Template for writing a submission to:

The NSW inquiry into Auslan Interpretation for Broadcasting

July 2022

1. Begin with a short introduction about yourself that includes:

Who are you?

You identify as Deaf or hard of hearing?

You use Auslan as your preferred language to communicate.

1. Write about why having Auslan interpreters broadcast in the NSW legislative council is important to you:

The reasons could be:

* Auslan is your natural and preferred choice of language
* When provided with the best possible access to information in Auslan you feel you can participate in decision making processes
* English is not a natural language for you to read in its written format
* Captions are too hard to follow and there are too many mistakes
* Captions do not provide nuance i.e., facial expressions, jokes

You do not have to write about all the reasons above – choose the ones that affect you the most. A few questions to get you started:

* What is one story you remember very well, where you experienced problems (because of Auslan interpreters not being broadcast) in accessing information in Auslan?
* What happened?
* Who was involved?
* Was there a good or bad outcome?
* What would you do next time?
* What would you recommend, to fixing this so it doesn’t happen again?

You can write about the problems you experienced in your chosen areas.

Include recommendations to solve the problems you experienced.

Don’t forget:

Include your contact details with the submission

Do not include your personal details and contact details **IN** the submission

Let them know if you do not want your submission published on the internet and why.

Here is an example:

To whom it may concern:

NSW inquiry into the broadcasting of Auslan interpreters in legislative council proceedings

My name is ….. and I am Deaf. Auslan is my first language and I use it to communicate in everyday life. I am a proud member of the Deaf community here in NSW. I would like to draw your attention to my submission into why the provision of Auslan interpreters in legislative council proceedings would be meeting Australia’s commitment to the UN’s Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly Article 9: *Accessibility* and 21: *Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information*. Auslan interpreters at legislative council proceedings should be the norm, not the exception.

Auslan is my natural and therefore preferred language. Auslan is not a language that represents English on the hands. It is a linguistically valid, rich and complex language and one Deaf people use to make sense of the world, belong to a community, immerse into the culture, values and mores of that community. Just like anyone else with any other spoken language. I have found that being able to access information using Auslan and Auslan interpreters is key to being able to make informed decisions and express myself clearly.

I have found that during the height of the COVID19 pandemic the use of Auslan interpreters at Gladys Berejiklian’s press conferences really supported the ability to access information. I was able to understand what was happening, the number of cases and deaths, the mandates put in place and make decisions that were based on the ability to access that information.

English as a written format is challenging for me. It is my second language, and I am not as proficient in it as I am in Auslan. It is frustrating when I am told that captions are a form of access; they aren’t. The captions do not always show exactly what the speaker said. The quality of captions can be bad, depending on which T.V. program you watch. Captions do not describe what is happening, such as the mood of the speaker or the tone the speaker uses. Captions are not a visual way to show what is happening. Captions make it difficult for me to make informed decisions because the lack of understanding of what is happening means that I need to search other avenues for clear and accessible information.

Providing Auslan interpreters at legislative council proceedings is an accessible way to acquire information and knowledge about law that may affect me; it is critical that this is automatically provided, not be a should-we-shouldn’t-we process.

Thank you for reading this.

Yours Sincerely,

[Name]