



## **Professional Interpreters for Justice**

### **Report of the Steering Committee**

Date: Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Time: 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Venue: Unite House - Holborn - London

**Present at the meeting:** Andrew Murray, Regional Officer of Unite, presiding over the meeting; Amelia Naranjo, Secretary, NUPIT Branch; Eulalia (Lalia) Pessoa-White, Director, NRPSI; Klasiena Slaney, Director SOMI UK; Magdy Abbas, Director SOMI UK; Keith Moffitt, Chair, CIoL Council (Observer); Guillermo (Willie) Makin, Chairman, SPSI; Penny Arbuthnot, Involvis.

**Via telephone link:** Madeleine Lee, Director, PIA; John Podvoiskis, Director, PIA; Tony Wilcox, WITS; Paul Wilson, CEO, ITI.

**Apologies:** Eileen Ford, Chair, NUPIT Branch; Geoffrey Buckingham, Chairman, APCI; Aqil Minhas, Treasurer, APCI.

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The meeting started at 4:00 pm and the agenda was as follows:

1. Approval of PIJ Report dated 11.12.12
2. Report on Meeting with the MoJ on 19.12.12
3. Interpreters Seminar 2013
4. Meeting with Devon & Cornwall Police force
5. Letter of response to the MoJ
6. Response to letter sent to Nupit FAO members of the Steering Committee

## **Approval of PIJ report dated 11.12.12**

This report was not approved. Any further amendments to the report dated 11.12.12 should be sent to AN by Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at the latest.

## **Report of meeting with the MoJ on 19.12.12**

KM gave a verbal report of the meeting with the MoJ that took place on 19.12.12.

AM pointed out that because the FWA is not working and with the NAO and PAC reports, added to the JSC Parliamentary Hearing, the MoJ is under a lot of pressure. Therefore the PIJ-SC should maintain the dialogue with the MOJ but also continue with the campaign. The content and tenor of correspondence with the MoJ, plus future discussions, our Parliamentary event and the forthcoming seminar will help the interpreters' campaign and that will maintain our position.

The initial purpose of the PIJ Campaign was to establish contact with the MoJ re the FWA and their contract with ALS/Capita, which has been achieved. This contract is supposed to last for five years, but it is clear after the first year of its implementation that it is a shambles. The MoJ keep using the same old arguments on which the contract was based.

The PIJ-SC need now to have a clear aims for the campaign as it is obvious that the MoJ need us more than we need them, therefore we now can lay down our conditions:

- i) Communications and negotiating stance must be aimed at obtaining the MoJ's agreement that part of the quality issue is related to the structure of their FWA and contract.
- ii) The negotiating stance is to condition the PIJ's participation to what is the appropriate structure to deliver quality interpreting within the Judiciary System.

Therefore, any further discussions with the MoJ must include a review of the contract and how it's being operated and they must be prepared to look for an alternative system.

Discussions over quality issues need to be based on the understanding on the part of the MoJ that these are linked to the FWA and the contract they introduced on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

It was pointed out that there is a need for clarification on the definitions of certain terms and phrases and the creation of a Glossary of Terms for the NAO report would be very useful:

- a) independent assessment of standards
- b) assessment of quality of contract
- c) assessment of delivery.

The MoJ will be informed that a group can be set up to work on this.

Any working group must include the NRPSI as regulator of the profession (registered interpreters are insisting on this), the organisations within the PIJ-SC and the MoJ. We don't want to have a repetition of the 2009 argument which is still being used by the MoJ to justify the outsourcing. PIJ will hold that there is no need for another list, as we already have an independent Register of qualified and vetted interpreters who have to comply with a Code of Practice, ensuring quality and standards.

### **Interpreters Seminar 2013**

Unite will be hosting an Interpreters' Seminar on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 – from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, in the same room that last year held the NUPIT seminar which resulted in the setting up of the PIJ-SC and the PIJ Campaign. However, although the room is free of charge, we need some funding for the food. Five SC members offered to help with the organisation of the seminar.

The purpose of this seminar is the following:

- To inform people of what the PIJ-SC have been doing
- To discuss the subject matter i.e. the quality issue
- No more than three (3) speakers will be invited to give people the opportunity to ask questions and most importantly, to talk to us. We need feedback from interpreters.  
Any suggestion about who to invite as speakers to the seminar should be sent to AN.
- There was an offer to write to prospective speakers from the Judiciary and the EU such as Eulita. The SC will decide who are the right people to invite to talk at the seminar. We could invite the MoJ to send a representative.

Fundamental decisions need to be taken, a future strategy discussed and we wish to talk to interpreters. - Involvis will be doing a survey, a draft circulated to the PIJ-SC and its results will be announced at the seminar.

## **Meeting with Devon & Cornwall police force**

Through an initiative of an SPSI member, members of the PIJ-SC were invited to attend a meeting with Devon and Cornwall police SPSI is to organise the meeting and the delegation. NRPSI volunteered to go as a regulator. It was suggested that WITS should also attend as they have experience with the costings and running of a Call Centre and invoicing facilities. Some expressed concern as we shouldn't be promoting WITS, but the fact of the matter is that WITS have valuable expertise and knowledge in respect of the above. The MoJ and Police Forces have always wanted a ONE STOP SHOP to reduce their costs. Everybody agreed to send a delegation for the initial meeting, which is to take place in the near future.

## **Letter of response to the MoJ**

Involvis agreed to draft a single letter indicating that members of the PIJ-SC are prepared to continue talks with the MoJ provided they review the operation of the Framework Agreement/contract and should consider an alternative structure.

## **Response to letter sent to Nupit FAO members of the Steering Committee**

An interpreter sent a letter to Nupit on 19.12.12 - FAO the Steering Committee members. As Christmas and New Year were approaching AN made the decision to hold it until 03.01.13 so all members of the PIJ-SC would receive and read it at the same time. A draft response was written by AN, which was put to the consideration of members of the PIJ-SC. For some the letter appeared too long and it was suggested that an acknowledgement of receipt would suffice.

## **Actions agreed at the meeting:**

1. PIJ to send a letter to the MoJ
2. Organise a seminar for 23/2/2013 – to invite no more than three (3) speakers
3. Organise a survey in time for the results to be published on 23/2/2013.

## **AOB:**

Topics for next meeting:

One single email address for all members of the PIJ-SC.

TheBigWord won a contract with the UKBA and with SOCA, which is due to start shortly.

The date proposed for the next meeting was Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013 at 3pm.

The meeting ended at 5:30 p.m.

Report by Amelia Naranjo (NUPIT)