



Talking TIS Newsletter

Summer 2012

Commitment to quality

TIS National is committed to the ongoing improvement of our service. We actively seek opportunities to identify and overcome any barriers to consistently providing a high standard, professional interpreting service.

By conducting regular quality assurance activities, TIS National is able to gain an independent view of the challenges our clients face when they use our services and work with interpreters.

The TIS National annual Client Satisfaction Survey is a key contributor to our quality assurance program.

The 2011 Client Satisfaction Survey captures the responses of 212 English-speaking clients who completed the survey online, while a further 200 non-English speakers were surveyed by telephone. The survey asked our clients about their experience with TIS National. Questions covered all aspects of our service, including frequency and ease of use, level of satisfaction and feedback handling systems.

The survey revealed that 95 per cent of TIS National's English-speaking clients were able to engage an interpreter every time or most times they requested one. Also, 91 per cent of English-speaking respondents were satisfied the information they provided in their most recent telephone interpreting service was correctly communicated by the interpreter and 88 per cent rated the quality of their last TIS National telephone interpreting service as good or excellent.

Non-English-speaking respondents indicated they were satisfied with the most recent service provided by TIS National 92 per cent of the time and 90 per cent of respondents were satisfied that during their most recent service the interpreter correctly communicated what they said.

The results of the Client Satisfaction Survey are used in conjunction with a recently launched mystery shopping pilot program. The mystery shopping program looks at the quality of our telephone interpreting service and also assesses the client service skills of TIS National operators.

The pilot is being conducted through a third party telephone mystery shopping agency working in partnership with the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).

Supporting TIS National's commitment to ongoing service improvement, the mystery shopping program is an opportunity to validate the high quality and professionalism of TIS National's interpreter panel, while also providing a quality assurance method to identify and address potential concerns. The results will be reviewed at the end of the pilot program and TIS National will determine the most appropriate method to monitor and manage service delivery and interpreter performance on an ongoing basis.

You can register to participate in the next Client Satisfaction Survey by emailing your name and email address to tispromo@immi.gov.au, or by phoning the Client Liaison and Promotions team on 1300 655 820.



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Busier than ever—TIS National experiences record demand for interpreting services

TIS National continues to break records for its telephone and on-site interpreting services. There is usually a spike in demand for interpreters in July and August following the end of the tax year. This year it coincided with the 2011 Census and TIS National set new records for the number of interpreting services provided, almost on a daily basis.

Demand shows no sign of decreasing this year. TIS National continues to facilitate more interpreting services than ever with 13 per cent overall growth from the same time last year, and an amazing 84 per cent overall growth from the 2005–06 financial year.

TIS National provided nearly one million telephone and 60 000 on-site interpreting services last financial year.

Areas of demand have also been of note as TIS National's top demand languages are always changing. Languages from Afghanistan, where demand was virtually non-existent five years ago, have stormed into the top 10 languages serviced by TIS National.

Various other languages spoken by refugee and humanitarian entrants have also experienced major growth over the past few years.

TIS National's contact centre is fully staffed and is working hard to answer all incoming calls, while the Client and Interpreter Liaison Unit has implemented strategies to recruit more interpreters to cope with increased demand in high growth languages.



Interpreter development—NAATI scholarships

TIS National's Interpreter Improvement Scholarship program for 2011 is in full swing.

TIS National's service standard is to deliver 90 per cent of services through National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited interpreters. As the demand for new and emerging languages increases, so does the need for suitably qualified interpreters. The aim of the scholarship program is to provide an opportunity for TIS National interpreters to further develop their professional skills and knowledge, and to gain their NAATI paraprofessional accreditation.

So far the scholarships have been awarded in Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The process of choosing candidates from New South Wales has begun and we are looking at development opportunities in other states.

TIS National interpreters without accreditation, in new and emerging languages where accreditation is available, can apply for the scholarships. We choose interpreters who show a commitment to helping their community in both the volume and quality of their work. These interpreters are sponsored by TIS National to attend a professional development session or workshop and will be funded to sit the NAATI paraprofessional accreditation test.

For those interpreters already selected, we wish you well as you attend the workshops and prepare for your NAATI tests.

TIS National encourages all interpreters to gain NAATI accreditation where it is available, and recognition where it is not. Information on accreditation and testing can be found at the NAATI website (www.naati.com.au).

NEWSFLASH: Expanded Real Estate Pilot

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Real Estate Pilot has been expanded to provide significantly more real estate agents with access to free telephone interpreting, through the department's Translating and Interpreting Service, TIS National.

The pilot aims to assist newly arrived, non-English speaking residents, particularly humanitarian settlers, to interact independently with real estate agents to access the private rental market.

Additional real estate agents have been nominated by service providers funded under the department's Humanitarian Settlement Services and

Settlement Grants Program.

It is hoped that even more settlers will benefit from the service, with the pilot expanding into additional areas of high settlement need across Australia.

The extended 12-month pilot began in October 2011.

For more information please contact Jenny Joyce.
Email: jenny.joyce@immi.gov.au



***Tax in Australia – what you need to know* DVD available in 16 languages**

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has produced a free DVD to help people who are new to the Australian tax system and face language or literacy challenges.

Tax in Australia – what you need to know provides essential information about Australia's tax and superannuation systems in plain, easy-to-understand language to break down communication barriers associated with low literacy, low English language proficiency, cultural differences and limited financial literacy.

It is available in Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, Dinka, English, Hindi, Karen, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Farsi, Thai, Somali, Spanish, Vietnamese and Auslan for those with a hearing impairment.

Tax in Australia introduces the basic principles of Australia's tax system: the tax file number; information people need to know when starting employment; and basic tax return and superannuation information. It uses case studies to explain common situations new arrivals may encounter. It also comes with subtitles to improve access for hearing impaired viewers.

Tax in Australia guides viewers to more information on the ATO's website and promotes the use of the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) for those who have low levels of English language proficiency.

Tax in Australia was developed in consultation with a range of organisations including DIAC service providers, Centrelink's Multicultural Advisory Committee, the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), Migrant Resource Centres and community groups. It has been very well received with positive feedback from users, community leaders, intermediaries and government agencies.

Tax in Australia can be viewed online at www.ato.gov.au/otherlanguages and is also available on DVD. Copies of the DVD can be ordered by emailing diversity@ato.gov.au. Please include details of the languages and number of copies required as well as your mailing address.

TIS National nominates interpreters for AUSIT Excellence in Telephone Interpreting Award

The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) hosted the 2011 National Excellence Awards at Australian National University in Canberra on 11 November.

TIS National was a platinum sponsor of the event and welcomed the introduction of a new award category, Excellence in Telephone Interpreting. TIS National proudly nominated two high performing interpreters in the category, Entisar Al-Sa'ady and Dongmei Chen.



Working as a teacher before migrating to Australia, Entisar always had a strong interest in linguistics. After arriving in Australia, she made pursuing a career in the industry her first goal.

Since obtaining her qualification as a level 3 NAATI-accredited Arabic interpreter, Entisar 'uses every possible opportunity to pursue professional development, and believes every assignment is a challenge'.

"Interpreters are professionals," Entisar said. "Therefore they should act according to this, never quit development and only accept assignments that are consistent with their accreditation."



Dongmei is a level 3 NAATI-accredited interpreter in both Cantonese and Mandarin. Before migrating to Australia from Singapore, Dongmei worked as a journalist for a Chinese newspaper and as a primary school language teacher.

Dongmei said learning new things about the world and people, and knowing that she is helping solve a problem for someone have been the most rewarding aspects of her career as an interpreter. 'When we are working we are voices for other people,' Dongmei said.

How do I find support for training?

TIS National regularly receives requests from our clients about gaining access to training on using TIS National services and working effectively with interpreters.

As TIS National is not a training organisation, it is unable to facilitate on-site training requests. However, the Client Liaison and Promotions team is dedicated to assisting its clients with as much guidance and support to deliver staff training about TIS National.

If you are planning a training or development session for your organisation, we can assist you by providing copies of various promotional materials, customised slide-show presentations and other information and assistance.

A useful promotional tool produced by TIS National is a three-chapter DVD showing how to gain access to an interpreter, including an overview of services, some tips and advice for using interpreters, and services for medical

practitioners (GPs and specialists).

Clients can also view the video on ImmiTV at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/ImmiTV>

A guide to TIS National services: <http://bit.ly/TIS-DVD-Guide>

Hints and tips for working with interpreters: <http://bit.ly/TIS-DVD-Interpreter-Tips>

TIS National services for medical practitioners: <http://bit.ly/TIS-DVD-Doctors>

You can request a free copy of the DVD or other assistance to deliver a training session by contacting the Client Liaison and Promotions team by phone or email.

Telephone: 1300 655 820

Email: tispromo@immi.gov.au

Cancer Council makes the switch to TIS National

Cancer Council Victoria will begin to use TIS National interpreting services for the operation and promotion of their range of support programs and information services.

Anna Epifanio, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) Patient Support Coordinator from the Cancer Connect program, said 'Cancer doesn't discriminate; it can affect anyone from any background.' It affects English speakers and non-English speakers alike.

The Cancer Council's nationwide Cancer Helpline (131 120) is staffed by registered cancer nurses with oncology qualifications and experience, offering a range of services to people affected by a cancer experience. The Helpline provides information about all types and stages of cancer and can explain what will happen during processes like chemotherapy, radiotherapy and other cancer treatments.

Using a unique database of resources, the Helpline staff can connect callers with cancer support groups and other community resources. Information is also available on cancer prevention and early detection, including related Cancer Council programs.

'When someone is newly diagnosed with cancer there are two things they really want, Trish Waters, Cancer Connect Program Manager said. 'The first is up-to-date information, which is provided through the Helpline with oncology nurses. The second is to talk to someone who has had a similar experience, and that's where Cancer Connect provides a unique and powerful opportunity to connect with individuals of shared experience.'

The Cancer Connect program comprises 160 volunteers who give their time to share their cancer experiences with callers.

As an organisation, Cancer Council Victoria is very committed to providing services to the CaLD community. 'For us, it is a significant priority,' Janet Phillips, Cancer Helpline Manager, said. 'We provide our literature in a lot of different languages. Now with the help of TIS National, we can also connect non-English-speaking callers to a cancer nurse assisted by an interpreter in their own language, through the Multilingual Cancer Information Line.' Non-English speakers can call TIS National on 131 450, say the language required, and once connected with an interpreter request to speak to the Cancer Council Victoria Helpline.



Cancer Council Victoria also provides their Living with Cancer Education Program

in languages other than English. The free program is run by trained health professionals to give people with cancer, and their friends and family, the chance to learn more about cancer, its treatment and their emotional reactions to it. Cancer Council staff said that running this program with the use of interpreters has been invaluable in dispelling many myths held about cancer in different cultural groups. Significant positive feedback has been received.

Giovanna Raco, who has been working on the Cancer Helpline for 14 years, said: 'We've delivered these sessions in Greek, Italian and Russian with the use of interpreters. We open the sessions up for discussion and get attendees to ask questions. They are really interactive and have a lot of questions.'

As a non-government and not-for-profit organisation, Cancer Council Victoria qualifies for fee-free interpreting, provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship through TIS National. Cancer Council Victoria funds the Cancer Helpline through fundraising events and community donations.

Janet Phillips from Cancer Council Victoria said: 'We have a strategic plan around how we might engage various community groups more. We probably average 25 to 30 calls with an interpreter a month and we think this number could be even higher.'

'Research shows that CALD communities generally feel more isolated and have a lack of access to information in their own language.'

TIS National is proud to help Cancer Council Victoria in its efforts to improve communication and health outcomes for these communities.

For more information about Cancer Council Victoria, call the Cancer Helpline on 131 120, Monday to Friday from 9am-5pm, or visit www.cancervic.org.au.

Recruitment strategy – unmet demand

TIS National is always looking to recruit suitable interpreters, particularly those who are accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).

In Australia's ever-changing multicultural society, there are new and emerging languages spoken. TIS National receives and analyses information about which languages are in demand, and uses this information to set recruitment priorities and policies.

We are very interested in knowing if your interpreting requirements are not being met. This could be in any of the new and emerging languages spoken by refugees or humanitarian entrants, or in higher volume languages. TIS National will use this information to guide our recruitment effort and will work to add interpreters to our panel when we know there is demand that is not being met.

For TIS National, Vietnamese is currently one of the top three languages requested after Mandarin and Arabic. Persian is fourth, but growing rapidly. It will soon exceed Vietnamese in terms of demand. We are eager to recruit Persian interpreters who have professional or paraprofessional NAATI interpreting accreditation. TIS National welcomes enquiries from NAATI accredited interpreters in other languages as well, particularly Somali, Dinka, Thai, Khmer, Dari and Hazaragi.

TIS National will consider recruiting those who have interpreting experience in Kirundi, Rohingya and any dialects of Kurdish.

The Interpreter Liaison Unit in TIS National can assist with all recruitment enquiries. You can contact the team by phoning 1300 132 621 or emailing interpreters@immi.gov.au. For up to date information on our recruitment priorities or to download an interpreter application form, please visit our website at www.immi.gov.au/tis.

Want to provide feedback?

Client feedback plays an important role in TIS National's quality assurance process.

TIS National is committed to following up and acting on feedback, which is an excellent way to identify and respond to any issues our clients may have encountered while using our interpreting service.

If you have encountered a problem with an interpreter, operator or service, providing feedback is a quick and effective way of helping TIS National to improve the quality of services provided to you in the future. TIS National also welcomes positive feedback.

We do our best to let our interpreters and operators know when they receive positive feedback.

TIS National has made it simpler and more convenient for our clients to provide feedback by introducing a new Online Feedback Form, accessible through the TIS National web page (www.immi.gov.au/tis).

You can also provide feedback about TIS National by contacting the Client Liaison and Promotions team by phoning 1300 655 820 or by emailing tispromo@immi.gov.au.

