

NRPSI STATEMENT | FOR PUBLICATION ON 21 AUGUST 2019

‘Addressing misinformation in order to preserve the standards of public service interpreting’

NRPSI has again written to Yorkshire and the Humber Police regarding their further response to a complaint raised by a Registered Interpreter about the supply of an interpreter by Capita TI to Trafalgar House Police Station in April 2019. (See also the NRPSI statement entitled [‘Robust projection of the values of and need for RPSIs’](#) published on 6 August 2019.)

A number of inaccuracies regarding NRPSI’s processes appeared in the original response to the Registrant and still feature in this response from Yorkshire and the Humber Police, which the Registrant has shared with NRPSI in the interests of the general public.

NRPSI, as an organisation that exists to protect the public by upholding interpreting standards, is duty-bound to address this misinformation in order to preserve the standards of the public service interpreting profession.

In the interests of clarity, NRPSI’s letter again explains the differences between the commercial Capita TI list of interpreters and the National Register of Public Service Interpreters – the not-for-profit, voluntary accreditation, registration and regulatory body for public service interpreting in the UK which has been operating for 25 years.

NRPSI’s letter also clearly states that the Capita TI list does not, as the latest response received by the Registrant incorrectly states, have the same stringent admission criteria in terms of the level of qualifications and experience as NRPSI. A Registered Interpreter needs to provide at least one Level 6 interpreting qualification and evidence of having worked more than 400 hours interpreting for each language they wish to register at Full status as well as all the necessary security clearances.

Each qualification and the proof of hours worked provided are then reviewed and verified by NRPSI rather than self-certified. Registered Interpreters also follow a Code of Conduct which is stricter and places greater ethical demands on them when compared to other codes of conducts prepared by privately-owned agencies.

Furthermore, NRPSI’s letter again addresses the assertion, reportedly made by Capita TI, that Czech and Slovak are ‘linguistically linked’. NRPSI believes these two languages to be unique and distinct from each other. Furthermore, it requires those interpreters wishing to register both languages to possess the relevant Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) qualification and hours of interpreting experience in each. A DPSI qualification exists for each language indicating that they are distinctly separate. Should a Registered Interpreter take an interpreting assignment that requires them to use a language they have not registered, then they would be in breach of the NRPSI Code of Conduct.

NRPSI has copied its second letter on this matter to Yorkshire and the Humber Police to the other recipients of its first letter: the ESPO, Capita TI and the Minister for Policing and Fire Services. It has requested that all parties focus on and recall the 1993 Runciman Royal Commission which recommended the establishment of a register of public service interpreters to ensure that only trained and qualified interpreters governed by a Code of Conduct be utilised by the public services. Established in 1994, NRPSI was set up to do just this and is the only register of public service interpreters that currently voluntarily deploys the strictest controls, the highest levels of qualifications and experience, and enforces a transparent Code of Conduct with a professional conduct and disciplinary process staffed by an independent panel.

As previously stated by NRPSI, the solution to ensuring we do not face the problems that arise from the use of unqualified interpreters in the future and lay the seeds for miscarriages of justice is for the Police Services across the UK to support the granting of statutory status to NRPSI for professional, experienced and qualified public service interpreters. NRPSI believes that it should be made mandatory for public service organisations to only engage with accredited, registered and regulated interpreters. It advocates putting in place measures to ensure interpreters working for the public services have been assessed without commercial or political influence and protecting evidential interpreting by recognising Registered Public Service Interpreters as Expert Witnesses.

NRPSI has also offered to meet with the Director of Procurement for Yorkshire and the Humber Police to ensure there is no further confusion in future between the National Register of Public Service Interpreters and those lists of interpreters created by private organisations for commercial benefit.

ENDS