



WASLI Newsletter

WASLI is committed to the advancement of sign language interpreting world wide

Editorial

Since this NEWSLETTER began WASLI has sought to bring you news on what is happening in 'sign language interpreting' around the world. The number of contacts has steadily increased. One thing that we still do not know for sure is how many countries do have sign language interpreter associations. However as the work continues to make new contacts, WASLI is able to get a more accurate picture of what is happening. The news we can bring you in this newsletter is a report on what is happening in the Asia Region. Also there is news that South has established an interpreter association.

Zane Hema (Editor)

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ASIA PACIFIC REGION SURVEY

This edition reports on a survey on sign language interpreting in the Asia Pacific Region and was completed by Ms Liza Clews in October 2006. WASLI would like to acknowledge and thank Liza for giving her permission to share her report.

AIM OF THE SURVEY

To find out the past and current information about sign language interpreting in the Asia Pacific region for the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) Asia/Pacific Regional Secretariat
 To share information amongst the members of the WFD Asia/Pacific Regional Secretariat
 To share skills and experience amongst working sign language interpreters
 To increase awareness about sign language interpreting

BACKGROUND

A questionnaire was sent out to the following WFD members; Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Macau, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, The Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Responses came from Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Nepal, The Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Information about Cambodia was included even though it is not a member of the Regional Secretariat.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions were asked:

1. How many sign language interpreters do you have that are working?
2. What is the sign language in your country? Do you have more than ONE sign language?
3. What is the spoken language of your country?
4. Is there any legislation in your country for the provision of sign language interpreters?

5. Do you have an interpreter training programme in your country? Can you give a brief explanation about the training programme?
6. Do you have testing system to decide who is qualified to be a professional sign language interpreter? If yes, can you please briefly describe the testing system?
7. What are the rates for using a sign language interpreter?
8. Do you have an association for sign language interpreters?
9. Who does a person contact if they require the services of a sign language interpreter?

RESULTS

1. How many sign language interpreters do you have that are working?

Cambodia	4
Fiji	15
Hong Kong	2
Indonesia	No information provided
Japan	18,161
Macau	3
Nepal	30
Philippines	964
Singapore	39
Sri Lanka	2
Thailand	50

2. What is the sign language in your country? Do you have more than ONE sign language?

Cambodia	Cambodia Sign Language (adapted ASL)
Fiji	Fiji Sign Language (heavily influenced by AUSLAN and signed English)
Hong Kong	Cantonese Sign Language (modified from Shanghai Sign Language); Mainland Chinese Sign Language; some ASL
Indonesia	Indonesian Sign Language
Japan	Japanese Sign Language
Macau	Macau Sign Language
Nepal	Nepali Sign Language
Philippines	Filipino Sign Language; ASL; Signed Exact English
Singapore	Signed Exact English (used in Deaf Education); Pidgin Sign Language; Shang-hainese Sign Language
Sri Lanka	British Sign Language, Local Sign Language
Thailand	Thai Sign Language

3. What is the spoken language of your country?

Cambodia	Khmer and many ethnic minority languages
Fiji	English, Fijian, Hindu and other pacific island languages
Hong Kong	Cantonese
Indonesia	Indonesian
Japan	Japanese
Macau	Chinese, Portuguese, Cantonese
Nepal	Nepali, but there are 80 ethnic minority languages also
Philippines	Filipino
Singapore	English, Mandarin, Malay, Tamil
Sri Lanka	Sinhala, English
Thailand	Thai

4. Is there any legislation in your country for the provision of sign language interpreters?

Japan and the Philippines were the only 2 countries that had legislation for the provision for sign language interpreting.

5. Do you have an interpreter training programme in your country? Can you give a brief explanation about the training programme?

Cambodia, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Nepal, Singapore and Thailand have some form of sign language interpreting training. The form of training varies from high-level training to very basic level training. It is difficult to know whether the training programmes available are for people to learn sign language only or they are training programmes for people to become sign language interpreters. Some information received for this question was limited to a 'yes' or 'no' response with no other de-

tails. It is interesting to note that the Philippines had legislation for the provision of sign language interpreters but did not have a sign language interpreter-training programme.

6. Do you have testing system to decide who is qualified to be a professional sign language interpreter? If yes, can you please briefly describe the testing system?

Even though most countries had some form of training for sign language interpreters, the majority of these countries with training programmes had no testing system for sign language interpreters to become 'qualified' in this field.

7. What are the rates for using a sign language interpreter?

COUNTRY	RATES (given in US Dollars according the exchange rate 13/9/06)				
	Per Hour	Deaf People	NGO's	Companies or Businesses	Other
Cambodia	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Fiji	2.90	No charge	11.60 per day	29.00 per day	N/A
Hong Kong	N/A	No charge	N/A	N/A	53.00 for 2 hours
Indonesia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Voluntary
Japan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Depends on who is contacted
Macau	N/A	No charge	No charge	No charge	13.00 to 26.00 per hour
Nepal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Philippines	7.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Singapore	6.35 (min. 3 hours)	N/A	19.05 per hour (min. 2 hours)	19.05 per hour (min. 2 hours)	12.70 per hour (min. 2 hours)
Sri Lanka	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thailand	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	13.40 for half day 26.70 for full day

8. Do you have an association for sign language interpreters?

Only Japan and the Philippines have an interpreter association.

9. Who does a person contact if they require the services of a sign language interpreter?

The following lists the various places that deaf people can contact to request for sign language interpreter services:

- The national association of the Deaf within that country
- Interpreting Agencies
- Deaf schools
- Welfare Offices
- Freelance Interpreters
- Interpreter Referral Centres
- Non-Government Organisations

REPORT ON THE MEETING OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AT THE WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF REGIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION (WFD RS-A/P) 4 Dec 2006 (By Emiko Ichikawa WASLI Asia Regional Representative)

I reported on the establishment of WASLI and suggested setting up of the network of sign language interpreters in Asia at the 18th WFD RS-A/P Representatives Meeting in Macau.

We had 17 sign language interpreters from 7 countries and 2 regions (Macau, Pakistan, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Hong Kong, China, Korea, Japan) attended, and 2 observers from Australia (working in Cambodia) and Scotland in our conference. Although we had only half a day and I could not facilitate smooth discussions easily because we had many different spoken languages (non-English speaking countries and people), we enjoyed the warm interaction helping each other.

At the end of the conference, we confirmed the decision that we would continue to have meetings. But I would like to note that, if we will have a meeting in parallel with the next WFD RS-A/P Representatives Meeting, we, as WASLI, need some coordination between Asia and Australia & Oceania. Some delegates of WFD RS-A/P asked me to arrange regional divisions in accord with those of WFD.

In Asia, it was also very political issue how we consider a "country". On this occasion, we included delegates from Macau, Hong Kong and China respectively. I suppose that we have no alternatives but to decide as any case that is out of compliance with UN arises.

(Please note that (1) the detailed report will appear in the WASLI Activities Report 2005-2007; (2) the WASLI Executive Board will be discussing further the issue regarding what is considered to be a "country".)

A New Interpreting Association in South Africa

News has been received that on the weekend of 26/27 May 2007, South Africa has established a national interpreter Association SASLIA-SA the South African Sign Language Interpreter Association – South Africa.

The elected office bearers and additional members for the management are as follows:

Chairperson: Thelma Kotze

Vice-Chairperson: Ronel Davids

Secretary: Trudie Visser

Treasurer: Francois Deysel

Additional member: Augustine Letlalo

Additional member: Christopher Matthews

WASLI sends its congratulations to South Africa.

NEXT EDITION

In the next edition there will be a focus on Transcaucasia & Central Asia including a (1) regional report (2) a report on the WASLI President's visit to Moscow to attend the International Conference on "Linguistic rights of the Deaf: Governmental support, research & use of sign language" hosted by the All Russia Federation of the Deaf, 22-23 May 2007 (3) news of a new interpreter association in Ukraine.

The WASLI Executive Board

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WASLI BOARD

Officers: Liz Scott Gibson (President); Philemon Akach (Vice President); Zane Hema (Secretary)

Regional Representatives: Emiko Ichikawa (Asia); Jemina Napier (Australasia & Oceania); Marco Nardi (Europe); Deb Russell (North America); Anna Komarova (Transcaucasia & Central Asia); South America – to be advised; Africa – to be advised

Co-optees: Bill Moody (US); Arun Rao (India); Francois Deysel (South Africa); Daniel Burch (US); Nigel Cleaver (England); Ito Tadashi (Japan); Carol Lee Aquiline (Former WASLI Working Group); Knud Sondergaard (WFD)