

ASLIA Conference Interpreting Guidelines

Saturday, 10 June 2006

GUIDELINES ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF AUSLAN INTERPRETERS AT DEAFNESS SECTOR CONFERENCES AND AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

RATIONALE

In recognition of the complex coordination required in selecting and managing an interpreting team for high profile events such as deafness sector conferences and national or international events, the following information endeavours to provide guidance for conference event organisers.

RECRUITMENT It is expected that a local employer of Auslan interpreters, or an agency, may be in a position to directly select and appoint relevant skilled and qualified individuals to some events. Interpreters can be employed directly on a contract basis by an event organiser, or they may work via an agency, who will act as a broker in the provision of an interpreting service to the event organiser. NAATI accredited Interpreters (formerly known as 'Level 3') are strongly recommended for all conference type events, particularly for interpreting on a stage or in a plenary session. The nature of national and international events, and some deafness sector conferences, may require organisers, or their delegate, to advertise interpreting positions and recruit Interpreters accordingly from throughout Australia, or in some cases from overseas if other sign languages are to be used at the event. If this is the case, the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association policy on the selection of Auslan Interpreters is strongly recommended. Please refer to Attachment A. Depending on the scale of the event, notice of at least 6 months in advance of the conference, advising of the proposed schedule and duration of event is necessary. Confirmation of expected interpreting needs and requirements, details of presenters and type of presentations, and general format of the event is required at least 8 weeks in advance of the event. For larger events, particularly international congresses, or well-attended national events, it may be prudent for the Interpreter Service to have a consultant or coordinator (for example, a representative from a local Deaf Society; ASLIA branch etc) participate in planning stages on any Conference Organising Committee to assist with ascertaining the exact requirements.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Full papers of all presentations; time schedules; working programs and running sheets should, as far as practicable, be provided to Interpreters, by way of packages/files sent out at least 2 weeks in advance of the event to allow for adequate preparation
- Interpreters may be booked for up to an 8-hour period per day for a 'full day', inclusive of morning and afternoon tea and lunch breaks (note such breaks are expected to be of an hour and a half minimum total duration. Interpreters are not expected to work during break times, unless specifically booked to cover these periods, or by prior negotiation). Time in addition to the 8 hours will incur an hourly fee charge
- Rates of pay to interpreters vary at times according to region, complexity of work, experience of the interpreter etc. Currently, rates can vary from a minimum of \$360 daily for an Interpreter (full day); Half-day rates are applicable for any booking of 3 hours or less; at a current minimum of \$175 for Interpreters; Please note this is subject to change without notice and practitioners may set their own rates. Additional fees may be charged for reading and preparation time by negotiation
- Hourly rates where applicable currently may range upwards from \$60 per hour for Interpreters; Please note this is subject to change without notice
- Interpreters working for full or half days will work in tandem with at least one other Interpreter. Sessions with two or more presenters requiring interpretation in two directions (eg. workshop format dividing into groups), or presentations that last for more than one hour, may require three Interpreters who may be required to work in both directions. However, at times, Interpreters may be requested to work in specific language directions, both as primary and support Interpreters
- An event of one or more days, may require teams of 3 Interpreters across more papers to allow for the cumulative effect of mental and physical fatigue experienced by Interpreters functioning in high pressure settings such as conferences
- It is highly recommended that a room or private space be made available for interpreters as a preparation and rest area. This could include tea and coffee making facilities, a workstation and comfortable seating. This space is essential for quality interpretation services to occur, as preparation and rejuvenation are critical factors in the delivery of a quality interpretation and the practice of positive health strategies
- Interpreters will make themselves available for up to 30 minutes per day for any orientation, information, and briefing or debriefing sessions, outside the specified 8-hour working contract for a 'full day'. This will not be paid for separately to the 'full day' arrangement, however any formal pre-conference meetings may require payment to Interpreters. Current administrative rates typically paid to interpreters at the date of print are \$20 per hour
- Interpreters, as well as presenters, will be consulted on the scheduling of specific interpreters to each session. This is to ensure teams are appropriately matched, and that presenters are comfortable with Interpreters assigned to their sessions. It is noted that in the case of a large event, full accommodation of any expressed preferences may not be practical or possible. However where possible, preferences expressed by interpreters and presenters will be accommodated. Interpreters must accept that although chosen for their competence and skill that they may be required to work across the program and should therefore have the ability to do so. Presenters and Interpreters will be advised of final schedules at least two weeks in advance of the event
- Interpreters, in addition to natural break periods, will be allocated "down time" in the event program each day, whereby between 30 minutes and one hour will be scheduled as a period of rest in the program, with teams rotating as needed to

cover this time for each person

- The conference Interpreters should have access to one specific individual who has the role of interpreter coordinator. This person will be the main point of contact for interpreters and will attend to any needs, such as ensuring extra copying is arranged for interpreters, environmental and technical set up and confirmations, and addressing any immediate needs or demands of interpreters throughout the event. It will be clear from the time of the booking that there will be one individual who will be available to interpreters for any issues that may arise
- ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**The following should also to be provided to the Interpreter:
- Interpreters should be accommodated in twin share accommodation in, or near, the conference venue - this applies to both local and interstate Interpreters. This is necessary for preparation purposes and to limit the fatigue and stress that could ensue from lengthy daily travel. Accommodation will be for the night before work commences, assuming a start prior to 12 noon, and the nights of the working contract up to, but not including, the final day of the contract. Additional accommodation will be at the interpreters own cost.
 - Interpreters appointed from another state will have a return airfare and domestic cancellation insurance covered by the event organiser. Transport costs to the local airport and upon arrival in the state or territory, via taxi for example, will be reimbursed by the organiser or their delegate upon presentation of appropriate receipts
 - Breakfast will be provided on all working days
 - Meals that fall during booked work times (eg. typically lunches and morning/afternoon teas) will be provided. Other meals will not be provided, unless negotiated separately with the event organiser by way of a direct contract. Interpreters working at a dinnertime event, such as the Conference dinner, will have their meal provided, as well as receive payment for their interpreting services. Any contract should be explicit as to whether a meal allowance is covered in the hourly or daily rate or will be paid as an additional payment
 - Shirts may be provided to Interpreters in some circumstances, to be worn during work times at the event, as specified by the organiser or his/her delegate. Direction may be given on other clothing also
 - Depending on the event, additional considerations such as the risk of occupational overuse injury and the need to access appropriately skilled physiotherapy or massage services during and/or after the event may be relevant (particularly relevant with Deafblind interpreting for example) and must be covered by the event organiser if deemed necessary in advance of the event
 - It is encouraged that event organisers consider allowing local inexperienced interpreters to attend the event as a professional development experience. The ASLIA Conference Interpreter contract may prove useful to employers intending to directly contract the services of Auslan Interpreters for conferences and similar events rather than booking services through the interpreter Service, or when using Interpreters not registered with the Interpreter Service. It is recommended the working conditions and rates set down in this document and attachments are regarded as standard for the industry when making such private contractual arrangements. [Click to download contract: ASLIAcontract_conf 76.02 Kb](#) Once arrangements for coordinating conference Interpreters have commenced, both Interpreters and Conference Organisers are required to give a minimum of 6 weeks notice in advance of the event of the intention to withdraw from planned arrangements and bookings. Event Organisers may be liable for partial administrative payment for any work undertaken prior to cancellation.