

# REPORT INTO ENGAGEMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION OF QUEENSLAND SPOKEN AND SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS



Respectfully submitted by Robert Aurbach, J.D.

M.B.P. Candidate, University of Queensland

Principal Consultant, Uncommon Approach

With assistance from Michelle McEinery, principal faculty advisor and Andrew Neal, Ph.D. program faculty advisor.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary.....	3.
Background and Purpose of Study.....	5.
Data Collection and Analysis.....	9.
The “Typical” Interpreter... ..	11.
Issues regarding compensation for interpreter services.....	12.
Working conditions.....	15.
Interactions with Language Service Providers.....	18.
Identification with the profession.....	20.
Understanding of complaint procedures and Standing Offer Arrangement.....	21.
Intent to stay or leave the profession.....	23.
Table of Relevant Findings.....	25.
Discussion.....	27.
Recommendations.....	32.
References.....	34.
Appendix: Copy of the Survey.....	36.

## Executive summary

For several years interpreters providing services to governmental agencies have been functioning under a Standing Offer of Arrangement (SOA) concerning fees and working condition. Anecdotal evidence suggested that many interpreters were dissatisfied with their remuneration and working conditions under the current agreement. Government indicated a willingness to review the SOA and a study was undertaken to get better information to inform policy makers on the current perceptions of working and pay conditions for that review.

Interpreters who hold credentials from the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) were invited to participate in the online survey, and nearly 300 interpreters responded.

Several major themes arose from the results of the study:


- Interpreters are dedicated to their profession and take very seriously their responsibility to faithfully serve communities of people who need assistance to communicate about the necessities of daily life.
- Most interpreters act as independent contractors, providing services through private Language Service Providers (LSPs) who act as booking intermediaries between the interpreter and the end user government agency such as a hospital or the courts. LSPs are supposed to engage NAATI credentialed interpreters whenever possible, but some have been known to use unqualified bilingual people.
- LSPs pay sign and spoken language interpreters differently, with sign language interpreters receiving a higher effective rate. Interpreters generally do not receive any of the entitlements or benefits enjoyed by other Queensland employees, and are often subjected to OH&S conditions

that would not be tolerated in the regulated workforce. The overall compensation for a spoken language interpreter is sufficiently low that it does not offset the risks and expenses of independent contracting and cannot be said to be comparable to other workers with similar levels of training and credentials.

- Spoken language interpreters are more dissatisfied with rates of pay, and are less likely to stay in the profession than sign language interpreters. Young and inexperienced interpreters and older and more experienced interpreters indicate the intent to stay within the profession., The large middle group of interpreters with 5-20 years of experience show disillusionment and an increased risk of exiting the industry, potentially creating an experience gap.
- There is widespread negative reaction among interpreters to most of the LSPs, who some believe to be actively pursuing profit over service quality or concerns about treatment of interpreters.
- There is no effective regulation of LSPs, nor any clear mechanism for bringing concerns about pay, conditions or behaviour to the attention of authorities,
- Lack of regulatory oversight has unintended negative impacts on interpreters that may affect the sustainability of their services and adversely affect the quality of medical, legal and other services for the community they serve.

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

Interpreters provide a critical communications interface between people for whom comprehension of spoken English is challenging and the governmental agency staff with whom they may be required to interact. Such environments include medical and hospital diagnostic and therapeutic interactions, interactions with the police and the courts, and dealings with other governmental entities. The importance of the quality of these services cannot be overstated: poor interpreting services can lead to life-threatening medical errors or unjustified criminal conviction. Moreover, the services provided by interpreters are an integral part of the provision of governmental services. Without effective interpreter support, government is unable to fulfil its obligations to provide governmental services. Without provision of effective and high-quality interpreting services those people who do not have the capacity to communicate in English may be effectively denied the entitlements and services routinely provided to other residents and citizens. Interpreters “level the playing field” for the non-English-speaking community, allowing government to fulfill its obligations to this group. Moreover, the exposure to high levels of risk generated by poor quality interpretation is of great public concern.



*“I know of a time when an unqualified interpreter mis-translated “leukemia” as “anemia...”*

The community of spoken language interpreters is served by the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) who provide a voice for the profession and administer continuing professional development, administration of a Code of Ethics and other services. Sign language interpreters in Queensland are served by the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association of Queensland (ASLIAQ), which provides similar services. Both spoken and sign language interpreters are credentialled through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). NAATI tests and provides credentials to persons to ensure that their comprehension and fluency in both English and the other language in which they are interpreting, and their

understanding of the requirements of the task of interpreting itself, are adequate for the job at hand. People who are bilingual (have knowledge and unassessed skill in two languages) and have not been assessed to have completed appropriate and NAATI endorsed training, do not have evidence that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to work professionally bi-culturally and bilingually. Neither has their knowledge and comprehension of the Code of Ethics and interpreting skills been assessed to meet the required standard by NAATI. Consequently, it is not possible to determine if they are able to fulfill the requirements and obligations of the task of professional interpreting.

Most interpreting services for governmental agencies in Queensland are provided by Language Service Providers (LSPs) which are independently owned and operated companies that accept interpreting assignments from end users (such as hospitals or the courts) and provide interpreters in a labour hire arrangement. Details of the pay and working conditions vary from LSP to LSP but interpreters are usually considered independent contractors for whom the normal employee protections, benefits and entitlements do not apply. The interface between Queensland Government and the LSPs is governed by a Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA), but monitoring compliance with the SOA or enforcing its terms is not a primary activity of any governmental entity. Each governmental entity is free to choose to utilise the services of the LSP with which they are comfortable or which provides the best rate.

A crucial factor in the environment is that spoken language and sign language interpreters are not paid at the same rates. Sign language interpreters are paid a flat rate dependent on their level of certification, but generally at least \$46.50 per hour (with higher rates for after hours or emergency work). Importantly, sign language interpreters are paid the equivalent of two hours pay as the minimum rate on every job. Their paid time begins when the interpreter arrives at the site and ends when they leave, so waiting time is compensated. Parking may be compensated, depending on the LSP, but generally travel expenses are not compensated. Other matters pertaining to costs vary by LSP. Sign language interpreters are also hired privately under their own ABN from NDIS funding packages, generally at higher rates of pay, providing opportunities to supplement their income not available to spoken language interpreters.

Spoken language interpreters receive a rate of pay that may vary significantly between LSPs. The current rate sheets for four LSPs were compared. Some made a distinction between NAATI certification levels in their rates of pay. Most lumped the lower levels of NAATI certification or recognition at the same rate of pay as non-certified bilingual people. There was substantial variation in the rates paid. LSP “A”<sup>1</sup> pays \$63.80 for the first hour for a “NAATI certified”<sup>2</sup> interpreter and \$59.00 for the first hour for all others, including non-certified persons. After the first hour, the rates are calculated at the rate of \$7.57 for “certified” and \$7.27 per fifteen minutes for other certification levels. The highest pay rate noted was \$71.00 for the first hour and \$42.00 per hour for the subsequent hours and the lowest was \$58.00 for the first hour and \$28.00 for second and subsequent hours. LSPs pay on significantly different schedules, with some offering a one-and-a-half hour minimum engagement, some offering a more finely tiered rate structure depending on qualifications, and significant variation in after hours and weekend/holiday pay. Since NAATI does not provide the higher levels of certification for some less common languages, there is a de facto cap on the rates of pay for providing services to speakers of less common languages. Although practices vary between LSPs, no compensation is usually paid for tolls, parking or other expenses of travel. While private contracting and some permanent positions with a single organisation are sometimes available, NDIS does not commonly fund spoken language interpreter services, so supplementation of income through that channel is not usually available. It should be noted that the charges paid to the LSPs by user agencies do not appear to consistently vary with the level of certification of the interpreter, as intended in the SOA, creating an economic incentive to provide less experienced interpreters or uncertified bilingual people.

AUSIT and ASLIAQ have noted growing dissatisfaction among interpreters with working conditions and pay provided by some LSPs. The lack of significant pay rises over an extended period of time is one contributor to this dissatisfaction, but other issues were noted. These concerns led representatives of ASLIAQ and AUSIT

---

<sup>1</sup> This LSP is referenced in the verbatim comments, below.

<sup>2</sup> There are times when there is some confusion from the generic term, NAATI certified, which is intended, for the purposes of this report, to refer to having tested for and received a NAATI certification, and “NAATI certified” referring to a specific level of qualification on the NAATI tiered qualification level scheme. Where the latter is intended, the term will be shown in quotation marks.

to seek help in gathering data to support their call for reform to the SOA and other measures. They approached the University of Queensland Centre for Business and Organisational Psychology for assistance. Masters of Business Psychology candidate, Robert Aurbach, under the supervision of Dr. Andrew Neal, undertook the collection and analysis of data from NAATI-credentialled interpreters to provide evidence concerning the current situation.

A five-member Advisory Group consisting of representatives of AUSIT and ASLIAQ, the NAATI Regional Operations Manager (QLD) and experienced interpreters was recruited and became a valued resource for the research, providing background information, suggesting lines of enquiry and analysis and supporting the distribution of the survey that was ultimately created.

A study of the attitudes of NAATI-credentialled interpreters in Queensland was initiated in August, 2022. The purpose of the study was to provide insight into interpreter attitudes and experience with regard to payment for their services, their working conditions, their intent to stay in the profession or leave it, their experiences with certain practices and the remedies they have for perceived complaints. The survey's non-demographic questions were largely derived from published and validated empirical scales. Additional questions that were specific to the industry were added on the suggestion of the Advisory Group, as were two open-ended opportunities to express thoughts or opinions. The final survey consisted of a consent page, 42 questions requesting responses to a statement on a multi-point scale, 2 open-ended invitations for comment and an open-ended request for description of the language in which NAATI credentials had been obtained.

The survey was reviewed under the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research by the University of Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee and received approval on 17 October, 2022 (2022/HE001687). Faculty program advisor Dr Andrew Neal, sponsored the ethics approval process. A copy of the survey is attached as Appendix 1.





## **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

The scope of the survey was collaboratively developed between the Advisory Group and the primary researcher, with review and suggestions from UQ faculty advisors. The primary topics were satisfaction with remuneration, commitment to the interpreting as a career, intent to leave or stay in the profession and demographic information. These topics had been previously researched in other circumstances. (Courtney & Phelan, 2019; Dean, 2001; Lee, 2017; Moorkens, 2020; Piecychna, 2019; Ruokonen & Makisalo, 2018; Setten & Liangliang, 2009). Questions were derived from the Financial Rewards section of the Index of

Organizational Reaction (Dunham & Smith, 1979), the Pay Satisfaction Scale of the Job Satisfaction Index (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951), the Distributive Justice Index (Price & Mueller, 1986), the Career Commitment Scale (Blau, 1989), the Job Expectations Scale (Kumar & Singh, 2011), the Career Withdrawal Cognition Scale (Carson & Bedeian, 1994) and general background (Rodriguez-Castro, 2015). Other substantive questions were suggested by the Advisory Group or the primary faculty advisor. Demographic questions were developed by the primary researcher, aided by insights from the Advisory Group. The consent question was developed from UQ Human research review sources.

NAATI distributed copies of the survey via information letter, to each of their 764 credentialed interpreters in Queensland. AUSIT and ASLIAQ reached out to their Queensland membership via email and social media and urged their participation. Invitees were repeatedly requested to submit only one survey. After approximately one week, all three entities sent out a reminder encouraging participation. A total of 298 (39%) responses to the survey were received during November 2022 and held without identifying information at the University of Queensland for analysis. Survey development, data collection and data analysis were carried out with the Qualtrics survey and statistical package.



## THE “TYPICAL” INTERPRETER

71.9% of survey respondents identified as spoken word interpreters and 28.1% identified as sign language interpreters. Spoken language interpreters tend to be older than sign language interpreters but there is no significant relationship between age and years spent as a NAATI-credentialed interpreter. Most interpreters work 20 hours a week or less (69.4%) and very few work over 30 hours per week (9.2%). 59.7% of interpreters spend 7 or less hours a week on average traveling to and from interpreting jobs and 79.0 % spend 0-10 hours a week using video or telephone technology in their interpreting work. Other than age, there were no significant demographic differences between spoken and sign language interpreters discovered.

Comparing the years of experience as a NAATI credentialed interpreter and other characteristics, there was a positive correlation between highest credential level achieved and years of experience and understanding of complaint procedures. This is in line with the expectation that experienced interpreters are attaining higher NAATI certifications.

There was no significant relationship between years of experience as a NAATI credentialed interpreter and economic needs satisfaction, general job satisfaction, intent to leave the profession, identification with interpreting as a profession or the decision to go into the profession if they had it to do all over again.

Across the whole sample, interpreters generally reported being very dedicated to the job and find a great deal of personal meaning in the work. Three questions were asked about identification with interpreting as a career. 84.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “My career in interpreting is an important part of who I am”. Similar results were obtained with regard to the other questions on that topic.

Notable take-aways: Few interpreters are able to work full time hours, regardless of their credentials or years of experience, due to the dynamics of industry

booking, travel and other factors. The factors that create this situation may have impacts on the career trajectory of interpreters, and their intent to stay within the profession, notwithstanding the very high level of identification with the job, and dedication to the work, displayed by interpreters.

## ISSUES REGARDING COMPENSATION FOR INTERPRETER SERVICES

There are significant differences between spoken and sign language interpreters with regard to their responses to questions about the perceived fairness of compensation. For instance, spoken language interpreters responded less favourably to statements such as “For the job I do, I feel the amount of money I make is ...” (scale of “extremely good” to “very poor”) and “To what extent are you fairly rewarded for the work you have done? (scale of “very fairly” to “very unfairly”).

The responses to two specific questions are of note. Both spoken and sign language interpreters responded to the statement: “I feel unappreciated by the language service providers when I think about what they pay me” with substantial agreement. 67.1 % agreed or agreed strongly with the statement while only 6.9% disagreed. A significant difference between sign and spoken word interpreters exists with respect to their responses to the question “To what extent are your economic needs satisfied by the pay you receive?”

Spoken language interpreters were significantly more likely to respond that their needs were not satisfied than were sign language interpreters. Negative responses to that question were significantly related to the responses to questions that measured job satisfaction and intent to remain in the profession.

The open-ended questions provided a great deal of insight into the perceptions of interpreters. Some of



*“All interpreting agencies have one dimensional pay scales that do not take into account qualifications and years of professional practice. There is no multi-tier pay scale progression, unlike any other profession pay scales for example teachers, nurses amongst others. This lack of differentiated compensation for practitioners has been a real issue for the professional T/I industry since day one.”*

the recurrent themes, which are reflected in comments reproduced below, include:

- Low pay rates given the level of professional responsibilities
- Low or no travel pay, or payment for hospital parking and other expenses and waiting time
- No payment for necessary preparation time
- Second and subsequent hourly pay rate at a level equivalent to unskilled labour such as house cleaning or low level administrative work.

This last point represents a very substantial level of misunderstanding or disagreement with the current economic environment. Interpreters show no understanding of the reason for the discrepancy between the first hour rate and the rate for subsequent hours, and almost universally are unsatisfied with the second hour rate, which is characterised repeatedly with reference to unskilled labour and/or menial positions. The lack of payment for mileage, travel time, tolls, parking fees and other expenses is often called out as an unacceptable condition. To the extent that the higher rate for the first hour is intended to compensate for the expenses associated with interpreting, this understanding has not penetrated to the interpreting community, and the rate of pay without the first hour differential is universally regarded as unacceptable in the comments to the open-ended questions.

Further analysis disclosed a significant correlation between respondent's reported low levels of economic need satisfaction and low general job satisfaction, higher intent to leave the profession, lower identification with interpreting as a profession and less likelihood of going into the profession if they had it to do all over again. Since only 18.1% of all interpreters reported that many or almost all of their economic needs were satisfied by their interpreting careers, these correlations apply broadly.

Two comments addressed the relationship between pay in Queensland and pay in other states.

*"When I left Sydney in 2009 to move to the Gold Coast, XXXXXX was paying me \$72 for the first hour. Now 13 years later on the Gold Coast, they are still only paying \$63, very discriminatory towards QLD interpreters." "*

*“Using private interpreting agencies for government jobs is a bad idea because they are only interested in the money. My experience in Sydney was very different, because they have government owned health care interpreter services and a government owned legal interpreting service. They provided a lot of training and there was serious quality control. All of that is lacking in QLD, we are so much behind...”*

Notable take-aways for the pay-related data are:

- There is a significant difference in pay satisfaction between spoken and sign language interpreters and wide variations between LSPs with regard the rates they pay. It is unclear how the LSPs justify paying widely varying rates for people who possess the same NAATI qualifications.
- The higher rate of pay for the first hour of engagement for spoken language interpreters is not widely understood to be intended as compensation for travel and expenses, or adequate for that purpose. The second and subsequent hour rate is widely believed to be an inadequate rate for the services of a learned and qualified professional.
- The current pay structure for spoken language interpreters is associated with less job satisfaction, less perceived ability to meet economic needs, and higher intent to leave the profession.
- It is reasonable to conclude from the data that the current pay structure for spoken language interpreters is having unintended negative consequences on the profession.
- There is evidence that some multi-state LSPs are paying higher rates in other states than are paid in Queensland.



*“We have not seen a significant increase in pay for over a decade and the cost of living has gone up. We need higher wages to be able to continue our work otherwise we can’t work under such poor pay conditions”*



## WORKING CONDITIONS

Governmental staff do not consistently check the NAATI credentials of the interpreters that are engaged. 55.3% of respondents indicated that their credentials are checked “rarely” or “never”. Under these conditions, governmental staff cannot be sure that the interpretation services provided by LSPs are competent. Some interpreters believe that this lack of accountability raises significant issues of legal liability when errors in interpreting lead to adverse consequences for the served person.

The need for other quantitative questions specifically addressing working conditions was not fully anticipated. However, comments that were volunteered by survey respondents spontaneously raised this issue. As might be expected, interpreters identifying as residing in metro areas used telephone and video technology less often than rural interpreters. The data did show that more experienced interpreters had a significantly better knowledge of the procedures for making a complaint against an LSP.

The open-ended comments that were volunteered addressed working conditions in far more detail. There were a number of comments that noted disrespect and discourtesy.

*“Often not viewed as qualified professional, more as a ‘support worker’, boundaries of role is often misunderstood. Under NDIS non-credentialed and minimal experience interpreters charge and are paid the same rate”*

*“Unfortunately, the interpreting agencies are not able to coordinate to organise suitable hours for interpreters in the same or close job locations. It is not only exhausting to travel all day from one place to another to work for an hour or two in each place, but it does also make the interpreting job or career almost impossible to be considered as a sufficient job that one can rely on for a living”*

*“The greatest let down for Interpreters is training Interpreters on how to protect ourselves emotionally from traumatic and highly distressing interpreting assignments. Especially for Interpreters working with refugees coming from war torn countries and with Interpreters working with end of life situations and Palliative care....”*



There were multiple comments noting inappropriate or disrespectful treatment by medical and legal personnel. One recurring theme of the comments relates to inappropriate waiting, queuing or treatment by administrative staff.

*Admin staff at hospitals can be very rude and uncooperative. For instance, the interpreter who needs the admin to sign the sheet is required to stand in the line of*



*patients which might cost him 20 minutes of his time though he has another back-to-back job to which he needs to go to.”*

*Interpreters are always been underestimated and been bossed by receptionist, nurses and people with lower qualification due to the stereotype that interpreters are very expensive, cost a lot and they are respected for their knowledge and qualification.*

Another recurring theme runs to waiting times, particularly at public facilities.

*“Minimum of 2 hours should be mandatory since all QLD health facilities have posters on the wall stating all patients may have to wait for up to 2 hours, I have had to leave appointments MANY many times over the years because only 1 hour was booked.”*

*“I frequently encounter admin staff and health professionals unwilling to accommodate patients with interpreters - I am booked for 1 hour but there are signs in the waiting area saying up to 3hr wait when I explain I’m only booked for an hour they say too bad, professionals come out 5minutes before the booking ends expecting the chat to only be a few minutes not realizing work between two languages and cultures you need to allow extra time.”*

A third theme of comments relates to the lack of proper information given to interpreters in preparation for their duties.

*“Specifically, when booked for a court interpreting assignment, I need to know much more than the date, time, and place. People expect interpreters to interpret anything without any background/briefing. If confidentiality concerns them, they could have interpreters sign an NDA or arrange for interpreters to be briefed by a court officer beforehand.”*

*“Due to the so-called privacy issue, interpreters have been provided with very little information on tasks, which lead to difficulties for preparation and affect our interpreting performance. This is unfair for both the involved parties and the interpreters.”*



Additional comments were raised about perceived OH&S violations, lack of normal benefits and entitlements and special concerns pertaining to interpreting in the regional setting.

The notable take-away is that interpreters routinely work in difficult environments, often under conditions that are outside their control. These include inappropriate or disrespectful treatment, excessive waiting times and lack of adequate information to allow proper preparation for interpreting. In some instances, external conditions may compromise the services given to the people in need of interpretation.

## INTERACTIONS WITH LANGUAGE SERVICE PROVIDERS

There were two themes that were very strongly reflected in both the scaled response questions and the written comments to open-ended questions. Both spoken language and sign language interpreters are dissatisfied with the treatment that they receive from many LSPs. As noted above, 67.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “I feel unappreciated by the language service providers when I think about what they

pay me” and only 6.9% disagreed with the statement. The comments recorded were almost universally negative, and sometimes quite specific. LSP names have been redacted, but it is notable that the name of one LSP was mentioned far more often than others.

*“The only problem is the rate of pay that I am getting from the language service providers. I often think of giving up this career that I love so much as I feel under paid and very unappreciated for the quality of work that I do. Take court interpreting (which is very stressful and exhausting) for examples, I was so underpaid working for some service providers that I always denied the jobs offered by them. I used to be offered a very high rate of pay by a service provider (which tells me how much they valued my work) but sadly most of the jobs went to service providers who hired interpreters who accepted cheaper rates. I used to think that being a certified interpreter is an honorable and something to be proud of. However, the truth is it all about who makes the most money for language service providers not who is the best and most efficient interpreter.”*

*The QLD Health had the most qualified and experience interpreters on their panel till 2018 that the current government cancelled the contracts and gave LSP “A” and other new emerging provider agencies the power over our lives. All government agencies across Australia disregarded the gross misconduct by LSP “A” ..... Interpreters have no rights even to lodge any complains with FairWork for the workplace harassment and exploitation they endure by the agencies such as LSP “A”, LSP “B” etc.*

*“LSP “C” is rude. LSP “D” is extremely rude and discriminatory. I refuse to work for any of them.”*

*“The agencies are making a mint whilst the interpreters suffer in the job”*

The second theme evident in respondent comments was the lack of bargaining power with the LSPs, who were willing to engage unqualified interpreters.

*“Many non-NAATI interpreters with poor English skills are hired by agencies that deliver bad quality jobs to patients including wrong translation and professional attitude. The reason told by agencies is the lack of NAATI interpreters but the truth is that the poor pay rate and unfair contracts stop other well-skilled professionals from joining the industry.”*

*“I think that agencies got control of interpreting jobs then they pay to interpreters at a very low rates, if we don’t accept we wouldn’t have any jobs”*

*“The agencies only think about their own benefits, and not have enough appreciation or respect for the interpreters”*

*“They use non-qualified people as interpreters as long as they are available for on-site jobs. People who make bookings don't care about qualification of interpreters”*

Notable take-away: There is a very strong feeling among interpreters that the unregulated LSPs act to maximise their profits, often to the detriment of interpreters or the quality of governmental services provided to those who have no or low English proficiency. The data is consistent with the view that, in the current environment, some LSPs have engaged in a *de facto* “race to the bottom” resulting in compromised services to those in need, and unintended negative consequences for the career trajectories of spoken language interpreters, particularly in the range of 5-20 years of experience.

## IDENTIFICATION WITH THE PROFESSION

Another major thread with both quantitative and qualitative support is the pride and commitment expressed by most interpreters, even if they are sufficiently dismayed with current conditions that they report themselves as considering leaving the profession. As noted above, three questions were asked concerning the level of identification that interpreters have with their profession. While spoken language interpreters tend to score higher responses than do sign language interpreters to statements “I strongly identify with my chosen profession” and “Interpreting as a career has a great deal of personal meaning to me”, over 80% of all respondents agree or strongly agree with those statements. 82.7% of all respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement that “Interpreting as a career has a great deal of personal meaning to me”.

These findings do not seem to be strongly affected by economic considerations. A regression analysis shows that the perception of economic need satisfaction does not explain variance in identification with the profession. Nor does the reported feeling of being unappreciated by language service providers correlate with or explain the reported levels of professional identification. General job satisfaction was significantly positively associated with each of the professional identity questions.

Professional identification is significantly related to experience as an interpreter, with the least and most experienced showing the highest identification. The same pattern applied when considering the age of the interpreter. The same pattern of age and experience applies with regard to responses indicating the intent to leave the profession.

Notable take-away:

Both spoken and sign language interpreters show a high degree of identification with their profession and with their service to people who cannot interface with governmental service and functions in spoken English, but that high degree of identification can be overcome by adverse pay and conditions. Particularly interpreters with 5 to 20 years of experience demonstrate increased questioning of their role in the profession.



## UNDERSTANDING OF COMPLAINT PROCEDURES AND STANDING OFFER ARRANGEMENT

Three questions asked about respondent understanding of complaint procedures. There is a statistically significant relationship between the years of experience an interpreter has and their knowledge of complaint procedures related to inappropriate treatment by an end user organisation or LSP, or to raise a concern

about the interpreting environment (including OH&S concerns). More experienced interpreters profess a better understanding of the procedures for making a complaint. Of perhaps greater significance is the large proportion of interpreters that are unclear regarding the mechanism for raising concerns about their working conditions. 73.8% of respondents reported being unsure, have to guess or uninformed about how to make a complaint against an end user organization. 70.1% reported being unsure, have to guess or uninformed about how to make a complaint against an LSP and 57.3% had the same reaction with regard to environmental concerns. There were several comments that reflected this.

*“Maybe safety is not considered in any qld government policy and procedure so I am not thought of in high risk environments, no PPE etc. If qld gov employees are rude or discriminatory I am unaware of how to report that, there is no clear avenue or training for mandatory reporting (suicide or risk of abuse situations). If language services providers are doing inappropriate things I have no idea where to report my concerns.”*

There is also some evidence that end user organisations have a similar lack of understanding of how to complain about poor services.

*“.....There has been many occasions where the client complains to interpreters about previous interpreters who keep on using google translate in the assignment, or that the interpreter was incompetent, or on more serious issues as to interpreting incorrectly (this would have legal and catastrophic consequences for all parties involved)”*

Notable take-away: There is either a lack of adequate oversight to provide both interpreters and end-users a mechanism for meaningful oversight of safety, working conditions and quality of service, or the mechanism is not understood by a majority of interpreters. This lack of protection falls most heavily on the less experienced interpreters, who are less likely to be familiar with existing procedural protections.

## INTENT TO STAY OR LEAVE THE PROFESSION

Five questions asked for responses to statements about intent to stay or leave the profession. Spoken language interpreters were significantly more likely to agree or strongly agree with the statements “I intend to look for a different line of work/career” and “I often think about quitting this line of work/career”. Similarly, spoken

language interpreters express significantly lower agreement with the statement “I plan to stay in this line of work/career” than sign language interpreters.

There is a significant correlation between responses on questions regarding perceived pay equity and intent to leave the profession. Interpreters who feel like their economic needs are not being met describe themselves as more likely to leave professional interpreting within 2 years, as intending to look for a different line of work/career, or to report themselves as often thinking about quitting. There is a significant correlation between responses to the statement, “I feel unappreciated by language service providers when I think of what they pay me” with expressions of intent to change careers. Less perceived appreciation by LSPs is associated with higher intent to leave.

There is evidence that the profession is in danger of losing some of its more experienced interpreters. When looking for relationships between age and intent to leave questions, there was a significantly higher than expected proportion of interpreters in the 31-40 age group and the 41-50 age group that agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I intend to look for a different line of work/career”. Similar results were obtained with the question “I often think about quitting this line of work”. These patterns did not emerge with respect to younger or older interpreters



The clients don't quite get the fact that it takes a lot to get where we are now rather than just being able to speak two languages and to interpret one into another.

A similar pattern arose when comparing the number of years spent as a NAATI credentialed interpreter to intent to look for other work. Those with 2-5 and 5-10 years of experience were more likely to agree to the statement “I intend to look for a different line of work/career”. More experienced or less experienced interpreters did not show this pattern.

The comments reflect the perceived realities of interpreting in Queensland.

*“I was hoping that community interpreting would be a viable profession after years of study and exams. I wish I had fully understood the working conditions before starting out because I would not have sat the NAATI exams. After investing so much time and money into this career, I feel let down. The rates are too low for the specialised nature of some community interpreting settings, especially legal. With such low rates, there is little incentive to invest in training, yet training is essential. I know a number of certified interpreters like myself who are leaving the profession due to the low rates. Instead of pushing more interpreters into and then out of the profession, those already in the profession should be adequately rewarded so they remain. I have a feeling that interpreting seems more like a side job than a profession. This is such a pity.”*



*“I can’t help but questioning myself: should I have chosen another type of work in the very beginning? This is frustrating... because somehow it seems like when we chose to work as an interpreter to service the government departments, we had to give up some potential employee benefits and things that make us feel more secured, even from the*



*government. The only option to change it is for us to work in another full-time position instead that is probably not translation or interpreting related at all. So when it comes to the nature of the job, we have no choice but accepting that it is a casual or contractor position and allowing some of our potential rights to be sacrificed.”*

Take-away: There is a notable pattern of the least and most experienced interpreters having higher levels of satisfaction and lower levels of intent to leave the profession. The middle group of more experienced interpreters shows signs of a different emotional reaction, as that group demonstrates both lower identification and greater intent to leave. This potentially signals the development in a gap in interpreter experience, as the most experienced interpreters retire without a robust group of experienced interpreters to replace them. Such a gap, if it developed, could have significant adverse consequences, as the most challenging interpretation jobs in the medical and legal fields require the development of interpreter experience to adequately service. Moreover, the gap in experience, if it develops, will have implications for the availability of mentoring and leadership within the profession and the recruiting of new interpreters.

### Table of Relevant Findings

Distribution of interpreters	71.9% Spoken language	28.1% Sign language	
Part-time/Full time	Less than 20 hours per week 69.4%	Over 30 hours per week (9.2%)	
Time spent traveling to jobs	7 hours or less 59.7%	15 hours or more 9.1%	
Time spent on video	0-10 hours per week 79.0%	More than 31 hours 2.0%	
“My career is an important part of who I am”	84.4% agreed or strongly agreed	8.5% somewhat disagree or strongly disagree	
“ I feel unappreciated by the language service providers when I think about	Agree or strongly agree 67.1%	6.9% disagree or strongly disagree	

what they pay me”			
Many or almost all of my economic needs are satisfied by interpreting	18.1% agreed or strongly agreed	42.2% Very few or almost none of my economic needs are satisfied	
NAATI credentials checked by end users	53.3% rarely or never	16.5% always or often	
Interpreting as a career has a great deal of personal meaning to me	82.7% agree or strongly agree	5.8% disagree or strongly disagree	
Complaints against an end user organisation	73.8% unsure, have to guess, have no idea	26.2% definitely know or probably know	
Complaints against a LSP	70.1% unsure or uninformed	29.9% definitely know or probably know	
Complaints about environmental concerns	72.4% unsure, have to guess or uninformed	27.6% definitely know or probably know	
I intend to look for a different line of work/career	Younger than 30 years of age 42.9 agree or strongly agree	31 and 50 years of age 36.3% agree or strongly agree; 32.0% of 41-50 years of age agree or strongly agree	51-60 Years of age 22.2 % agree or strongly agree’ over 60 6.2% agree or strongly agree
I intend to look for a different line of work/career	Less than 2 years of experience: 22.8% agree or strongly agree	2-10 years experience: 42.5% of 2-5 years and 33.4% of 5-10 years of experience	More than 10 years of experience: 9.0% of 10-20; 1.5% of more than 20 years of experience

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Interpreters are highly dedicated to their profession**

Both the survey numbers and the written comments paint an inspiring picture of pride in the profession of interpreting and dedication to the welfare of the persons to whom services are provided. Interpreters love their work, but particularly spoken language interpreters appear to be reaching a level of frustration with pay and conditions that is resulting in some considering leaving the profession altogether, and a larger group needing to engage in other work to be able to meet their economic needs. The number of written responses added on a mobile device to a 45-item survey is one indicator of the passion of interpreters in getting their story heard and their desire to see some improvement in their circumstances. The passion in the written responses themselves, as partially reflected in the quotations offered, is another indicator of the level of disillusionment on the one hand and hope for a better future on the other.

NAATI certified interpreters are a cohort of people highly motivated to providing non-English-speaking populations in Queensland with the same access quality services provided to other citizens and residents. They are frustrated and cynical about the current interface between them and government, through the language service providers.

### **Differential impact of pay issues**

The respondents to this survey overwhelmingly expressed dissatisfaction with the pay and benefits they receive. As independent contractors or “casual employees”, they receive no paid sick, annual or holiday leave. They are responsible for many of their own expenses, such as, mileage, petrol and parking. They are often uncompensated for travel. There is no understanding that the higher rate for the first hour of service is intended to provide compensation for such expenses, and a strong feeling that it is inadequate to do so.

*“These are the main reasons a lot of interpreters left the industry because by adding the travel time to your paid time and then also paying for parking, often an interpreting assignment works out at almost \$20 an hour which in this day and age with living expenses so high, is just unmanageable”*

This reaction is strong as reflected by the second and subsequent hour of pay being frequently compared to the rate that received by a cleaner, retail worker or other non-professional and non-credentialed work. The second and subsequent hourly rates are widely believed by interpreters to be inappropriate for a learned profession that requires education, testing and recurring periodic certification.

Spoken language interpreters are more concerned about the pay situation than are sign language interpreters and are more likely to be currently considering leaving the industry. This is likely related to disparate rates and pay structures that create a dynamic where the user agencies pay the LSP a designated rate and the LSP procures services from interpreters in a non-standardised manner. In this context, some LSPs are believed to have chosen to make use of less qualified or unqualified interpreters to maximise their profits or to provide working conditions that compromise the quality of services provided. Respondents indicated that the availability of uncredentialed and untrained bilingual persons willing to provide services to the LSPs at low rates and the availability of highly paid NDIS work for sign language interpreters contribute to this result.

### **Disillusionment in the middle tier of experience**

There is a persistent pattern in the data concerning pay satisfaction and intent to leave the profession. Responses on both topics show that new or less experienced and very experienced interpreters are less likely to be dissatisfied, or to intend a career change. Interpreters with a middle level of experience report themselves as more dissatisfied and more likely to look for another line of work. While nothing in the survey directly informs an analysis of this data, it seems plausible that younger and less experienced interpreters have yet to be disillusioned by the work and pay conditions that have been reported. Interpreters who are older or more experienced often have an extended commitment to the profession and are less likely to seek other work at later

stages of life. The group in the middle – representing 47% of the workforce by age and 32.2 % of the workforce by experience, are more likely to leave the profession. If unaddressed, this trend could create a crisis of availability of experienced interpreters in the future, particularly as the current crop of very experienced interpreters retires. The consequences of this experience gap, if it develops, could include mentorship and leadership gaps in the industry as well.

*I have a degree in translation and a NAATI certification but I have had to stop working as an interpreter and take on a customer service job. I now only interpret one or two days a week.*

### **Widespread negative reactions to LSPs**

More than two thirds of respondents expressed agreement with the statement, “I feel unappreciated by language service providers when I think about what they pay me”. In the comments, concerns about LSP practices were frequent, as were concerns about the absence of normal labour entitlements, and other issues about the relationship between the LSP and the interpreter. Reference was made in the comments to changes in 2018, when the existing Department of Health Interpreter panel was cancelled. Since that time, interpreters have been vocal about what may be characterised as a “race to the bottom” where LSPs utilise unqualified bilingual people instead of certified interpreters, placing people with low or no English proficiency at risk.

*“My concerns, however, are related to language service providers. Some of them are really good, caring and friendly. Others don't care at all about interpreters and clients. I would like to say, choose the right provider who cares is a lot more important than just choose the cheapest one.”*

This is almost certainly an unintended consequence of the changes to the interpreter services in 2018 in Queensland. It appears that there currently is no consistency between LSPs in their rates, benefits or policies, no oversight of their provision of high quality trained and credentialed interpreters when it is possible to do so and no clarity regarding how consumers or interpreters may to raise concerns about poor services, mistreatment or other concerns. There is also no effective centralised repository for complaints, leading to inadequate information about the nature and extent of problems in the industry. Taken together, these

concerns about the impact that an unregulated industry is having on critical governmental services have traditionally been considered an appropriate circumstance for the creation of governmental regulation and oversight.

### **No OH&S protections, benefits or entitlements**

Interpreters provide a critical service which can have direct impact on the health or liberty of individuals who are vulnerable because of their language status. Yet, it is reasonable to raise the issue of interpreter vulnerability under the current employment regimen. As independent contractors (or “casual” employees) they enjoy no leave benefits or entitlements. They are required to carry their own liability insurance in some instances, and although there were no comments pertaining to workers’ compensation insurance, some LSPs may seek to use interpreter independent contractor status as grounds for not providing coverage. Interpreters are required to pay their own expenses in many cases, including petrol, tolls, car maintenance and insurance. They are often not compensated for mileage or for their travel time. Contributions to superannuation are reported to be sometimes lacking, and regular or predictable hours are the exception. It is hard to reconcile the treatment that interpreters receive with that normally afforded to people who have sought and tested for a learned qualification. A young interpreter who is a mother-to-be wrote at length about her feeling of vulnerability

*“...So when it comes to the nature of the job, we have no choice but accepting that it is a casual or contractor position and allowing some of our potential rights to be sacrificed. What’s worse is that, as a young interpreter & translator, I believe my income is not high enough as if we could afford our own annual/maternal/sick leave without working and without the government’s support, too. I believe we need fresh blood and new energy to enrich the community and the industry; but as a young interpreter myself who is passionate about languages hence the career, I do feel less cared and believe that there are things to be done at least at the government level to make young interpreters like me feel more secured and less anxious, in terms of social welfare & support, when welcoming our younger generations to this world...”*

There is evidence that other states are more protective of interpreters than is Queensland.

## **Evidence of failure of government agencies to properly manage the provision of interpreter services**

The respondent's comments indicate that in some instances, conditions under the control of the user agencies may compromise the services given to the people in need of interpretation. Taken together, these comments suggest that Queensland government staff have a significant lack of understanding of, or appreciation for, the role of interpreters as an integral part of their services. The practice of checking of interpreter credentials by user agency staff would allow the user agencies the ability to choose to utilise those LSPs that provide qualified interpreters. In some instances, there appears to be little affirmative management of the interpreter resource in an effective manner. Improving staff knowledge and booking procedures will likely contribute to improving the working conditions of interpreters, the quality of service provided to non-English speakers, and less waste. These improvements should flow on to improved outcomes for Queensland government and better provision of services for non-English speaking communities.

## **No central place for complaints or regulatory oversight**

Interpreters, as a group, are poorly informed about where to go to raise concerns about OH&S matters, issues of treatment by LSPs and issues of treatment by the staff of end user organisations. Substantially more than half of all respondents either were unsure or did not know where to lodge a complaint. Remedies for non-payment for services rendered also appear to be a concern, according to a few interpreter comments. Retribution for raising such complaints was not the subject of specific enquiry, but there were comments that supported the existence of this fear. Some comments suggested that end user organisations were in a similar disadvantaged position.

The lack of knowledge is paired with genuine lack of clarity over who has the authority to oversee the resolution of issues. The current SOA has not been reviewed, but it reportedly requires LSPs to provide periodic reports to the government, There is a widespread belief that this monitoring is not taking place. The perceived "race to the bottom" by some LSPs is viewed as being enabled by lack of effective oversight.

There is evidence that some other states are not characterised by the combination of privatisation of language service provider services and lack of significant governmental oversight of the industry. Research into practices elsewhere may help to further delineate the unintended impacts of current arrangements on the interpreting profession and provide guidance into the steps that must be taken to ensure that the profession remains able to properly serve those among us who have low or no proficiency in spoken English.

An additional concern is that the absence a centralised place to report inappropriate conditions or behaviour means that there is no effective capture of the frequency or nature of these incidents. As a result, there is no way for policymakers to know the extent of the problem or the scope of needed interventions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The data presents a compelling picture of a profession that is dedicated, but struggling under current conditions.

Consistent with that data, several steps would appear to be prudent.

1. Expand the current research to cover the attitudes, pay and working conditions of interpreters across Australia to determine whether different patterns of compensation and industry regulation appear to avoid the unintended consequences of the service provision mechanism in Queensland, including disillusionment and intent to leave the profession among interpreters in the middle range of experience.
2. Consider eliminating the compensation disadvantages experienced by spoken language interpreters as compared to sign language interpreters. Raising of the effective rate of pay and establishment of a comparable minimum paid booking should be considered.
3. Consider establishing standardised tiers of compensation that differentiate higher qualified and/or more experienced interpreters, providing them with meaningfully higher hourly rates. At the same time, consider setting minimum standards experience or qualification for the most critical medical



and legal interpretation jobs. The intent should be to provide a more adequate means of making a living for those who develop the expertise to provide a better service and ensure that this higher level of service is delivered where and when needed.

4. Consider the establishment of minimal safe working conditions to protect both interpreters and the people whom they serve. Inclusion of stakeholders, including practicing interpreters in the development of these standards is recommended.
5. Consider oversight and standardization of practices, rates of pay and benefits provided by language service providers. Provide well-defined and well-understood mechanisms for rectifying deviations from these standards. Governmental regulation of the industry, or the provision of interpreting services to governmental agencies through a governmental booking entity may be considered.
6. Consider establishing a recognised mechanism for those interpreters with 5 – 20 years of experience to make their concerns and suggestions known. This group will become the experienced leaders and mentors of the future, and they are a resource that should not be wasted.
7. Consider the provision of training for Queensland government staff, especially in the user agencies. Such training should include the practice of routinely checking interpreter credentials, appreciation for the integral role of interpreters in the primary mission of the agency, provision of proper working conditions, utilization of proper booking procedures and the avoidance of wasteful waiting time.

## References

- Blau, G. (1989). Testing the generalizability of a career commitment measure and its impact on employee turnover. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 35(1), 88–103. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(89\)90050-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(89)90050-x)
- Brayfield, A. H., & Rothe, H. F. (1951). An index of job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35(5), 307–311. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0055617>
- Carson, K. D., & Bedeian, A. G. (1994). Career Commitment: Construction of a Measure and Examination of Its Psychometric Properties. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 44(3), 237–262. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1017>
- Courtney, J., & Phelan, M. (2019). Translators' experiences of occupational stress and job satisfaction. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*, 11(1), 100–113. <https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.111201.2019.a06>
- Dean, R. K. (2001). Application of Demand-Control Theory to Sign Language Interpreting: Implications for Stress and Interpreter Training. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 6(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/6.1.1>
- Dunham, R. B., Smith, F. J., & Blackburn, R. S. (1977). Validation of the Index of Organizational Reaction with the JDI, the MSQ, and Faces Scales. *Academy of Management Journal*, 20(3), 420–432. <https://doi.org/10.2307/255415>
- Kumar, N., & Singh, V. (2011). Job expectation and its correlates. *IJRESS*, 1(2).
- Lee, J. (2017). Professional interpreters' job satisfaction and relevant factors. *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, 12(3), 427–448. <https://doi.org/10.1075/tis.12.3.04lee>
- Moorkens, J. (2020). Comparative satisfaction among freelance and directly-employed Irish-language translators. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*, 12(1), 55–73. <https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.112201.2020.a04>
- Pieczchna, B. (2019). Polish Sworn Translators' Attitudes Towards the Job they Perform – Results Obtained from a Job Satisfaction Survey. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric*, 58(1), 125–154. <https://doi.org/10.2478/slgr-2019-0020>
- Rodríguez-Castro, M. (2015). Conceptual construct and empirical validation of a multifaceted instrument for translator satisfaction. *Translation & Interpreting*,

7(2), 30–50. <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-439362764/conceptual-construct-and-empirical-validation-of-a>

Ruokonen, M., & Mäkisalo, J. (2018). Middling-status profession, high-status work: Finnish translators' status perceptions in the light of their backgrounds, working conditions and job satisfaction. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*, 10(1), 1–17.  
<https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.110201.2018.a01>

Setton, R., & Liangliang, A. G. (2009). Attitudes to role, status and professional identity in interpreters and translators with Chinese in Shanghai and Taipei. *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, 4(2), 210–238.  
<https://doi.org/10.1075/tis.4.2.05set>

---

Start of Block: Default Question Block

## Appendix:

# AUSIT/ASLIAQ survey

Q0 Research title: Survey of NAATI- credentialed interpreters

Researcher: Robert Aurbach, Masters of Business Psychology candidate, University of Queensland under the supervision of Dr Andrew Neal

Project supervisor, Dr Andrew Neal, University of Queensland

I consent to participate in this research project. It has been explained to me that the purpose of this research is to investigate the attitudes of NAATI-credentialed interpreters with respect to compensation and their intent to continue working in the profession. I have also been provided with a written project information sheet in a language that I can understand.

The possible risks of participating in this research have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand that in this research I will be required to fill out a survey form.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw from this research anytime without needing to provide any explanation, and I would not receive any penalty or bias as a result of my withdrawal. I understand that because the data is stored in a non-identified fashion, it will not be possible to destroy my data if I decide to withdraw at a later point in time.

I understand that data collected for this research will be stored in a non-identified fashion, and may be re-used in future research, released to other researchers, or made publicly available.

I understand that this research adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. I have been provided with contact details of the researcher, as well as UQ Ethics Coordinator.

If you consent to participation in this research, please indicate by writing "yes" in the space provided below.

---

Q1 Do you primarily work in spoken language(s) or sign language interpreting

Spoken language

Sign language

Q2 Highest NAATI interpreting credential obtained

- NAATI Recognised Practicing
  - NAATI Certified Provisional Interpreter (including Certified Provisional Deaf Interpreter)
  - NAATI Certified Interpreter
  - NAATI Certified Specialist Health Interpreter
  - NAATI Certified Specialist Legal Interpreter
  - NAATI Certified Conference Interpreter
- 

Q3 Languages for which you hold NAATI recognition or certification

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q4 What is your gender identification?

- Male
  - Female
  - Non-binary / third gender
  - Prefer not to say
-

Q5 What is your age?

- under 20
  - 20-30
  - 31-40
  - 41-50
  - 51-60
  - over 60
  - Prefer not to say
- 

Q6 Years spent as a NAATI credentialed interpreter

- 0-2
  - 2-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - more than 20
- 

Q7 Are you physically located in

- Metro
- Regional
- Rural

---

Q8 Average hours a week that you are paid for interpreting (NOT including travel)

- 0-10
  - 11-20
  - 21-30
  - 31-40
  - more than 40
- 

Q9 Average hours each week spent traveling to and from interpreting jobs

- 0-3
  - 4-7
  - 8-10
  - 11-15
  - 15-20
  - More than 20
-

Q10 Average hours each week spent in interpreting using telephone or video technology

- 0-10
  - 11-20
  - 21-30
  - 31-40
  - more than 40
- 

Q11 For the job I do, I feel the amount of money I make is:

- Extremely good
  - Somewhat good
  - Neither good nor bad
  - Fairly poor
  - Very poor
-



Q12 Do you believe that your rate of pay is related to the level of NAATI certification that you have earned?

- Definitely not
  - Probably not
  - Might or might not
  - Probably yes
  - Definitely yes
- 

Q13 I feel unappreciated by the language service providers when I think about what they pay me

- Agree very much
  - Agree
  - Neither agree or disagree
  - Disagree
  - Disagree very much
-

Q14 To what extent are you fairly rewarded, considering the responsibilities you have?

- Very fairly
  - Somewhat fairly
  - Neither fairly or unfairly
  - Somewhat unfairly
  - Very Unfairly
- 

Q15 To what extent are you fairly rewarded, taking into account the education and training that you have had?

- Very fairly
  - Somewhat fairly
  - Neither fairly or unfairly
  - Somewhat unfairly
  - Very Unfairly
-

Q16 To what extent are you fairly rewarded in view of the amount of experience that you have?

- Very fairly
  - Somewhat fairly
  - Neither fairly or unfairly
  - Somewhat unfairly
  - Very Unfairly
- 

Q17 To what extent are you fairly rewarded for the amount of effort that your job requires?

- Very fairly
  - Somewhat fairly
  - Neither fairly or unfairly
  - Somewhat unfairly
  - Very Unfairly
- 

Q18 To what extent are you fairly rewarded for the work that you have done?

- Very fairly
- Somewhat fairly
- Neither fairly or unfairly
- Somewhat unfairly
- Very Unfairly

---

Q19 To what extent are you fairly rewarded for the stresses and strains of your job?

- Very fairly
  - Somewhat fairly
  - Neither fairly or unfairly
  - Quite unfairly
  - Very Unfairly
- 

Q20 Please tell us anything else about pay or remuneration matters that you would like us to know (Optional)

---

---

Q21 I like this career too much to give it up

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

Q22 To what extent are your economic needs satisfied by the pay you receive?

- Almost none of my needs are satisfied
  - Very few of my needs are satisfied
  - A few of my needs are satisfied
  - Many of my needs are satisfied
  - Almost all of my needs are satisfied
- 

Q23 If I could do it all over again, I would not choose to work in this profession

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Q24 Generally speaking I am very satisfied with this job

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

---

Q25 I am generally satisfied with the kind of work that I do

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Q26 My career in interpreting is an important part of who I am

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree or disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

Q27 Interpreting as a career has a great deal of personal meaning to me

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Q28 If I could go into a different profession which paid the same, I would probably change

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Q29 I strongly identify with my chosen profession

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

---

Q30 Given the present circumstances, how likely is it that you will leave professional interpreting within the next 2 years?

- Extremely unlikely
  - Somewhat unlikely
  - Neither likely nor unlikely
  - Somewhat likely
  - Extremely likely
- 

Q31 I often think about quitting this line of work/career

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree or disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-



Q32 I plan to stay in this line of work/career for some time

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree or disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Q33 I intend to look for a different line of work/career

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree or disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
-

Q34 When working for government, I know where and how to make a complaint about the behaviour of the person or organisation requesting interpreting services, if I think it's appropriate to do so.

- I definitely know
  - I probably know
  - I'm unsure
  - I'd have to guess
  - I have no idea
- 

Q35 When working for government, I know where and how to make a complaint against a language service provider if I think it is appropriate to do so.

- I definitely know
  - I probably know
  - I'm unsure
  - I'd have to guess
  - I have no idea
-

Q36 When working for government, I know where and how to make a complaint concerning the environment in which I was asked to interpret.

- I definitely know
  - I probably know
  - I'm unsure
  - I'd have to guess
  - I have no idea
- 

Q37 During the last year, my NAATI qualifications have been checked by the end user of my services

- Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
- 

Q38 Do you believe that you have been impacted by the Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA) with the Queensland government?

- I have been positively affected by the SOA
- I have been negatively affected by the SOA
- I don't know how I have been affected by the SOA
- I don't know enough about the SOA to have an opinion

---

Q39 When working onsite with governmental agencies, the staff with whom I work are competent in working with interpreters

- Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
- 

Q40 When working onsite do you find that you have been booked for an appropriate amount of time?

- Too little time is frequently booked
  - Too little time is sometimes booked
  - The time booked is about right
  - Too much time is sometimes booked
  - Too much time is frequently booked
-

Q41 When working for Government, and using their video technology platforms for communication, do you find that the video technology is operating smoothly and without technical issues?

- Always
  - Most of the time
  - About half the time
  - Sometimes
  - Never
- 

Q42 Have you ever been asked to interpret in another language other than a language for which you hold a NAATI certification?

- Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Frequently
  - Almost all the time
-

Q43 What is your highest academic qualification related to interpreting?

- Certificate
  - Diploma
  - Graduate certificate
  - Bachelor's degree
  - Master's degree
  - Other
- 

Q44 What is the highest academic qualification that you possess, whether or not related to interpreting?

- Certificate
  - Diploma
  - Graduate certificate
  - Bachelor's Degree
  - Master's degree
  - PhD
  - Other
- 

Q45 Please tell us anything additional you would like to share about your experience of interpreting while working for governmental agencies. (Optional)

---