INTERPRETER COMMISSION
MEETING SUMMARY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2007

Members Present: Leticia Camacho (by phone), Emma Garkavi, Ann Macfarlane, Frank Maiocco, Judge Ron Mamiya, Steve Muzik, Justice Susan Owens, Virginia Rockwood, Judge Dennis Yule

Members Absent: Jeff Hall and Lourdes Portello Salazar

Guest: Mike McElroy, King County Prosecutor's Office

AOC Staff: Karina Pugachenok, Chris Ruhl and Tina Williamson

GENERAL BUSINESS

Welcome
Justice Owens called the meeting to order and introductions were made around the room.

Meeting Minutes
A motion was made, seconded and **passed** to approve the March 2007 meeting minutes.

Chris confirmed that the Commission meeting minutes and Commission roster would be posted on AOC's website as originally intended.

Future Commission Meetings
A phone conference is scheduled for October 19. In addition, a Commission meeting will be held on November 30 at SeaTac from 1:00-4:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Issues Committee
Steve Muzik asked whether a Mandarin interpreter who is already certified in Cantonese would need to take the written exam again. The Commission agreed that the interpreter would not need to retake the exam.

Discipline Committee
Nothing to report.

Judicial Education and Court Manager Education Committee
Tina reported on the DV/Ethics Workshops and provided final attendee lists for the SeaTac and Richland locations. A final workshop is scheduled for Saturday, September 15 at AOC's SeaTac office; 27 participants are registered. Workshop attendees have expressed an interest in attending an "advanced" domestic violence and ethics workshop; Tina will work with the Education Committee to explore this option further. Steve stated that it would be good to have some of the workshops scheduled in the second year of the compliance period for those still working on completing their credits.

The Interpreter Program will have its first Resource Table at the Fall Judicial Conference in Vancouver, WA. In addition, materials were also sent to the AWSCA conference. Discussion followed regarding the Interpreter Program's presence at future conferences, including an effort to get on the agenda for the Superior Court Judge's/Administrator's conference scheduled for April 2008 and the District and Municipal Court Judge's conference scheduled for June 2008.

INTERPRETER COMMISSION/PATTERN FORMS COMMITTEE

Karina reported that the committee is close to prioritizing the languages for translation. Besides Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese, two more languages still need to be selected. Questions and concerns raised included: What is / wil be the protocol for use of translated forms? Do specific steps or procedures need to be identified? How will it be decided which additional languages to select for forms translation? How do we take into account forms that have already been translated (including forms translated by King County)? How much funding should be held back from LAP funds for pattern forms translation?

TESTING and TRAINING

Certified
The oral exam for certified interpreters was held on September 8 and 9 at Bellevue Community College (BCC). Tina reported that 71 exams were administered, with all WA certified languages represented. Tina will request feedback from Rene Siegenthaler of BCC on how the exams went.

Registered
Tina reported that five Oral Proficiency Interviews have been conducted, and we are currently awaiting the results of those interviews. Chris noted that the Samoan language had been removed from the list of languages that Language Testing International currently offers. Consequently, we had one Samoan candidate pass the written exam, and she is now unable to complete the process to become registered.

AOC INTERPRETER PROGRAM

Program Changes

Chris reported that Robert Miera is no longer with AOC. He stated that the position is not classified properly and he will be making a request to reclassify (technically, reallocate) the position from a Court Program Analyst to a Sr. Court Program Analyst. However, this change was not budgeted for FY08-09, so the position will be held open until later in 2007 to generate savings in order to hire at the Sr. CPA level. Discussion followed regarding the position duties and marketing of the position. In an effort to reach a wide applicant pool, there will be a national search and Chris will have a job description and announcement available for Tina and Judge Mamiya to take to the annual Consortium meeting in October. In the interim, AOC staff will continue to take a "team" approach to staffing the interpreter program (Chris Ruhl, Tina Williamson, Brian Backus, Karina Pugachenok and Paula Odegaard).

Interpreter Funding and LEP/LAP Update

Karina reported that a number of Superior, District and Municipal courts are planning to apply for interpreter services funding and are starting to talk about innovations in providing interpreters – e.g., coordinated scheduling and use of interpreters. She recently visited Grant, Pierce, Snohomish and South King counties. Other counties that have expressed interest are Yakima, Benton/Franklin, Kitsap and Spokane.

Data Collection: There was discussion of the challenge trial courts face in getting up to speed for the required data collection in time for this funding. Some courts feel it may be better to wait until the next round of funding when the overall data collection and invoicing system is further developed and glitches are worked out. Karina reported that work is being done on a uniform invoicing system. In response to a question from Commissioner Rockwood, the nature and advantages of King County District Court's interpreter scheduling and invoicing system were described, including its receipt of a national award and the fact that it is 99% web-based.

Strategic Planning Follow Up

AOC is able to apply for SJI technical assistance funds so we can acquire John Martin's services. Chris will distribute the proposal via email to the Commission for review. Commission members are to get back with any input within a few days. There was consensus to ask John to reduce the proposal so that AOC's required commitment is only $3,000.

WASCLA Summit Conference

This year's Washington State Coalition for Language Access (WASCLA) conference was held on September 7-8 in Ellensburg. The conference was well attended (150/Friday and 120/Saturday). Chris and Karina presented information on the interpreter funding legislation. Emma applauded them for their presentation, saying it was fantastic.

Reciprocity
Reciprocity continues to be an area of discussion. This is an agenda item for the upcoming Consortium meeting scheduled for October 14-17 in Minnesota. In light of this information, a motion was made to postpone a decision regarding reciprocity until the November 30 Commission meeting. Meantime, Tina will gain access to the internal Consortium website to research certification standards and processes of member states. Also, we need to determine whether Oregon's certification standards and process in particular are the same as Washington's.

Khmer Exam
At the annual Consortium meeting, Judge Mamiya will try to persuade members to redo the Khmer exam. Brian Backus will provide Judge Mamiya with information regarding Khmer demographics in the U.S. Currently, there are three certified Khmer interpreters in Washington State. A motion was made, seconded and **passed** to reimburse trial courts **only** for use of the three currently certified Khmer interpreters.

NAJIT Guidelines
Ann will email the guidelines to AOC and then they will be forwarded to the full Commission for review.

OTHER BUSINESS

Emma commented on the need for more frequent testing for the registered category. Chris said that we need to determine if we are precluded by any budget constraints. One option would be to charge more for the exam to offset the cost. There was also discussion of how to target which languages are needed the most, but no conclusions were reached.