New AUSIT website
www.ausit.org online!

2011 AUSIT National Excellence Awards get closer
Call for National Council nominations
NZSTI conference report
Advance payments — an alternative view
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From the editor

The deadline for the Summer 2011 issue is 10 November 2011. Thanks to all contributors for their contributions.

Please send any letters, articles or images for forthcoming editions to:

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The editor reserves the right to edit or not to publish any item submitted for publication. Opinions expressed are those of the authors only and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editor or those of AUSIT and its executive. AUSIT does not necessarily endorse products or services appearing in any advertising contained herein.

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Front cover: (background) A screen shot of the new AUSIT website’s homepage at www.ausit.org. See page 3 of this newsletter for more details.

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AUSIT recently announced its call for nominations for the 2011 AUSIT Excellence Awards. The Awards are a biennial project recognising extraordinary performance in the language industry, and this year the presentation will take place at a special dinner in Canberra on 11 November.

The Excellence Awards bring together professionals, language service agencies and other stakeholders in our industry to help build the capacity and raise the profile of the profession.

The Awards originated in Victoria in 2004 and went national in 2007. In previous editions, AUSIT has honoured a variety of individuals, teams and organisations. Outstanding achievements recognised at the Awards include an interpreting training program for remote Indigenous interpreters, a QLD health multicultural service system for delivering services state-wide, some high profile court interpreting, subtitling of the documentary The Burning Season, the National AUSLAN interpreter booking system and many more.

This year’s call for nominations introduced an additional new category, telephone interpreting. Due to the nature of telephone interpreting, this category will not be judged on one single assignment but on a series of assignments and consistency of performance. For more information about the criteria and how to nominate, please check out the website www.ausitawards.org.

Prize winners receive nationwide recognition for their work as well as an opportunity to help shape the industry. Agency owners are particularly encouraged to nominate their professionals. It demonstrates their commitment to quality and their acknowledgement of good language professionals, and at the same time places their agency in the spotlight.

We would also like to know about any special achievements in your state. If you are aware of industry events or achievements that deserve to be acknowledged, please visit the awards website at www.ausitawards.org for more information about nominating and the awards process, or contact Claudia on rat4cat@internode.on.net.

Please disseminate this announcement widely through your electronic newsletters and networks! With your help and nominations, the AUSIT Excellence Awards can continue to celebrate excellence, promote our industry and promote better work and pay conditions for our professionals.

Self-nominations will be accepted and are encouraged. Send in your completed nomination form now! For detailed information on the criteria, the award process and the nomination system, please visit the AUSIT Excellence Awards at www.ausitawards.org or contact info@ausitawards.org.

Completed nomination forms must be submitted no later than 30 September 2011, but nominations should be received well before this date. Please send completed nomination forms to the following address:
info@ausitawards.org or mail to: AUSIT, PO Box 193, Surrey Hills VIC 3127.

Reminder

Branches, office bearers and members are reminded that all material for the 2010-11 Annual Report/Notice of NAGM is due in to me, Bradley Dawson, by no later than Friday 23 September. There can be no extensions to this deadline. Please contact me by email or telephone (03) 5472 3427 for more details.
Dear Members,

Another three months have passed since we published the last newsletter, and whilst it has been a busy and occasionally stressful period, we were able to make some good progress. Obviously ways must be found to include more of the skills of our members. Below is a brief summary of what we have been working on.

Website
On 15 August 2011 we took our new website www.ausit.org live, offering members and senior practitioners the opportunity to edit their online listings. As with anything technological, some bugs remain and further improvements need to be made.

Pay and conditions
AUSIT National Council members maintain a careful watch over industrial developments. Late in May we read with concern about the voluntary administration of the OnCall Interpreters and Translators agency, obtained legal advice and made it available to our members. These events triggered promising new activities within the pay and conditions group, which may lead to the creation of an AUSIT lobby and education project in due course. Every member is welcome to contribute. Details of this discussion are available on http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AUSIT-PayandConditions/. We have tentatively arranged for webcasting a Q&A session with the directors of the OnCall Interpreters and Translators agency.

Excellence Awards, JBML
The next greatest T&I event in Australia is approaching fast. Preparing for the AUSIT Excellence Awards and the D-Day Expo which accompanies the award presentation ceremony on 11 November 2011, National Council members are working continuously to spread the word along several professional grapevines; there can never be enough promotion. We hope that the quantity and quality of submissions will match or even exceed the already high benchmarks set in Sydney and then in Adelaide at the previous two Awards. However, we do not know anything about names or numbers of nominees because the jury’s work is absolutely confidential. Very strict measures are in place to maintain secrecy up until the gala dinner. This year we will see a new category: Excellence in Telephone Interpreting. The long tradition of holding the National Annual General Meeting and the Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture in conjunction with either the national conference or the excellence awards will be maintained. We are proud and happy that Senator Kate Lundy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, has accepted our invitation to present the Jill Blewett lecture on 12 November 2011 in Canberra at University House (ANU).

Code of ethics
The working group looking at whether our Code of Ethics should be reviewed, produced its first report in May. There is general agreement that some updating of the Code is desirable. A number of members responded to the invitation to comment on the report, and their feedback has now been forwarded to the group for consideration and for a decision regarding the next step. The members involved in the Working Group are Uldis Ozolins (coordinator), Christian Schmidt (liaison with National Council), Adolfo Gentile, Meredith Bartlett, Vesna Boglev, Eva Hussain, Rita Wilson, Jim Hlavac and Marc Orlando. We thank them sincerely for the valuable and impressive work done so far, and look forward to the next step in the process.

Membership special offer
In 2012, AUSIT will celebrate its 25th anniversary. In preparation for the occasion, AUSIT is offering its members the opportunity to renew for two years and enjoy a 15% discount, on the condition that the renewal subscription is paid within a month of the first renewal notice being issued.

Applications and renewals
Most memberships are now due for renewal on 30 June of each year. The first bulk processing has had its glitches which should be ironed out in time for next year’s renewals. The membership application forms have been updated progressively, but some work remains to be done.

Yellow Pages
AUSIT will again be present in the online Yellow Pages and also in the paper version for each capital city.

Associations forum
National Council members are regularly attending free webinars provided by the Associations Forum, of which AUSIT is a member. This helps us to improve the way AUSIT is run. We are also planning to look at how branches can benefit from these webinars in due course.

Copyright income
Some lending rights payments have been received from CAL (Copyright Agency Limited) for use of AUSIT publications, including papers from the Proceedings of the XIV FIT World Congress we hosted in Melbourne in 1996.

Complaints mechanism
AUSIT has been approached by several parties lodging complaints about members, providers and industry standards in general. Two Board of Professional Conduct (BoPC) cases have been dealt with and further cases are likely to be referred to the BoPC. AUSIT recognises this is an opportunity to leave our mark on the industry and improve standards throughout.

(continued overleaf)
Call for nominations

In accordance with by-law E nominations, I hereby call for nominations for all elective offices of the AUSIT National Council. Please note that there has not been a casual vacancy since our last NAGM; i.e., all officers elected in November 2010 are currently serving.

The following positions will be vacant as of 12 November 2011:
- National President (currently Daniel Muller).
- National Vice-President (currently Annamaria Arnall).
- General Treasurer (currently Diana Rodriguez-Losada).
- General Secretary (currently Yutaka Kawasaki).

Please note that in accordance with the Constitution (Clauses 7.3.2, 7.3.3 and 7.3.4 respectively), the President, the Vice-President and the Immediate Past President (not an elective office) cannot serve for more than three consecutive terms. All current office bearers in these positions are serving their first term, so they are eligible for re-election.

Please forward any nomination to your branch Principal Delegate by 12 September; i.e., two months before this year’s NAGM, which is scheduled for 12 November 2011.

Thank you.

Yutaka Kawasaki
AUSIT General Secretary

By-law E — nominations

No later than three (3) months before the date set for the Annual General Meeting, the General Secretary shall call for nominations for all elective offices, including those where the National Council has appointed an office bearer due to a casual vacancy.

Nominations shall be made by Principal Delegates after consultation with their respective branches.

Nominations shall be in writing and signed by the Principal Delegate lodging it, and shall be accompanied by the signed acceptance of the nominee.

Nominations shall not be accepted if reaching the General Secretary later than two (2) months before the date set for the Annual General Meeting.
New by-law provisions need approval by all branches

In conjunction with constitutional amendments approved at the 2010 NAGM, the following new provisions were adopted as ‘by-law F’.

In accordance with Clause 7.1 of the Constitution, the new provisions should be ratified by all branches, by majority vote at General Meeting, before taking effect. I would like to ask all branches to include the approval of these provisions on their agenda for this year’s branch AGM. If you have any questions regarding the provisions, please direct your questions to the National Council via your branch’s Principal Delegate.

I would also like to encourage all members to take this opportunity to re-read the by-laws and other constitutional documents available from our website. If you have any opinions regarding these documents, you will have opportunities to record your voice in the minutes of branch AGM, where this item is discussed.

On behalf of the National Council,

Yutaka Kawasaki
AUSIT General Secretary

By-law F — Awards and Special Categories of Membership

In addition to the categories of Member, Corporate Member, Associate and Honorary Member, as prescribed under Section 5 of the Constitution, the following Awards and Special Categories of Membership shall apply:

Fellow, Senior Practitioner.

The prerequisites for these categories are as follows:

Fellow

The prerequisites for fellowship are:

a) Financial membership at the date of nomination and for at least the five preceding years;
b) Gainful interpreting and/or translating at professional level or above for a period of at least five years;
c) Significant contribution to the progress of the profession in general.

An eligible candidate for Fellowship shall be admitted if:

a) The candidate is nominated in writing by at least ten financial members;
b) The nomination is supported by the Committee of the branch through which the nomination is forwarded;
c) The nomination is approved by at least two thirds of the members of the National Council;
d) The total number of Fellows does not exceed ten percent of the total number of members of the Institute.

Senior Practitioner

The prerequisites for membership as Senior Practitioner are:

a) Financial membership and gainful interpreting and/or translation at professional level or above for at least the preceding five years;
b) Continued gainful interpreting and/or translating as well as continued professional development according to the criteria that may from time to time be determined by the National Council.

An eligible candidate for membership as Senior Practitioner shall be admitted if:

a) The candidate is nominated in writing by at least five financial members;
b) The nomination is supported by the Committee of the Branch through which the nomination is forwarded;
c) The nomination is approved by a majority of the members of the National Council.

New AUSIT website goes live at www.ausit.org

Our new website went live in August. The complications and main cause for the delay was the member profile and listing module and the need to have it interfaced with our membership administration tool. Several changes had to be made to the coding, each of which has a follow-on effect on many other aspects of the site. Whilst our membership administration tool holds all the data needed to administer the membership, additional information for the members’ online profiles is held on the new website itself. The interface then makes sure updates are reflected throughout the system. Please note that it may take up to a week for certain changes to appear on the new website. Also, please ensure that you advise our administrator at admin@ausit.org of any changes to your contact details, which cannot be edited online at the moment. Any changes to procedures will be communicated by e-Flash as and when required.

Daniel Muller
President

A sample of the new ‘member profile’ interface.
AUSIT submission on WA Language Services Policy 2008

There is something unique about this policy. It is the only such policy in Australia that accepts educational qualifications as at least equivalent to a NAATI credential when it comes to determining the suitability of engaging an interpreter or translator for state government services. The policy is intended as a guide to state public servants who need to engage T/Is when providing services to people who cannot communicate effectively in English.

Recently, AUSIT WA submitted opinions to the Office of Multicultural Interests (WA state government) on how to improve the policy. The key points assert that AUSIT:

- Supports WA’s move to make training and education an important criterion for the engagement of translators and interpreters by government agencies.
- Supports the recommendation by Professor Sandra Hale that interpreters in judicial settings be trained especially for that purpose.
- Supports special training for interpreters in the public health sector.
- Strongly recommends enhancement of the WA government’s procedures for citizens to make complaints about unethical or poor translation and interpreting.
- Offers its services to investigate such complaints.
- Offers its services to train WA government staff in working with interpreters.
- Supports removal of the definition of competent interpreter/translator from the LSP.
- Feedback is welcome.

Please email the AUSIT WA Secretary, Jean Deklerk at j.t.s@digisurf.net.au.

AUSIT SA/NT Branch AGM

The SA/NT branch of AUSIT will be holding its 2011 AGM on Wednesday 21 September 2011, at 6:30pm at The German Club, 223 Flinders Street, Adelaide.

All financial members can become committee members. We usually meet in person every two months and interact by email in the meantime.

Everyone brings their own particular knowledge and expertise to the group and the workload is shared by all in accordance with their capabilities and experience. Join us to make a difference and contribution to your association.

Help to shape the future of the profession whilst enjoying and benefitting from the exchange of knowledge and ideas with others who share a passion for interpreting and translating.

An E-flash has been sent to all AUSIT SA/NT members. If you haven’t received it, please contact SA/NT AUSIT secretary, Caroline Sanders at: caroline@sandertranslations.com.

Notice of Annual General Meeting — AUSIT Western Australia Branch

The AGM will take place at Tresillian Community Centre, Corner of Tyrell and Edward St., Nedlands, WA on Saturday 17 September 2011 at 1:00pm.

Agenda

1. Opening and apologies.
2. Confirmation of previous minutes.
3. Branch Chairman’s report.
4. Branch Treasurer’s report.
5. Election of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
6. Ratification of addition to national by-laws.
7. Other business.
8. Close.

St Jerome’s day celebration

Following the AGM, members are invited to celebrate St. Jerome’s day with good food and drink.

Annamaria Arnall

Be a part of AUSIT’s growing online community

Are you making the best of your AUSIT network? See below for information about our AUSIT on-line communities on Yahoo.

Apart from the e-Bulletin, which is a general discussion group with approximately 300 subscribers, AUSIT has the following Yahoo groups: Seventeen specific languages or language groups, Medical interpreters and translators, Literary translators, T/I pay and conditions issues, and Technology in general.

To join a group of your interest, please send evidence of your AUSIT membership (such as proof of your renewal payment) to David at the postal or e-mail address below. Mention the groups you think you may be missing out on and your e-mail address, and we’ll send you an electronic invitation to join those groups. It is likely there’s already a group for your language. If no group has been formed for your language, we will consider starting one if a sufficient number of members, using a particular language, requests a group.

Please allow a few days for processing once you’ve sent your request. Send requests to the following address:

David Connor
AUSIT Yahoo Groups Manager
PO Box 1070
Blackburn North VIC 3130
or ausityahoo@optusnet.com.au

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AUSIT Vic/Tas workshop on public speaking

Having in mind the importance of public speaking skills for interpreters wishing to upgrade to conference interpreter or take on court interpreting jobs, the Vic/Tas Branch held a public speaking workshop at VicDeaf’s John Lovett Centre in Albert Street, East Melbourne on 30 July 2011.

It was our pleasure to have Toastmasters’ Valerie and Greg Hayes and their friend Frances, as trainers for the workshop. Greg, a member of Toastmasters for over 30 years, holds the top rank of distinguished Toastmaster. Valerie is also an experienced Toastmaster and a former regional governor who has won several international speech contests. They both worked in Papua New Guinea for ten years and this experience gave them an understanding of language and cultural barriers. Frances is a retired primary school principal with rich teaching experience and fine skills. The workshop was divided into two parts.

First, each of the three trainers delivered a speech, touching on topics such as pronunciation, speaking volume, similar English words, and body language. They not only set an excellent example of public speech skills, but also involved everyone in pronunciation exercises they had prepared for the workshop.

In the second part of the workshop the participants were divided into four small groups, each with a trainer to help and guide. Everyone had a chance to practise given tasks. After half an hour of intense activity each group elected a speaker to report back to all present, about the tasks performed and how they felt about the training.

The program was well received. Interpreters were able to refine basic skills and student members gained confidence by practising useful and interesting exercises. Moreover, it provided an opportunity for participants to socialise and develop friendships.

Committee members have received very positive feedback about this workshop.

BiYi Fang
AUSIT Vic/Tas
Breaking through the language barrier

A successful UWS/IWHS project focuses on access to interpreter training for women from ‘emerging communities’ in Sydney

The University of Western Sydney (UWS) is well known for its interpreting and translation programmes in languages that are well established in Australia, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Spanish. In addition to these respected programmes, UWS was recently able to provide an exciting opportunity for interpreter training to women from language groups that were identified as emerging in the south western Sydney area, and that do not currently have interpreter courses available.

In 2010, the UWS Interpreting and Translation Research Group (under the direction of Associate Professor Sandra Hale, now Professor in ITT at UNSW) partnered with the Immigrant Women’s Health Service (directed by Dr Eman Sharobeem) to implement an important project. This project was funded by the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office for Women’s Policy, under its Domestic and Family Violence Grants programme. The Department funded the project in recognition that access to high quality interpreter services is fundamental for victims of domestic and family violence who do not speak English, in order to access available support. The project included the following:

Identifying growing language groups in the south western Sydney area which do not have language services or interpreter training opportunities available.

Conducting a focus group with women from those language groups, to identify the main barriers which prevent access to domestic and family violence support services.

Providing training on issues of domestic and family violence to over 40 women.

In addition to the above activities, participants were given an opportunity to apply for an interpreter training course run by UWS at its Bankstown campus. The women selected had to be from language groups identified as ‘emerging’, which don’t have established interpreting services. There was a competitive selection process, including an English placement test conducted by UWS College.

The selected women proved to be a highly motivated, vibrant and diverse group who contributed as much to the educators as they got from the training delivered. The range of personal and professional experiences in the group made the whole experience an extremely rewarding one. Seventeen women who were speakers of Assyrian, Bengali, Burmese, Chaldean, Dari, Dinka, Hazaragi, Nepali, Pashto, Punjabi, Somali and Urdu completed the course. This was no small feat, considering that the course was delivered over two, three-hour sessions per week over seven weeks and participants had to combine family, work and other study responsibilities to be able to attend.

The 40-hour course was developed by Associate Professor Uldis Ozolins and delivered by Uldis and Erika Gonzalez, another experienced interpreter and educator. It covered areas such as interpreting in medical, DFV and legal settings, placed much emphasis on the ethics of the profession as well as terminology and allowed participants to practise in role play settings. A characteristic of this course is that it was delivered in English, as participants are from a diverse range of languages. An important research outcome of the project will be to fully evaluate the course’s effectiveness. If it is found to be an effective mode of delivering interpreter training (as pre and post-course evaluations seem to indicate), it will be a significant contribution to the development of programmes targeted to the newer and growing languages in Australia. It is only through the development of solid and effective interpreting services that all Australian residents will be ensured fair participation in the broader community.

As a further contribution to building capacity within the targeted communities, the project also provided finance for participants to sit the NAATI para-professional interpreter test in their language, or to apply for recognition when accreditation is not available. Sandra Hale, as principal researcher, is now awaiting the results of the tests to be able to assess the effectiveness of the training delivered.

NAATI was very supportive of this project, with Gary Harkins, NSW State Manager, providing personal support to the substantial administrative effort required to deal with a large group of applications. He also visited the university to address the group on the test structure and requirements. We were also very pleased to count (continued on page 12)
This year saw a reversion to the traditional Queen’s Birthday Weekend time slot; however, it also saw a change in the Auckland venue — from Auckland University to AUT. The event certainly flourished in its new (and very pleasant) surroundings — helped by exceedingly clear pre-conference instructions on how to get there, where to stay, and other matters of interest to out-of-town attendees. Those elements, complemented by excellent catering and delightful support staffing by AUT students, went far towards ensuring a successful event.

The conference organisers deserve to be congratulated for producing a program characterised by a good balance between the interests of translators and interpreters and between academic/theoretical and practical concerns. Adding to the practical aspects of the event, the main conference was preceded and followed by NAATI preparation workshops for interpreting and translating respectively — as well as a presentation by Hannah Brodsky addressing the question “How do I know if I’m ready for the NAATI exam?”

The congenially professional atmosphere that pervaded the weekend was established by a pre-conference social gathering (hosted by AUT), at which entertainment and illumination were provided in equal measure by a surprise guest speaker: sign Language interpreter Jeremy Borland, whom the disastrous Christchurch earthquake of 22 February flung into professional prominence at media briefings and many other key events at which he provided vital links with the deaf community. His riveting account of his own hair-raising escape, and of weathering the rigours of personal and professional stresses in the ensuing weeks, not to mention the pressure of sudden celebrity, left no doubt that his status as joint winner of Deaf Aotearoa’s Interpreter of the Year award is well deserved. One positive outcome of the disaster has been its highlighting of the communication needs of the deaf and the importance of meeting those needs.

The conference theme, *Reflections on Language and Technology*, was addressed in magisterial style by opening keynote speaker Frank Austermuehl. Posing the question “Why has machine translation become so much better?” he suggested that one (at first sight) paradoxical answer was “because it has become so much more human.” After a wide-ranging *tour d’horizon* of developments both in the technology of machine translation and in its use, he emphasised a need for “more critical reflection and more humanistic research”, and outlined a number of possible “fight or flight” responses by translation practitioners. These included: offering additional services, developing new skills (such as revising, pre- and post-editing, consulting), learning to use new tools, and simply “being better”.

Dr Austermuehl’s treatment of the conference theme was complemented later in the first morning’s proceedings by Patrick King of NZTC, who gave a very concrete account of his company’s experiences with new technologies.

Anita Goethans of AUT gave an interesting account of developments at AUT in the online delivery of translator training, while Anna Sachtleben addressed aspects of AUT’s work in the training of interpreters.

Overseas presenters featured prominently in this year’s Conference with three Chinese contributors (Haoda Feng on political translation from Chinese to English, Szu-Wen Kung on sociological approaches in translation studies, and Zhengxiu Xie on interpreters’ perceptions of their roles) and a large group from Indonesia (for the first time in over a decade), led by UK expatriate Roger Bell, Visiting Professor at the University of Sumatra (Universitas Sumatera Utara or USU) and a former Professor of Linguistics at Westminster University. Professor Bell gave a humorously thoughtful disquisition on the question “Translators – who do they think they are?”, and both he and his colleagues reported on various aspects of the translation- and interpreting-related work being done at USU. The international contingent was given a European flavour by the presence of Vienna-based Gabriele Sauberer, representing TermNet (www.termnet.org), of which NZSTI is a member, who addressed the topic *Terminology and Tools: what language professionals and communicators really need*.

Melanie Withwer related her experiences of a close working relationship between a German author and herself as translator, giving some delightful insights into the world of German children’s literature.

For many NZSTI Conference veterans, no conference is complete without a presentation by John Jamieson. *Telling a good story — hidden narratives in non-fictional texts* certainly provided a satisfying helping of Dr Jamieson’s unique blend of wit, erudition and insight, in which he explored different modes of address used by writers in addressing their readers and the issues involved in appropriately rendering these in translation.

Robyn Pask, CEO of Interpreting New Zealand, chaired a particularly valuable panel discussion focussing on the topic of keeping mentally and emotionally safe as an interpreter —strategies for maintaining a self-protective distance while interpreting in distressful situations as well as for self-care between interpreting assignments.

Dr Ineke Crezee of AUT (a participant in the panel chaired by Robyn) gave an interesting presentation, based on work she has been doing by herself and her AUT colleague Lynn Grant on the use of technology in investigating the role of figurative language in interpreter training.

Auckland Branch has long enjoyed a reputation for putting on good conferences. They have earned warm congratulations for providing by far the best of the four Auckland NZSTI conferences that this writer has so far had the pleasure of attending.

Peter Tuffley
The Tax Office comes to AUSIT

After attending the Seminar on Tax, John Gare examines the contractor/employee divide. How does working as a contractor versus an employee affect your income tax?

Some notes following the Seminar on Tax hosted by the Vic/Tas Branch on Friday 12 August 2011.

The seminar was held in the J M Lovett Centre in Alfred Street, Melbourne, kindly made available to AUSIT by VicDeaf. The attendance of 69 in was probably an indication of a current spike in the level of translator/interpreter interest in tax and related matters. Rod Henshaw of the ATO’s Speakers and Seminars team held our interest throughout his presentation of about 45 minutes and was still answering questions an hour later.

Unsurprisingly, following the On Call superannuation case and All Graduates’ recent announcement of a casual employee business model, much attention was focussed on the contractor/employee divide. The Tax Office, in their 72-page publication Business and professional items 2011 (NAT 2543) provide a lot of helpful information for people who earn personal services income (PSI) as contractors. Rod referred frequently to the ‘results test’ contained in this publication and also mentioned the ATO employee/contractor decision tool at www.ato.gov.au/employeerecontractor. (This section of the ATO website is designed specifically for the building and construction industry but does reflect many of the often-quoted criteria for deciding whether a worker is an employee or a contractor.)

I discovered, in checking references for this report, that item 14 of the Tax Pack (located under the section titled ‘Income’) has for many years specifically mentioned ‘payment for translation and interpretation services’ for the Translating and Interpreting Service of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’ as an example of personal services income.

As one who finds the benefits of being a T&I practitioner who operates as a contractor, on the whole pretty much illusory, I tend to hang my hat on the admonition which follows, (still under item 14): ‘Do not show at this item, income you received as an employee.’ Readers might like to consult their accountant on the question of whether or not you are obliged to submit a business tax return if you receive income from the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). Unfortunately this question did not come up at the seminar.

Rod, in answer to a question on notice, addressed the nagging question of the T&I professional with multiple ‘employers’, in a changing situation where agencies seem to be under some pressure to deduct PAYG tax at source. For three given monthly earnings, $625, $1042 and $1458, he extracted withholding amounts from the ATO Monthly tax table (2011-2012), for tax-free threshold income, both claimed and not claimed. (As you can only claim the tax-free threshold from one employer, more tax is withheld by other employers.)

The figures are, for tax-free threshold claimed, nil, nil and $61 respectively and, for no tax-free threshold, $104, $173 and $264 respectively. As it happens, the figures used correspond to the earnings of three different workers, receiving total earnings of $30,000, $50,000 and $70,000 per annum, respectively, paid monthly in four equal components by four different employers. Anyone who is so inclined can look up the Monthly tax table and check my comparative PAYG income tax withholding for the single employer and multiple (four) employer cases as follows:

The tax withheld is more in the multiple employer case, only for incomes below $30,000. For people in higher income brackets, the sum of withholding amounts for multiple employers is considerably less than the amount which would be withheld over the year by a single employer paying the same total earnings.

Otherwise, the tax situation for the employee versus the contractor or business is flexible. As Rod said, it is possible to earn part of your income as an employee and part as a business, if you so choose. Even as an employee there is provision (within limits) for claiming work-related expenses for things such as home office expenses and travel. Rod mentioned the 34 cents per hour deduction allowable for ‘heating, cooling, lighting and the decline in value of furniture in your home office’, which appears under section D5 in the Tax Pack. Interpreters who find themselves in the ‘employee’ category will need to explore every avenue to claim ‘transport expenses’ and may find useful the various ‘taxation rulings’ on the subject published by the ATO. Unfortunately, neither speeding fines nor parking fines can be claimed!

Comparative PAYG tax withholding for single and multiple (four) employers

<table>
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<th>Earnings per year</th>
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<th>$70,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tax withheld</td>
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<td>$15,756</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single employer</td>
<td>$3,744</td>
<td>$6,228</td>
<td>$10,236</td>
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</table>
Pay attention to developments

UWS Senior Lecturer and AUSIT member Ignacio Garcia explores the evolution of machine translation in this interview with Sam Berner. What possibilities does this software offer translators and what effect is it having on the industry?

Please introduce yourself to the readers. Who are you, what do you do and how long have you been doing it?

I’m a senior lecturer at the University of Western Sydney (UWS), where I’ve been teaching and researching translation technologies since 2003. However, my academic background is not in translation but history. I completed my PhD at the University of New South Wales with a thesis on Spanish migration to Argentina. Translation was something I did on the side to support myself while writing the thesis. Some of the casual jobs I took at the time, the most memorable for SBS Radio (Spanish Program), also involved translation.

On gaining a permanent position at UWS, I decided to align my research interests with the needs of the Interpreting and Translation unit I was part of. We had identified a gap in our program on computer assisted translation and I volunteered to fill it. And the rest, as they say, is history.

How did your interest in the workings of machine translation begin?

Being a humanities — not a computer science — person, I didn’t want to involve myself with machine translation. Translation memory (Trados, Wordfast etc.) was challenging enough. Then, Microsoft and others started requesting translators post-edit the segments for which there were no matches in the memory databases. Soon afterwards, Trados and Wordfast introduced (in some cases re-introduced) this machine translation feature in their products. I couldn’t avoid machine translation now. I soon found out that post-editing — making whatever changes are needed on the machine output, so that the final version serves its purpose — is a very exciting area of research, best attempted from a humanities, not computer science, perspective.

Give a very short history of the development of machine translation (MT).

Okay, three chapters only...

First, 1949-1964: These are the pioneering years. The MT algorithms are raw, words are entered on these big, expensive machines through punch cards and post-editing is much more expensive (and produced a much lower quality) than translating, yet this does not deter small groups of visionaries and dreamers.

Second, 1965-2006: These are the incubation years. Nothing really exciting happens, just some tweaking of the algorithms to take advantage of increased computer power and connectivity.

Third, 2007-onwards: This is when the technology takes off. Everyone starts using it. For some language combinations and for some types of text, translators will soon need to consider whether they should post-edit instead of translating (even when the client is not asking them to).

Where do you see the development of this technology going? How long do you think it will take before it is fully usable?

As I’ve just said, for some language combinations, for some types of text, and under certain conditions, machine translation may already be usable, both for translators to translate faster, and for people who do not share a common language to communicate. As a researcher with an interest in machine translation and post-editing, my goal is to find out exactly what those language combinations, types of text, and conditions may be. By usable I mean, usable enough, not really ‘fully’ usable.

How do you see it affecting translators?

For well-established translators working in a particular niche (and close to retirement age), machine translation may not mean much. For emerging translators, those leaving our lecture theatres, it should mean a lot. They need to test whether they are well suited to post-editing, whether they should look for post-editing assignments or accept them when they come their way. They need to assess how well machine translation — including free online engines such as Google Translate or Bing Translator — work in their particular language combination and for the kind of texts they are asked to translate.

As for the rest, they should pay attention to developments. So far, translators have managed computer-related change well. Writing is no longer done on typewriters. Translators used to advertise their services through the Yellow pages, but most would now do that through their own website. Translation memory, even if just a simple tool like Wordfast Classic, is no longer a comparative advantage — most other translators working in the same field will use it as well. My guess is that the next wave of change will come either via integrating machine translation with translation memory, or inputting text into the translation memory tool through speech recognition…or doing both things at once.

Is there enough interest in MT from an academic point of view in Australia? How do we compare to other countries?

I wish there was. I’m aware of some academics writing on technology-related translation matters, but from the computer science angle. Europe and Canada are where most work on translation technologies and post-editing is still done. Australians have a good reputation for being early adopters of technology, but I don’t think this particularly applies to academics teaching and researching in translation.
Advance payment for translations— an alternative view

AUSIT Senior Practitioner Bob Desiatnik discusses the benefits of a ‘payment-after-service’ approach to translation work

I was struck by the number of colleagues who, in responding to a recent e-Bulletin posting seeking advice about prepayment for a translation, reported that they don’t release their translations (to private clients, as distinct from agencies or government departments) until they have received payment.

I agree with Trish Will that ‘most private individuals find this normal’, and with Moreno Giovannoni, who wrote ‘it’s perfectly normal to ask for payment in advance and no-one objects’. Indeed, many of my private clients offer, unasked, to prepay for translation work.

It may therefore surprise some to learn that for years I have adopted exactly the opposite approach to the one that has been advocated. Even when first-time clients offer to prepay, I usually tell them I prefer not to accept payment until the work has been completed and delivered.

I would be the first to agree this approach is at odds with commercial commonsense and carries a certain risk. Why then, do I employ it?

In reality, it has worked well. In many years of professional practice, I’ve been ‘stiffed’ by only one private client, and the amount involved was not significant. It is important to note that payment-after-service is in line with the billing conventions of many professionals. The dentist doesn’t extract a fee before extracting your tooth. And plumbers, with whose rates we are so fond of comparing our own, don’t ask for payment up front.

I believe that, as an adjunct to the care I put into my work, scrupulous adherence to deadlines and other aspects of the service I provide (and the fact I make it clear to clients that I am treating them as trustworthy individuals), helps secure their loyalty for future work and as a source of recommendation to other potential clients. It takes some of them by surprise — but it’s a pleasant surprise — when I tell them they don’t have to pay in advance. That pleasant surprise is often the first step in building a relationship with a private client. The future income likely to flow from a good rapport with a client may greatly exceed the loss which might result from non-payment.

I should add that, as David Connor recommends, translators should always ‘keep their ears open’, not necessarily for something that could be used later on, but simply to gauge whether the person at the end of the phone is a good risk in the first place. A brief phone conversation is usually enough for me to calibrate my antennae! An email address, are provided. If I have any doubts, I keep open the option of asking for pre-payment. Factors influencing my final decision include whether the enquirer can be located at a home or work address, the amount of time, effort and money that would be lost should payment fail to materialise. The decision-making process is more or less spontaneous and instinctive (though I sometimes google the enquirer’s name, just to see if anything adverse comes up).

These observations would be incomplete without reference to the fact that, in applying a payment-after-service approach, even for first-time clients, I do set dollar limits. They are, however, reasonably generous. I recently did a $600 job for a person who resides in Darwin. I was unlikely to ever meet this man, and chasing him for payment would prove very tedious, with dubious prospects of success. This individual — no doubt conscious of the precautions I might logically be expected to take — offered to pay up front. I declined the offer, after considering a number of factors (including his employment background, which was set out in the documents requiring translation). Payment was made by EFT within 24 hours of receipt of my invoice.

**AUSIT QLD mini conference a success**

On Saturday 28 May University of Queensland once again welcomed Qld AUSIT members and interested industry players for a day of lectures, presentations and discussions. Over 60 people attended the event, held at the Abel Smith Lecture Theatre, and sponsored by the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies. It was gratifying to see that many non-members had found out about the event and decided to attend.

The audience was treated to a mix of practical business advice, time-management techniques, new technology and interpreter experience. Our guest speaker this year was Heather Smith, founder of ANISE Consulting, who improve small business financial literacy through educating owners to produce accurate and meaningful management reports in a timely manner. Other speakers included Rona Zhang, who shared her experiences interpreting at the Australian Expo Pavilion in Shanghai, Maria Corbett, who spoke from years of experience about interpreting for patients suffering post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and Sam Berner who presented her Personal Efficiency Program.

There were smiles all around, and ample opportunities to network and meet new people, all encouraged by the amazing weather. Nothing beats Queensland’s sun when it comes to conviviality. Institute of Modern Languages staff members also graced the audience, and left the event impressed by the wealth of knowledge AUSIT members have.

The event ended in a lively discussion between the panel and audience about the future of our profession. Ten new members joined at the event. We welcome them all to our vibrant community of practitioners in Queensland.

AUSIT QLD Branch Committee
Branch news

Queensland

The ground beneath our feet has dried out but our enthusiasm hasn’t. Although typically a quiet period, while a few members take routine trips back into the [so-called] European Summer, we are quietly making plans for next month’s Queensland Branch AGM.

Several ‘old-but-safe-hands’ will not be able to stand again this year, due to eligibility for long service leave and a range of other commitments — it seems unlikely, but those who run AUSIT at a national and state level do also have lives, passions, responsibilities and, occasionally, other things they need to do. We are looking forward to welcoming some new talent who will be taking up vacant positions on the Queensland Management Committee. This year’s post holders will not be going far and will continue in the wings, supporting the new candidates. It has been simply great to see the enthusiastic response to our initial call out for interest. After all, AUSIT is run by members, for members and well, the more the merrier we say (although if the inclusion rate keeps up, we may have to buy our Chair, Tea Dietterich, a larger balcony on which to hold committee meetings).

Hot on the heels of our successful mini-conference (see p.), Rona Zhang was asked to repeat her presentation at the University of Queensland’s symposium for students of Japanese Interpreting and Translation. Always an enthusiastic speaker, Rona must have been particularly inspiring, because as a result of her time, effort and spirit, no less than 10 of the students signed up to become student members of AUSIT on the day. For those who say that AUSIT has no meaning or clout in the current marketplace, how can this be so when the up-and-coming generation sees such benefit in joining us? By word of mouth, we continue to share the message.

The QLD AUSIT Branch AGM will be held on the 22nd of September, at the Brisbane Square Library Community Meeting Room. See you there!

NSW

Since May this year, the NSW committee has held three professional development events and approved fifteen applications to join AUSIT — thirteen as full members, two as associates. We have also approved an application by an existing full member for senior practitioner status.

Professional development

Notes from our March ‘grapevine’ event, with former AUSIT President Uli Priester, are now available online. This was followed up in May with a grapevine on Conference Interpreting Training, with teacher and conference interpreter Axelle Chazal. Axelle studied at the elite Ecole de Traduction et d’Interprétation at the University of Geneva, and shared rather hair-raising stories about its intense training regime.

The idea behind the grapevine events is for experienced practitioners to share the benefits of their experience with others, whether newcomers or veterans, who in turn are encouraged to contribute their own insights and questions.

A professional development highlight of the last quarter was the June seminar on telephone interpreting, organised in collaboration with TIS National. Alison Thorne flew in from Melbourne, despite the best attempts of the ash cloud to stop her, and gave a very useful presentation to an audience of over forty AUSIT members and outsiders. Her presentation and an event report are available online on the AUSIT NSW website. Among the many excellent outcomes of this event was an agreement between AUSIT NSW and TIS National to hold a similar event on a yearly basis.

In July, AUSIT NSW Chair Helen Slatyer presented some of the most salient results of the ‘Kaleidoscope’ survey of Australian interpreters and translators, undertaken by AUSIT in 2007, in collaboration with Macquarie University, the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association (ASLIA), and the Australian Federation of Deaf Societies (AFDS). The PowerPoint presentation from this event is also available online.

In October, AUSIT NSW will be holding a workshop on translation memory software, organised by NSW Committee member Charlotte Brasler, in collaboration with Max Doerfler, and with the invaluable support of Macquarie University. Stay tuned.

RAC News

AUSIT NSW has a representative on NAATI’s NSW Regional Advisory Committee, which also comprises government (e.g. TIS, Centrelink), educational and industry representatives.

One of the initiatives of the NSW group has been to hold information seminars on topics of general interest to the committee, which have then formed the basis of PD activities with a broader outreach. RAC committee member and Max Doerfler made a presentation to the committee and its associates on translation memory software, which led to a presentation at Petersham TAFE on the same topic, and ultimately resulted in AUSIT NSW’s own upcoming workshop on this subject.

Finances

AUSIT NSW closed its local St George accounts in the last quarter and opened two Westpac accounts linked to the other state and national accounts, able to be accessed online and administered centrally.

AUSIT NSW AGM

The AUSIT NSW AGM will be held on the afternoon of Saturday 15 October 2011. Formal notice, along with an agenda, reports and position descriptions will be circulated a month in advance. All local AUSIT members are encouraged to attend and to consider participating in the work of the committee for the following year.

http://sites.google.com/site/ausitnsw/.

Write to us at ausitnsw@gmail.com.

Melissa McMahon
Acting Chair, AUSIT NSW Branch
T&I business — communicating with clients

Interpreters and translators pride themselves on their ability to transfer sensitive or nuanced information from one language to another. They need to apply the same focus to general communication with clients, says Suzan Piper.

As translators and interpreters we aim to accurately render written or oral communication from the source language to a target language in a sensitively nuanced manner. But we do not do that in a vacuum. Recent changes in superannuation arrangements with agencies and related discussions on the AUSIT e-group only serve to remind that few of us are employed full-time as translators or interpreters. We work rather as freelance entrepreneurs. We operate small businesses — even if we only employ ourselves — working with a range of direct and indirect clients, including agencies.

There are skills and knowledge associated with running a translating and/or interpreting business. These include but are not limited to: Book-keeping and invoicing. Negotiating assignments. Maintaining good customer records. Familiarity with a professional code of ethics. Awareness of organisational and legal requirements. Developing strong professional networks. Continuous professional development. Marketing. Customer relationship management.

Working in the service sector, we all benefit from a better focus on communication skills and interpersonal skills as we work with our customers. It is much cheaper to retain repeat customers than to market anew, yet we can undervalue the basic communication skills required to relate to our own clients. Quick reflection of our own experience of feeling undervalued or ignored by a service provider should remind us of the dangers of overlooking this area.

Translators and interpreters work in different scenarios and in different modes. Interpreters tend to (but not always) work locally and are often employed, if not by government agencies, then through private agencies. Communication with these customers is more frequently by telephone or email. Nowadays it is more common for translators to receive offers of work through email; these offers can be followed up by phone (landline, mobile, Skype) or even through instant messaging. Customers may be located in the same state, interstate, or overseas in a different time zone. However, translators and interpreters can also meet face to face with clients in their office, at a café, or through marketing initiatives such as a visit to a trade fair or chamber of commerce.

Each of these modes of communication offers its own challenge in terms of appropriate etiquette, clarity and rapport. It is easier to make a good impression on a client you meet face to face, particularly if you have strong verbal communication skills and your dress, facial expression and body language is appropriate. Written communication is a less personal medium. It is the content that appears to be of paramount importance, not the style. Yet a badly crafted email can offend or miss its mark through inappropriate wording or too casual a tone.

Telephone conversations with clients have the benefit of being interactive and provide a way to convey personal warmth. When you hear the phone ring while working in your small business/home office, try stopping to breathe and smile before you pick up — the listener will hear the warmth in your voice and be more inclined to respond positively. You too can make that call to a new or long-term client to establish contact, to gain feedback, to build a better picture of the client and the client’s needs, and for them to build a better picture of you and your unique skills.

Don’t forget to take notes to build that customer profile in your files; this may include recording information in your email address book, project records or financial records. You want your clients to remember and come back to you and/or recommend you to their family, friends and business associates. So make sure you listen to them, discover their needs and show them you mean business.

Suzan Piper has 15 years experience as a NAATI-accredited T/I. She is currently designing and teaching material related to the business practices of translation as part of the new Australian Diploma of Translating.

(from page 6)

Breaking through the language barrier

on the support of the language units from the Community Relations Commission for a multicultural NSW, TIS National, Centrelink and the South Western Sydney Local Health District. Representatives from these language services joined participants on the last day of their course to provide information on the type of interpreting services they provide and how to apply to work for them. We hope that this kind of exposure, along with the confidence and strong base that professional interpreter training provides, gives the amazing participants of this project the opportunity to further contribute to their communities as professional interpreters.

Breaking through the language barrier: Empowering refugee and immigrant women to combat domestic and family violence through cultural and language training.
International Conference on Translation and Cross-Cultural Communication

Co-Hosted by
The School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies, The University of Queensland, Australia
www.slccs.uq.edu.au
The Confucius Institute, The University of Queensland, Australia
www.uq.edu.au/confucius

Conference Date: December 1-2, 2011
Conference Location: The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Working Languages: English and Mandarin

Call for Papers and Participation

First Call
The conference will address both translation/interpreting and cross-cultural communication studies in general and between English and Chinese in particular. The subject areas covered by the conference include:

- Theories of translation/interpreting
- Multidisciplinary approaches to translation/interpreting
- Translation and interpreting: history and traditions in China and other countries
- Translation and interpreting: role in the modernization of Chinese society
- Translation and interpreting in the context of globalisation
- Linguistic analysis and translation
- Technologies in translation/interpreting
- Corpora in translation studies
- Translationese and language development
- Translation/interpreting for special purposes (e.g., science, engineering, technology, business, law, government and tourism)
- Literary translation
- Translator/interpreter training and pedagogies
- Cross-cultural communication

Please submit a 200-300 word abstract in either English or Chinese to: Dr Leong Ko at l.ko@uq.edu.au by 31 July 2011.

Abstracts should also include: Title of Paper, Family Name(s), First Name(s), Institutional Affiliation, Current Position, email address and at least 3 keywords that best describe the subject of your submission.

Accommodation
Accommodation will be arranged at St Leo’s College on The University of Queensland campus at the economical rates of $65 for a standard room and $80 for a single room. The cost of accommodation includes all in-house meals. Please use the attached reservation form and contact St Leo College directly. Extended stays can be arranged with the College. Please view the conference website above to download the special accommodation form.

Keynote speakers
Professor Miriam Shlesinger, Bar-Illan University, Israel; Chief Editor of Interpreting.
Professor Jose Lambert, Katholieke Universiteit, Belgium; Chief Editor of Target.
Professor HUANG Youyi, Vice Chair of the Translators’ Association of China; Vice President of FIT; Vice President of China International Publishing Group; Deputy Chief Editor of Translation Journal of China.
Professor LIN Maosung, National Taiwan University of Science and Technology.
Dr Jing Han, Chief Subtitler, SBS TV, Australia, University of Western Sydney

Selected papers from the conference will be peer reviewed and published in two book-length volumes – one in English and the other in Chinese.

Important Dates
31 July 2011: Deadline for submission of abstracts
15 August 2011: Notification of acceptance
30 September 2011: Deadline for payment of registration and dinner (Please note: Cancellations before 7 Nov 2011 will receive a refund of 50% of registration and dinner fees. No refund available after this date.)
20 January 2012: Submission of full paper (using APA style)
20 March 2012: Notification of selected papers for publication
20 April 2012: Submission of final papers for publication
Late 2012: Publication subject to arrangement with the publisher

Conference fee schedule

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Full Conference registration fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day only rate</td>
<td>Lunch, morning and afternoon teas, day conference materials.</td>
<td>Aus $130 Inc GST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Full Conference registration fee</td>
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Conference website (for registration & further info)
The AUSIT Excellence Awards recognise initiatives and activities by individuals, teams, and organisations operating in all sectors of the translating and interpreting industry.

Encouraging best practice, professionalism, dedication to quality, innovation and outstanding contributions to the industry.

www.ausitawards.org

The Awards celebrate organisations and individuals/teams in six categories:

• Outstanding Contribution to the Translating & Interpreting Industry

• Excellence in Translating

• Excellence in Interpreting

• Outstanding Contribution to AUSIT (Paul Sinclair Award)

• Outstanding Contribution to Indigenous Interpreting and Translation

• Excellence in Telephone Interpreting