

Multicultural Affairs Queensland
Language Services Guidelines
2016

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Introduction

These guidelines have been developed to assist Queensland Government agencies to meet their responsibilities under the Queensland Language Services Policy. These guidelines provide generic advice, incorporating best practice principles in relation to working with interpreters and bi-lingual staff, developing multi-lingual information, using technology and collecting data and monitoring performance. Individual agencies may have particular legislative obligations which require more specific practices.

These guidelines may also be of assistance to local governments and other organisations developing and implementing their own language services policies.

Under the Queensland Language Services Policy, Queensland Government agencies are defined as:

- all Queensland government departments*, and
- government organisations that were covered by the preceding Language Services Policy**.

*Including non-government organisations that are funded to deliver services on behalf of those departments (funded services).

**These include Hospital and Health Services, TAFE Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

Customer focus and risk management

The provision of language services, such as interpreters, to customers unable to effectively communicate in English not only supports people during the period in which they are learning English, but can also:

- help them to overcome complex service systems
- ensure that inappropriate or inadequate services are not provided due to misunderstanding of customers' needs
- ensure health and legal requirements, and administrative processes are met (e.g. obtaining informed consent)
- reduce the risks of re-victimisation (e.g. in relation to domestic and family violence situations)
- reduce the potential for compensation claims and litigation related to inadequate service provision
- enhance the quality of program and service delivery, including potential cost savings resulting from a more effective and targeted approach.

There are also economic benefits to agencies in engaging language services in terms of better customer understanding of services and programs resulting in less repeat appointments and visits. Creating a better understanding of administrative, legal and regulatory processes or requirements, by engaging language services is also likely to reduce longer term costs to government in enforcement and compliance activities. Engaging language services in managing consultation activities and promoting new products or services will also ensure that all segments of the community are aware of and can contribute to the business of government.

Working with credentialed interpreters in the health context:¹

- improves quality of care, clinical treatments are likely to be more effective as health care workers are able to get a better understanding of patients' symptoms
- improves client safety, reduces the risk of patients missing treatment appointments, inappropriately taking medication or following care instructions
- promotes access to health care
- reduces unnecessary health expenditure, including reducing non-attendance rates at clinics, unnecessary diagnostic investigations, admission rates and length of stay in hospital, and increases the likelihood of seeking early treatment and the use of preventive or early detection services
- reduces stress on families
- minimises the risk of legal complications.

A refusal to provide a qualified interpreter could be potentially discriminatory and there are considerable risks to an agency in not using qualified interpreters particularly for obtaining informed consent in legal, police, health and other government agency contexts.

Discrimination

In order to avoid complaints of discrimination in the provision of services, it is important that government agencies and funded services engage interpreters on appropriate occasions where customers have difficulty communicating in English.

Instances where a government agency or funded service refuses to provide their services to customers experiencing difficulties communicating in English may be considered **direct** discrimination under *the Anti-Discrimination Act (Queensland) 1991* (the Act). Providing a service without engaging an interpreter for customers who experience difficulties communicating in English may be considered **indirect** discrimination under the Act.

The following two examples, supplied by the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland, illustrate examples of complaints of discrimination because a qualified interpreter was not provided for a customer with difficulty communicating in English. The first case study also illustrates the risk in using family or friends to interpret instead of accessing a qualified interpreter.

Example one:

A complaint was made to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland following the death of the complainant's teenage son in a car accident.

As it occurred late at night, the hospital was unable to locate an interpreter for him. The complainant's other son interpreted instead, but the lack of a professional, appropriate interpreter further increased the family's trauma in the process of identifying the body.

This matter was not resolved at conciliation and was referred to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

¹ Foundation House: The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (2013) promoting the engagement of interpreters in Victoria health services, http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/resources/publications_and_resources.htm

Example two:

A complaint regarding the failure of a government agency to engage interpreters was made to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland by a deaf woman who claimed that interpreting services were not provided to six profoundly deaf adults in an emergency situation.

As well as being deaf, the complainant was unable to read or write, so she required the services of not only Auslan interpreters but also a deaf relay interpreter.

At the conciliation conference, an agreement was reached that the government agency involved would work with the deaf community to ensure more effective communication in the future.

Guidelines for working with interpreters

There must be flexibility in policies to cater for the language service needs of regional and remote area populations.

Why engage qualified interpreters

Using qualified interpreters means that the level of skill and quality of the interpreting meets certain standards.

Qualified interpreters are also required to maintain confidentiality, impartiality and accuracy as part of the AUSIT or ASLIA codes of ethics².

Under the codes qualified interpreters are required to remain impartial at all times which provides agencies with a level of certainty about the information they are being provided. Impartiality is a significant concern when using relatives, friends and advocates, or bilingual staff to interpret.

The following example illustrates the benefits of using qualified interpreters to improve access to services for customers with difficulty communicating in English.

Example:

“Windana is a refuge providing accommodation and intensive support to women and children escaping domestic and/or family violence.

Without access to interpreters, we would not be able to communicate with our clients on everyday issues such as the fire alarm system, the use of the pager for emergencies, the security system, where the shops are, the public transport system, how to apply for Centrelink payments, the immigration process, how to apply to schools and child care and a whole host of ordinary issues that we all take for granted.

We would also not be able to provide essential emotional support to the women and children when they need it. Women and children come into our refuge with a variety of behavioural and emotional needs and they exhibit distress, grief, anger, hypervigilance etc.

If the Queensland Language Services Policy did not provide us with access to interpreters, we would find it financially impossible to engage interpreters as often as we do.

This would have an enormous impact on our women as not only would we not be able to provide the same level of intensive emotional support, we would not be able to explain legal, Centrelink, immigration and other processes which can be quite complicated and confusing for women.”

Windana Support Centre.

² AUSIT is the national independent association for the translating and interpreting profession. ASLIA is the national peak organisation representing Auslan/English interpreters and Deaf Interpreters (DIs) in Australia (see Definitions section for further information).

Role of an interpreter

The interpreter's role is to assist with communication between you and your customer.

Interpreting is often thought of as a simple word-for-word translation from one language to another. However, interpreters often have to convey complex information for which there may not be an equivalent word or term in the other language. Interpreters may need more information to understand the context and select the most appropriate words to convey the meaning to the customer.

Some interpreters develop specialist skills to work in particular fields, such as court interpreting and health services. That way they are more familiar with the terminology used in these contexts.

It is not the interpreters role to provide explanations or answer questions from the customer.

Assessing the need for an interpreter

Agencies should provide an interpreter in situations where a person has difficulty communicating in English.

When a person requests an interpreter they should be provided with one. One way a customer may request an interpreter is by showing a Queensland Interpreter Card (refer to Definitions on page 32). Without a Queensland Interpreter Card, it may be difficult to assess whether a person needs an interpreter.

The ability to converse in English does not necessarily indicate that a person comprehends the level of English spoken by doctors, nurses, magistrates, lawyers, police officers and others, or that the person understands written English. If there is any doubt about a person's ability to communicate in or comprehend English, an interpreter should be engaged.

Here are some practical ways to help you make your decision about whether an interpreter should be engaged or not:

- Ask a question that requires the person to answer in a sentence. Try to avoid questions that can be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no' or a familiar question such as 'where do you live?'
- Give the person a message and ask them to repeat it back to you in their own words.

Engaging a qualified interpreter will be crucial in certain circumstances such as obtaining informed consent (health, mental health, aged care assessment), raising a record of interview (police), or for the swearing of affidavits or statutory declarations.

Costly mistakes, complaints or litigation can result from an agency neglecting to provide an interpreter.

An interpreter helps both parties to communicate effectively. It is acceptable to engage an interpreter to ensure clear communication even if the person, family member or carer considers that they do not need one.

When assessing the need for an interpreter, agencies should also consider factors such as gender, levels of literacy, cultural and religious needs, dialect and hearing impairment and support needs. Even when an interpreter is present, other factors, including the person's level of comfort in the interview environment, may create communication difficulties and impact on the communication outcome.

Protocols for engaging interpreters

1. *Appropriate qualifications*

Agencies should engage a qualified interpreter whenever needed.

The highest levels of NAATI accreditation are Conference Interpreter (Senior) and Conference Interpreter. Interpreters at these levels are required if organising an international conference and are highly skilled at simultaneous interpreting, where the interpreting is done at the same time as the speaker.

For most public sector agencies the third highest level of accreditation is more appropriate (Professional Interpreter). Depending on availability and the interpreting task, the recommended order of preference protocol for engaging qualified interpreters is:

1. NAATI accreditation level - Professional Interpreter
2. NAATI accreditation level - Paraprofessional Interpreter
3. NAATI Recognised Interpreter.

Qualified interpreters at these levels are skilled at providing consecutive interpreting, where the interpreting is done at appropriate pauses during the session.

Other qualified interpreters may have tertiary level interpreting qualifications or be a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), for conference interpreters.

Interpreters that are not qualified should not be engaged unless the situation is an emergency and a qualified interpreter is not available.

In Queensland, the majority of NAATI accredited interpreters hold the Paraprofessional level of accreditation. There may be no accredited interpreters and/or only a small number of Recognised interpreters for the languages of small communities, particularly those who have recently arrived.

Access to qualified interpreters in rural and remote Queensland is often limited to interpreting by telephone. However, some interpreters are available for on-site work in regional centres. The availability of qualified interpreters can be checked through the relevant interpreter service provider. Additionally NAATI and the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) produce directories of accredited practitioners. Both directories are available on their respective websites.

NAATI - <http://www.naati.com.au/>

AUSIT - <http://www.ausit.org/>

Complex interpreting work, which may have serious implications for the person and the agency, should be undertaken by the most qualified interpreter available.

The category of interpreters and the situations when the Queensland Government should engage them are summarised in the table below.

Type of interpreter	Levels of credentials	Engagement situations
Qualified interpreter	For languages where NAATI accreditation testing is available, NAATI issues accreditation at the following levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraprofessional Interpreter (lowest level) • Professional Interpreter • Conference Interpreter • Senior Conference Interpreter (highest) 	Where accreditation exists, preferred order of engagement is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional Interpreters 2. Paraprofessional Interpreters
	For languages where NAATI accreditation testing is not available, NAATI issues a recognition level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised Interpreter 	Where accreditation does not exist, preferred engagement is for Recognised Interpreters.
	Other qualifications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreters with Australian tertiary level interpreting qualifications • conference interpreters who are members of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) 	Where a NAATI credentialed interpreter is unavailable.
Other interpreter	No NAATI credentials	Not to be engaged unless the situation is an emergency and a qualified interpreter is unavailable.

2. Confidentiality

In small communities, where people from the same cultural/linguistic group may know each other, an individual may feel embarrassed speaking through an interpreter from the same community, particularly about health-related issues. In this instance a telephone interpreter based outside the local community may be more appropriate.

Confidentiality is particularly important in domestic violence and sexual assault situations. Service providers should stress the importance of confidentiality to the interpreter prior to the session and obtain agreement that confidentiality will be respected in all circumstances.

It is also recommended that in domestic violence and sexual assault matters a separate interpreter is booked for the women to that provided to the perpetrator.

3. Gender issues

It is important to consider the gender requirements of the person, particularly in domestic violence and sexual assault situations.

Providing a female interpreter for women experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault may not always be possible, especially for new and emerging languages. In these situations accessing a female telephone interpreter may be an appropriate option. A male interpreter should only be engaged with the woman's agreement.

4. Language requirements

Language and dialect are also important requirements to consider. Language skills may decrease in stressful situations and people are likely to be more comfortable speaking in their first language. If an interpreter is not available in the person's first language, there may be another language they are able to communicate in. However, the person's level of competency in this alternative language may be an additional factor to consider.

The following good practice example provided by the Queensland Program of Assistance for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), illustrates the significance of these protocols.

Good practice example:

“When engaging interpreters we try to make sure the interpreter is from the same region as the client (e.g. a Congolese woman who speaks French does not speak the same dialect as a French speaker from France), the same gender (especially important if the client has experienced sexual or domestic violence), from the same of different ethnicity (particularly if there is a history of conflict within the country of origin between different ethnic groups), and that the interpreter is either experienced with the counselling content or comfortable working in a highly stressful situation. These considerations are necessary for the comfort of the client and to ensure that they can develop a trusting relationship with both the counsellor and interpreter.”

QPASTT

The following good practice example, provided by Mater Health Services, demonstrates how these general protocols can be implemented within a service environment.

Good practice example:

“Mater Health Services has a detailed policy on the engagement of interpreting services including guidance around what to do in emergency situations when an accredited interpreter is not available. The policy also covers the use of bilingual staff and makes it clear to staff that engaging an interpreter is a matter of patient safety and professional practice.

Interpreters are booked through the central Queensland Health Interpreter Service Information System accessed through the Mater intranet or through an Interpreter Bookings Coordinator. Arrangements are also in place for emergency and after hours requests.

The policy provides guidance about identifying the appropriateness of an interpreter, such as pre-empting the information being provided by the health professional.

Posters and other information are available in clinical areas of the hospital and all staff are provided with a wallet sized card outlining key points in using an interpreter, many of our staff attach this to their lanyards.”

Mater Health Services

Practices to be avoided

Friends and family members should not be used as interpreters and children and young relatives are not appropriate interpreters in any context. Children acting as interpreters in some situations may lead to further trauma for the child, including negative emotional and psychological well-being.³

Customers and family members may be embarrassed or uncomfortable when family members act as interpreters. Family members may also feel that the role of interpreter is imposed on them and may not feel confident that they possess the necessary skills. In these situations communication may be distorted or changed because of a lack of competence in English or the other language or bias on the part of the family member or advocate. However, the customer may feel more comfortable with a family member, bilingual associate or worker present for support, along with the qualified interpreter.

Using bilingual staff as interpreters is not recommended, unless they are suitably qualified. Bilingual staff members who have not received NAATI credentials may not be adequately skilled in the language. The impartiality of bilingual staff may also be brought into question particularly in sensitive health, person safety or legal situations where conflict of interest issues may arise. Refer to Guidelines for bilingual/multilingual staff (page 24) for information about when it is appropriate to use bilingual/multilingual staff.

Engaging other people as interpreters, such as local community elders, or people working in the industry who are not accredited, should be avoided as much as possible.

³ Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (June 2015), *Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence*, http://eccv.org.au/library/2015-06-02_SUB_RCFV_FINAL.pdf

Note: While it is acknowledged that circumstances may require the engagement of an interpreter that is not qualified, for example, during an emergency, they may compromise or misinterpret important information. Any agency engaging the services of an unqualified interpreter should develop strategies to mitigate any risk to customers and/or the organisation. Accordingly, qualified interpreters are recommended.

Selecting the most appropriate method of delivering interpreting

An interpreter assists effective communication. Communication comprises both verbal and non-verbal channels. The following provides a brief overview of the advantages and disadvantages of three methods of delivery.

On-site interpreting is where the interpreter attends in person and provides access to both verbal and non-verbal communication channels. On-site interpreting should be used in situations when complex or lengthy matters will be discussed including where documents and consent forms are involved (i.e. when an interpreter provides a sight translation of a written document).

Telephone interpreting can be a cost-effective option for simple communications that are not lengthy. Telephone interpreting mainly involves verbal communication and is therefore not as detailed a communication option compared to on-site interpreting. Telephone interpreting may be more suitable in circumstances where a customer's confidentiality can be better preserved (e.g. in small communities) and where an on-site interpreter is not available. It can also provide more immediate access to interpreters (e.g. in circumstances where pre-booking is not an option).

Video conference interpreting / Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) provides both verbal and non-verbal communication channels and is an alternative to telephone interpreting where agencies have access to video conferencing facilities. Video conference interpreting or VRI provides a practical option when sign language interpreters are not available locally as it enables individuals in the community, regardless of hearing loss or communication method, to communicate via an Auslan interpreter over the Internet. VRI can be provided pre-booked or on-demand (for Auslan) via Auslan Connections (Deaf Services Queensland). VRI provides the hearing impaired community with equitable access to information and should be used in similar situations to telephone interpreting for migrant and refugee languages. VRI should only be used where face-to-face interpreting is not available⁴.

⁴ For more information visit the Auslan Connections website - <http://www.auslanconnections.org.au/>

After hours or emergency interpreting

Queensland Government agencies which deliver services that are likely to be accessed after hours or in an emergency (e.g. health, human and social services), should have protocols in place to ensure they are able to access qualified interpreters out of normal business hours if required. For example, this may include engaging a language service provider to deliver a specific after hours service.

Agencies should also ensure that relevant staff are aware of these protocols.

Procurement arrangements

Paying for interpreting services

Agencies are responsible for budgeting and paying for interpreters (including customer initiated contact). In line with relevant legislative requirements, customers of Queensland Government agencies, including of services provided by funded non-government organisations, do not pay for interpreters.

Customer initiated contact

The Queensland Government website at <http://www.qld.gov.au/contact-us/> refers customers to interpreter service providers for assistance with information in their language. An interpreter will then contact the relevant agency to address the customer's needs.

Agencies should regularly audit their websites and other information resources to ensure information relating to interpreters, including contact information, is up to date.

Front-line service staff should be aware that customer enquiries may be generated through interpreters.

Agencies should have mechanisms in place to ensure that invoices for such calls are paid within a suitable timeframe.

Queensland Government funded services

Queensland Government funded services must be provided with adequate arrangements to engage interpreter services for service delivery (delivery of the service or program for which the organisation is funded). The relevant funding department is responsible for informing funded services of the process and arrangements for accessing interpreter services.

Non-government organisations funded to deliver services on behalf of the Queensland Government should contact their funding body for details on the specific arrangements in place for their organisation.

Australian Government arrangements

Subject to Australian Government approval, some non-government, community based or non-profit organisations are eligible for free interpreting services. General practitioners and Members of Parliament are also entitled to free interpreting services.

Further details about eligibility for free interpreting services can be obtained from the Australian Government's Translating and Interpreting Service website at www.tisnational.gov.au.

For employers to support employees who are hearing impaired in the workplace, the Australian Government's Employment Assistance Fund may be available to provide assistance. For more information visit <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/government-services/employment-assistance-fund>

Arranging an interpreter

Interpreting services may be provided over the phone or when the interpreter is physically present (on-site). Audio-visual access to interpreters may be available through video conferencing networks.

Depending on the situation there may be a need to engage a specialist interpreter for people who are Deafblind or if the customer is hearing impaired and from overseas, a Deaf Interpreter as well as an Auslan Interpreter may be needed.

Who to contact?

1. Some agencies have established internal arrangements to engage interpreter services. In this circumstance, staff should refer to the agency's internal guidelines on requesting and booking interpreter services.
2. If your agency does not have an internal arrangement in place, a list of interpreter service providers can be found on the Translating and Interpreting services page on is located on the Queensland Government, For government website at <https://www.qld.gov.au/gov/find-translator-or-interpreter>

Alternatively agencies can look for a qualified interpreter via:

- **NAATI online Directory** at <http://www.naati.com.au/>
- **AUSIT online Directory** at <http://www.ausit.org/>
- **for conference interpreters** – The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) – Australian members on 02 6633 7122 or website <http://aiic.net/> or email swehov@nor.com.au
- **for Auslan and Deaf Interpreters** – Auslan Connections (Deaf Society Queensland). On-demand interpreting for VRI call 1300 010 877. For pre-booked interpreting call 1300 010 877, TTY 07 3892 8501, fax on 07 3392 8511, or email qld@auslanconnections.com.au. For after-hours emergency interpreting for hospitals or police please call 0455 068 500. More information is available from <http://auslanconnections.com.au/>.

What to consider when requesting an interpreter

When requesting an interpreter, consideration should be given to:

- giving as much notice as possible
- briefing interpreters on the nature of the assignment and providing an opportunity for the interpreter to decline the engagement, e.g. if there is a risk of vicarious trauma
- providing relevant documents where appropriate
- establishing language, gender, and cultural background preferences for interpreters and request these from the provider
- ascertaining communication supports (e.g., a person with a disability who chooses to have a support person or assisted technology available).
- requesting the same interpreter where continuity and the customer's confidence in the interpreter is important
- ensuring you check the qualifications of the interpreter by sighting their NAATI identification card or using the NAATI online verification tool, www.naati.com.au/online
- considering whether the interpreter has to travel and building this into the timing of the appointment. You may reduce travel costs by arranging multiple appointments requiring the same language interpreter consecutively.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreting

As well as the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, also spoken amongst communities in Queensland are: Aboriginal English, which differs depending on the local community; and Torres Strait Creole. While all Indigenous languages in Queensland are considered to be 'endangered', there are still people from remote communities who do not have English as their first language.

There are very few accredited interpreters in Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. The Queensland Government For Government website (<https://www.qld.gov.au/gov/find-translator-or-interpreter>), includes a list of interpreter service providers for Aboriginal languages but the majority of these operate outside of Queensland and are unlikely to have expertise in Queensland specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

NAATI may be able to provide assistance in sourcing an interpreter in Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Some Queensland Government agencies employ cultural liaison/support workers to support communication between speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and services.

Information for Queensland Government employees regarding Community Specific Profiles for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is available via the Cultural Capability Portal at <http://datsima.govnet.qld.gov.au>.

There are a number of information resources available about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including:

- Our Languages website provides information about Aboriginal languages across Australia, including maps, and can be found at <http://www.ourlanguages.net.au/>.
- The State Library of Queensland has resources on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Queensland and can be found at <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages>.
- Indigenous Language Centres support the revival and maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. More information is available at <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages/centres>.

Interpreter quality

To maintain confidentiality, accuracy and impartiality, qualified interpreters observe the professional code of ethics.

The AUSIT Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators can be obtained from AUSIT at http://ausit.org/AUSIT/About/Ethics_Conduct/Code_of_Ethics/AUSIT/About/Code_of_Ethics.aspx.

The ASLIA Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct for sign language interpreters can be obtained from ALSIA at <https://aslia.com.au/code-of-ethics/>.

When working with interpreters, staff should always check the interpreters' NAATI credentials via their identity card or online verification system before commencing the session - www.naati.com.au.

If working regularly with an interpreter, consider providing training in your particular field, e.g. interpreting in hospitals, in the courts or in counselling sessions.

Skilling staff in working with interpreters

Communicating with people through an interpreter can be a difficult skill to learn. Agencies should provide adequate training and access to information, such as fact sheets and checklists for staff who may need to work with interpreters.

The Queensland Government For Government website (www.qld.gov.au/gov/interpreter-and-translator-services) contains information about working with interpreters, how to obtain an interpreter and procedures for locating a qualified interpreter.

Agency staff will benefit from training in working with interpreters in their workplace. Organisations specialising in cross-cultural training often include courses in working with interpreters.

The following good practice example, provided by the MDA Ltd, demonstrates an innovative approach to training staff on working with interpreters.

Good practice example:

“The Department of Human Services (Centrelink) has produced a 30-minute DVD including eight scenarios demonstrating poor and problematic face-to-face interpreter engagement, and a good practice scenario. The scenarios are specific and relevant to Centrelink’s day to day work. Three of the scenarios use BYO interpreters (such as relatives, friends and minors) to demonstrate the importance of booking qualified interpreters to ensure impartiality, confidentiality and competence.

Other scenarios focus on checking the correct language, cultural competence and considerations (including considering the gender of the interpreter), roles and seating, style of language and pace, and maintaining control of the interview. The DVD also includes a short section on tips for working with phone interpreters.

The DVD is intended to be used as a training resource followed by discussion of the scenarios to unpack and understand the features that constitute good and poor practice.”

MDA Ltd.

During the interpreting session

Briefing an interpreter before the session

Interpreters should be fully briefed before communication with the customer occurs to:

- a) Inform them of the nature of the likely discussion
- b) Provide them with an opportunity to decline the engagement.

This is of particular importance in situations where the interpreter may experience vicarious trauma as a result of the engagement, such as counselling sessions, domestic and family violence cases, and in some health care situations.

Interpreters should be provided with any briefing or background material, where appropriate, that may assist them in their role. If there are any concerns regarding confidentiality the interpreter can be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Agencies should be aware of any legislative requirements in relation to information sharing, including the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, Information Privacy Principle 11 – Limits on disclosure.

A pre-briefing session may only take 10 minutes and also provides an opportunity to discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the interpreter, such as relationship or previous involvement with the customer.

Working conditions

Be sure to schedule breaks periodically throughout the session, particularly for long interpreting sessions (e.g. more than an hour). For longer sessions you should consider engaging more than one interpreter to enable the interpreters to take a break. Fatigue can reduce the quality of interpreting. It is particularly important for Auslan interpreters who are also at risk of repetitive strain injuries.

Consistency in interpreting provides significant benefits to the customer, the interpreter and the agency. Having two interpreters in the room for lengthy sessions allows one interpreter to take a break while maintaining a connection with the conversation. However, this may not be appropriate in all situations. When requesting an interpreter, ensure that you brief them on the potential timeframes for the session, and if they are willing to accept the engagement, discuss strategies to address potential fatigue (e.g. appropriate signalling for breaks).

During the session, remember to pause often so that the interpreter has opportunities to interpret your words. Make sure to agree upon appropriate timing with the interpreter before the session.

The interpreter may need to take notes during the session to help remember key terms. The interpreter may also need to seek clarification of terms that do not easily have an equivalent in the other language or have a different cultural meaning. Discuss any concerns with the interpreter before or after the session, not in front of the customer.

Arrangements must be in place to protect the interpreter if there is the potential for the situation to become threatening or violent.⁵ Provide any necessary health and safety information to the interpreter prior to the session (e.g. working in prisons).

Speak clearly and directly to the customer. Only address the interpreter directly if needing to provide instructions and avoid interrupting the interpreter.

During the session the interpreter may point out areas of possible cultural misunderstanding. However it is up to staff to work through these issues with the customer. Do not expect the interpreter to explain or clarify on your behalf.

If using on-site interpreting, provide an appropriate meeting room with adequate seating or for telephone interpreting, a quiet space.

⁵ AUSIT Guidelines for Health Professionals Working with Interpreters, http://ausit.org/AUSIT/Documents/Guidelines_For_Health_Professionals.pdf

At the end of the session

In highly sensitive and stressful situations the interpreter should be provided with an opportunity to debrief about their experience. Agencies may also consider providing access to counselling services for interpreters working in these situations, if not already provided through the interpreter service provider.

Good practice example:

“When necessary, QPASTT will arrange extra time at the end of a counselling session to provide an opportunity for the counsellor to debrief with the interpreter. This enables the interpreter to debrief and provides a form of professional support for the interpreter.”

QPASTT

Guidelines for using technology

Interpreter services are a human focused industry, however with Queensland's highly decentralised population and low numbers of qualified interpreters in particular languages, it is often very difficult for services in regional areas to engage on-site interpreters.

Use of technology in the provision of language services could improve access to government frontline services, making it easier for customers, and help to reduce the costs of using interpreter services for government agencies.

The following table summarises the benefits and risks associated with technologies currently being used.

Technology type	Benefits	Risks
Skype	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits of an on-site interpreter without the need for the interpreter to be in the same room as the customer • widely accessible – can be downloaded onto any computer with a webcam and internet connection • able to access a wider range of languages as interpreters can be sourced from around Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requires a strong/ fast internet connection which may be lacking in some regional or remote areas in Queensland • not suitable for multi-call connections. • limited usability – most webcams will not allow for all parties to be visible at the same time. This makes it difficult for interpreter to see both customer and staff non-verbal cues • assumes all parties have access to technology including computer with a webcam and internet connection • less secure than video conferencing and may not be suitable for sensitive / confidential situations and where information security is a concern.
Video conferencing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits of an on-site interpreter without the need for the interpreter to be in the same room as the customer (of particular benefit in the regions) • on demand VRI can be leveraged for unscheduled or impromptu appointments or to provide services to the hearing impaired community to a similar level as telephone interpreting • able to access a wider range of languages as interpreters can be sourced from around Australia • utilises a dedicated phone line and can provide a more reliable and better quality connection. • More suitable for multi-call connections • more secure and able to be used in sensitive / confidential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited availability to agencies with facilities • requires a strong/ fast internet connection which may be lacking in some regional or remote areas in Queensland

	situations and where information security is a concern.	
Multilingual information lines – pre-recorded information in languages other than English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • able to provide most commonly sought after information in multiple languages • likely to resolve most callers information needs • cost-effective as the agency is not engaging an interpreter to provide the same information to multiple customers • caller can be transferred to an interpreter if the pre-recorded information does not meet their needs • pre-recorded information is accessible 24 hours, 7 days a week • less time spent by call centre staff determining customer's needs • inclusive of people illiterate in their first language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only limited general information can be provided • does not enable specific questions/circumstance of customer to be addressed
Machine/ automated translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cheap alternative for small translations • almost instantaneous translation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more difficult to ensure the quality of translation provided as not NAATI accredited • not practical for larger translation projects such as multiple page documents • current technology varies in accuracy and quality • does not reflect specific terminologies (e.g. used in legal, health or technical sectors) or local community's context
Video/You Tube clips in languages other than English (e.g. Australian Tax Office vox pop video, Looking to our multicultural future)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information can be made widely available to stakeholders/customers through uploading on website • inclusive of people illiterate in their first language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requires customers to have internet access • only of use for general information which may not meet specific need of individuals

Types of technology

Video conferencing facilities

A number of agencies now use video conferencing technology to aid service provision in regional centres.

Wider use of videoconferencing technology when working with customers with limited English proficiency would reduce the cost associated with booking on-site interpreters and increase availability of a wider range of languages as interpreters could be accessed from wherever they are around Australia.

Some challenges that are specific to the health setting require the physical presence of an interpreter (i.e. on-site) to fully support the patient and clinician. Some forms of technology are not appropriate for all patients, such as videoconferencing for mental health patients.

Multilingual information lines

Some agencies, through an interpreter service provider, operate a multilingual information service supported by superior interactive voice response (IVR) technology and custom built software that manages content and reporting including call statistics and connection time and invoicing.

With these services pre-recorded information is provided in the most relevant language groups for customer services and a dedicated phone number for each language, or access via a single number, can be provided. If the information provided does not meet the customer's needs they are then automatically forwarded to an interpreter and the relevant agency.

An example of this type of service is available at: <http://www.vits.com.au/multilingual-information-lines>

Video/You Tube clips

The Australian Tax Office's YouTube channel includes videos with captions available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Turkish, Arabic, Japanese, Khmer, Korean and Thai on the Goods and Services Tax (GST). These videos include simple and practical information to help people manage GST in their business. They also show how to complete and lodge business activity statements, better ways to keep good records and how to manage GST debt.

Auslan translations are very valuable to the hearing impaired community. Information in Auslan as a video clip helps to ensure that the information is relayed in the hearing impaired person's first language.

Machine / automated translation

While use of qualified translators is the standard under the Queensland Language Services Policy for the translation of government publications and information resources, this can be expensive and time consuming, especially if not adequately planned. It therefore limits the amount of information accessible to people with limited English language proficiency.

There are a number of web and application based translation products (e.g. Google Translate) widely available to assist overseas travellers and other people needing to communicate small amounts of information in another language.

While these technologies are convenient and cheap they vary considerably in quality and provide only a limited translation (i.e. they translate one word for another without consideration of the context in which the word is used which may result in a different meaning). They also only provide translations for a limited number of languages and rarely the new and emerging languages spoken by refugee communities (e.g. for African languages Google Translate currently only has Swahili, Afrikaans, Somali and Zulu).

“False Friends are one of the reasons why ‘direct translation’ between languages is not possible. False Friends can be defined as words which sound the same and usually have a common origin but which have different meanings.

False Friends have long been recognised for English and French (faux amis) where a word takes on different meanings in languages over time. In the long history of contact between English and French, many French loan words into English have acquired different meanings in English and modern French, for example French chariot which can mean ‘shopping trolley’.”

(NAATI News Vol.27, Issue 1)

Using this technology in a more systematic and widespread way may result in legal liability and be dangerous to customers. Using a web or application based translation product in place of an interpreter will also be of limited use for oral languages where there is no written form or where literacy levels within the language community are low.

Computer Assisted Translation (CAT), such as Memory Translation and collaborative translation, provides a seemingly cost-effective and practical solution to translating volumes of information.

Some translation service providers are using machine translation for particular customers. This involves establishing a database of previously translated information by a qualified translator that can be utilised to assist in future translations for the same customer. As it is customer specific, the database can accommodate particular terminology used by the customer, business or industry, reducing the risks associated with machine translation.

When using machine translation, agencies must have mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the translation, including engaging a qualified translator to check finalised translation and a community language speaker to ensure cultural appropriateness of the translation.

If providing machine/automated translation programs on websites agencies should be responsible for ensuring the quality of the particular program used. Some factors agencies should consider include:

- whether the system includes a feedback and corrective action system so that errors are identified and rectified
- whether a skilled and qualified translator was involved in the development and ongoing quality control of the machine/ automated translation system
- engagement with community language speakers to test the translation provided through the system for accuracy and cultural appropriateness.

Levels of use of translation according to risk can be described as below:

- critical, legal and health content should be provided through high-quality translation channels (human)
- large volume product-related knowledge content may be processed via customised machine translation with post-editing by a qualified translator (human)
- random comments and social media feedback could be processed by customised machine translation systems.⁶

How and when to use technology to support customers with limited English proficiency

Technology should only be used to supplement the engagement of qualified interpreters and translators and not replace it. Given the concerns that exist regarding the quality and accuracy of machine/ automated translation, it should not be used in legal, health or technical fields. Other forms of technology may be more appropriate in these circumstances.

The following matrix provides an outline of which technologies should be used in relation to the type of communication required; two-way information exchange (e.g. police interviews or engagement workshops) and one-way information exchange (e.g. promotion of new programs or regulation); and the level of risk to the organisation and individual involved.

	HIGH RISK	MEDIUM RISK	LOW RISK
TWO-WAY INFORMATION EXCHANGE		Videoconferencing	Skype
ALL INFORMATION EXCHANGES	Qualified interpreter/translator		Bi-lingual/bi-cultural staff member
ONE-WAY INFORMATION EXCHANGE		Video/YouTube clips Multi-lingual information lines	Electronic/online translation database/apps

*High risk scenarios are those which may require the translation of critical information, such as health or legal information pertaining to an person's individual circumstances.

**Low risk scenarios are those which may require translation of general product or service related information which is not dependent on individual circumstances.

⁶ Valeria Cannavina & Anna Fellet (2011) LTAC Language and Translation Automation Conference - Proceedings, <http://www.lulu.com/shop/valeria-cannavina-anna-fellet/ltac-language-and-translation-automation-conference-proceedings/ebook/product-18860182.html>

Guidelines for bilingual/ multilingual staff

The Queensland Government employs approximately 243,163 people (as at June 2015). Of this total approximately 22,440 or 9.23 per cent are from a non-English speaking background (people who have migrated to Australia and whose first language is a language other than English, and the children of those people)⁷. This is a significant potential resource to assist government services be responsive to customers who have low English language proficiency.

Bilingual/multilingual staff can be of assistance to customers speaking their common language but they should not be used by agencies in place of qualified interpreters.

Situations which may benefit from bilingual/ multilingual workers include:

- a Mandarin-speaking staff member promoting a government product to a group of Chinese business people
- a French-speaking staff member assisting a French speaking customer from West Africa to fill in a form for public housing
- a Vietnamese-speaking government employee providing community recovery outreach to areas with a high number of people from a Vietnamese background.

Cultural liaison/support workers may also support communication between agencies and customers. These workers are able to develop trust and build relationships with local communities to better support customers. There is also a potential cost saving for agencies in reducing the need to engage an interpreter service where they are not specifically necessary.

Bilingual/multilingual staff can also help to improve front-line services through increased cultural responsiveness and customer focus through increasing the confidence and skill level of all staff in communicating with and supporting customers with low English language proficiency.

Agencies using the skills of bilingual/ multilingual workers will need to consider the following potential issues:

- operational considerations – is using their language/cultural skills part of the staff members role or an additional duty? Management will need to consider operational requirements to ensure that the staff member is able to take on these additional duties (e.g. allow time out of their work day to provide communication support when required (maybe with little notice), redistributing work when staff member is away)
- bilingual/multilingual workers and other staff are aware of when a qualified interpreter is required and that bilingual/ multilingual workers are not to take on the role of an interpreter.

Bilingual/multilingual staff should not be used in any situation which requires a qualified interpreter.

⁷ Public Service Commission, Queensland Public Service and sector wide profile data, <http://www.psc.qld.gov.au/>

Guidelines for multilingual information planning

To ensure translated resources are cost-effective and customer focused, agencies need a thorough understanding of the community that their communication strategy is targeting. For example, many languages are oral only, meaning there is no written form to translate material into. Similarly, literacy levels may be very low for some communities including in their first language. When developing communication strategies for customers identified as requiring language support, a range of communication mechanisms should be considered, including:

- translated written information (available in hard copy or online), including posters, fact sheets, brochures, post-cards, etc.
- audio or video clips in languages other than English
- pre-recorded multilingual information accessed via the telephone
- information sessions conducted with interpreters (these could also be recorded or streamed online)
- employment of bilingual/bi-cultural workers
- pictorial representations (for basic information)
- large print / braille (for people with a visual impairment).

Media

Communication strategies which include components in English and languages other than English may be in one, or a combination of, the following:

- in print – translated brochures and booklets, factsheets, business cards, advertising flyers and postcards, poster slogans, forms and papers, and advertisements
- electronically – translated or original language messages on the internet, intranet or by email
- audio-visually – subtitled, dubbed, voice-overed or original language videos, audio-cassettes, multilingual telephone information lines, ethnic radio or television scripts and audio clips on websites
- bilingual/multilingual workers – focus groups or information sessions
- Auslan Video Translations.

Planning

Multilingual communication requirements need to be planned based on market research and the use of customer profile data which identifies language spoken, literacy levels, age, gender, communication abilities if the customer has a disability and how recent arrival was in Australia. Planning also includes dissemination strategies and evaluation and feedback mechanisms.

1. Language choices should be based on in-house locally-researched data as well as external data sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census and other demographic data.
2. The choice of media used to communicate with customers also needs to be carefully considered. For example, only 73.7 per cent of people who do not speak English well or at all have access to the internet⁸. Literacy levels as well as some languages not having a written form are also key considerations.

⁸ Department of Immigration and Border Protection (2014) People of Queensland-statistics from the 2011 Census.

3. Checking for cultural appropriateness is a vital part of any multilingual communication strategy and will include feedback on the appropriateness of photography and artwork (e.g. cartoons) as well as language. Lack of awareness of cultural differences can impact the transfer of messages and meaning to the relevant community. Cultural diversity networks may be available to give feedback on a draft multilingual product.
4. Distribution – Ethnic communities, business associations and peak agencies should be included in decisions about information needs, formats and dissemination strategies. Agencies should organise their own networks with the assistance of the Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory and/or with the advice of Multicultural Affairs Queensland, or through contacting services.

Key considerations:

- agencies need to balance the imperatives of getting information to large identified groups with the information requirements of smaller or emerging groups and regional/ isolated communities
- the marketing of government products and services in multilingual form to international destinations requires sensitivity to local acceptability factors. Queensland's multicultural community is an ideal resource for product testing
- ensure that the original source material is written in plain English and is of good quality as this will help ensure a quality translated version
- agencies need to ensure good quality assurance processes for managing the translation project from the procuring of a translator to vetting the final product.

Planning can include professional development of bilingual/multilingual staff to encourage them to attain NAATI accreditation and use their language skills in the workplace.

The following good practice example illustrates how an agency can work with translators to improve the quality of the product provided.

Good practice example:

The Department of Transport and Main Roads uses accredited interpreters and translators. Overseas translations of driving licences are not accepted by the department, which ensures consistency of produced translations is maintained, as well as providing opportunities to local NAATI credentialed translators. In addition, the department communicates its expectations in the area of translating to NAATI which disseminates this information to translators, assisting improving the quality of translations."

AUSIT

Contracting out work

Multilingual material (including translation work) used in any of these strategies should be obtained through professional sources. In Queensland the majority of translation and audio-visual work is contracted out to private organisations. Agencies should ensure that translators are accredited through NAATI.

Organising translations

Using qualified translators provides agencies with more confidence that the product will be accurate, professional and appropriate.

Agencies should engage NAATI accredited translators. NAATI levels of accreditation include Paraprofessional Translator, Professional Translator and Advanced Translator. A NAATI Recognised Translator can be engaged for new and emerging languages in which accredited translators do not exist.

Staff should be aware that translators are accredited either to translate:

- from English to another language, or
- from another language into English.

Verification through a stamp may be required for legal documents, such as translations of birth certificates and driver's licences which are used to prove a person's identity.

The NAATI accredited translators' stamp includes:

- the accreditation level
- the language of accreditation
- NAATI number.

Ensure that you leave enough time for the translation. The translator may need to check with you regarding particular terms or intended meaning and this may increase the time taken for the translation.

It is recommended that translations are either checked by a second translator or tested with the particular language group to ensure the most accurate translation in terms of context and intended message.

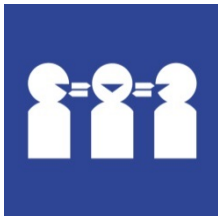
Distributing information

Agencies should consider which distribution methods are most effective for the communities they wish to target.

Options to consider include:

- using ethnic media outlets such as radio station 4EB and community newspapers
- providing information to settlement service providers, ethnic community organisations and peak bodies such as the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland and/ or Deaf Services Queensland (for the hearing impaired and hard of hearing communities).
- visiting the Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory and/or Disability Service Provider information on the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services website (www.communities.qld.gov.au) for contact details for culturally diverse organisations and service providers.
- providing information through local churches, mosques, temples and cultural clubs.

National Interpreter Symbol



The National Interpreter Symbol is a national public information symbol developed as a joint partnership between Australian, state and territory governments. It provides a simple way of indicating where people can ask for language assistance.

The Queensland Government encourages the use of this symbol when distributing information.

More information about the symbol, including artwork and guidelines for use is available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's website at <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Life/Help/National-Interpreter-Symbol>.

Guidelines for data collection and reporting

Agencies are required to report annually on the performance measures identified in the Queensland Language Services Policy. These are:

- Number of clients that require language support for the year.
- Amount spent annually on interpreters engaged by agencies.
- Numbers of occasions interpreters are engaged annually by the agency.

Agencies may also need to collect other data to inform the delivery of culturally responsive services.

Efficient systems can assist agencies to be more responsive to customer needs, identify emerging trends, develop an evidence base so that solutions can be implemented, and save both time and money.

Systems to be considered include:

- interpreter booking systems
- data collection for service usage and customer profile highlighting vulnerable groups
- reporting and feedback systems.

Not all agencies will need to develop extensive systems, however, how interpreters and the services they provide can be better integrated into service delivery for the benefit of customers should be considered by all agencies.

Identification of customer language service needs in the agency

Agencies may need to consider collecting additional data regarding the language needs of customers, including ensuring that:

- ethnicity data collection mechanisms, including country of birth, first language spoken, English proficiency/need for an interpreter and language for which an interpreter is required (is part of agency market research and customer profile descriptors). Cross-linking with other agencies/sections on data is encouraged for a standard approach
- requests for interpreters and languages are recorded
- agency is aware of appropriate mode of interpreting for its customer base (on-site only, telephone only, on-site and telephone, personal computer or site-based video conference)
- agency has installed conference or dual handset telephones in public contact areas and interview rooms
- agency has researched information needs of its non-English speaking customers
- procedure is in place to flag a customer's interpreter needs through agency services (e.g. by noting a customer's file and records)
- procedure is in place to obtain and record feedback from customers on levels of satisfaction in terms of both access to, and quality of, service delivery through the increased engagement of interpreters.

Interpreter use

Agencies may collect data regarding interpreter engagements, cost and languages requested and accreditation status of interpreters. This data can help agencies to budget for future interpreter costs and effectively meet the needs of people who experience language barriers.

Other indicators to inform agencies' performance in working with interpreters includes ensuring that:

- policy, planning and front-line staff are aware of and understand the desirability of working with qualified interpreters for effective communication, and have been trained to do so
- staff members know when to engage qualified interpreters
- procedures are available for staff to obtain interpreters in planned and unplanned (emergency) situations and staff know how to respond to and distribute the Queensland Interpreter Card
- budgeting arrangements have been made for the payment of interpreters by the agency
- policies guide staff not to use friends and relatives as interpreters
- staff are aware that a refusal to provide an interpreter could be potentially discriminatory and understand the importance of qualified interpreters in obtaining informed consent in legal, police, health and other government agency contexts
- funded services are aware of their responsibilities to engage interpreters and the arrangements in place to facilitate this.

Multilingual information planning and management

In multilingual information planning, agencies may consider ensuring:

- communication plans are made before the agency produces multilingual (including English) information for customers with difficulty communicating in English
- choices on media, languages and cultural appropriateness of information and its packaging are based on relevant data
- evaluation of past and present multilingual projects is used as part of planning to inform future information/promotion strategies
- effective dissemination links are in place through ethnic media and community networks
- bilingual staff members are involved in supporting effective information provision to customers.

Integration of language services policy into organisational processes

A culturally responsive service will have integrated the Queensland Language Services Policy with the organisations business processes and activities. Some of the actions that agencies can take to fully integrate the policy include:

- data on languages spoken by customers is used as an important part of building responsive customer services
- language services initiatives including interpreter engagement and multilingual information projects are part of core business planning and budgetary processes
- a register of qualified and non-qualified bilingual/multilingual staff is available and policy exists relating to their role in liaising with culturally diverse communities

- language services-related initiatives (such as providing staff access to NAATI credentials) are incorporated as part of agency enterprise bargaining, Equal Employment Opportunity and selection and recruitment processes
- the agency has centralised its interpreter booking and recording functions where appropriate for greater efficiency in budgeting and data collection
- the agency provides its staff with access to training in cultural capability, diversity, cross-cultural communication, working with interpreters and planning multilingual information strategies as aspects of its management of cultural diversity internally and externally
- the agency has trained its front-line staff in product knowledge for an accurate response in either English or languages other than English (through interpreters) to information requests.

Definitions

Language services

Services provided by agencies which address communication issues affecting people with limited proficiency in English. This may include speakers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Auslan (Australian Sign Language).

Language services include:

- engagement of interpreters via the telephone, videoconference or on-site
- employment of bilingual or multilingual staff
- accreditation of bilingual or multilingual staff
- use of multilingual information strategies.

Interpreter

A person who conveys oral messages, concepts and ideas from one language into another language (including sign language), with a high degree of accuracy, completeness, objectivity and sensitivity to the cultures associated with the languages of expertise.

Qualified interpreters

Range in skills and expertise. In the Language Services Policy, the following credentials are considered qualified interpreters:

- interpreters credentialed by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) at the Professional, Paraprofessional, Interpreter or Conference Interpreter Levels, or with NAATI Recognition
- interpreters credentialed by NAATI in Auslan and as Deaf Interpreters
- conference interpreters who are members of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC)
- interpreters with tertiary level qualifications in interpreting.

Translator

A person who makes a written transfer of a written message or information from one language into another language to provide complete and accurate text reflecting the original material.

NAATI levels of accreditation include Paraprofessional Translator, Professional Translator and Advanced Translator. A NAATI Recognised Translator can be engaged for new and emerging languages in which accredited translators do not exist.

Staff should be aware that translators are accredited either to translate:

- from English into another language, or
- from another language into English.

Bilingual/multilingual staff

People who are fluent in two or more languages but their language skills have not been formally assessed. They should not be employed in the capacity of a qualified interpreter and thus are not expected to provide interpreting services as described above. They can act as liaison for the culturally diverse communities (e.g. provide information directly in languages other than English or limited cultural advice). The community sector also employs bilingual workers to provide specialised information services and/or personal assistance within targeted communities.

Multilingual information management

Planning and developing information in languages appropriate for a customer group to meet their information needs. Information is provided in English and in languages other than English.

Queensland Interpreter Card

Assists non-English speakers to inform Queensland Government agency staff that they require an interpreter. The card is similar in size and quality to a business card and identifies the language for which an interpreter is required. Multicultural Affairs Queensland distributes this card. More information on the cards, including how to order them, is available on the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services website <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/multicultural/policy-and-governance/queensland-interpreter-card>.

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI)

The national standards and certifying body for translators and interpreters in Australia. The following explains how NAATI credentials work.

- **Accreditation**

Where there is sufficient community demand for a language, NAATI provides a number of pathways to become an accredited interpreter.

- **Recognition**

Where there is low community demand for a language and no accreditation available, NAATI provides a recognition credential.⁹

Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT)

The national independent association for the translating and interpreting profession. Members of AUSIT are mainly practising translators and interpreters and membership is voluntary.

AUSIT has a number of guides available on its website which may provide more information on working with interpreters and arranging for translations, http://www.ausit.org/AUSIT/About/Ethics_Conduct/Best_Practices/AUSIT/About/Best_Practices.aspx?hkey=655cd37a-1bad-4948-96c4-d06539c16968.

⁹ NAATI provides 12 months for Recognised interpreters to obtain accreditation after a test is introduced for a language.

The Australian Sign Language Interpreter Association (ASLIA)

The national peak organisation representing the needs and interests of Auslan/English interpreters and Deaf Interpreters (DIs) in Australia.

Agencies

Under the Queensland Language Services Policy, Queensland Government agencies are defined as:

- all Queensland government departments*, and
- government organisations that were covered by the preceding Language Services Policy**.

*Including non-government organisations that are funded to deliver services on behalf of those departments (funded services).

**These include Hospital and Health Services, TAFE Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

Further information

- The International Standard ISO 13611: Interpreting – Guidelines for community interpreting, defines an extensive range of concepts and terms relating to community interpreting.
- The International Standard ISO 17100:2015 Translation services – Requirements for translation services, includes core processes and resources for the delivery of quality translation services.

Contact

Multicultural Affairs Queensland

Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

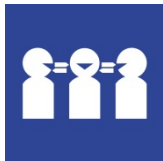
Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

Fax: 3224 5691

Web: www.communities.qld.gov.au

Postal: GPO Box 806 BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: MAQ@communities.qld.gov.au



Do you need an interpreter?

If you need an interpreter call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450** and request to be transferred to Multicultural Affairs Queensland on **13 74 68**.

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