledging and respecting their particular lifestyle. Literacy challenges were overcome by using text-to-speech technology to automatically convert the written web resources to spoken language.

Training materials were adapted to the unique requirements without sacrificing standards, in a ground-breaking approach that included staff travelling thousands of kilometres to recruit students and working closely with their community, employing local know-how — and even organising a supply of fuel to allow students to attend face-to-face sessions.

From left: *Matthew Taylor, Kimberly Language Service (KIS) Booking Officer, Ina Scales & Dee Lightfoot, KIS Manager.*



Paul Sinclair award for outstanding contribution to AUSIT

Winner: **Rod Wahl (WA)**, for leading the constitutional review project in 2010.

This award was named in honour of a founding member and unceasing champion of AUSIT, Paul Sinclair, following his untimely death in 2009. It was judged by the National Council, and presented by Paul's widow, Dalia Sinclair. Paul would have been particularly pleased that the award went to an AUSIT member who has devoted a great deal of time, effort and expertise to the ongoing project to improve and update the AUSIT Constitution, originally written in the late 1980s when Paul was Executive Director of NAATI and a major force behind the establishment of the national professional association.

For the next edition of the Excellence Awards in 2013 the new category of Excellence in Remote Interpreting will be introduced and AUSIT will be working with TIS National on the entry and assessment criteria for the award. AUSIT member Dongmei Chen, who participated in a telephone interpreting trial this year, will act as AUSIT's

From left: *Sam Berner & Dalia Sinclair.*



ambassador for the category.

Following the Memorandum of Understanding signed last year between NZSTI and AUSIT, we also hope to open all the awards categories to our colleagues across the Tasman in 2013. This year they were eligible to enter the two individual categories, which presented us with the interesting challenge of finding two independent reviewers for a translation in Cook Islands Maori.

Above: *AUSIT Excellence Awards winners.*
Below: *Excellence Awards judge and Chair, Rita Wilson, Trevor Neroy, Director of TIS National & Amelia Bannerman, Interpreter Liason Officer, TIS National.*



It's better than winning an Oscar!

Sam Berner speaks to **Dalia Matar**, winner of the AUSIT award for Excellence in Translation



Award winner
Dalia
Matar

Good morning, Dalia, and congratulations on winning the AUSIT Excellence in Translation award. How did it feel to hear your name announced?

DM: I felt thrilled, delighted and most importantly, very proud. I have a passion for languages and translation and to see my work recognised at such a level was, and still is, beyond words. I remember, when receiving the award, I said, 'It's better than winning an Oscar'. An award is a recognition and with every award that was given out, I was thinking, that person made a difference in communication, they made a significance change, they bridged a gap and they delivered a message, which is crucial in our world today. If people have a better understanding of one another, many conflicts could be resolved. Words will become more powerful and we might use them more and use weapons less.

I had a look at the SBS program for which the award was given, and I have to admit it was very heartbreaking to watch. What was the first thing that you thought of when you saw the footage?

DM: It wasn't a thought. It was a feeling — a feeling of deep sadness.

The program you are referring to was from Iraq. It looked at the alleged effects of depleted uranium used by the coalition forces on the population. There were hours of interviews requiring translation and horrific, uncut video footage of deformed babies and a suffering populous. I felt very sad when I saw this footage. This is despite the fact that when you work in the media and you come across a lot of confronting footage, you can develop some sort of detachment towards the material you're working on, which is not a bad thing because then all your attention is focused on the context and the translation. It's like having some sort of a shield or a shelter to escape to if you like. But working on this footage, that shield was nonexistent. There was no running away from it, no sheltering from feeling the pain of these people. In a failed attempt to shield my emotions, I tried to translate without looking at the screen, but that quickly proved impractical as I had to get the time codes for the translation and the screams were ear piercing anyway. I then tried a different technique of acknowledging my feelings and focusing on the context to make a difference. That worked better.

It was also very challenging in terms of dialects, and you did so well even though you are not Iraqi. So I am wondering if you could maybe share a few of your translation strategies with us...

DM: Yes, I am Egyptian and I grew up in Cairo. And you are right, Arabic dialects do represent a challenge, especially because Arabic is spoken by more than 250 million people around the world and the vernacular is not just different from the standard written form, it varies drastically from one country to another. But I'm lucky in the sense that I'm involved with many Arabic communities. My experience in the field of interpreting helps strengthen my knowledge and understanding of the different dialects and subtitling many Arabic movies over the years has also given me the necessary experience when it comes to dialects. But if there is a strategy, it's to focus, tune in and take on the challenge. It's amazing how after a while you'll find that your ears get used to the dialect and you'll find that you can understand it and you can pick up a few words too.

Quite a few of our colleagues on the floor that night asked 'Who is Dalia Matar?'

DM: I wish I could answer this question but I'm yet to find out and I think until I explore my full potential, I'll never know. But talking generally, I'm of an Egyptian background, I grew up in Cairo. My academic background is in languages and translation as well as journalism. I arrived in Australia 16 years ago and I have been working in the field of interpreting and translation and with languages ever since my graduation from university.

My work at SBS includes subtitling movies, documentaries and current affairs programs from all over the Arab world and assisting journalists as required. I have a particular interest in news and current affairs stemming from an interest in the world and my surroundings. I completed post graduate studies in journalism at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Sydney, in 2007. One trait I have and I can't do without is determination, and one gesture that I cherish is a smile, mainly because it speaks all the languages in the world.

People come to translation for various reasons. What is your story with translating and languages?

DM: Fate brought me to it. Then, it was love at first sight. I say fate because I was lucky enough to be sent to a language school in Egypt, where I learnt English, French, and of course, Arabic, at an early age. I later developed a passion for languages and I was influenced by my uncle who was an academic at the time, teaching French at one of the universities in Cairo.

After high school I studied at the Faculty of Languages, Ain Shams University, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Languages and Translation. I worked in the field of translation in Egypt, in a corporate environment, and when I first arrived in Sydney, I studied for a Post Graduate Diploma in Interpreting and Translation and acquired NAATI accreditation. I worked for a few years at the

Department of Immigration, TIS, in a supervisory capacity where I was responsible for a group of languages. Then I worked for Centrelink Multilingual Service, as an acting team leader, and I've always freelanced as an interpreter and translator. In 1999, I joined the SBS subtitling team.

There isn't much understanding of subtitling among text translators, and yet I am aware that it is much more demanding and very different to what we do. Would you like to make a comparison for the benefit of our readers?

DM: There are similarities and there are differences. Subtitling is similar to translation because you have to render the meaning of what is being said in another language. But it's different from translation because you only have two lines on the screen to render what is being said, so you do have to be concise.

I think it's the only profession I know of

where you are assessed by how little you produce. When people talk they have different delivery speeds, some talk slowly, others tend to say a lot in a short period of time — the latter type is the most challenging for subtitlers. Unless you want to have a screen covered with text, you have to find a way of rendering what is being said in just two lines. So to subtitle 'See you later,' sometimes you just have to say, 'Bye.'

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with us, Dalia. We look forward to seeing more of you in the future, and wish you the best of success in your work.

DM: I'd like to thank you, Sam, and everyone at AUSIT for all your hard work and your commitment to the profession. The Excellence Awards are a great way of raising the bar and bringing industries, translators, interpreters and language experts together. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

News from NAATI

The NAATI Board has approved the first stage in the Improvements to NAATI Testing Project (INT). The team contracted to deliver INT will be led by Australian researcher, Professor Sandra Hale, from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and includes top international and local experts in different aspects of translation and interpreting.

The members of the panel include co-investigators Dr Mira Kim, UNSW; Dr Ignacio Garcia, University of Western Sydney; Dr Jim Hlavac, Monash University; Dr Barry Turner and Miranda Lai from RMIT; Helen Slatyer from Macquarie University; Associate Professor Catherine Elder from the Language Testing Research Centre at the University of Melbourne; Professor Claudia Angelelli from San Diego University; and Professor Gyde Hansen from the Copenhagen School of Business. The panel will act as expert consultants on assessment and evaluation.

Advisors to the project are Associate Professor Jemina Napier from Macquarie University (on sign language); Dr Michael Cooke (on

Indigenous interpreting); and Marc Orlando from Monash University.

The task ahead is ambitious and wide-ranging. From the outset the scope has been broadly defined, encompassing standards, levels of accreditation, emerging technologies and assessment and training models. The work approved by the NAATI Board will be progressed in four stages over 12 months. Stage one, which has commenced, will review language, translator and interpreter testing literatures as well as review government language/ interpreter policies. This will be followed by reviews of testing instruments, marking systems and accreditation/certification systems, leading to development and definition of standards and initial consultations with stakeholders.

In early 2012 the focus will shift to working group discussions with translating and interpreting stakeholders, on different aspects of translator and interpreter accreditation and training; stakeholders include practitioners, service providers and educators. Around mid-year the team will develop recommendations

on pathways to accreditation, types and levels of accreditation, pre-testing, testing instruments, marking systems, examiner training/ qualifications, examiner reliability, content validity, and implementation. The aim is to have recommendations for consultation and feedback by about July next year. It is expected the proposed conceptual overview for new NAATI standards, testing and assessment would be finalised by the end of 2012.

Much of the conceptual framework in which NAATI operates has not been revisited systematically for some time and INT will address that need. The work of the INT panel will inform the thinking of members, the Board, stakeholders and staff, as together we plan the next stage of NAATI's development. The emphasis throughout discussions with stakeholders reflects our wish to ensure the widest possible input into this process. NAATI is delighted to have secured the services of such a distinguished, experienced and multi-talented panel and looks forward to working closely with them on this significant project.

The translating and interpreting industry — a pillar of multiculturalism

Terry Chesher reports on the Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture for 2011, delivered by Senator Kate Lundy

Following the National Annual General Meeting on November 12, newly elected President Annamaria Arnall welcomed Senator Kate Lundy, Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, and invited her to present the 19th Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture for 2011. Each year AUSIT invites a distinguished speaker to present the lecture, to honour the memory of Jill Blewett, who played an important role in the early development of the translating and interpreting profession in Australia.

Senator Lundy (who is also Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, and Senator for the ACT) confined her presentation to interpreting and translation in the context of multiculturalism, acknowledging interpreters and translators as great enablers and champions, whose work in government language services provides guidance and gives a voice to migrants settling into the community.

Senator Lundy affirmed the government's support for translating and interpreting in Australia, and acknowledged the work of interpreters in assisting new arrivals through the government's free services, such as TIS National (possibly the only service of its kind in the world) and the Doctors Helpline and service to pharmacies. She also recognised the invaluable work of interpreters in bushfire and flood relief. In addition, following a successful pilot program, there will be an expansion of free interpreting services for real estate agents and their clients.

In highlighting the low rates of pay in a field where demand outstrips supply — in community-based interpreting, practitioners are paid less than cleaners — Senator Lundy recommended better remuneration for interpreters, in light of the skills they bring to language services. She thanked practitioners for their role in building a bridge between Australian society and arriving communities, citing Census data on migration and the multicultural make-up of Australia today.

Senator Lundy congratulated AUSIT on its Excellence Awards, and expressed interest in learning more about the testing of practitioners. She indicated one point of contention between NAATI and AUSIT. This concerns qualifications obtained through NAATI accreditation versus those obtained through relevant tertiary study. Senator Lundy is looking forward to the results of the review commissioned by NAATI, *Improvements to NAATI Testing Project*, from a consortium led by AUSIT member Professor Sandra Hale from the University of New South Wales. Through a four-stage process the review will encompass 'standards, levels of accreditation, emerging technologies and assessment and training models.'¹ Completion is expected in October 2012. New developments in telephone interpreting technology and enhanced video interpreting, facilitated by the National Broadcasting Network, may be of benefit to interpreters.

Senator Lundy drew attention to two government reports of interest to the profession, and provided multiple copies of both. The first, *The People of Australia — Australia's Multicultural Policy* (2011) affirms the need for government services and programs to respond to the needs of our culturally diverse communities and for the government to provide equitable services to all Australians.

The *Access and Equity in Government Services Report 2008-10* features examples of 'how government agencies are responding to the needs of Australia's multicultural society'. It includes, inter alia, a 2009 'own-motion' report by the Ombudsman on the use of interpreters by four government agencies². The provision of services 'was not always done in an accessible, responsive or fair manner' (p. 30) and the report identified the need for strategies to be developed in order to provide timely, high-quality interpreter

services. Senator Lundy took questions and comments from the floor. These included concerns that:

- The separate responsibilities for indigenous, sign and migrant/refugee language services (at present coming under different ministries) could be located within one portfolio, removing an inappropriate separation.

Other issues which were mentioned to Senator Kate Lundy by AUSIT members include the following:

- There are large gaps in the provision of services, notably in small, emerging and indigenous languages, meaning that not all Australian citizens have access to adequate language services.
- That one of the barriers to the universal provision of translation and interpreting services is the lack of legal obligation to provide language services for Australia's multicultural population.
- Interpreters and translators are undervalued and underpaid.
- Unlike most professions, the income of interpreters is going down across the sector and this means fewer qualified professionals can afford to continue practising.

Senator Lundy acknowledged these issues as significant, observing that low rates of pay are a barrier to attracting and keeping qualified professionals in the industry and that the government should encourage upgrading of skills, but was unable to offer a firm commitment to change the situation in the short term. She referred to a recent government initiative to raise pay in the community sector, inferring that this would flow on to our profession.

In conclusion, Senator Lundy affirmed the Federal Government's support for our profession and expressed her thanks to practitioners for the role they play in the delivery of programs which improve the quality of life for all Australians. She has found it inspiring to learn more about the practice of interpreting and translation, and about AUSIT's robust Code of Ethics. She assured us that the government is grateful for the work being done, and keen to work with us in the future. A copy of her address will be available in the publications section of the AUSIT website.

The session ended with a vote of thanks to Senator Lundy. She then joined AUSIT and guests for lunch. Among the guests were Dr Neal Blewett, representatives from academic institutions and relevant government departments including NAATI CEO John Beever, the Chair and Directors of the NAATI Board and Trevor Neroy, the new Director of TIS National.

1 NAATI NEWS July-September, 2011 p.2 Vol. 24 Issue 3.

2. Australian Federal Police, DEEWR, Centrelink and DIAC.

Interpreters and translators unite for industry change

Interpreters and translators perform a critically important service for the community and contribute their expert skills in a diverse range of settings. Every day, they make real the right to understand and be understood for hundreds of members of the community.

Pay and conditions diminishing

There is no doubt that since the late 1980s, when many of the services were outsourced by public sector agencies, translators and interpreters have experienced a continual reduction in their pay and conditions in real terms. A range of expenses formerly covered by employers are now being borne by workers themselves. The profession is marked by low rates of pay and incomes have not kept pace with the cost of living. Notice periods, minimum terms of engagement and cancellation fees provide no offset for the income insecurity which marks the industry.

On-Call ruling moves the goalposts

The recent On-Call decision has created much uncertainty around contractor/employee status. Many translators and interpreters are unsure about their rights and obligations. The sustainability of the profession is compromised due to issues such as remuneration, qualifications, accreditation, professional recognition, de-professionalisation and because practitioners often work in isolation.

Industry must face critical questions

The conditions under which translators and interpreters currently work have given rise to questions which go to the heart of what it means to be a translating and interpreting professional in 2011 and beyond:

- What is the role of agencies in maintaining professional standards

and do their current practices provide appropriate, adequate and fair operating structures to support translators and interpreters?

- How do we sustain the profession when de-professionalisation and lack of recognition of the status of translators and interpreters are impacting on service provision?
- How do we attract the next generation of professionals to the industry and ensure that new graduates are supported and mentored?
- How do we ensure that professional development practices continue to support the translating and interpreting profession?
- Fundamentally, what kind of support structures and practices will be necessary in order to create a sustainable profession, capable of delivering the high-quality, effective service levels all stakeholders agree are essential?

APESMA joins the game

The Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia (APESMA) has been approached to work with translators and interpreters to develop an industry-based approach to addressing the long-term threat to the quality and professionalism of translating and interpreting services. This will occur initially in Victoria.

APESMA is a Union for professionals

with over 20,000 members nationally. APESMA cover a wide range of professionals including engineers, scientists, managers, IT professionals, collieries staff, pharmacists, architects, surveyors, contractors and consultants, to name a few.

APESMA CEO Chris Walton has met with translators and interpreters in Melbourne to talk about recognition for the work they perform and the need for unification to achieve it. APESMA looks forward to playing an active and considered role in identifying and responding to the challenges of the industry — challenges that can only be tackled with the shared cooperation and commitment of major stakeholder groups including AUSIT and translators and interpreters themselves.

APESMA is now accepting members from the translating and interpreting profession around Australia, although its initial membership drive is focussed on Victoria.

For more information on this campaign and how to get involved and join, please email, giving your telephone number, or call one of the following contacts:

Niki Baras: **email** TIUnion2011@gmail.com **phone** 0403924365

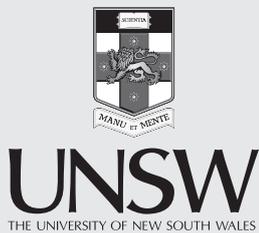
John Gare: **email** johngare@westnet.com.au **phone** 0448 665 685

Savas Augoustakis: **email** savlits@bigpond.net.au **phone** 0417 398 814

Moreno Giovannoni: **phone** 03 9578 9827



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People-smuggling trials put pressure on court interpreters

Suzan Piper discusses the difficulties faced by court interpreters as Australian authorities charge large numbers of Indonesian crew with 'people smuggling'

Across Australia there have been a flood of trials of Indonesian 'people smugglers'. These are not the organisers who earn thousands of dollars for their services but the hired help. They are Indonesian fishermen, farmers or labourers from impoverished, undereducated backgrounds recruited from remote parts of Indonesia to crew the boat for a six-day voyage to Australia. Generally they are only paid a couple of hundred dollars, and are often initially not told of their ultimate destination. Once they are caught in Australian waters they face a minimum mandatory sentence of five years prison, with a three year non-parole period. Well over 200 suspected illegal entry vessels have entered Australian territory and many of their crew have chosen to take their chances and go to trial.

This situation has placed serious pressures on law enforcement, legal and Indonesian interpreting professions. Currently there two to three cases running concurrently across the Sydney courts, lasting from one to three weeks. One trial ends and another begins. The Indonesian community in Australia is a relatively small and law-abiding one. At normal times in Sydney there are an adequate number of experienced court interpreters whose services

are not necessarily required every week. But these are abnormal times for Indonesian legal interpreters right across Australia in all the major capital cities. The demand is relentless.

This regular court work has enabled barristers, judicial officers and interpreters to become even more aware of each other's roles and responsibilities. At times it has been a positive experience and at other times less so. Lawyers and interpreters have a common focus on language, which they use to different ends. Lawyers are focused on the art of persuasion. They craft their presentation of the case meticulously, pacing its flow and delivery. However, they can be prone to making complex or loaded suggestions or questions, relying on highly formulaic legal terminology that does not always translate well into another language.

Court interpreters strive to deliver the message of the barrister, faithful to its content, intent and register, no matter how long the sentence or how many twists and turns it makes. Likewise, in these boat crew cases the interpreters aim to faithfully interpret the testimony of the accused, no matter how limited their education or knowledge of Indonesian.

The presence of the interpreter is vital in court to ensure that natural justice is afforded to clients from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB), to enable them to follow and participate in the same way that a native English speaker would. This is done through consecutive interpreting of the testimony of the NESB speaker in the witness box and simultaneous interpreting of the rest of the entire proceedings.

In October 2011 Sandra Hale and Ludmilla Stern published an article on interpreter quality and working conditions (*Judicial Officers' Bulletin*, Vol. 23, No 9.) which presented some key findings of Hale's national survey into interpreter policies, practices and protocols in Australian courts and tribunals. One finding of the article was research showing interpreter performance is significantly affected by fatigue when interpreters interpret for up to 60 minutes in the simultaneous mode. In her survey, Hale reports most court interpreters claim they never get (nor feel empowered to request) breaks. 'This is in stark contrast to the conditions provided to conference interpreters who work in pairs, at intervals of 30 minutes each.'

Interpreters are often blamed for incompetent interpreting. It could be because the interpreter requires further training. It might be that working conditions require improvement. Or perhaps the barrister or judicial officer requires further training on how to effectively work with interpreters. These are just some of the 16 recommendations made in the national survey report. The implementation of a national protocol for working with interpreters in courts and tribunals is long overdue.

Suzan Piper is an AUSIT Senior Practitioner and Indonesian Interpreter.

Branch news

AUST SA/NT Branch report

Over the last three months, AUSIT SA/NT have held two workshops. The first was in response to an urgent need for information about the impact on practitioners of changes to their taxation status. This was presented by Tony Rose from the Australian Taxation Office. This was a well-attended session

which proved most informative. The second workshop, titled 'Translation Theory — a mystery, a blessing, a curse? What does it mean to practitioners?' was presented by AUSIT members Christian Schmidt and Marina Morgan. This presentation by a pair of excellent speakers gave us an overview of translation theories from the early days of the profession through to modern

times, showcasing how these theories influence the way we approach our work and providing us with justification for our choices. The session concluded with an examination of some practical situations and a discussion about how these situations could be approached. After the session, more than half the attendees joined Christian and Marina, at a charming Vietnamese restaurant

Branch news continued...

across the road, to investigate this topic over lunch. The workshop was received positively and has sparked interest both locally and interstate. We hope that these talented speakers will share more of their valuable knowledge with us. Perhaps this single workshop could evolve into a series...

We would like to invite all interpreters and translators, irrespective of whether they are members, to join us over a cup of coffee and breakfast for our regular monthly meetings held between 10am and 12 noon on the first Saturday of each month (except for January) at Alfonso's cafe, corner of Hutt and Halifax streets, Adelaide. Come and join a group of people who are passionate about their profession. Exchange experiences, advice, news, generally catch up with your colleagues, make new acquaintances and earn some networking PD points.

Sadly, we have just farewelled our wonderful outgoing chair, Claudia Ait Touati. Claudia, a Dutch translator, has been the chair for the last five years. During this time she brought a wonderful, enthusiastic spark to our SA/NT branch. She dedicated herself wholeheartedly to AUSIT and was responsible for bringing

D-Day and the Excellence Awards to Adelaide in 2009, the first time Adelaide has hosted such an event. Claudia was National Secretary in 2006 and has spent the last three years on a national professional development committee. She also served as representative of SA on the National Council of AUSIT and on the Regional Advisory Committee for NAATI for a number of years. She is currently involved in setting up a care farm in Coonalpyn, but she is still maintaining ties with the T&I profession. Very best wishes to you Claudia in your new project and a hearty thank you for all you have done for us.

We are also proud to introduce our new Chair, Maurite Fober. Maurite, a German to English translator and English editor, spent some years on the Queensland branch committee before returning to her hometown, Adelaide. Her background includes working in small and large private sector companies, as well as in media liaison for the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Maurite believes the T&I industry has entered an interesting phase as everything is changing so quickly. 'Technology is continuously updating our tools of trade, our ways of collaborating

and the expectations our clients have. The freelance mode of working, which was the province of eccentric artistic types only ten or so years ago, has now become familiar and respectable.'

However, while freelance work suits independent professionals, it also presents challenges. 'When your whole industry is in transition and you don't have a corporate safety net, staying in touch with developments can be hard,' Maurite says. As in other sectors populated by sole traders, Maurite believes translators and interpreters will respond by becoming more collegial and connected.

'Networking has become fundamental to business success. This is one of the ways AUSIT makes a real difference to how well an individual adapts and grows within this profession.' AUSIT's work supporting professional standards is one of Maurite's priorities. 'I am very pleased to be working with such a strong and capable team.'

We look forward to a productive and exciting future as a committee. We hope to combine the experience of older members with the fresh ideas brought to the committee by those who have joined us more recently.

Ludmila Berkis
SA/NT Principal Delegate

Language barrier complicates aid to Horn of Africa drought victims



Translators are desperately needed to interpret medical instructions where language barriers are hampering aid efforts

Amid international aid efforts to get humanitarian supplies to the drought-stricken Horn of Africa, Translators without Borders, a US-based charitable organisation working in the world's crisis zones, is warning of a critical shortfall in local knowledge which is significantly hampering the administration of medical aid.

'With this crisis, we're concentrating on translating health material,' says Lori Thicke, who founded Translators without Borders 18 years ago. 'If we can help keep families healthy, and prevent mothers from dying needlessly in childbirth, there will be a new, stronger generation that can avoid a similar crisis in the future.'

To meet this need, the charity is appealing for more translators to help medical staff in the region translate

and communicate medical advice (written predominantly in English) into local languages.

With an estimated 10 million people needing food and medical supplies, Translators without Borders is working with local African NGOs and ministries of health in the Horn of Africa to translate critical medical information into Swahili, the lingua franca of Africa, spoken by around 100 million people in the region.

'Africa carries 25% of the world's disease burden, but only has 3% of the world's medical resources, creating great difficulty,' Thicke says. 'Put into the mix that much medical advice is only available in the major Western languages, and not local dialects, then we have another significant barrier to recovery. Situations such as the drought affecting Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya bring these issues into acute focus.'

Translators without Borders helps aid groups respond to humanitarian crises in two ways. By providing free translations, the group saves NGOs, such as Oxfam, valuable funds that can be used to further their mission, as it can often

cost \$3 a word to translate text into a local language. The group also helps NGOs speak to potential donors across borders, to help raise more money for their work.

'For the first time in history more Africans have access to a cellphone than have access to shoes or clean water,' says Simon Andriesen, CEO of localisation company Medilingua and a board member of Translators without Borders. 'So we have a means of delivering information into the hands of those who need it most. Translation is the final keystone to the bridge we need to build to unlock that knowledge so it can do some good.'

Translators without Borders is appealing to the international community for help. People can assist the organisation by providing translation skills or by donating money to support the work. Please visit <http://translatorswithoutborders.com/> for further information. In addition, we welcome enquiries from those who need translation support and are available to discuss potential projects.

(This is an edited extract of a press release from Translators without Borders)

National Council 2011-12

National Executive

Annamaria Arnall — President



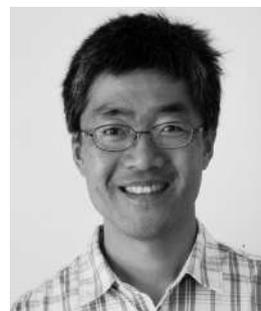
I live in Perth, Western Australia and freelance full-time as a Hungarian translator and consultant in cultural and linguistic matters. Before arriving in Australia I worked as a translator and conference and consecutive interpreter between the Hungarian and Polish languages. In Australia I've been a public servant for a decade which included a short stint in the position of TIS booking officer. I joined AUSIT in 2002 and began contributing to the National Council shortly afterward by offering some coordination to colleagues involved with professional development event organising. I served as Vice-President from 2003-05, and then from 2006-2008 and 2010-11. My first degree is in food technology and my second in linguistics and anthropology. I'm a reader but writing doesn't come easily to me. When just elected to president, I came across advice from the great 19th century Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz on where to direct our focus: 'Less on perfection, more on happiness.'

Barbara McGilvray — Vice-President



Barbara McGilvray BA (Melb), MA (Syd), FAIT, was a founding member of AUSIT and has since been active at both branch and national levels. Barbara became a Fellow of the Institute in 1995, and was part of the organising committee for the International Federation of Translators (FIT) World Congress hosted by AUSIT in Melbourne in 1996. Barbara has added NAATI Advanced Translator accreditation (IT>EN) to her academic qualifications in French, English and Italian, and for the past 15 years has chaired NAATI's Italian panel. Barbara began her career translating film scripts while living in Rome and Paris in the 1960s, and today translates mainly literature and subtitles. She taught translation at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) in the 1990s and is currently a member of the external T&I advisory committees for the University of New South Wales and UWS. Barbara is looking forward to a productive year working with the National Council and the new Executive Officer.

Yutaka Kawasaki — General Secretary



I was born in Sapporo in northern Japan and studied Public International Law at a university in Tokyo. After migrating to Australia, I started a PhD at the University of Western Australia in the field of public international law.

During my research and after gaining the doctorate, I worked as a university lecturer and a legal affairs officer at the United Nations (among other things), but continued translating on a casual basis.

Around the time my son was born, I decided to become a full-time translator and joined AUSIT, where I currently serve as General Secretary and as chairperson of the WA branch.

Diana Rodriguez-Losada — General Treasurer



I was born in Argentina and also lived in Spain, England, the Dominican Republic and Papua New Guinea. We relocated to Australia in 1987 before settling in Perth in 1993. I am the proud mother of Ivan, Indira and Karel and soon to be mother-in-law of Marisa. I enjoy travelling (who doesn't?), reading, dancing and active involvement in the communities I belong to.

I have been treasurer and chairperson of the Latin American Cultural Association Inc. and other community based organisations. This has given me the experience to undertake the challenges of committee work, consulting in a multicultural environment and liaising with sponsorship bodies, including the submission and acquittal of grants for large events.

I acquired accreditation as a professional Spanish to English and English to Spanish translator. I am also a practicing community interpreter, experienced Spanish teacher, and have worked as a language/relocation consultant for local and overseas companies. I hold a BSci in Agriculture (Argentina) and a Grad Dip in Business Management (Australia). These qualifications and my frequent participation in T&I professional development activities, have provided me with over 25 years of ongoing practice in the industry.

I have been an AUSIT member since 2002 and applied and was accepted as a Senior Practitioner as soon as the category was established. I have been a proud member of the AUSIT WA team since 2003. After being heavily involved in organising the 2010 AUSIT BNC Synergise, I am now also a member of the National Events Organisation group (NEO).

State Principal Delegates

Tea C. Dieterich — Qld Principal Delegate and AUSIT Sponsorship Manager



Tea Dieterich is a NAATI advanced translator and interpreter, an AUSIT Senior Practitioner and holds degrees (Masters) in translation, interpreting and cultural studies in Spanish, English, German and French from the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and the University of Granada (EUTI).

Recruited by the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Tea came to Sydney in 1997 and worked as the Chamber Interpreter, wrote the *Business traveller's guide to Sydney and the Olympic Games* and managed Australian/German events.

In 1999, Tea founded her own company, today known as 2M Language Services, providing language services across Australia. In 2000 Tea was recruited to assist in the establishment of the Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) in WA, which provides NAATI-accredited interpreters in Indigenous languages. Tea was subsequently manager of KIS for three years, and moved across to Cairns in 2002 where she lived for five years.

Today Tea works out of the head office of 2M Language Services in Brisbane, with regular long stints in Paris. Tea has been AUSIT Vice-President and AUSIT Qld Branch Chair in the past five years and adores working with the local AUSIT branch. She uses her extensive business networks in Australia to promote AUSIT in the corporate sector and export industry.

Amale Hourani — NSW Principal Delegate



I work as a freelance English/Arabic translator and do consultancy work in Arabic. Originally from Lebanon, I commenced my career teaching high school mathematics in 1976 and then continued within the school system in three different countries using three different languages, until I finally became the general manager of an international high

school in Saudi Arabia. In 2002, I decided to start my own business and I founded a translation service. I joined AUSIT in 2004 and in 2009 I started helping with professional development events. In 2010, I took on the role of membership officer. I am now the NSW Deputy Chair, membership officer and Principal Delegate.

On a more personal note, I have two beautiful children, Rami and Diana, an understanding husband, Nouhad, and a loving Shih-tzu, Muffin. I am an advocate of sustainability, a member of the diggers' club and I grow my own food. I am an active member of the local Lion's Club, parish group and neighbourhood watch group. It all keeps me very busy indeed, but of course I look forward to dedicating some extra time in the coming year to being a productive Principal Delegate, helping realise great outcomes for AUSIT members.

Sultan Doğan — Vic/Tas Principal Delegate



Sultan Doğan works as a freelance T/I for various Australian government and non-government agencies in the legal, medical, social and human rights fields. She worked as a conference interpreter and a translator for various embassies in Ankara and has taught interpreting skills in the T&I course at RMIT, as well as working as an ESL and LOTE teacher. Sultan has

also taught in China and Turkey.

Her current research includes transnational links between homeland and ethnic communities living abroad, plus the future of community T&I in Australia. Sultan has contributed to a number of Office of Multicultural Affairs and Australian Family Studies research studies pertaining to the Turkish community and writes bilingual articles, short stories, travel notes and poetry in her blog <http://storieswithinboundaries.wordpress.com>.

Sultan Dogan holds a BA in Interpreting and Translating, Dip Ed in ESL and LOTE, a Grad Dip in Applied Linguistics, and has a Trademark and Patent Attorney accreditation from Turkey.

Ludmila Berkis — SA Principal Delegate



I was born in Australia to Russian parents. With a mother who loves books and a house filled with them, a love of reading in both English and Russian was unavoidable and with it came a fascination for languages. My formal education was in science. Having qualified as a microbiologist, I went on to be employed as a research biochemist for 15 years.

On a number of occasions it was suggested to me by various people that I should consider interpreting, but I dismissed this until my path crossed that of a young and enthusiastic interpreter and translator from Moscow who had recently arrived in Australia to study and who must have seen something in me. He was teaching a course in Russian at the local university and he actively encouraged me to attend and complete the course. With his help, I went on to qualify as an interpreter and translator in 1994 and found that I was hooked on the profession. I joined the South Australian branch of AUSIT soon after and went on to serve on the committee for a couple of years.

Due to other commitments, I dropped out of AUSIT for some time but re-joined in 2009 and soon found myself on the committee once again. I could not resist becoming involved with the energetic and dedicated group of people in the South Australian branch. My other interests include the piano, ballroom dancing, painting and of course, science and literature.

At this time, as so many changes are occurring in our field, it is vital we work together to achieve the best outcome for our profession.

State Principal Delegates continued...

Jean Deklerk — WA Principal Delegate



Jean has been an AUSIT member since 2002. His active involvement started in 2007, as a WA Branch Committee member, then Secretary, NAATI RAC AUSIT delegate, and as member of the AUSIT 2010 Biennial National Conference 'Synergise!' Organising Committee. Born to Dutch immigrants in Sydney, Jean taught French

and Japanese at high school in Queensland and lived for eight years in Japan, which is birthplace of his two children. He is a professional Japanese to English translator and has been working from home in Perth since 2002. Being involved in AUSIT has taught Jean much, especially that a team of like-minded and mutually respectful people who commit to getting the job done well can deliver a successful conference. Jean urges AUSIT WA members to contribute to the profession through AUSIT by bringing solutions to problems.

Karmenu Attard — ACT Principal Delegate



I was born in Malta in 1949 and in 1984 became a NAATI level 3 translator in Maltese and English in both directions. In 1994, I became a NAATI level 3 accredited interpreter in Maltese and English. I now work as a full-time T/I for over 400 companies in Australia and overseas. I also interpret on site, meaning I travel interstate.

I normally work in courts and deal with criminal issues; however, I also do a lot of phone interpreting. In addition, I teach Maltese, work as a branding analyst and localisation consultant, and write short stories in English about Malta. I enjoy walking, reading in English, Maltese, Italian, Latin and Indonesian, listening to classical music and I do play one instrument — the radio. Finally, I forgot to mention I am married to Charlotte and I have two children: Frank (22) and Miriam (26).

NZSTI Annual Conference 2012 Call for papers

Wellington, NZ

Translating and Interpreting:
Celebrating Strength in Diversity

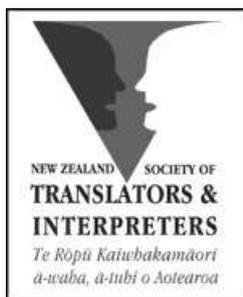
When: 9–10 June 2012

Where: Massey University, Wellington

Our profession encompasses a diverse range of skills and experiences — from translating a New Zealand children's book into German to interpreting for foreign dignitaries attending the 2011 Rugby World Cup. No other profession is as inherently 'international' and culturally diverse as ours. NZ-based practitioners cover hundreds of language combinations and areas of specialisation.

NZSTI seeks to mirror this diversity in its 2012 Annual Conference by creating a programme with at least three dedicated streams: General Translation; Literary Translation; and Interpreting. Our goal is to fill each of these streams with a weekend full of stimulating presentations and workshops, ensuring that there is literally 'something for everyone'.

We will endeavour to structure the programme in such a way as to make it possible for attendees to easily step into alternate streams should they wish to do so. People will also be able to mix and mingle at lunch and morning and afternoon tea breaks, as well as at traditional social events such as the conference dinner.



We are seeking proposals for individual papers, panel discussions, and workshops for this conference and request the following from interested presenters:

- A short 200–300 word summary of your proposal,
- An indication of which stream this fits into, or which streams, if it applies to more than one.

For the General Translation and Literary Translation streams:

As a guide, we are seeking proposals for presentations that are 20 minutes in length (followed by approximately 10 minutes for questions). However, proposals for longer presentations, workshops, or panel discussions will still be considered. On submission, please specify the length of time required for your presentation.

For the Interpreting stream: We are more flexible in terms of time allocation for this stream because we are keen to offer a wider variety of presentation formats — in particular, practical, hands-on workshops and discussions among practising interpreters.

The deadline for submitting proposals is: **5pm Friday 27 January 2012.**

Please email your submission to: nzsticonference2012@gmail.com. If you have questions in regard to the format or suitability of your proposal, please email the following people who are in charge of the individual streams:

General Translation:

John Jamieson – john@nztinternational.com.

Literary Translation:

Marco Sonzogni – marco.sonzogni@vuw.ac.nz

Interpreting: Robyn Pask – robyn.pask@interpret.org.nz

A tentative conference programme and additional information will be circulated in late February 2012.

Thursday 8 December, 5 - 7pm | Central Lecture Block 3, UNSW



The School of Languages & Linguistics at the University of NSW, with the support of AUSIT (the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc.), NSW Branch, invites you to the launch of Professor Sandra Hale's report: "Interpreter Policies, Practices and Protocols in Australian Courts and Tribunals – A National Survey," by the Honourable Justice Ian Harrison, NSW Supreme Court. Following the launch there will be a talk by Professor Hale on the main survey results and a Q&A session with a panel of experts representing the legal profession, the interpreting profession and NAATI.

Program for the evening

5-5:15pm – Refreshments in foyer

5:15-5:20pm – Welcome by Associate Professor Ludmila Stern,
Head of School of Languages & Linguistics

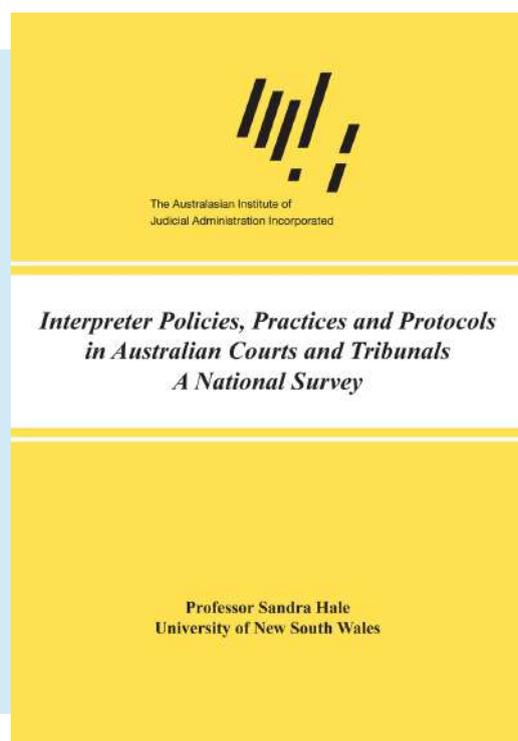
5:20-5:30pm – Launch of the report by the Honourable Justice
Ian G. Harrison, Supreme Court of NSW

5:30-6pm – Presentation of results and recommendations by
Professor Sandra Hale

6-6:45pm – Panel discussion and Q&A

6.45-7pm – Refreshments

Please RSVP to Erin Ralson by 30.11.2011 (languages@unsw.edu.au)



Abstract

Prof. Hale will present the results of an AIJA sponsored national study of interpreter policies, practices and protocols in Australian courts and tribunals. The research consisted of a review of all existing policy documents and two online questionnaires: one for practising interpreters and one for judicial officers and tribunal members. The results showed great deficiencies in the current system, with dissatisfaction from the judiciary on the quality of interpreting provided, and from the interpreters on poor working conditions and inadequate remuneration. The sixteen report recommendations surrounding issues of accreditation, specialisation, training, protocols and pay and working conditions will be presented at the forum, followed by comments on their implementation from the panel members and an open Q&A session with the audience.

[To view the report click here](#)

Central Lecture Block, Theatre 3 (map ref E19)
Enter via gate 8, High St Kensington

