



Professional standards

Version 2015

Basic Texts.

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In application of Article 18 (b)(2) of the Statutes as well as Articles 7 and 8 of the Code of Professional Ethics, The Assembly of the International Association of Conference Interpreters herewith adopts the following Professional Standards whose purpose is to ensure an optimum quality of work performed with due consideration being given to the physical and mental constraints inherent in the exercise of the profession.

These Standards also apply to candidates and pre-candidates.

Article 1

Professional Address

- a) Members of the Association shall declare a single professional address. It shall be published in the Association's list of members and shall be used, inter alia, as a basis for setting up regions.
- b) Members in the permanent employment of an organisation's language department must declare in the list of members that they are employed by that organisation. Their professional address shall be at the place of their registered employment.
- c) Given the Association's regional structure and in order to ensure that members are able to exercise their voting rights at statutory regional meetings and that the rules pertaining to dues are respected, any change in professional address from one region to another shall not be permitted for a period of less than six months. Any such change must be notified to the secretariat at least one month before the intended date in order to ensure that it can be published in the Association's list of members in good time. The Secretariat shall inform the Bureaux of the two regions concerned.

Article 2



Contracts For Recruitment

- a) In order to avoid any difficulty between the parties, members of the Association should not accept any contract for recruitment unless they know the precise conditions thereof and are certain that their identity and remuneration are known to the organiser of the conference (in cases where the organiser of the conference is not its initiator particular conditions shall apply as laid down in Annex 2).
- b) The Association shall provide standard forms of contract for those of its members wishing to use them.
- c) Any contract for the employment of a member of the Association must stipulate that the interpretation is intended solely for the immediate audition in the conference room. No recording, not even by those listening, may be made without the prior consent of the interpreters involved, in accordance with the provisions of international copyright agreements.

Article 3

Cancellation of Contract

1. Cancellation by the interpreter

Members of the Association shall not withdraw from a contract unless they are able:

- a) to give sufficient notice;
- b) to give sound reasons, and
- c) to suggest a replacement to the recruiting interpreter or, if there is no recruiting interpreter, directly to the conference organiser, unless the latter prefer to recruit the replacement themselves;
- d) at all events, to secure the conference organiser's approval of the change as quickly as possible.

2. Cancellation by the organiser

Contracts should include a clause covering the possible cancellation of an assignment by the organiser, as appropriate.



Article 4

Remuneration

Except for those cases where the Association has signed an Agreement, members are free to set their level of remuneration.

Article 5

Non-Remunerated Work

Whenever members of the Association provide their services free-of-charge for conferences of a charitable or humanitarian nature, they shall respect the conditions laid down in the Code of Professional Ethics and in these Professional Standards.

Article 6

Teams of Interpreters

Given the physical and mental fatigue that are caused by sustained concentration, certain constraints will necessarily apply to the composition of teams in order to guarantee that the work done will be of an optimum quality.

The minimum number of interpreters required to make up a team is a function of these constraints as well as the mode of interpretation, the number of languages used, the language classifications of the interpreters making up the team, the nature of the conference, its duration and the workload.

1. Consecutive Interpretation

Number of languages used: Minimum number of interpreters:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Two languages into two | Two |
| Three languages into three | Three |

Under exceptional circumstances and provided the principles of quality and health are taken into full consideration, it shall be possible to recruit just one interpreter instead of two or two interpreters instead of three.

2. Whispered Interpretation



For a conference involving the interpretation of one or two languages into one other language and where there are no more than two listeners, whether or not consecutive interpretation is provided in the other direction, at least two interpreters shall be required.

3. Simultaneous Interpretation

Teams of interpreters must be put together in such a way as to avoid the systematic use of relay. However, when there is no alternative to the use of relay for a given language, the team shall comprise at least two interpreters able to provide a relay from that language. In addition, if the relay is provided from a two-way booth, at least three interpreters shall work in that booth.

As a general rule, a team is composed of at least two interpreters per language and per booth. This is to ensure adequate coverage of all language combinations and to guarantee the necessary quality.

The number of interpretation booths is the same as the number of target languages, except for the case of two-language conferences where a single booth may suffice.

See Team Strength Table below.

Team strength table for simultaneous interpretation in booths

| Number of languages used in the conference room | Number of booths | Number of interpreters (1) |
|---|------------------|----------------------------|
| One-language conference: | | |
| into one other language | 1 | 2* |
| into two other languages | 2 | 4 |
| ... (2) | | |
| Two-language conference: | | |
| into one of the languages used | 1 or 2 | 3** |
| into both languages used | 3 | 5 |
| into three languages (2+1) | 4 | 7 |



into four languages (2+2)

... (2)

Three-language conference:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------|
| into one of the languages used | 1 | 2 |
| into two of the languages used | 2 | 3 |
| into all three languages used | 3 | 5*** |
| into four languages (3+1) | 4 | 7 |
| into five languages (3+2) | 5 | 9 |

... (2)

Four-language conference:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|------|
| into one of the languages used | 1 | 2 |
| into two of the languages used | 2 | 4 |
| into three of the languages used | 3 | 6 |
| into all four languages | 4 | 8*** |
| into five languages (4+1) | 5 | 10 |
| into six languages (4+2) | 6 | 12 |

... (2)

Five-language conference

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| into one of the languages used | 2 | 4 |
| into two of the languages used | 3 | 6 |
| into three of the languages used | 4 | 8 |



| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----|
| into four of the languages used | 5 | 10 |
| into all five languages used | 6 | 12 |
| into six languages (5+1) | 7 | 14 |
| into seven languages (5+2) | | |
| ... (2) | | |

Notes on the Team Strength Table

(1) This number shall be increased if:

- the language combinations are such that the minimum number of interpreters shown on the table is insufficient to cover them;
- the working hours are long;
- the conference involves the presentation of a large number of written statements or is of a technical or scientific nature requiring extensive preparation.

(2) And so on: each booth working non-stop must have at least two interpreters. Moreover, in the case of relay via a two-way booth, such booth shall have at least three interpreters.

* An interpreter shall not, as a general rule, work alone in a simultaneous interpretation booth, without the availability of a colleague to relieve her or him should the need arise.

** One of whom must be able to relieve each of the other two. In certain circumstances this number may be reduced to two (particularly for short meetings or meetings of a general nature, provided that each of the two interpreters can work into both languages).

*** Under certain circumstances and providing the principles of quality and health are fully respected, this number may be reduced by one (short meetings or meetings of a general nature).

4. Videoconferences

The Association shall adopt special rules covering interpreters' work for videoconferences.



Article 7

Interpreter's Working Day

Given the constraints related to quality and health, the normal duration of an interpreter's working day shall not exceed two sessions of between two-and-a-half and three hours each.

Article 8

Non-Working Days

Contracts should include a clause covering non-working days as well as travel days, days permitted for adaptation following a long journey and briefing days, as appropriate.

Article 9

Travel

Contracts should include a clause covering travel arrangements, as appropriate.

Article 10

Rest Days

Travel conditions should be such that they do not impair either the interpreter's health or the quality of her/his work following a journey.

After a long journey, or after a journey involving a major shift in time zones, scheduling of rest days should be considered.

Article 11

Accommodation and Subsistence

Contracts should include a clause covering accommodation and subsistence arrangements, as appropriate.

The Secretariat shall maintain a list of hotel prices practised throughout the world and a list of hotels granting reductions to members and shall make them available to members upon request.



Article 12

Agreements

Members shall be unconditionally bound by the conditions applicable to freelance members working for organisations that have signed an agreement with the Association and which are contained in said agreements that are the result of negotiations dealing, in particular, with working conditions, remuneration, team strength and social security.

Article 13

Intergovernmental Conferences outside the Agreement Sector

A number of particular conditions may apply to the work done by members for certain intergovernmental conferences that are not covered by an agreement signed with the Association.

Article 14

Staff Interpreters

The Association shall adopt recommendations concerning the working conditions of staff interpreters (Staff Interpreters' Charter).

Article 15

Amendment Procedure

These Professional Standards may be modified by a decision of the Assembly taken with a two-thirds majority of votes cast; if appropriate, legal opinion may be sought before the proposals are submitted to the Assembly.

Recommended citation format:

Basic Texts. "Professional standards". aiic.org.