

NRPSI calls on government and the public services to only use Registered Public Service Interpreters in order to ensure their own protection

12 July 2018: As the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) launches its fifth Annual Review of the UK public service interpreting profession,* it is calling on the UK government and public services to only use Registered Interpreters so as to avoid jeopardising the standard of the services they provide and public safety.

Stephen Bishop explains: *“Safeguarding issues have dominated public, political and media discourse in recent times, bringing to the fore the need for those professions and professionals working closely with the public services and vulnerable members of the public to be regulated. The existence of NRPSI as the Regulator of public service interpreting and the commitment to professional standards of the 1,807 NRPSI Registered Interpreters mean that the public service interpreting profession is one step ahead in meeting this need. But, the profession can only continue to service this requirement with government’s and the public services’ support for its registered professionals. Government and the public services can provide this support by ensuring that they only use NRPSI Registered Interpreters.”*

The NRPSI Annual Review, which provides independent analysis of the information held on the National Register about Registered Interpreters and their languages at 31 December 2017, shows that 93% of Registrants have a language registered at Full status, meaning that they possess both the necessary qualification in this language and 400 hours’ experience of using it in a public service setting. Furthermore, it highlights that the average length of time that interpreters stay on the Register has increased to more than 10 years, indicating their commitment to high professional standards.

Highlights from the latest NRPSI Annual Review:

- 1,807 public service interpreters are registered with NRPSI, demonstrating their commitment to professionalism.
- 93% of Registrants have a language registered at Full status, meaning that they possess both the necessary qualification in this language and 400 hours’ experience of using it in a public service setting.

- 103 different languages are registered, with 15% of Registrants offering more than one language.
- The most popular languages registered are Polish and Urdu.
- Almost two thirds of Registrants are women (65%).
- The largest age band is for Registrants aged between 45 and 54.
- 2,587 interpreting qualifications are held by the 1,807 Registrants. Of the Registrants, 37% hold two or more interpreting qualifications.
- All Registrants are required to provide evidence of at least one valid security clearance, as this is required by public service users. More than half (57%) hold more than one type of clearance.

The Annual Review also contains key information on professional standards. It looks at the number of complaints brought against Registrants, their nature and NRPSI's performance in dealing with them.

Ted Sangster, NRPSI Chair, says: *"A defining characteristic of the public service interpreting profession is quality. It is the quality of the qualifications and experience of our 1,800+ Registered Interpreters and the interpreting services that they deliver that sets them apart; they represent the pinnacle of the interpreting profession. Their commitment to standards and professionalism, as is evidenced by our fifth Annual Review, is worthy of the widest recognition. And this acknowledgement and support for Registered Interpreters from the wider interpreting community, government and the public services is vital if we are to maintain a high-quality public service interpreting profession for the greater good."*

To view/download a copy of NRPSI's Annual Review 2017, visit:

<http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/AnnualReview2017>.

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Editor's notes:

***About the data**

The 'NRPSI Annual Review of Public Service Interpreting in the UK' provides data on the Registrants that were on the National Register at the end of 2017, together with an analysis of the complaints heard by NRPSI over the last three years (2015–2017).

About NRPSI

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) is the UK's independent voluntary Regulator of the public service interpreting profession. Funded by Registrants' fees, it is a not-for-profit organisation. By maintaining interpreting standards, it safeguards the public. All Registrants – there are currently 1,807 covering 103 languages – satisfy rigorous entry criteria in terms of qualifications and experience, and demonstrate their commitment to professional standards by signing NRPSI's Code of Professional Conduct. While NRPSI is a voluntary Regulator, its powers allow it to discipline and, ultimately, exclude a Registrant who breaks its Code of Professional Conduct. In this way, it can ensure that interpreters on the National Register, which is publicly available and searchable online for free, are appropriately qualified, have the level of competence claimed and employ best practice. <http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/>