

[Dismay at ‘pretend’ interpreter at Nelson Mandela memorial service](#)



Joint media release 12 December 2013

Joint statement from Deaf Australia and ASLIA

Deaf Australia and ASLIA (Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association) are dismayed by the use of a person pretending to be a sign language interpreter at the memorial service for Nelson Mandela.

We are outraged that an unaccredited 'interpreter' was used and want to be clear that unaccredited interpreting damages communication for both hearing and Deaf people.

While we believe that this situation highlights the need for public education about Deaf people and the interpreting profession, we regret that this has shifted the focus of attention away from where it should be – on Nelson Mandela.

We are further dismayed to see on Channel 7's Sunrise this morning, Thursday 12 December, the show's 'cash cow' making fun of the fake 'interpreter', and further compounding the insult to Deaf people and Australian sign language interpreters. Deaf people and genuine sign language interpreters are as proud of their sign language as other people are of their language.

We realise that shows like Sunrise like to make fun of people and causes. We would like to state that sometimes this is inappropriate, and this was one of those times.

Deaf Australia and ASLIA are calling on Sunrise to apologise for the bad taste of this parody.

We are also calling on the media to shift the focus back to where it belongs – on respectful remembrances for Nelson Mandela.

#END

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