

National Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 11, Number 4, December 2003.

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From the President



For the first time in the history of AUSIT, a Presidential election was held during the National AGM in Canberra. Many saw this event as the sign of a vibrant and evolving organisation.

Already, AUSIT has much to be proud of. Over the years, struggling with limited funds and skills, successive dedicated volunteers have progressively taken it in the right direction.

As a professional association keen to be the driving and defining force of the T&I Profession, AUSIT has work to do. Fortunately, the enthusiasm that was palpable in Canberra left us all optimistic that we can accomplish more in that direction and that we can build on the work of the outgoing National Council and Executive, who deserve our sincere thanks for their achievements.

During my term as President, my main objectives will be to develop our resources, to enhance our position and to promote professional standards and the recognition of those standards, in order to improve prospects for our members.

Professional Development, of course, has a prime position in the achievement of these objectives and I hope that all branches pursue it as actively as they did last year, under the guidance of our new Vice-President, Annamaria Arnall. One new

focus will be the development of workshops on ethics. Often requested by our members, these courses will show our commitment to the continuous improvement of standards and will enhance the image of our profession.

In Canberra, a new Committee was formally set up to promote and to raise awareness on the issues of pay and working conditions for interpreters. An impressive amount of research and advocacy is providing a fresh base for action. In his portfolio as Immediate Past President, Moreno Giovannoni will bring to the Committee his extensive knowledge of the issues and his experience of the players. I shall make myself available to promote their work.

With less than 5% of the membership actively involved in the concrete work of AUSIT, our pace will remain slow and laborious, unless the involvement of our volunteers can be expanded and backed with regular support and funding. Promoting our association to practitioners, industry stakeholders and clients of T&I aims to help us obtain appropriate financial support for our activities. Our new Treasurer, Louis Vorstermans, will watch over the financial process and enhance management practices at branch and national level.

In recent months, AUSIT members have been reflecting on the attributes that define professionalism in T & I. Whilst

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From the President

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sharing some goals, such as regular practice and professional development, with the recently released NAATI Re-accreditation proposal*, sections of the membership have spoken for reform, for more autonomy and for a need to move away from a single system of professional recognition. At the time of writing, these ideas are still being developed and I have planned a series of consultations with other stakeholders. I encourage members to take part in the discussions held on the e-Bulletin or to write to me privately to share their views, so we can put forward a representative position on this pivotal issue.

Finally, I would like to encourage all members to support their branch committees and to make themselves available to help from time to time. We will progress faster if we all contribute.

**Yveline Piller
President**

* Available under 'What's New' on the NAATI website: www.naati.com.au

The national newsletter team would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed items or assisted with production of the newsletter in 2003. Thank you, also, to all who have offered your ideas and kind words of support and encouragement.

Please continue to send your contributions and feedback to the Editor. December – January can sometimes be a “slack” period for many T/Is, so why not use the time to write an article for the newsletter? The next issue will be published in March and the contributions deadline is Friday 13 February 2004 (just as well we're not superstitious!)

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The regional administrators, Tineke Millard (Northern Region) and David Connor (Southern Region), will be happy to assist you with membership inquiries / renewals and all other administrative matters.

Interpreters and Translators Planning for Success

by Czesia Chwasta



I have conducted several 'Planning for Success' workshops for AUSIT over the past 16 months, aimed at expanding the business skills of interpreters and

translators.

Success for interpreters and translators requires excellence not only in technical skills, but business aspects such as planning, marketing and selling. These business aspects may not come as readily as the technical skills.

What are your personal values and vision for your future? What are the mission, vision and values for your Interpreting and Translating business? Even though you usually are your business, planning for your business needs to be quite separate for it to reach its potential. How do you plan for your business?

You may be your business but your interpreting and translating qualifications and skills are only the

Customers, especially prospective customers, need to feel that you are interested in their needs.

beginning in establishing yourself. You may be truly professional, and stand out in your field, but if the market is not aware of 'who you are', 'what you do', 'how well you do it' and 'why you do it better than others' - so what? Who is going to want your services if you don't let it be known the 'who, what etc' about you and your business activities?

Many interpreters and translators may not feel comfortable with marketing and selling themselves. Those that make the effort to try to match what they can offer to the individual and specific needs of the market are usually well rewarded. To be successful, you need to know what your market, or potential customers, want - and will pay for.

How do you find out what existing and/or potential customers want and would pay for? ASK them! For your market research, upon which the rest of your marketing will be based, prepare a questionnaire and K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple and Short). Think carefully about what you really need to know and keep the number of questions to a minimum, say 6 - 8. You may require a different questionnaire for potential and existing private customers, for example, or larger corporate and

smaller individual customers.

Marketing and selling takes time and planning, time that is often difficult to allocate amongst day-to-day activities. However, remember the old saying:

'If you fail to plan - you plan to fail'.

Once business cards have been obtained and maybe brochures, the waiting begins ... waiting for others (often third parties) to bring work. Certainly, there is some work that is usually only obtained through agencies e.g. government work. However there are substantial sectors of private enterprise that are potential customers, but these do vary, depending on the English speaking business activities of individual countries.

Let's say you undertake market research, from which you may compile a list of prospective customers. Now what? You have to sell yourself. If it's an organisation that you need to approach, you will need to make an appointment over the telephone i.e. you need to 'sell' an appointment to the decision maker who would be in the position to give you business.

Do you know exactly what you will

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Newsletter Contacts and Editorial Policy

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Particular thanks are also due to David Connor for his assistance in liaising with the printers.

Contributions deadline for next issue: 13 February 2004

Please send all contributions to the Editor

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The AUSIT national newsletter is published four times a year. Letters to the Editor, short articles and items for the calendar of events and other sections are invited. The Editor reserves the right not to publish or to edit any item submitted for publication. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or of AUSIT or its executive.

Value - add your Work but Don't be Greedy!

by Margaret Tedeschi

Translation agencies and translators - no matter how good or bad the relationship between the two, the obvious reality is that one really cannot live without the other for too long. Therefore, a certain level of respect is needed on both sides to forge a lasting working relationship.

An important factor to remember is that translators should concentrate on what they do best - that is, translating. Typesetting should not be part and parcel of the job request from the translation agency; it should be left to professional typesetters who have the expertise in this area. How many times have I heard translators complaining that to 'win' a translation job they are prepared to typeset the document without payment? By the way, do not be under the grand illusion that the agency is not getting recompensed for any typesetting provided by their translators - they are definitely getting paid!

Translators who provide typesetting should also be aware of the possible litigation associated when using illegal software. At the moment, there is a \$5,000.00 'finder's fee' for anyone willing to provide a name and address of a person who is using illegal software to the appropriate authorities. A translator who is providing typesetting by using illegal software can also be sued by the manufacturer of the software simply for having only one illegal font face on their computer. All it takes is for one individual to have a dislike or to be jealous of another translator to put them out of business.

Every typesetter needs to ensure that they have legalised ALL of their software. That means that every font face and every software application and operating system needs to be purchased from the

As a translator/typesetter do you have professional indemnity insurance?

manufacturer and you must also be able to provide proof of purchase.

The typesetter must also be aware of the following:

If you have provided typesetting, does your client/agency 'sign-off' that the typesetting is correct? If not, you may find that once the job has gone to print, the client may find that they do not like the look of the job, the font used etc. Therefore, you as the typesetter can be sued for the printing costs and don't presume that the agency will handle all your legal responsibilities. If you have been assured by the agency that this is the case, do

Just because you have a computer does not mean you are a designer or typesetter - after all, try telling that to a designer who has spent at least four years studying the concept at university.

you have this in writing and has a contract been signed off by the managing director of that agency?

As a translator/typesetter do you have professional indemnity insurance? Think about it, although it's

probably one of the most expensive insurances you can take out.

Do you as the translator provide typesetting, design or is it just copy-fitting? Be aware of what skills you may claim to have. Copy-fitting is simply being given the space to insert your translation and the translator pops the translated text into the space provided. You are not typesetting the text to fit the design of the original version.

Let me explain the abilities of a professional typesetter. They are able to: identify typefaces and sizing of type, understand the X-height of type, distinguish the dimension and comparisons of type and spacing, display, mix typefaces, pick a similar typeface across various languages, design first lines of paragraphs, display of headings and sub-heads, achieve emphasis, know how to indicate text types on layouts, identify proofreader's marks, etc. Just because you have a computer does not mean you are a designer or typesetter - after all, try telling that to a designer who has spent at least four years studying the concept at university.

However, one of my biggest frustrations is the agencies who recommend to their clients to have 'back-translations' done to ensure that the translation is correct. Any person in the language industry knows that this is just a money-making deal that certain agencies push. After all, there are big bucks involved in back-translations. Unfortunately, it's usually the government departments who fall victim to this idea as they have been conditioned to believe that this is their only

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Parliament Hosts Inaugural Visit By Chinese President

by Charles Qin

“When you go to the well to draw water, remember who dug the well”, said Simon Crean in his address to the Parliament to welcome President Hu. He was, of course, using an old Chinese proverb to refer to the ground-breaking work of the Labor Party thirty years earlier and the historic visit by Gough Whitlam to China when he established Diplomatic Relations with the People’s Republic of China in 1972. Luckily for me, I remembered the old saying and thus was able to render it immediately into Chinese drawing nods of appreciation from President Hu.

China is Australia’s fastest growing market and the largest source of overseas students

I was very honoured to have been asked to interpret the speeches both in Parliament House and at the State Banquet in honour of President Hu’s visit on October 24th. It was a lucky stroke for me and my colleague Mei Hua Yao to be engaged as the interpreters by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; fellow member and colleague Peter Barker, who would normally officiate at such functions, was tied up with another ministerial-level visit, thus enabling me, as it has been reported, to make history by providing the first simultaneous interpreting ever in an Australian Parliament.

I also worked as an interpreter for the visit by President Jiang Zemin in 1999. To me, a Chinese, to have

witnessed both visits first hand, I feel tremendously privileged, but somehow this one was special. Parliament House is a sacred place and a Chinese Presidential visit a rare honour. The House of Representatives chamber was overflowing as both senators and MPs joined forces; galleries were packed and security tight. Many of you saw the occasion unfold on television – it was a jubilant event – a great speech delivered by President Hu seeking common ground – highlighting the complementarities of our economies and the immense potential for cooperation – China is Australia’s fastest growing market and the largest source of overseas students; while also not holding back on some thorny issues such as human rights, the issue of Iraq and the UN, and the one-China policy position on Taiwan. He also appeared to shock many attendees when he reminded us that the famous Ming Dynasty Admiral Zheng He had visited Australia in the 15th century and even at this early stage, enjoyed friendly exchanges with the aborigines.

The logistics of the event were precisely orchestrated – ably managed by Ms Julie Yeend, head of the ceremonial and hospitality branch in the PM’s Department. A sound-proof booth had been constructed in the top gallery directly opposite the Speaker’s Chair and providing a bird’s eye view, had I had the time to soak it up. The booth only had room for two interpreters and it was actually closed before the session for security reasons – the first time I have experienced this. Ms Dai Qingli, President Hu’s interpreter, and I shared the booth for the hour of

speeches. The President was welcomed by the speaker, Kevin Andrew, who then invited Prime Minister Howard to speak. As is well known, the Prime Minister writes his own material, or more often speaks off the cuff. I had been provided with some speaking notes at the briefing on the previous afternoon, however quickly abandoned these as the PM digressed. He spoke of the trebling of bilateral trade since 1996 and stressed the importance of stability in the region and the close relationship with China; he referred to ‘Chinese’ being the most spoken foreign language in Australia and China our third largest trading partner. Opposition Leader Crean, on the other hand, had a carefully crafted speech drawing on the history of the relationship, reminding us that it was the Labor Party that made it all possible and highlighting the presence in the gallery of one of the early well-diggers, Gough Whitlam; unfortunately a copy of the speech had not been provided to me, so my only ‘text’ was the words spoken.

Ms Dai’s simultaneous interpreting involved synchronising a beautifully translated speech with her leader’s words and such challenging tongue twisters as ‘international vicissitudes’, ‘mutual emulation and assimilation’ and ‘cultural pluralism’.

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AUSIT SA/NT Branch Enterprise Bargaining Progress Report

by Nella Schulz

One of the many aspects that I think AUSIT should be addressing with enthusiasm is that of remuneration. All too often we hear complaints about the lack of pay for a professional service but we seem to have no united support when it comes to taking action. It seems that it is OK for products to have recommended retail prices and for some professions to have recommended scales of charges but AUSIT has been reluctant to confront the issue.

I sincerely believe that if you feel strongly about an issue, instead of standing back and complaining, it is far better to get involved in the issue. This is my small contribution towards my concerns relating to remuneration.

Clearly the process is proving to be a very complex one with many parties needing to work together to achieve a fair outcome for interpreters and translators.

Background Information

The Interpreting and Translating Centre (ITC) is a major employer of translators and interpreters in South Australia. They claim to have up to 300 casual employees on contract. Since 1995 full-time and casual translators and interpreters have been part of an Enterprise Bargaining (EB) process with ITC. Negotiations commenced on 22 August 2003.

Establishing the Facts

Early in the year I made enquiries with the Public Service Association (PSA) regarding representation for the ITC's casual T/Is at EB negotiations this year. The response was

that they were unable to do so because ITC casual T/Is constituted only 3 or 4 PSA members (about 1%) out of a possible 300. I am one of those members. We now have a few more casual T/I PSA members.

Casual T/Is had only received the pro rata 10% increase over 2 years which had been awarded to the full-time Public Service employees, because we had not asked for anything different via representation at the EB negotiations.

Knowing how difficult it would be to persuade ITC casuals to either join the PSA or AUSIT, I approached the Employee Ombudsman Office for advice and to see if they would be able to represent us at the coming EB together with AUSIT. The reply was 'yes' they, AUSIT and the PSA could jointly be part of the EB negotiations but we would have to have either the AUSIT membership numbers who were also ITC casual employees and/or the written consent from those casuals to represent them, which equated to 50+% of these casual employees.

ITC agreed to circulate to their casuals T/Is AUSIT's letter about EB, which had a return slip to indicate consent to AUSIT and ombudsman representation, a copy of AUSIT's and PSA's membership application forms, and AUSIT's brochure. AUSIT's membership together with the acceptance slips were not sufficient to make up the 50+% required. We were approximately 70 short of the required number to be accepted in the rounds of negotiations. Remember that some of those who received

the circular may work very few hours for ITC.

In April one of our colleagues asked for accurate details of how our wages were calculated as he felt, from the information he had, that we were not receiving the 20% loading for casual employees. (I am still pursuing this issue via the PSA.) Our pay slips do not clearly indicate what our rates are or what component is the current 20% loading.

In May I requested information from the Office for the Commissioner of Public Employment (OPCE) regarding the stream and level of Public Service salary we ITC casual T/Is are connected to. The information provided confirmed that we are linked with ASO3 – administrative stream – which has 3 salary levels. I had also asked them to provide written information detailing how our wages were calculated, i.e. which of the three ASO3 levels we are equated to; what percentage we had forgone in 1997 (about 10% over 2 years); then with the 20% casual loading, how much was our rate of pay?

After countless telephone calls and e-mails, I eventually got a response in early July, but OCPE failed to give the very information I had requested to have in writing. A further telephone call gave me vague verbal information that: 'historically the professional level was connected to the top ASO3 level, and the paraprofessionals were connected to the lower ASO2 level'.

Industry Issues

Towards Preparing a Submission

Our PSA representative had previously mentioned that we were part of the general Public Service casuals, and that we were the only Public Service casual employees being engaged for a two-hour minimum instead of the regular three-hour minimum. This puzzled me so I wrote a request to clarify whether ITC casuals were part of the Public Service Parity Agreement or whether they had a separate agreement as had been the case in 1997, and I think, in 1999 because of our 'special circumstances'. I felt that if ITC casuals were part of the Public Service Parity Agreement, then we should not need to seek the 50+% representation from our sector for EB representation.

The PSA looked into the matter and finally another AUSIT colleague and I met with a PSA employee for an explanation.

We were told that we were Public Servants and part of the Public Service Parity Agreement and therefore did not need to seek 50+% representation from our sector.

However, we would need to write to the PSA General Secretary with a submission for EB and request that they strongly argue/negotiate on behalf of our sector of Public Service casual employees.

Preparing a Submission

A submission was prepared and submitted to the PSA General Secretary with AUSIT SA Branch sanction. We have been advised to keep the final details of our submission confidential at this stage.

We would not have been able to seek a separate EB agreement as a demarcation via AUSIT and the Employee Ombudsman without the

50+% representation, which we did not have. Both ITC and the PSA have told us that even a casual T/I who may work one hour a year is still considered to be a Public Service casual employee who must be part of the consenting for EB representation numbers.

As it turns out we now have the PSA representing us at EB. We were also informed that not all Public Service casual employees were engaged for a three-hour minimum, but that the majority were.

ITC Contracts

Some of us queried why ITC casuals needed to sign separate yearly contracts with their employer if we were Public Servants. The PSA informed us that all Public Servants have to sign a separate work contract with their employer. In fact, the work contracts we signed prior to officially becoming Public Servants were considerably different, lengthier and more detailed. Multicultural SA informed me that prior to 2000, ITC casuals were contracted under the SA Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Act 1980, and since July 2000, under the Public Service Management Act 1995.

In conclusion

All these enquiries have been a learning experience for me and for AUSIT, but at least we are finally being represented. As negotiations proceed, I will be having ongoing consultation with the PSA and if the issues are not confidential I will keep you informed.

At the time of writing this report there is nothing I can tell you, other than the process has started and that the PSA has agreed to present our submission and argue for our claims.

As a matter of interest, the PSA have said they will charge all non-PSA members \$750 for their work and representation at EB negotiations. They might consider proportional charge for casuals compared with full-time employees. They would be prepared to enforce this payment through the Small Claims Court and claim to be legally able to do so at State level. It would be far cheaper to become a member of the PSA at a cost of \$55 including GST.

If nothing else I feel I am untangling a giant cobweb.

Thank you

I would like to sincerely thank all who have made positive and constructive comments and suggestions, and colleagues who returned Representation Slips with comments and support. I would like to thank the AUSIT SA/NT Branch Committee and in particular, Andrea Hoffmann, Thomas Kruckemeyer, and John Hallett, and Ian Peake, Nev Kitchin and Dolly Costello (PSA), James McCabe (Employee Ombudsman's Office), Adrian Watson (OCPE) and Erricos Neophytou (ITC).

Nella Schulz BA (Int/Trans, NAATI Prof)

AUSIT EB Representative

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SIGN LANGUAGE

In Europe there are 44 different sign languages, mother tongue for some 1.6 million deaf people. This enormous diversity makes it financially impossible to protect them all as "minority languages", leading the Council of Europe to suggest that they need to be "harmonised". *Dick W. Speekman*

A Question of Competence

by Harry Blackmore



When faced with a new assignment, translators and interpreters ask themselves if it is within their level of

competence to produce a good result. This self-assessment is particularly desirable for newly accredited and relatively inexperienced workers.

The AUSIT Code of Ethics states that "Interpreters and translators shall undertake only work which they are competent to perform in the language areas for which they are 'accredited' or 'recognised' by NAATI."

Consider the following commonly-encountered scenario:

As an independent, freelance interpreter, you have been asked by a client to act as an interpreter in a legal action. There is no other interpreter immediately available and you are unfamiliar with court procedures and legal terminology. Your client stresses the importance of the case and persuasively urges you to accept this assignment.

What may you do?

What may happen if you proceed to

interpret for your client and, before long, you regret accepting the task? What may happen if you misinterpret a crucial part of the evidence?

What may you do?

- (i) Decline the interpreting assignment - Quote Code of Practice 3(a)(i) - and
- (ii) Recommend an appropriately experienced interpreter be sought instead
- (iii) Accept the assignment on condition of right to withdraw - Code 3(b)(i)
- (iv) Research legal procedure and terminology beforehand - Code 3(b)(ii), 3(c), 1(c)(ii)
- (v) Advise both parties of your conditional decision

What may happen?

- (i) Acknowledge incapacity to proceed further and offer to withdraw - Code 3(b)(i)
- (ii) If you continue and misinterpret and your client loses the case, as a result
- (iii) You may be held liable for any acts of negligence, or
- (iv) You may be liable for breach of contract - Code 3(a)(ii)

A self-employed (independent, freelance) interpreter is personally liable for any acts of negligence. Client may sue interpreter for negligence, and interpreter must pay any damages awarded by court. (Hence wise to have professional indemnity insurance!)

A self-employed interpreter may also be liable to client for breach of contract. That is, by accepting the assignment there is an implicit declaration of competence and this constitutes a contract (oral or written) - Code of Practice 3(a)(ii). Any failure to exercise due care and skill in the performance of these duties is a breach of an express or implied term of the contract.

See chapter 13 (Legal Liability of the Interpreter for Negligence) in Ludmilla Robinson's Handbook for Legal Interpreters (ISBN 0 455 21225 2).

Dr. Harry Blackmore is a senior consultant psychiatrist, lecturer in Deaf Studies and NAATI examiner in Auslan. He was national convener of the 1995 revision of the AUSIT Code of Ethics.

Career Change - Found in Translation

by Julie-Anne O'Hogan

"Translating and interpreting is a natural industry for Australia and there are growing opportunities to provide services to Europe, for instance, by doing overnight translations. Membership of the Australian Institute for Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) has grown 40 per cent in the past two years. The body represents about 760 specialists who speak some 60 languages.

"Over the past decade, working conditions have declined as demands of the job have increased," says AUSIT president Yveline Piller, "For example, community interpreters are often offered casual rates of \$25 per hour."

(...) AUSIT is negotiating minimum pay and standards for translators. (...)

from the Sydney Morning Herald, 12/11/2003

Branch News

Australian Capital Territory

For the past two months the ACT Committee has been entirely engaged in preparing for the National AGM held in Canberra on 25 October.

Our next preoccupation will be to plan a PD program through to the middle of 2004, and we hope to complete a large part of that planning at our Committee meeting on 22 November.

Our membership now stands at 43 (four more than at the start of the month).

Mike Ovington, Chair
09.10.2003

New South Wales

The new committee:

The NSW branch committee constituted itself at its first meeting on 17 September 2003. Terry Chesher gave a brief overview of the duties that need to be carried out. The two "veterans" of last years' committee, Uli Priester and Christian Houlemare, volunteered for chairman and secretary respectively. Andrew Bean agreed to act as a secretary during Chris' absence overseas - apart from that he is looking into how the profession can be promoted effectively to industry. Bess Wang courageously took on the position of treasurer and has already received an induction on reporting from Vince Danilo, our previous national treasurer. Committee member Rosana di Giorgio is involved in teaching T&I at Macquarie Uni and may well provide a conduit for the NSW branch in cooperating more with universities and TAFE. Paul Sinclair, a former NAATI CEO and founding member of AUSIT, keeps working towards achieving a higher profile and greater recognition for

the profession. He is interested in aligning AUSIT with "Professions Australia", an association of smaller professions which lobbies on behalf of its members. Terry offered to continue working for AUSIT, with Ludmila Stern (Uni of NSW), following the Bar Association's invitation to participate in their Continuing Professional Development, to continue liaison with the Health Care Interpreter Service and to contribute to the Macquarie University course in Interpreting Skills for Languages of Limited Diffusion.

Events

Our member Bob Desiatnik organised a St Jerome's picnic day at Milson's Park on 21 September - two large tables were taken up by members who turned up, excellent weather, great food and a lot of interesting conversations made the picnic a most enjoyable occasion.

On 1 October Macquarie University's School of Linguistics organised a joint event with the branch. Professor Martin Forstner (Univ. of Mainz, Germansheim), President of CIUTI (Conférence Internationale d'Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes) and Professor Hannelore Lee Jahnke (School of Translation and Interpretation, Univ. of Geneva) spoke about recent developments in teaching translation at their respective institutions.

Prof. Jahnke explained, among many other things, that her students get to translate actual commercial work obtained by the school at the end of their course, an idea which caused a fair few eyebrows to be raised in the audience.

Prof. Forstner spoke about bi-

lingualism and bi-culturality, terms that sometimes disguise a massive imbalance in the true competence of persons in the two areas. He mentioned migrant children who are very competent in everything relating to family life in the language and culture of their parents (but not a lot outside that field), while in their "second" language and culture they have great competence in everything else but know only bare essentials about family life matters. Prof. Forstner also spoke at length about economic and commercial aspects of translation which he thought were not being given enough attention in teaching the profession.

At the end of the lectures, the organiser of this great event, Eddie Ronowicz from the Macquarie School of Linguistics, expressed interest in organising more joint events with AUSIT - an interest which is wholeheartedly reciprocated.

Preparation for the National AGM

Discussions were held about the future direction of AUSIT and the issues that will be central at branch level during the term of this committee. It was agreed that the branch wants to focus on PD, raising the profile of the profession and supporting the membership category reform. Uli Priester represented the branch at the meetings before and after the AGM (due to Barbara McGilvray's absence overseas) and put these issues forward on the branch's behalf.

Uli Priester, Chair
13.11.2003

Queensland

From the sunny state (soon hot and sticky) QLD, state of affairs as

at 13 November 2003:

Several AUSIT members participated in the steering committee planning for NAATI's Interpreter Awareness Day. QLD's "ethnic" radio, 4EB, came on board offering to broadcast interviews with interpreters on St Jerome's day, 30 September.

A script was prepared by the group and interpreters from about 15 languages of higher volume of use by the QLD community were chosen to tape 5 minute interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to create awareness of the need for using properly qualified interpreters, the entitlement of non-English speaking Australian residents to use interpreters when dealing with government agencies, and of course, some hints on how to seek NAATI accreditation. All scripts were translated into the corresponding languages, after editing by each interpreter for cultural nuances.

AUSIT was also promoted during these interviews with the aim of creating some "brand recognition" across the community of listeners of the radio station. It was a very good example of how 2 organisations working for the profession can maximise their efforts by working in collaboration.

The QLD Branch would like to thank the outgoing National Committee for their enthusiasm, dedication and achievements and to welcome the new Committee. We will have our welcome translated into personal handshakes and hugs when Yveline Piller, AUSIT's new President, visits our State the second week of November.

Yveline has not wasted any time and has already been in contact with the QLD Branch for networking purposes and arranging "official" visits with stakeholders of the profession locally in the state.

As the year is winding down, the QLD Branch would like to wish everyone a great end-of-year and happy celebrations of the season. Stay safe and be happy.

*Patricia Avila, Branch Secretary
13.11.2003*

South Australia / Northern Territory

Wordfast Demonstration

The first event organised by the new committee was a Wordfast Demonstration held on 5 November at TAFE. The speaker was Andrea Hoffmann, the AUSIT SA/NT Chair. The committee's new PD coordinator, Kayoko Todd, did a marvellous job booking the venue, writing the flyers and getting them out to members and non-members before the event. On the night of the seminar she organised and set up the necessary equipment so that everything went smoothly. The seminar itself was to give participants an idea as to what Wordfast does, how it works and who could benefit from using it. After the brief overview followed a practical demonstration on the laptop so that participants saw how the program is installed, set up and how to do a translation with it. The translation of the Christmas cookies was a hit, and participants were getting hungry. Unfortunately there were no samples. The Q&A session was lively with a lot of very interesting questions. Overall the event can be considered a success.

End-of-year gathering – December

Time to meet and have fun! Wrap up another busy year. Come and meet fellow translators & interpreters. Date and venue yet to be confirmed. Let us know if you have a great idea as to what you would like us to organise for this event.

Plans for next year

Your SA/NT committee has a few ideas up their sleeves but we need to confirm the speakers first. So we will not let the cat out of the bag yet. Do contact us if you have suggestions for future events. We are here for you. We would like you to give us some feedback.

In closing we would like to thank our members for their support and wish you all a very happy and successful New Year!

*Your AUSIT SA/NT Committee
06.11.2003*

Victoria / Tasmania

It has been a very busy 2 months for the new committee since the branch election. Six members from the committee attended the National AGM in Canberra and I am happy to report that we are still the biggest branch in terms of numbers and activities. At the National Council planning meeting we also volunteered to host the next AGM with a conference in 2004. However, the main focus for the committee is still on our branch and the committee members have been working tirelessly on planning the activities for the upcoming year. Here are some highlights:

- End of Year Party – a major event which will be held at the Immigration Museum on Friday 12th December. We have His Honour Justice Alistair Nicholson from the Family Court of Australia as our guest speaker. The invitation is on its way, so keep an eye out for it!
- Our calendar of events for 2004 which will be launched at our End of Year Party is full of interesting topics and speakers. Stress management for Interpreters, Advanced Translation Software, Communication Analysis for Interpreters, Ethical Issues for Interpreters & Translators to

mention a few!

AUSIT Vic/Tas committee representatives are also sitting on several external committees and here is a quick update:

- **Court Users Forum:** The Melbourne Magistrate Court is often a very busy court with interpreters. AUSIT Vic/Tas recently asked if the court could set aside a room for interpreters. The Court has agreed to look into it.
- **DIMIA Working Group:** AUSIT Vic/Tas has worked together with all parties on The Interpreter Fact Sheet and it is now ready for distribution to government agencies which use language services.
- **Interpreter Mental Health Training and Debriefing Working Group:** this working group is looking at specialised training and specific support for interpreters working in the mental health area.

The AUSIT Vic/Tas committee is still looking for a member with good organisational and minute taking skills to take on the role of Secretary as the position is still vacant.

We value your comment and contribution and are always looking for more volunteers. Please contact AUSIT Vic/Tas Committee PO Box 1070 Blackburn North VIC 3130 or send an e-mail to The Chairperson: Sarina Phan at sarinaphan@yahoo.com.au

We look forward to a wonderful year growing the AUSIT Vic/Tas branch, and ensuring it goes from strength to strength!

Sarina Phan, Chair
09.11.2003

Western Australia

Many of the WA branch committee members have been travelling overseas for the past few months:

Younghi Newman, Chair; Annamaria Arnall, Vice-Chair, Michela Clavenzani-Wilkins and Judy Zhao. Also, there's a mini baby boom in the West: Barbara's baby Thomas was born in July while Yutaka is expecting his in a few week's time. As a result, it has been a little quiet for the past few months.

We did manage to hold a "Networking and Whingeing as We Munch" barbecue in late September. The day was unusually warm and sunny for the time of the year and the event was well supported by members.

Consultations with State Government's Office of Multicultural Interests in regard to state language services are continuing. Diana Rodriguez took care of the matter in Younghi's absence.

With most of the committee members back from overseas, we are looking forward to starting working together as a team again.

Lastly, but by no means least, we would like to congratulate Annamaria Arnall, who was elected Vice President of AUSIT last month. Good on you, Annamaria! We're sure you will make an invaluable contribution to us.

Your WA Branch Committee

National Council

The 2003 National AGM was held on 25 October in Canberra. A new national executive was elected and the names of the office holders are listed in Who's Who elsewhere in this newsletter. The constitutional amendment (agenda item 5) to allow a presidential election and the motion to set up a pay and conditions subcommittee (agenda item 7) were both passed. The minutes of the AGM are available in the members' section of the website: www.ausit.org

Over the last few months, National Council has admitted the following people to AUSIT membership or associate membership:

Legha Zareh, Beverley Jacobs, Graciela Critelli, Gurcharan Singh, Daniel Muller, Yasumi Tebecis, Wolfgang Bechstein, Luca Ferrerio, Annette Boon, Robert Crouch, Radojka Banjac, Wiebke Eikholt, Barbara Mountjouris, Natalia Chernishova-Simoes, Mirela Franjic, Krishna Gopal Anand, Rita Wilson, John Velez, Nick Fazio, Michael Golding, Peter Ryan, Mirjana Simjanovska, Sultan Dogan, Richard Wong, Nang Nguyen, Khin Maung Latt, Jose Pereira, Charlie Anderson, Eliane Harrison, Lingling Holloway, Jalal Uddin, Stephanie Smee.

Congratulations and a warm welcome to all our new members.

Do you ever feel isolated in your work as a T/I? Would you like to be able to ask for advice or opinions from colleagues, or share your concerns? Do you ever wonder what AUSIT is doing and how debates and developments in the T&I industry may affect your work? Then subscribe to the AUSIT e-Bulletin. Simply send a blank e-mail message to: AUSIT-eBulletin-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to be able to exchange news and views with hundreds of colleagues throughout Australia and beyond.

Letters to the Editor

In “*Interpreting Police Interviews*” (June 2003 Newsletter), Dr Harry Blackmore raises some ethical questions about interpreting in Police interviews. I would like to suggest that there are few quandaries here at all and the position is clear.

Dr Blackmore asked what should happen if a Police interview is taped and it turns out that the interpreting by the Police interpreter was sub-standard.

The Code of Ethics is subject to the law. It is merely a contractual document and is subject to the laws of the States and Commonwealth, whether statutory or unwritten.

Everyone in Australia has a right to the protection of the law and to a fair criminal trial. Therefore the suggested quandaries do not arise. Once the interpreter realises that the Police interpreting was defective he should suggest to the client that the client’s lawyer retain the interpreter to provide an expert opinion on the accuracy of the Police interpreting.

Ensuring that the Police interpretation is accurate is a basic part of the lawyer’s preparation of his case. It could even be crucial to the result. For example in a receiving case, if the suspect is asked whether he “knew” that the goods he received were stolen, it would be critical to know whether the correct translation is that he knew them to be stolen or merely that he suspected that they were stolen. Any lawyer worth his salt would immediately obtain a check opinion on the correctness of the Police interpreting.

The next step is that the interpreter will be retained by the lawyer to provide his opinion on the correctness of the Police interpreting. Here there is no occasion to beat

around the bush. If the Police have inaccurately interpreted the statements the interpreter must say so. The accuracy of the interpretation may well determine whether someone is convicted and goes to prison. In the normal course of events the lawyer will provide the Police with a copy of the interpreter’s opinion and the Police interpreter will either back down or stick to his guns. If the discrepancy is important both interpreters may end up giving evidence before the jury. There is nothing distasteful about that.

It is a complete misconception to think that the video has been provided to the suspect on a “confidential” basis. Like any Police interviewee he is provided with a copy of his interview video. He can supply it to his lawyer and expert witnesses in any way he sees fit.

It is essentially for the lawyer to take the case further, not the interpreter. If the Police interpreter insists that his interpretation is correct, the lawyer may well seek opinions from one, two or even ten more interpreters to show that the Police version is wrong. But the interpreter needs to keep out of this.

Anyone can make a complaint about the Police administration. But it is probably better to leave that to the lawyers. They will decide whether the error made by the Police interpreter was merely inadvertent or more sinister.

There is no such thing as “quashing” a Police interview. The interview happened. Whether it was correctly interpreted by the Police will be a matter for the jury to determine if the Police interpreter refuses to back down.

The niceties of the Code of Ethics work well in a normal commercial transaction. However in a criminal case there are important fundamental rights which take precedence. As I have attempted to point out, an accused person has a basic right to a fair trial and there are simply no quandaries at all. However I have also suggested that the running of the case should be left to the lawyers.

I mentioned that any lawyer worth his salt would obtain a check interpretation on the Police version of the interview. Further, a reasonable lawyer would also engage an independent interpreter to check that there are no utterances on the tape which were not interpreted. This is likely to be more important in practice. For example, it may turn out that the suspect is muttering under his breath “I am so tired, can I go home now?” The lawyer would be interested to know if part of the interview was not interpreted.

Dr Craig Jensen

Accredited Translator and Practising Barrister

Cairns, QLD.

Harry Blackmore says: Dr Jensen’s letter offers very helpful answers to the series of questions raised by the interpreters concerned. It is reassuring to learn from a lawyer that the scenario outlined really posed few quandaries, although the interpreters were deeply distressed at the time – a matter of perspective!

Apart from our eBulletin in English, AUSIT also runs 15 specific language discussion groups called eForums (or eFora, if you prefer!). You can discuss terminology and write in your own language. Simply contact your Administrator for more details on how to join them.

say for the first 100 words, and have you practised until you are comfortable with what you will say? And do you have responses, which you have practised, to any objections you may face to obtaining the appointment you seek?

Continuing on with your selling theme, let's say you obtain an appointment with a prospective customer. How will you prepare? The more you find out about the prospective customer, before the appointment, the better. Look up any web sites, obtain brochures, annual reports etc – anything that is likely to give you a better understanding of their requirements.

Customers, especially prospective customers, need to feel that you are interested in their needs. The best

first impression you can create will be if you have a 'you' focus on the customer, rather than one based on your own need for the business. Therefore, talking about you and your business, without exploring the customer's needs, is hardly likely to impress.

In the first instance, you need to spend a little time establishing rapport with your prospective customer. Remember that you are being 'summed up' as to whether you are suitable party with whom to do business.

Then, some carefully selected open questions, starting with Who, What, Where, When, Why and How, will allow you to determine the customer needs you may be able to satisfy.

Selling is integral to business success, as is the need for self-confidence, which is only obtained by preparation, requiring plenty of practice.

*Czesia Chwasta
Chessa Consulting P/L
chessa@optusnet.com.au*

value - add your work

option. The only way to ensure a translation is correct is to have the document checked by a different accredited translator who also includes a report in English so that the client can understand what changes are recommended. A legal document is the only time I would recommend a back-translation, and only because of the ramifications involved.

Finally, at InLingua Text we believe in passing on the names of any good translator to other agencies. At least in this way, we are helping to keep the best translators in constant work and therefore working within the industry. However, there are some agencies who seem to believe that their translator database should be kept confidential and will not recommend any of their translators even under threat of death.

In conjunction with a number of

other agencies, we constantly source each other's best translators. Generally, the questions we ask each other are: Who do you use in this language? How expensive are they? Are they responsible translators? Do they provide work within the timeline? This obviously means that dialogue between 'certain' agencies can be cooperative without jeopardising future work prospects and generally most agencies prefer to use translators resident in Australia.

However, recently I had the misfortune of sourcing a translator for a project requiring a technical translation, in a particular language in which there were numerous professional translators. The arrogance regarding the rate of pay the translators expected was far more than I as an agency would charge the client. The arrogance lay in the fact that as a professional translator they expect to be paid \$35.00/\$45.00 per hundred words or else they were

not interested and I could 'look elsewhere'. Well I did - overseas - and found a fantastic translator whose work was checked as the best ever that the client had come across and hey, guess what, the rate he charged us was a lot less than the usual amount I pay my translators here!!

Just a reminder, don't trade yourself out of work - there are others who are just as good and these are translators who value the fact that in this financial climate the work they get is valuable. But by the same token, also be aware of value-adding the extra work you do such as copy-fitting or typesetting. There has to be a happy medium between the two and a fine balance is needed between value and greed.

*Margaret Tedeschi is one of the
Managing Directors of InLingua Text
Pty. Ltd.*

inaugural visit by chinese president

continued from page 4

As many of you are aware, conference interpreters usually work in teams of three and change over every 20 minutes or so; protocol prevented Ms Dai and me assisting each other. In fact, as you probably realise, Ms Dai's simultaneous interpreting involved synchronising a beautifully translated speech with her leader's words and such challenging tongue twisters as 'international vicissitudes', 'mutual emulation and assimilation' and 'cultural pluralism'. Her rendering was described as 'plucky' in one newspaper; my interpreting, I feel, was also brave – no notes – but of course no one except the President, his delegation and probably Kevin Rudd heard me. All participants were provided with headphones and receivers to tune in for their language. Kevin Rudd was chided by his colleagues that if he wore the headphones for the President's address they would know he didn't really understand Mandarin, while, on the other hand, if he didn't it would confirm that he was a 'smart arse' (Age Newspaper, October 25, 2003). I don't know what he thought of my interpreting, or whether he even listened, but I was

delighted at being able to interpret for 40 or so minutes without a break and without notes and to know that the President appreciated it, anyway.

The State Banquet at the Hyatt Hotel was a sell-out; myself and another of President Hu's interpreters again sitting in the booth waiting, hungrily, for dinner to finish and for the speeches to begin. Feedback is normally scarce – after all, few participants at international conferences speak both languages – so who knows, or sometimes cares whether you did a good job or not. I was delighted that two members of the Hu delegation who did understand both languages came to congratulate me.

I hope that the extensive coverage of President Hu's visit, which I believe eclipsed the token visit of President Bush, highlights not only the significance of the Australia-China relationship, but also reveals the importance of interpreters in making such relationships and deals possible. A second 25 plus billion dollar gas deal was signed during the visit. You all heard the melodic voice of President Hu's interpreter

– making his message instantly come to life. We also saw on TV interpreters Mei Hua and Dai Qingli accompanying their leaders as they assisted with all communications. We hope that this will further the recognition of the sometimes heard but not seen, behind-the-scenes interpreters who make it happen. Australian conference organisers should also heed the example set by Parliament House. How often do we hear of international events being staged in Australia attended by visitors from around the world with either no conference interpreters engaged, or inexperienced and inadequately prepared interpreters hastily called upon at the last minute. Australia sees itself as being a target destination for conferences, yet unlike Asia and Europe, doesn't recognise the value and skill of high-quality interpreting. Let's make this a turning point and heed the fine example of Parliament House in recognising the value of interpreters whatever their field of work.

Charles Qin is a member of the AUSIT Vic/Tas branch.

AUSIT has been successful in obtaining one of the 500-euro travel grants offered by the Norwegian reproduction rights agency KOPINOR. The money was offered to translators' associations to subsidise a member's attendance at a one-day copyright conference in Paris on 21 November 2003, as part of FIT's 50th anniversary celebrations. Our delegate is NSW member Christian Houlemare, who has a particular interest and experience in the area of copyright.

Christian will be one of the organisers of a NSW branch seminar on literary translation early next year, which will also give him the opportunity to report on interesting and useful aspects of the Paris weekend. Other events include a full day of presentations on "Translators' rights in 2003", in keeping with this year's International Translation Day theme of translators' rights, and a round table on "Harry Potter" featuring translators of the Harry Potter books into a number of different languages.

Barbara McGilvray



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New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI)

The Annual Conference of the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Wellington, May 30 - June 2 2003

I congratulate myself for taking up NZSTI Henry Liu's invitation when in Perth for the 2002 AUSIT Conference and for asking my friend and colleague Dr. Lidia EliceGUI not only to come along but to try to write a paper and present it at the conference (*).

The city of Wellington is very picturesque and friendly too, as are New Zealanders. We were very impressed by the tuned organisation of the conference, from the logistics, catering and social function point of view to the ample range of topics presented at the actual conference, mostly by our NZ colleagues and T&I providers. Unfortunately, only a handful of people from Australia attended this conference from which all of us benefited. Adolfo Gentile from Melbourne delivered the keynote speech.

It surprised us to learn that they rely on our NAATI system to achieve official

recognition but on the other hand, one of the major government T&I service providers ("Musings of a Service Provider" by Naomi Tocher) has such a stringent system in place to assess and recruit practitioners as well as monitor T/Is' performance that would make any of us (accredited and experienced T/Is) hesitate. During this session the risks of having different membership categories was brought to the attention in that the general public and prospective clients are not aware of the requisites to be an associate or full member and therefore, some associate practitioners have been taking advantage of this unawareness, claiming themselves to be simply "NZSTI members" which gives credibility.

Peter Low's hands-on "Singable Translations of Songs" presentation was very enjoyable and emphasised the need to produce a well-balanced, readable, sensible and at the same time faithful translation. Peter Tuffley highlighted with very practical examples the vastness of a translator's role with his paper "Conduit, Custodian or Cultural Consultant?". The use and pros

and cons of the most popular translation memory software was Christof Schneider's responsibility. Sabine Fenton gave a very interesting insight into "Translation of Legal Texts", discussing authoritative vs non-authoritative, instrumental vs documentary and communicative vs semantic translations: no waste at all. The topic on "Professional Indemnity Insurance" run by Isabelle Poff-Pencole, was a not-to-be-missed session, where three major options were put for discussion and evaluation, one of them being for NZSTI members to be under the AUSIT insurance scheme. The Editing Workshop run by Patrick King and a panel of editors was really a must to attend, in particular for many of us who do the editing process on our own. Last but not least, the Powhiri or Maori welcome to the University campus was a unique and no doubt ice-breaking experience.

Diana Rodríguez-Losada, Spanish Translator and Interpreter, AUSIT WA Committee Member.

(*): "Adjusting to Change: The Western Australian Experience"