

We reject any current reference to *qualification* via a one-day training and self- certification by the agency conducting the training as being irrelevant, and not as required by the definition contained within the collaborative tender requirements.

It is worrying to note that the majority of languages used in court and police settings are termed 'minority languages' and include Polish, Urdu, Punjabi, Chinese, Russian and Lithuanian. So this pay-range disparity discriminates directly against mother-tongue, first-language speakers of minority languages and as a consequence, against their communities.

In the Collaborative Tender award (pricing), no account was taken of comparison rates in other industries or the commercial sector. There is a clear financial disparity between interpreters in the CJS and their colleagues in the commercial sector. The Collaborative Tender failed to consider financial disparity, and categorically failed to safeguard interpreters with any inbuilt proviso, such as... "Any cost-cutting cannot be passed onto linguists via downgrading in their terms" a term in use that we have noted elsewhere, for example in the ITT documents now circulating in England.

It should also be noted that there is a significant disparity between the rates of our interpreters' fees, and the fees paid to sign language interpreters (SLI) here in Scotland. This disparity favours the SLI who come mainly from the host community.

We therefore assert, that the terms of the Collaborative Tender and the subsequent contract have paved the way for a deterioration in the terms of engagement for interpreters and a consequent lowering of standards with serious consequences for the industry and its service delivery.

Despite the fact that these changes disproportionately affect minority ethnic interpreters and the service available to their communities, we believe that, prior to the setting up and awarding of the 'Collaborative Tender', the Scottish Government - and specifically the procurement body - have not carried out an Equality Impact Assessment/Race-Equality Impact Assessment as required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2001. This could be perceived as institutional racism.

We therefore seek an enquiry into

- ***interpreting standards* in general**
- ***the processes involved for the establishment and implementation of the Collaborative Tender***
- ***the subsequent conditions created by the Collaborative Tender.***

We further assert that now would be an opportune time to demonstrate how the collaborative tender is succeeding in:

- improving the DPSI usage-ratio, by assessing the current DPSI usage-ratio across and within the CJS and to produce a correlation of a rise in, retention of, and use of DPSI linguists
- to identify the most-commonly 'used' languages across and within the CJS
- how it is/is not/ impacting on quality of outcome based on competency in the- other language standards, and not exclusively on the standards of "time- keeping" and "appearance" as currently used.

