



WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide

The WASLI Activities Report (2005-2007)

Message from the WASLI President

It is with great pride that the WASLI Executive Board brings you this report. The decision to establish WASLI was taken at a meeting of sign language interpreters during the World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in Montreal in 2003.

Work began in earnest to prepare for the Inaugural WASLI conference. This would take place in Worcester South Africa from 30 October to 2 November 2005. Over 200 sign language interpreters from over 40 countries attended this event and over the 3 days together the conference created a wonderful spirit of unity and camaraderie.

In South Africa, the Governing Document took its final shape, and conference discussions and the general meeting highlighted issues which interpreters felt WASLI needed to address. The first WASLI Executive Board was elected and gave a commitment to ensure that the issues raised would be part of their work programme.

Since that time, the WASLI Executive Board has also worked to put in place the necessary structures needed for an International Association and to ensure WASLI operations, policy and procedures are in accordance with the Governing Document.

This report gives you an account of the activities of the WASLI Officers and Regional Representatives since South Africa up until March 2007. I would like to thank the WASLI Executive Board and those co-opted to the Board, as well as the many individuals and organisations who have in some way contributed to the work of the Association.

This Report is the combination of all your efforts.

Liz Scott Gibson
WASLI President

LOOKING BACK TO 2005

THE WORCESTER DECLARATION (2 November 2005)

The participants at the first conference of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) in Worcester, South Africa from 31 October to 2 November 2005 have agreed on the following resolutions:

- To formally ratify the name of the organisation to be the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI)
- To adopt the governing document as agreed by conference participants
- To work towards the establishment of sign language interpreter associations in countries where there are currently none, and to encourage regional networks throughout the world
- To work in partnership with associations of Deaf people at local, national, regional and international levels
- To encourage the development of sign language interpreting as a profession throughout the world
- To support and work with developing countries to establish sign language interpreter education/training and provision of services
- To foster networks of sign language interpreters worldwide and provide a forum for the exchange of experiences at the next conference to be held in Spain 2007

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Officers' Reports



President's Report

Liz Scott Gibson, Scotland
Elected WASLI President: November 2005
Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

Representation

- Meeting with WFD Board, Helsinki, Finland, February 2006
- Participation in the Balkan Deaf Forum, Belgrade, Serbia December 2006
- Meeting with Senior Legal Adviser to the office of the Ombudsman in Kosovo regarding interpreting within a human rights framework (with Selman Hoti & Susan Emerson) December 2006
- Visit to RTK TV studios, Kosovo to see interpreting of news bulletin (with Selman Hoti)
- Conference planning meeting with FILSE in Segovia January 2007 (with the WASLI Secretary)
- Formal greetings from WASLI sent to Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Somaliland, & Ukraine

Lectures

- To interpreting students participating in the Transcaucasia project
- To participants in the Balkan Deaf Forum
- To interpreting students in Kosovo
- To participants in the Organisational Training Programme in Kosovo
- To participants at the All Russian Federation of the Deaf Conference on Linguistic Human Rights

Papers/articles

- Interview for ASLI journal
- Article for EFSLI journal
- 'Resolutions' for ASLIA journal

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- Video interview for the All Russian Society of the Deaf Department on Sign Language Research & Development
- Review of Critical Link 3 for the Sign Language Translator & Interpreter journal
- Letter of greetings sent to WFDB
- Contributed to the ILO Guidance for Interpreters
- 'How to work with a sign language interpreter' for WFD Congress participants (with Nigel Cleaver & Raili Ojala)
- Definition of the term 'professional sign language interpreter' for WFD in relation to the UN Convention on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities (with the Executive Board)
- Joint statement with WFD on sign language interpreting
- Drafted a response to the WFD's consultation paper on International Sign/International Sign Language
- Information about recognition of signed languages sent to the President of India to support Christine Lazares ULA AP Hyderabad
- Abstract submitted to WFD for paper to be presented at WFD Congress
- Response to 'Government Action on the Implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities – a Global Survey' by the office of the UN Special Rapporteur

Organisational

- Meetings with the WASLI Secretary
- Working group to make initial selection of International Sign interpreters for WFD Congress (with Carol-lee Aquiline, Francois Deysel, Bill Moody)
- Supporting information to Interpreter Co-ordinator of WFD Congress
- Chaired WASLI Executive Board meeting in Durham England March 2006
- With WASLI Secretary, dealt with issues arising from lack of Treasurer input
- Investigated options for legal seat/INGO registration
- With WASLI Secretary, ensured South African conference proceedings ready for publication
- Responses to various pieces of correspondence!



Vice President's Report

Philemon Akach, South Africa

Elected WASLI Vice President:

November 2005

Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

- 1-2 April 2006 Keynote speaker at the ASLI Conference, Durham-England
- 25 May-4 June 2006 I attend the 1st AFLinCO conference in Lille France. Networked with spoken language and SL Interpreters who attended or worked at the conference
- 17-24 June 2006 I attended the LEA conference in Oslo Norway and met an interpreter from Uganda studying in at Oslo university and he introduced me to interpreters he knew and I talked about WASLI.
- 4-9 July 2006 Speaker at the AVLIC Conference, Toronto Canada and also brought greetings on behalf of WASLI to the guests at our conference Wine and Cheese Reception this July 4th, 2006. Dr Deb Russell, the WASLI North America regional representative also addressed the gathering.
- 8-10 October 2006 CIT conference San Diego California, I attended and chaired the WASLI Board Meeting as the President was unable to attend.
- 9-10 May 2007 2nd AFLinCO conference in Lille, France. I met and networked with French-English interpreters and LSF interpreters.

Team worked with the executive board on policy development and worked towards finding representatives in the WASLI regions that do not yet have one



Secretary's Report
Zane Hema, England
Elected WASLI Secretary:
November 2005
Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

INTRODUCTION

It has been an honour serving as the first secretary of WASLI and the last two years have been amongst the busiest in my life. The inaugural WASLI 2005 conference was such a significant event for our profession but in some ways belied the challenge that lay ahead.

That challenge was to set up an international association from nothing, with a group of enthusiastic individuals who served as volunteers (whilst maintaining full time jobs and other commitments), without funds, in order to communicate with and meet the expectations of sign language interpreters and many others from around the world.

According to the Governing Document, the three main duties of the Secretary are to keep accurate records of the meetings of the Executive and the General Membership meeting; to supervise the keeping of the Associations records; and to co-sign cheques as agreed by the Executive. I have completed minutes of meeting but have not signed any cheques yet, but that does not mean I haven't been busy.

Dec 2005 – April 2006

- Created the WASLI Work Programme 2005-2007 (16 pages)
- Dealt with unresolved issues from WASLI 2005
- Set up an infrastructure
- Conducted an interview for NEWSLI (the magazine of ASLI, which ran an International feature)
- Ran a workshop on ASLI International with Danny Stubbs at the ASLI 2006 Conference profiling the WASLI 2005 Conference
- Gave a WASLI presentation to NRASLI, Japan (Thanks to Emiko Ichikawa and Ito Tadashi)
- Conducted an interview for MIMI Magazine (Japan)

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- Gave a WASLI presentation in Malaysia (Thanks to Lucy Lim)
- Meet with Sign Language Interpreters in New Zealand and Australia.
- Prepared for the first Board Meeting in Durham, UK 31 March – 1 April 2006
- Developed an internal translation network
- Developed a WASLI database
- Worked with David Wolfenden on development of the WASLI website
- Creating WASLI Membership documentation
- Dealing with WASLI correspondence

May 2006 – Oct 2006

- Coordinated publication of the WASLI 2005 Country Reports (thanks to Nigel Cleaver)
- Produced WASLI Newsletter and WASLI Updates
- Designed WASLI membership forms
- Wrote the pages for the WASLI website
- Arranged for editor, proof reading, printing and publication of the WASLI 2007 Conference Proceedings
- Coordinate website going live
- Wrote the article 'WASLI – Past Present Future' for the SLTI International Journal
- Met with the President to review the work programme and progress the WASLI work
- Attended the EFSLI 2006 Conference in Prague (Czech Republic)
- Prepared documentation for the Board meeting that took place in San Diego
- Dealing with WASLI correspondence

Nov 2006 – March 2007

- Met with the President to review the work programme and progress the WASLI work
- More Newsletters and Updates
- Rearranged duties of WASLI Finance
- Worked with Jack Callon and David Wolfenden to set up Pay Pal for online transactions
- Arranged with Jack Callon sales and distribution of the WASLI 2005 Conference Proceedings
- Finalised all the preliminary documentation for the 2007 General Membership meeting
- Visited Segovia with the WASLI President to meet with the WASLI 2007 Conference Organising Team
- Officiated at the launch of MyASLI (Malaysia)
- Gave a WASLI presentation at the Singapore Association of the Deaf
- Liaised with FILSE over 2007 Conference arrangements
- Preparing the brief for the WASLI Media Team in Segovia



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- Dealing with Letters of Invitation
- Dealing with WASLI correspondence

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- Coordinating Board Meetings
- Reviewing current structures and systems
- More WASLI Newsletters and updates
- Developing Members Only area on the website
- Developing the WASLI Network of Experts
- Review and update of the website
- Liaising with WASLI Regions for regional events
- Preparing for the next General Membership meeting 2011

WASLI Regional Representatives' Reports

Africa Regional Report

The WASLI Africa Region does not yet have a regional representative but in the past 2 years much work has gone on to develop links with sign language interpreters, deaf associations, and other organisations in this region. This report has been compiled by the WASLI Secretary and it should be made clear that the information contained is 'self-reported' by correspondents from the Region.

The region comprises 53 independent countries of which 6 are known to have interpreter associations. (Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia) Since WASLI 2005 there are now 2 new interpreter associations; GOSLIN – The Guild of Sign Language Interpreters of Nigeria in 2006 and SASLIA-SA - the South African Sign Language Interpreter Association of South Africa in 2007.

The development of sign language interpreting was accelerated by the emergence of Deaf associations across the continent. Over the years there has been a number of development projects that have seen organisations and individuals involved in interpreter training in Ghana, Tanzania, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and others.

UGANDA

UNASLI, the Ugandan National Association of sign language interpreters was established in 2003, with the primary task to look after the interest of sign language interpreters, Deaf people and hearing people communicating in sign language, providing a service and acting as experts in this area. In doing so, UNASLI wishes to enhance the status of sign language interpreters in their country and to improve the availability of information to Deaf people in all spheres of influence.

KENYA

Kenya's interpreter association (KSLIA) was established in 2000. The development of sign language interpreting is hindered by lack of interpreting training, and lack of testing and accreditation (and the need to work with the National Examination and Certification bodies) and professional development. There is a need to work together with Government so they understand the role that sign language interpreters play in the lives of Deaf people.

TANZANIA

In Tanzania, there is no interpreter training outside that provided by the Tanzania Association of the Deaf (TAD). Those who have trained have left



WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide the profession because of the lack of employment opportunities choosing to retrain in professions where opportunities are better. Of the interpreters in the country, 1 is a woman and 5 men and only one full-time employed interpreter at TAD.

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Translators Institute established the first accreditation system for South African sign language interpreters. Funding for a number of short-term training programmes have allowed people to qualify. But lack of ongoing funding and support has resulted in disappointment for others interested in training.

CAMEROON

There are few sign language interpreters in Cameroon and the situation in this country is perhaps similar to others in Africa. Often interpreters are not paid for their work simply because those that use them cannot afford to pay. The impact of this is that many interpreters chose to work in more lucrative professions. However, there are those who are positive about the future with the need to set up an interpreter association and to work alongside the national deaf association.

WASLI has been able to develop links with interpreters and Deaf associations from these and other countries such as Morocco, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Mozambique, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Swaziland, Guinea, Botswana, Burundi, Senegal, Somaliland, Sudan and Gambia.



Asia Regional Representative Report

Emiko Ichikawa, Japan

**Elected Regional Representative:
November 2005**

Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

The situation of sign language interpreters in Asia varies widely: some countries do not have an interpreter organisation, while others almost do not have any sign language interpreters. In order to provide sign language interpreters in Asia with the opportunity to exchange information and increase mutual communication so that they can improve their quality and that of the sign language interpretation system, it is necessary for them in Asia to have an opportunity to get together.

We, the members of The National Research Association for Sign Language Interpretation (NRASLI), made an appeal to hold a meeting for sign language interpreters in Asia, at the 16th World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific (WFD RSA/P) Representatives Meeting held in Jakarta, Indonesia, and the 17th WFD RSA/P Representatives Meeting held in Shanghai, China, respectively. As a result, we finally succeeded in holding the meeting in 2006.

Although it would take still more time to realise a sign language interpreters network in Asia, which NRASLI has been seeking, we will continue our efforts to that end by cooperating with fellow sign language interpreters in Asia.

THE FIRST CONFERENCE FOR SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN ASIA
As a parallel session of the 18th WFD RSA/P Representatives Meeting in Macau from 3 to 5 December, 2006, the first Conference for Sign Language Interpreters in Asia was held on 4, December, aiming to establish an interpreter network in Asia, which is in accordance with WASLI's action plan.

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18 people from eight countries and two regions in Asia, namely Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Pakistan Malaysia, and Macau, and one observer from each of Australia and Scotland participated in the meeting.

After introducing themselves, the participants made a report on the situation of and challenges for sign language interpreters in their country/region.

SOUTH KOREA

The national government decided in 2006 to approve a qualification for sign language interpreters. There are two types of qualification; one is issued by the deaf organisations, and the other, by the national government. The levels of the sign languages are the same and both of them are valid for five years.

The number of sign language interpreters has risen to 693 in the past 9 years. There are 137 centres nationwide, which provide sign language interpreters. The average number of staff per centre is 4 (1 hearing-impaired and 3 hearing). We are now lobbying our government to introduce a system in which sign language interpreters are available around the clock.

There are training centres for sign language interpreters, too. As for universities, two of them provide training courses (a two-year course and a four-year course).

CHINA

Even if sign language interpreters are hired, they tend to quit before long because of insufficient salary. Each region has a centre for the disabled, which provides training for sign language interpreters. Although there is a syllabus approved by the national government, it is not used in a unified manner. Since there is no qualification examination system, the number of sign language interpreters is unknown. Some of them start to work after only a few months' training.

Although sign language is officially recognised by provincial governments, sign language interpretation is not regarded as a profession, because the educational system has not been established and the training, qualification and other systems are yet to be organised. Various measures have been taken since 1980s. They were instrumental to advance the standardisation of a sign language, but they failed to lead to a drastic development.

HONG KONG

There are 80,000 deaf people in Hong Kong. There has been no qualification examination for sign language interpreters. The first-ever exam will be available in 2006. Court interpretation is carried out by sign language interpreters who have been working for deaf organisations for more than one or two decades and are approved by the organisations. There are 4 deaf organisations, some of which have training courses for interpreters.

THAILAND

When the National Association of the Deaf in Thailand (NADT) was founded in 1987, sign language courses were introduced and the training started. Before that, teachers of deaf schools could not use sign language at all or used English-based sign systems at best. The number of people who have completed the basic course has reached 300, but few of them continue their learning.

In 2000, Ratchasuda College began to train sign language interpreters and its graduates have become teachers at deaf schools or sign language interpreters.

In 2005, a course to foster deaf schoolteachers was established. At present, most of the interpreters in Thailand are relatives of the deaf, teachers of deaf schools, and graduates of Ratchasuda College. Sign language interpretation service is available at NADT, the associations of the disabled, and colleges at where deaf students enrol.

The Sign Language Interpreter Association was established in 2003. Its membership consists of 15 officers and 40 members. Graduates from Ratchasuda College are regarded as qualified sign language interpreters, although there are neither qualification systems nor examination systems. An interpreter can interpret in court with approval of NADT.

CAMBODIA (The reporter is Australian observer.)

I have stayed in Cambodia for 5 years, supporting the deaf and training sign language interpreters. I am in charge of basic sign language training. Subjects of the training are the beginners and deaf schoolteachers. There is no qualification system at present. It is planned to implement the Code of Ethics from January 2007. Court interpretation is provided by a Cambodian sign language interpreter and myself. Based on the Law for the Disabled, the court has responsibility to provide a sign language interpreter.

PHILIPPINES

A nationwide training programme was introduced in 1992 and the Philippines Federation of the Deaf (PFD) was established in 1997. Presently, there are 964 sign language interpreters including deaf schoolteachers. Organisations or training centres for sign language interpreters are yet to be established. There is no qualification system. The only qualification available now is the certificate given on the completion of sign language interpreters training course.

SINGAPORE

Although a qualification system is yet to be established, the national training system for interpreter is in place. American teachers were invited to train interpreters. English-based sign language and deaf sign language are used.

The study on sign language, sign language grammar and other issues began several years ago. A committee in the Association for the Deaf coordinates dispatching of sign language interpreters. Registered sign language interpreters are the members of the committee. The Association for the Deaf is the contact for SLI provision.

PAKISTAN

We have neither a training system nor a qualification system. The number of sign language interpreters is less than 5. No person wants to work as an interpreter because there is no assurance of income. Sign language interpretation is given on a voluntary basis. At present, there are 4 sign language interpreters, but there is no chance for them to get together. There are various sign languages in Pakistan. Recently, a deaf person who could not use a sign language interpreter committed suicide. As we have no resources at all, we would appreciate it if other countries help us.

MALAYSIA

The Malaysia Federation of the Deaf made up a training programme in 2005. This is a 5-year programme supported by the grant from REDtone International, a cellular phone carrier. The programme has 20 instructors. The subjects of the programme are CODA, parents of deaf people, and the general public. The period of training is 14 months. The programme consists of three areas, specifically, theory, practical skills and practice. It is planned to train 100 people in 2007. In the future, we wish to transfer the programme to a college. Challenges for the future are: to obtain support from the government, to establish sign language interpreting as a profession, to establish a qualification and accreditation system, to offer sign language interpreter training courses at local colleges, to expand functions of the centres for the deaf, and so forth.

MACAU

The population of Macau is 450,000. The number of sign language interpreters is unknown. Under the Macau Deaf Association, there are two Centres: Children's Centre (Users are 300 children. 80 % of them study at regular schools.) and Deaf Service Centre (Users are 240 deaf people who can use sign language).

Besides providing sign language interpreters, which is their main activity, they offer a counselling service as well. The interpreter-training programme has 3 basic courses, one intermediate course and one advanced course (provided jointly with other organisations). Texts of Macau sign language and other materials have been published. Presently, the number of sign language interpreters is 3. It is not enough, so we would like to increase the number at least by 2. The problem is low remuneration.



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JAPAN (NRASLI)

NRASLI was established in 1971. The membership in the fiscal year 2006, ended in March 2007 is 10,500. We would like to expand the membership to 12,000. Ms. Emiko Ichikawa, chairman of the steering committee, is also the Asian Representative of WASLI. NRASLI has a branch office in each and every prefecture and work jointly with organisations for the deaf at both regional and national levels.

JAPAN (JASLI)

JASLI was established in 1991. It consists of those who passed the national qualification examination. The membership is 1,300. Main activities are training for members, providing learning opportunities for those who aim at acquiring qualification, and publishing their organisation's magazine and other materials. Current problems are the low pass rate in the qualification exam and insufficient remuneration. It is necessary to improve social status of sign language interpreters.

FUNDARISING FOR WASLI 2007

A fund-raising activity was held in the meeting in Ehime Prefecture, in the summer, 2006. It advocated the necessity of financial assistance to fellow sign language interpreters in other parts of Asia so that they could participate in either the 2007 WASLI conference or the Interpreter conference in Asia. A total of 183,814 yen was raised from the members nationwide with warm messages of encouragement.

(WASLI also has links with a number of other countries in the Asia region including, India, Israel, Kuwait, Mongolia, Oman, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan and Hong Kong)



Australasia & Oceania Regional Representative Report

Jemina Napier, Australia

**Elected Regional Representative: January 2006
Report from Jan 2006 – March 2007**

This report has been prepared in consultation with Executive Board members of the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association (ASLIA) and the Sign Language Interpreters' Association of New Zealand (SLIANZ), and interpreter educators in Australia and New Zealand.

1. List of countries and associations

Officially there are 31 countries in the Australasia/ Oceania region of which 2 have Interpreter Associations: Australia and New Zealand.

AMERICAN SAMOA

There is no interpreter association

AUSTRALIA

The national interpreter association is the Australian Sign Language Interpreter Association ASLIA

Since the last report, ASLIA National has been working on many different projects, the following of which are complete:

- Guidelines on legal interpreting, mental health interpreting & pro-bono interpreting
- Development of research catalogue & reference lists
- Launch of new website with members only site
- Re-branding of the association's image

The following are projects we are currently working on:

- Revising our Code of Ethics (inspired by the new values based code introduced by AVLIC). A draft is on the website and soon plans will begin for a wider consultation process.

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- Position paper on interpreter remuneration (out for membership consultation now)
- Proposed survey with AFDS & AUSIT & Macquarie University
- Search for secretariat funding so can lobby Federal & State Governments
- Development of NABS/ ASLIA Deaf interpreter certification
- Establishment of Interpreter Training Network
- Cooperation with proposed Auslan & Deaf Studies Teacher Association
- Collaboration with the Australian Association of the Deaf (AAD) to host an Auslan/English Interpreting summit in 2007 – inviting stakeholders from throughout Australia to sit around a table to discuss what needs to be done to resolve supply and demand issues in Australia.

FIJI

Jemina Napier and Della Goswell from Australia, and Ruth Spencer and Hayley Best from New Zealand, have all visited and spent time in Fiji working with, and providing training and support to people working as (typically unpaid) interpreters in Fiji. Kate Nelson, who has been working as a deaf development project officer in Fiji, established a training programme, which was delivered over a six month period (one evening a week). Jemina Napier and Della Goswell provided an intensive one-week training programme in August 2006 in order to complement the training delivered by Kate, and provided advice on how they could establish a professional association, even informally to begin with. One of the biggest problems highlighted was financial, in that even suggesting that people get together once a week to chat would be difficult because people cannot even afford the bus fare. Jemina Napier provided an overview of WASLI's aims and objectives, and that they could receive support from WASLI in the development of their profession. Since that time, Fiji representatives are sent copies of the WASLI newsletters and any other relevant information.

NEW ZEALAND

There is no independent system for accreditation of signed or spoken language interpreters within New Zealand other than the Māori Language Commission's registration system for Māori interpreters and translators. Some spoken language interpreters therefore apply for Australian NAATI accreditation. However, as NAATI's sign language accreditation is specific to Auslan, it is not available to NZSL/English interpreters. Although there is no national interpreter accreditation body, the Diploma of Sign Language Interpreting (DipSLI) is recognised as the minimum standard of qualification to work as an interpreter in New Zealand.

Professional development

SLIANZ hosts an annual conference with plenary presentations and workshops, and invites speakers from Australia and other countries as well as drawing on local interpreting and interpreting-related expertise,. In 2005 and 2006 Della Goswell and Jemina Napier, two Australian-based interpreter educators, were our keynote speakers respectively. This year is our 10th year anniversary as an incorporated society; our keynote speaker will be Dr. Rachel McKee, the founding President of SLIANZ

Training

Professional training for NZSL interpreters has been offered since 1992 through the Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting (DipSLI) program at Auckland University of Technology. This is a two-year full time undergraduate course, with an entry requirement of basic NZSL proficiency as well as standard university entrance requirements. Since the Diploma's introduction, it has become clear that an adequate level of bilingualism and interpreting competence takes a longer period of formal study; it is hoped this training course will be expanded into a three-year programme, whether as an interpreting degree or as a major within a more general Bachelor's degree. The exit standard for current DipSLI graduates is roughly equivalent to NAATI paraprofessional level.

Negotiations are currently underway for the Postgraduate Diploma in Auslan/English Interpreting from Macquarie University to be offered locally in New Zealand, in collaboration with Victoria University Wellington.

Te Reo Māori

Recently, the DipSLI program has recruited students who are speakers, or advanced students, of Te Reo Māori, in order to address a demand for interpreters who can interpret between Māori, NZSL and English (in Māori settings and at public events where Māori is used as one of the languages of official proceedings). At this stage, the course does not specifically teach translation between Māori and NZSL, but aims to equip Māori interpreters with knowledge of sign language interpreting principles and techniques that they can apply to the use of Māori as a working language. The availability of trilingual interpreters is an important goal for Māori deaf people who want to



WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide participate in hearing Māori contexts and to access knowledge of their cultural heritage (Smiler 2004). Dr Rachel McKee has undertaken to edit a volume for Gallaudet University Press (with Dr Jeffrey Davis from the USA) on trilingual interpreting, incorporating discussion of interpreting for deaf Māori people.

Professional Association news

At the 2006 AGM, the membership gave guidance to the committee with two strategic goals: To develop a structured system of professional development; to undertake a comprehensive and nationally consistent promotion of safe working conditions, co-working and OOS prevention.

These goals have been allocated a 2-year timeframe for research and proposal developments. We are currently surveying our members to gauge their preferences for a system of professional development.

SLIANZ is progressing with a number of other small projects:

- Annual Conference
- A new website, which will be launched before the 2007 AGM / Conference
- Internal administration: re-branding and re-formatting of all committee forms, documents and publications; streamlining committee processes
- Newsletter: After having both a members-only newsletter and members-only Presidential update, we have opened our newsletter up to the public. Members-only updates continue to be published by the President on a 6-8 weekly basis.
- Regional meetings: We do not have branches so in order to increase regular face-to-face contact with our members, we successfully trialed a regional meeting in Auckland. This was met favourably by Auckland members and will be rolled out nationally in the second half of 2007.
- Fundraising for our website
- Re-evaluation of our mentoring system



**Europe Regional
Representative Report**
Marco Nardi, England
**Elected Regional Representative: November
2005**
Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

INTRODUCTION

I have been fortunate enough to participate at the development of WASLI since the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) congress in Brisbane (Australia) in 1999. I attended the RID Symposium in Washington (USA) in 2002 and I was invited to contribute to the WASLI working group in 2003. I was also fortunate to attend the WFD Congress in Montreal (Canada) where WASLI was officially launched.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to be the WASLI European Representative for the last two years. I would like to thank, at this point, the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI), for having supported my nomination in 2005 and all the colleagues representing the various National Associations in Europe that voted in support of my election. I am also aware that, in attendance at the event in Worcester (South Africa), there were other colleagues from Europe, non-members of EFSLI, and that therefore were not aware of my nomination. I would like to take the opportunity to apologise and to reassure them that in the future we will seek support from all possible contacts that we now have in the region.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- Number of independent countries in the region: **46**
- Number of other "dependencies" in the region: **1**
- Number of National Associations end of WASLI 2005: **25**
- Number of National Associations start of WASLI 2007: **26**

The Independent Countries are: Albania; Andorra; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Cyprus; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxemburg; Macedonia; Malta; Moldova; Monaco; Montenegro; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Ireland; Romania; Russia; San Marino; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; The Netherlands; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Vatican City.

The "dependencies" are: United Nation Protectorate of Kosovo

Consideration: there are a number of "countries" like Andorra, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City that are small enough to be served (with regards to sign language interpreting) by neighbouring countries.

National Associations existing in Europe in 2005 were: **ABILS** (French Belgium), **AFILS** (France), **AILGP** (Portugal), **ANIMU** and **ANIOS** (Italy), **ARILS** (Swiss French), **ASLI** (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), 'bgsd' (Swiss German), **BGSD** (Germany), **CKTZJ** (Czech Republic), **EVKTÚ** (Estonia), **FILSE** (Spain), **FTT** (Denmark), **HART** (Iceland); **IASLI** (Republic of Ireland); **JOSZ** (Hungary), **NBTG** (Netherlands), **OGSDV** (Austria), **SASLI** (Scotland), **SDENG** (Greece), **STTF** (Sweden), **SVT** (Finland), **Tolkeforbundet** (Norway), **VVTG** (Flemish Belgium), **ZTZJS** (Slovenia).

Since 2005 WASLI and EFSLI have supported colleagues in Malta to establish **AILSM**.

Group/Support Network: As a region we are fortunate enough to have had a support network since 1993: the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI). Annually we have an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and usually a Seminar or Conference. For more information please refer to the website: www.efsl.org

ACTIVITIES 2005 - 2007

Since the first General meeting in South Africa the activities undertaken in Europe and within the Board of Directors of WASLI can be summarised as follows:

After coming back from the inaugural WASLI event I created a short report that was included in the 'efsl' Newsletter and reports were published in the 'efsl' in Brief (monthly update) and a WASLI Newsletter.

The WASLI Executive Board agreed a communication policy and set guidelines for the usage of e-mails messaging as well as other possible methods

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I have supported various European National Associations' Representatives with their reports, for their Newsletters, providing them with details and information related to the General Meeting and Conference in Worcester. The very first task was to reorganise all the modifications to the Governing Documents as well as making amendments to the minutes of the meetings that took place.

Received the Report from Jefwa Mweri (Kenya, Africa) supported by 'efsli' and SVT (Finland) to attend the event in South Africa.

I have forwarded my personal profile for the website as well as information about: Co-Interpreting/Team interpreting, Mentoring and other resources available for the development of the related web pages.

I have assisted the Executive Board with its work on the definition of 'professionalism' to assist WFD with their work. Contributed to Board discussions on numerous issues including International Sign, Task Groups, Regional Representation policy

Sent the 'efsli' guidance "How to organise and AGM/event" to FILSE to help with preparing for WASLI 2007.

Worked with colleagues to provide an Italian translation of the 'Introductory Page' on the website (Thanks to Lorella Galvani and Marinella Salami)

I attended the first Board meeting in Durham, April 2006. In Durham I met with the WASLI Regional Representative for Transcaucasia and Central Asia, Anna Komarova. A number of countries in that region are also part of geographical Europe. We agreed that although information will be shared across borders, the decision will be left to the members as to whom they wish to receive support from.

Liaising with AIIC – International Association of Conference Interpreters on behalf of WASLI.

Liaising with the current 'efsli' President to create a European Protocol to use as a guideline. As soon as the document is ready, it will be made available to both organisations.

I have attended the 'efsli' AGM/conference in Prague (Czech Republic) where information on WASLI conference 2007 was presented to the members.

I was invited as 'efsli' President (at the time of the invitation) and WASLI European Regional Representative to present a paper at the University for Spoken Language Interpreters in Trieste (Italy). An amended version of the paper is going to be submitted for publication.

Overall I have responded to numerous messages requesting information about availability of Interpreters in Europe with particular language combination, training institution in specific countries, information about membership, training, etc.

I am now communicating with ANIOS (my national association), 'efslí' and other European members to seek support for my nomination to continue into the next term.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES 2007 – 2011

- Improve direct communication with the contacts in the region.
- Disseminate information and providing response or sign posting to all requests received.
- Provide information, network of contacts, support to all those that require them.
- Undertake tasks allocated from the work programme, with particular interest to create a "List" of Interpreters in Europe (as model for application in other regions) with a multiple language combination.
- Contribute and support the work of other member of the Board.
- Support the development of new Associations with provision of information or meeting face to face, if possible.

It has been a wonderful experience of supportive environment and collaboration.



North American Regional Representative Report

Debra Russell, Canada

**Elected Regional Representative:
November 2005**

Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

Introduction

It has been my distinct honour to serve as the first North American representative to the WASLI Board. This region includes Canada, the United States of America and Mexico. Each country has a national interpreter's organisation – Canada (AVLIC), the US (RID) and Mexico (ANILS)

I thank RID President Angela Jones, AVLIC Past President Denise Sedran, and AVLIC President Tarren McKay, for their support of my initial nomination and their continued support. My thanks also, to Daniel Maya Ortega of ANILS (Mexico), for providing information about the association in Mexico, and serving as our contact there.

Activities 2005-2007

The following summarises my contributions to WASLI's development thus far.

December 2005:

- Attended the WASLI Inaugural Conference in South Africa. The organisers did an outstanding job of hosting the world, and I was extremely proud to represent AVLIC (Canada) at this conference. In addition to presenting the country report, I participated in all conference events. In total there were 12 Canadians in attendance and our thanks to AVLIC and WASLI for supporting Geden Singo from Tanzania to attend WASLI. I brought several materials to Geden from Canada that we hoped would enhance the work of the Tanzanian group. We continue to communicate with Geden and provide information as requested.

January – March 2006;

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- Finalised the communication protocol to be used by the North American Representative when representing AVLIC and RID as two of the countries within the North American region.
- Produced a report based on the South African conference, which was published by AVLIC in their Newsletter, and distributed to RID chapters via the RID President's list serve.
- Submitted personal profile information for the WASLI website.
- Began reaching out to members in North American to determine if there was an organisation of interpreters representing Mexico. While this action took some time, I am pleased that we were able to finally make contact with Daniel Ortega Maya, representing ANILS. Since that time, WASLI has been able to include a formal report in a WASLI newsletter about their activities and we look forward to continued contact with them.
- Bill Moody and I produced the Internal Rules for WASLI Board approval. This was done by performing a scan of five documents that reflected policies and procedures that were used by several international organisations, both for profit and non-profit. Based on the best practices of those documents we prepared a first draft that was then distributed to a small reading circle of 6 of Deaf and hearing interpreters. Based on the feedback, we adjusted the document, and then distributed to the entire Board of Directors for feedback. A final document was ready for the April Board meeting. This is a "living document" and will be constantly revised to reflect the needs of WASLI as it evolves.
- Provided WASLI updates to RID and AVLIC for distribution to members, prior to the WASLI website being launched.

April –June 2006:

- I attended the ASLI conference in Durham, England. Thank you to that incredible organisation for their warm welcome and hospitality. In addition to giving two presentations, I participated in the first meeting of the WASLI Board of Directors. My thanks to my employer, the University of Alberta, for sponsoring my trip to England and covering my expenses for this meeting. The meeting resulted in several actions and tasks for all of us, and I have completed all assigned tasks within the timelines set.
- From England, I attended meetings in Ukraine stemming from my role at the University of Alberta. While there I met with Deaf community organisations and Interpreters to review WASLI developments and to encourage discussions about forming an interpreter association and formalising training opportunities for interpreters.
- Produced a draft WASLI brochure for consideration by the Board of Directors.

July –Sept. 2006:

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- Attended the AVLIC conference in July in Toronto. I reported on WASLI's activities during the AGM, and was able to meet with the WASLI Vice president, Philemon Akach, RID President Angela Jones and out-going and in-coming presidents of AVLIC.
- Volunteered to coordinate the WASLI Sponsorship Programme. This programme involved sending several invitation letters to WASLI members and interpreters of each region, to ask for their support to sponsor delegates to attend WASLI in Spain.

October-Dec 2006:

- Attended a second meeting of WASLI during the Conference of Interpreter Trainers in San Diego, CA. Philemon Akach, Jemina Napier, and I met to review tasks completed, outstanding business, and to make recommendations for the WASLI board for the next three months. Produced the minutes and action list from that meeting for distribution to the entire Board.
- Responded to a call from Jemina Napier to suggest names of Deaf persons from North America who could serve on the Scientific Committee for WASLI 2007.

January – March 2007:

- Together with my assistant, Robin Demko, coordinated the sponsorship programme to connect conference applicants in need of assistance with potential sponsors. We were pleased to have gathered some \$13,000 in pledges of support, and to be able to support 10 applicants. We have had sponsorship applications from 24 countries and unfortunately, we were not able to support them all. Coordinated all communication between successful and unsuccessful applicants and sponsors. The tremendous need for financial support does speak to the disparity among regions and the need for constant public relations within our regions for financial support.
- Per the WASLI Board directive to re/elect regional representatives, I approached AVLIC, RID and Mexico to seek their support to run again as North American Representative.

Throughout the year, I have responded to some 700 emails that relate to the management of the WASLI, through its Board of Directors. My practice is to respond within 48 hours in order to keep the agenda of WASLI moving forward. I have also communicated via email and telephone with 123 North American members inquiring about WASLI membership, activities, and developments.

Planned Activities for 2007-2011

- Continue to share information with members in all three organisations within our region via email and videophone meetings



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- Volunteer to coordinate the sponsorship programme for the 2011 conference
- Explore the feasibility of holding a regional meeting of the three presidents in order to represent their issues and concerns at the international level
- Participate in the development of training standards for interpreters per the Work Plan of WASLI
- Continue to serve as a resource person to members and our Board of Directors

I have learned so much over the past year, and the experience of being involved with WASLI has been one of the most invigorating experiences of my career. I want to acknowledge the hard work of my colleagues on the Board during this first term, for their constant commitment to improving interpreting throughout the world by working closely with Deaf organisations.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of Liz Scott-Gibson and Zane Hema. Much of WASLI's success and development is due to the many hours that they have poured into this organization and the amazing professionalism they have demonstrated when representing us throughout their numerous travels. Thank you, Liz and Zane! I am excited for what the next four years will bring to our shared organisation.

South America Regional Report

The WASLI South America does not yet have a regional representative but in the past 2 years much work has gone on to develop links with sign language interpreters, deaf associations and other organisations in this region.

This report has been compiled by the WASLI Secretary and it should be made clear that the information contained is 'self-reported' by correspondents from the Region.

The South America region includes the countries of Latin America (excluding Mexico) has 32 Independent countries where just one (3.1%) is known to have an interpreter association and that is Columbia (ANISCOL). Little is known about sign language interpreting in this region.

ARGENTINA

Argentina does not have an interpreter association but those who work are interpreters are Children of Deaf Adults (CODA), teachers of the Deaf and parents of deaf children who have not had any formal interpreter training.

BRAZIL

Brazil has 4 State interpreter associations. In 2005, the first sign language interpreter training started at the universities in Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro. The history of interpreting saw the majority of interpreters started off in Churches working in a voluntary capacity but now more and more interpreters are able to earn a living as an interpreter.

COSTA RICA

It is also understood that a university interpreter training is offered in Costa Rica.

WASLI is aware that there is an email group set up specifically for interpreters. Conscious that the region does not yet have a regional representative, WASLI has sent a message of greetings to all contacts in the region putting them in contact with each other encouraging them to begin the process of electing a representative for the region.

In addition to the countries mentioned above, WASLI has contacts in Cuba, Ecuador, Venezuela, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile and Peru.

One exciting prospect for this region is that many of the South American countries plan to be represented at the WASLI 2007 Conference where one of the official languages is Spanish. WASLI will work hard to get a more up to date picture on sign language interpreters and provision.



Transcaucasia & Central Asia Regional Report

Anna Komarova, Russia

Elected Regional Representative:

November 2005

Report from Nov 2005 – March 2007

The WASLI Transcaucasia and Central Asia region is comprised of several of the countries of the former Soviet Union or otherwise as the countries of the World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat in Eastern Europe and Middle Asia.

The 11 countries that make up this region are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

All countries have national associations of the Deaf set up between 1926 and 1937. Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan have joint organizations of the Blind and the Deaf. National associations of the Deaf have branches in all regions employ full-time interpreters from 2 in Armenia and Georgia to about 800 in Russia.

Due to political reasons it is very complicated to receive information from Turkmenistan. Most of the sign language interpreters are relatives of the Deaf.

The Finnish Deaf Association and Moscow Centre for Deaf Studies and Bilingual Education had some sign language interpreter training seminars/short intensive courses in all the countries except Byelorussia and Turkmenistan in 1999-2007.

Only 2 countries have associations of sign language interpreters – Russia (not registered in the Ministry of Jurisdiction, set up in March 2005) and



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Ukraine (registered in the Ministry of Jurisdiction, set up in April 2007). In Ukraine the association has big problems with the Deaf Union as it was founded against its will.

Sign Language Interpreters in Armenia and Azerbaijan are willing to set up their associations, as well.

The vast majority of sign language interpreters in Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine use signed Russian and ignore real sign languages. The situation is changing in Russia. Although there are different spoken languages (4 different family groups, not related), different religions and cultures, all sign languages are practically the same (preliminary research proves that this is just one sign language - Russian sign language, with dialect variations, with the possible exception of Armenian sign language)

ARMENIA

3,500 deaf people, 4 trained sign language interpreters, 8 with no qualifications or permanent jobs
2 sign language interpreters on TV (news programmes)

AZERBAIJAN

7,000 deaf people, 15 sign language interpreters, only 3 are employed

BYELORUSSIA (BELARUS)

GEORGIA

3500 deaf people, 4 trained sign language interpreters, 7 have no qualifications, 2 sign language interpreters on TV (news programmes). It was good that the Ministry of Social Welfare provided 6 working places for sign language interpreters

KAZAKHSTAN

14,000 deaf people, sign language interpreters

KYRGYZSTAN

Deaf people, 2 sign language interpreters with qualification, 13 no qualification, 9 have no jobs

RUSSIA

Officially there are 100,000 members of the All-Russian Federation of the Deaf (about 50,000 more unregistered Deaf people) and about 800 sign language interpreters. However, although the people are registered as sign language interpreters many of them work as secretaries, accountants or even as heads of the Deaf association branches.

The average figure is 150 deaf persons per sign language interpreter. In Moscow the provision is 30 free hours for interpreter service per year and the



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interpreter receives about 8 euros per hour. In other regions the situation varies and is about 2 euros per hour. TV interpreting can be found on local and regional channels only.

TADKIJKISTAN

20,000 deaf people, 6 sign language interpreters, 1 qualified

TURKMENISTAN

Little is known about this very closed country – about 3000 deaf people, might be 1 or 2 employed sign language interpreters

UKRAINE

Altogether there are about 100,000 Deaf people of whom 57,000 are members of the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf. 289 official sign language interpreters, about 800 people have some sort of sign language training, and there is TV interpreting

The Ukrainian Society of the Deaf has existed since 1933. The Ukrainian Society of the Deaf has always trained the sign language interpreters, and they been employed with the association. Today, 289 sign language interpreters work with the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf. Each year, the training programme graduates 30 interpreters from this short program of study. After Ukraine gained independence in 1991, Deaf people were able to enjoy greater variety in their employment and post-secondary education choices, and hence the standard of interpreting was also raised. There is now discussion about the need for increased standards in both training and practice of interpreting in order to meet the needs of Ukrainian Deaf citizens. The Ukrainian Society of the Deaf has 57000 registered adult members, and the estimated population of Deaf Ukrainians is over 100.000.

The status of Ukrainian Sign Language does not yet have formal recognition; however the Institute of Special Pedagogy has established the Ukrainian Sign Language Laboratory and is working closely with the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf in order to document the native signed language. At this time there is no official professional category to define the profession of interpreting.

On March 14, 2007, our association was officially registered in the Ministry of Justice in Ukraine. The Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Ukraine has elected Marina Liferova as their first president. The association has created several goals and we will be working hard to gain official recognition of our profession, and raise the level of interpreting in Ukraine.

UZBEKISTAN

21,000 deaf people, 10-15 sign language interpreters who also received training from a Japanese charity agency (in signed Uzbek) TV interpreting

WASLI Membership Report

Nigel Cleaver – WASLI Membership Secretary

At the time of this report WASLI has contacts in 106 countries around the world. Take up of WASLI membership has been slow but the potential for growth is enormous.

NATIONAL MEMBERS are those national interpreter associations of sign language interpreters with goals similar to WASLI.

The following associations are paid up NATIONAL MEMBERS; AVLIC (Canada), JASLI (Japan), NRASLI (Japan) GOSLIN (Nigeria), RID, (US) and SKSLIA (South Korea)

Applications in their final stage of processing are: ASLIA (Australia), ASOIVE (Venezuela), MyASLI (Malaysia), SASLI (Scotland), ASLI (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), FTT (Denmark), ZSLIA (Zambia) and SLIANZ (New Zealand)

PROVISIONAL MEMBERS are those interpreters from a country where there is not national association of sign language interpreters but who provide a working plan toward the development of an interpreter association.

Madagascar is the only provisional member.

SPONSORING INDIVIDUALS are individuals that support the aims and objectives of WASLI.

Jeffrey Jaech (US),
Daniel Burch (US),
Priscilla Burch (US),
EJ Cohen (UK),
Judith Collins (UK),
Maya de Wit (Netherlands),
Pattie Dobie (Canada),
Griet Geysels (Belgium),
Caron Hawkings (UK),
Linda Lamitola (US),
Angela Jones (US),
Maria Micioni (US),
Nicole Pancino (US),
Oliver Pouliot (UK),
Deb Russell (Canada),
Gary Sanderson (US),
Paul Schortemeyer (Canada),



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Susan Stegenga (US),
Eve West (US),
David Wolfenden (UK),

SPONSORING ORGANISATIONS includes Deaf Associations, Business, Agencies, Institutions, Chapters, Public Statutory Bodies, Companies, Local Authorities, Charities, Forums or any body that supports the aims and objectives of WASLI.

Significant (UK),
South Korea Association of the Deaf (South Korea)

“SPONSORING A MEMBER”

Jeffrey Jaech of the US has the honour of being the very first WASLI Sponsoring Individual Member. He also is the first to sponsor the membership fee for 2 interpreter Associations, GOSLIN – the Guild of Sign Language Interpreters of Nigeria and NAM – National Association of Madagascar Here is an excerpt from the correspondence when Jeffrey was introduced to Josiah from GOSLIN:

“I am thrilled that I could assist GOSLIN with its membership in WASLI! This is an exciting and historic time for you and your colleagues. I live and work in New York City, a very international city. Our Deaf community is very international, as well, so reaching out beyond our borders makes sense to me as the world becomes more and more interconnected. Hearing of GOSLIN's many accomplishments would certainly not bore me! I am especially interested to hear more about the progress you make toward establishing an institute for interpreter training. Please do stay in touch. I hope we will have the opportunity to meet in person some day soon!”

If you would like to become a membership sponsor, please contact Nigel Cleaver at membership@wasli.org

BECOME A WASLI MEMBER NOW
www.wasli.org and click on MEMBERSHIP

Looking beyond 2007 and towards 2011

As you can see from this Activities Report there has been much work to get the Association started. There of course remains much work to do. The Executive Board meets on 12 July 2007, just before conference. The focus of this meeting will be to agree a Strategic Plan for beyond 2007 and towards 2011. Some of the more important part of the strategy will look at:

- To work to see the establishments of more interpreter associations in countries who do not have them
- Increasing membership
- Strengthen the work that is happening in the regions
- To find better ways of communicating, sharing information
- Further our relations with the World Federation of the Deaf and National Associations of the Deaf
- Setting up Task Groups to develop policy and guidance on important issues
- Preparing for WASLI 2011

The next few years will be an exciting time for WASLI. At the Conference a new WASLI Executive Board will be elected and we hope for the first time to see representatives from South America and Africa take their place on the Board. This team will have the huge responsibility of taking the Association forward and they will want to work closely with you in order to do this.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WASLI would like to acknowledge the contributions of all those who have in some way contributed to the work of the Association. There are many of you, in fact too many to be listed here. There has been an incredible amount of work achieved during the past 2 years and this could only have happened with your help, time, energy and commitment.

THANK YOU ALL